

Eleventh Annual Symposium (CAAS)

Diversity & Representation

*Representing Diversity,
Diversifying Representation*

Proceedings



Proceedings of the 11th Annual Symposium of the Consortium for Asian and African Studies (CAAS)

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Proceedings of the 11th Annual Symposium
of the Consortium for Asian and African
Studies (CAAS)

Diversity and Representation: Representing
Diversity, Diversifying Representation

Eleventh Annual Symposium of the Consortium For
Asian and African Studies
(CAAS)

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Venue: at SOAS via Zoom

Diversity and Representation: Representing Diversity, Diversifying Representation

The theme of the 2021 CAAS Symposium held at SOAS is ‘Diversity and Representation’. Under this theme, the symposium explores different understandings of and approaches to diversity and representation – including linguistic diversity, cultural diversity, ethnic diversity, religious diversity, but also diversity of ideas and opinions and other forms of diversity. The topic spans studies of diversity at community, local, and regional level, with a focus on the Global South. It asks how different forms of diversity are perceived, understood and talked about, and how diversity is represented in different contexts. It also asks questions of representations of diversity, and explores the ideologies, positions and perspectives that inform different modes of representation. Diversity and representation have been studied from many different disciplinary perspectives and we encourage both disciplinary studies, but also in particular inter-disciplinary and regional, area-studies approaches to a better understanding of what diversity means in African and Asian contexts.

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Panel 1-1: Cross-Cultural Critical Reflections on “Representation” and “Diversity”

Critique on the Concept of “representation” by a Vietnamese Poet-thinker Phạm Công Thiện and the Possibility of Eastern Thought

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Abstract

Phạm Công Thiện (1941–2011), who was a well-known South Vietnamese poet-thinker during the Vietnam War, intensely criticised the concept of “representation” in the 1960s. In this presentation, I will argue about the reason he criticised that concept and explored the possibility of another view of the world in Buddhist thought, which is different from representative thinking.

Based on Heidegger’s philosophy, Thiện claimed that the ultimate cause of the Vietnam War was Western metaphysics, which had forgotten Being itself, and that the most essential feature of Western metaphysics was its representative way of thinking. For Heidegger and Thiện, Western metaphysics is essentially characterised by the belief that humankind as a subject represents the world as an object that stands in front of a subject in order to appropriate and rule it by language, logic, and reason. Thiện denounced the fact that his motherland had become an object of the war and that even anti-war movements at that time also regarded Vietnam as an object for the movements, which were based on representative thinking of Western metaphysics in addition to being the cause of the war.

In contrast, he claimed that there had been another view of the world based on Being itself in Buddhist thought, which was one of the traditional Vietnamese religions. He thought that Heidegger’s Being would ultimately converge into the Nothingness of Zen Buddhism and appealed to the awakening of such Being = Nothingness that he discovered

in the classical verses of Vietnamese Zen master's poem. He thought they were not the representation of the world but the emergence of the true world. When we examine such a perspective, we expect to prove the possibility of Eastern thoughts, which differs from modern representative thoughts.

1. Introduction

I have long been researching the works of Vietnamese Buddhist poet-thinker, Phạm Công Thiện (1941–2011), who was active in South Vietnam during the latter half of the 1960s.

He was well-known for his extreme expressions, such as the phrase "I masturbate with God and generate the human race," and also for his extreme behaviour; when he met Henry Miller in U.S. for the first time, he declared: "I will kill you, Henry Miller." Despite being a Buddhist monk, he had a common-law wife and children. He also abandoned his family and leave Vietnam forever in 1970 even though he was a faculty dean at a Buddhist University then.

Despite his eccentricity, he contributed significantly to the South Vietnamese literary and philosophic scene. One of his most outstanding contributions was to introduce Martin Heidegger's thoughts on exploring the cause of the Vietnam War philosophically at that time. Based on Heidegger's thoughts, he argued that the fundamental cause of war was Western metaphysics characterized by the thinking method known as "representation."

I believe that the issue that Thiện raised is fundamental to modern times and modernity. The problem of the essential or philosophical feature of this concept of "representation" cannot be ignored. Therefore, in this presentation, I intend to examine Thiện's argument and introduce Mahayana Buddhist thought, in which he explored a different view of the world, which differs from that of the Western or modern perspective.

I would argue that the concept of "representation" has its own drawbacks as it is only one view of the world and that there is a need to reevaluate other thinking methods in this world that have been cultivated by traditional Eastern thought to confirm the diversity of human worldviews.

2. Representation and Vietnam War

Let us first examine the central issue of why Thiện criticized the concept of “representation.” Thiện believed that the ultimate cause of the Vietnam War was Western metaphysics, and he considered representative thinking, or a representative view of the world, as one of the characteristics of Western metaphysics. Further, Thiện regarded the modern history of Vietnam since the French colonial era as an invasion by Western metaphysics. He also contended that the contradiction of the modern world that had been formed by and based on the representative thinking of Western metaphysics—and that had spread worldwide—had manifested as the tragedy of the Vietnam War in which the Vietnamese suffered in terms of blood and fire.¹

Let us now more concretely analyze how Thiện criticized the concept of “representation.” In 1965, when the Vietnam War was intensifying, Thiện wrote an essay in form of an open letter style to the American writer, Henry Miller, entitled “The Ontological Background of the Present War in Vietnam (An Open Letter to Henry Miller),” describing the war and the distress of Vietnamese. Thiện addressed Miller primarily because Miller denounced the machine-oriented development of the Western modern world despite being a Westerner. Furthermore, with respect to Miller’s thoughts, Thiện believed that Miller accomplished a type of Eastern enlightenment.² Although there are other reasons as well, I will not delve into them in the interest of time and to avoid diverging from the main theme of my presentation—that is, the Vietnam War as connected with the concept of “representation”, and reflected in Thiện’s following quotations:

Vietnam is becoming chaos, and through the dominance of Representation (der Herrschaft des orstellens), tends to dissolve into nothingness.³

The hour of Vorstellungswelt has struck. Holy Darkness has come to close in on my

¹ Phạm Công Thiện, *Im Lặng Hồ Thắm*, Saigon: An Tiêm, 1967, p. 11, pp. 19–20.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 91–101. In Thiện’s letter to H. Miller on August 2, 1966, he wrote “I think you have attained Satori!” (Underlined original. Satori means enlightenment in Japanese). Thiện’s letters sent to H. Miller are stored in the ^{Department} of Special Collections of UCLA Library.

³ Phạm Công Thiện, “The Ontological Background of the Present War in Vietnam (An open letter to Henry Miller)”, in Thích Nhất Hạnh, Bùi Giáng, Tam Ích, Hồ Hưu Tường, Phạm Công Thiện, *Dialogue*, Saigon: Lá Bối, 1965, p. 80. (Hereafter “The Ontological”)

country. Foreign napalm bombs have made Vietnamese plum blossoms falling.⁴

Thiện obviously regarded the Vietnam War as the dominance of representation, or the invasion of “representation” over Vietnam. Furthermore, he claimed that representative thinking could not solve the war problem, as suggested in the following quotation:

... it is ontic(al)ly, impossible [.....] to solve the conflict in our country if we are still asking how to solve it, since the way of how-thinking only faces any being in question by the artificial light of Representation or *Vorstellung*. And Representation is unable to face what-is or was *ist*.⁵

In these quotations, important keywords such as representation are expressed in German because Thiện’s criticism was based on Heidegger’s thoughts. The German word “*Vorstellung*” literally means “to put forth,” and has been used since the 18th century as a translation of the Latin word “*repraesentatio*.”

Heidegger interpreted the character of the concept *Vorstellung* in the essay “The Age of the World Picture” as follows:

If then, we wish to clarify the pictorial character of the world as the representativeness of beings, then in order fully to grasp the modern essence of representativeness, we must scent out the original naming power of that worn-out word and concept “to represent”: to put forth and relate to oneself. It is through this that the being comes to stand as an object and so first receives the seal of being. That the world becomes picture is one and the same process whereby, in the midst of beings, man becomes subject.⁶

The concept of “representation” can be summarized as characterizing human beings

⁴ Ibid., p. 85.

⁵ Ibid., pp. 77–78.

⁶ Martin Heidegger, *Off the Beaten Track*, Edited and Translated by Julian Young and Kenneth Haynes, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002, p. 69; Martin Heidegger, *Holzwege*, Gesamtausgabe Band 5, Frankfurt a M: Vittorio Klostermann, p. 92.

as subjects and portraying things and events in the world as objects in front of the subject, which the subject appropriates and rules using “the artificial light.” I interpret this as language, logic, and reason of human beings, and consequently, through human representation, the world becomes “the collective image of representing production [das Gebild der vorstellenden Herstellens].”⁷ Therefore, Heidegger pointed out that “the fundamental event of modernity is the conquest of the world as picture.”⁸ The “conquest” here can be replaced with the term “controlling knowledge,” following Paul Tillich, whom Thiệu quoted in his essay. Tillich explains that controlling knowledge “is outstanding, though it is not the only, example of technical reason. It unites subject and object for the sake of the control of the object by the subject. It transforms the object into a completely conditioned and calculable ‘thing’.”⁹

For Thiệu, the contradictions of such a view of the world manifested in the Vietnam War, and Vietnam was forced to be sacrificed as an object for the ideologies of the East and West that are both rooted in Western metaphysics. Furthermore, although the anti-Vietnam War movements accelerated worldwide during that period, Thiệu criticized the thought of peace in his book *Im Lặng Hồ Thẳm* (The Silence of the Abyss) in which he wrote:

The very pacifist thought of you, the very bellicose thought of you, has given rise to a war [...] The very Latin word *ob-jectum* has cut off Vietnam, Germany, the earth, and the Being of human into two.¹⁰

Thiệu believed that the concept of peace was also based on the representative method of thinking in Western metaphysics, where Vietnam was also regarded as an object for peace.

⁷ Martin Heidegger, *Off the Beaten Track*, p. 71.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Phạm, “The Ontological”, p. 82. Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 1, Chicago: University of Chicago press, 1951, p. 97.

¹⁰ Phạm, *Im Lặng Hồ Thẳm*, pp. 211–212.

3. Being and Nothingness in Zen Buddhism

Heidegger deemed that the representative manner of thinking resulted from the forgottenness of Being of Western metaphysics. He criticized that Western metaphysics, right from Plato's era, had only been viewing beings and their characteristics, but not Being themselves of the beings. Therefore, Heidegger asserted that we must ask the Being itself, which had been forgotten since Plato.

Following Heidegger, Thiện also urged in the essay for the need for asking the Being of beings, although, in the latter half of his essay, he replaced the word "Being" with the word "Nothingness," although the meanings of Being and Nothingness are semantically opposite. One of the reasons is Thiện referred to Heidegger's statement that Being and Nothingness belong together (*Sein und Nichts gehören zusammen*).¹¹ Furthermore, although he did not state explicitly in the essay, for Thiện, Heidegger's Being would ultimately attain the Nothingness of Zen Buddhism.¹² He called the awareness of Nothingness (Being) the New Consciousness and stated the following:

... this New Consciousness is not the consciousness of any being in particular, but in fact it is the Consciousness of Pure Nothingness which leads to the total Destruction of both ens and non-ens, and, finally, to the very Destruction of the Nihil itself.¹³

Although this may appear to be a very nihilistic assertion, you must not imagine this as the destruction of the physical world. This type of destruction was actually performed during the Vietnam War; however, Thiện's concept of destruction here is fairly different. Rather, it can be regarded as metaphysical and fundamental destruction of our normal consciousness.

¹¹ Phạm, "The Ontological", p. 85. Although this essay only indicated to Hegel's "das reine Nichts" in his *Wissenschaft der Logik*, Thiện might refer to Heidegger, who quoted Hegel's same words in his essay "Was ist Mepahpysik?" cf. Martin Heidegger, *Wegmarken*, Gesamtausgabe Band 9, Frankfurt a M: Vittorio Klostermann, 1976, p. 120.

¹² Phạm Công Thiện, *Ý Thức Mới trong Văn Nghệ và Triết Học*, 4th ed, Saigon: An Tiêm, 1970 (1st Ed. Saigon: Lá Bối, 1964), pp. 180–181.

¹³ Phạm, "The Ontological", p. 84.

4. World articulation by language and negating such a world

To explain this destruction of our normal consciousness while paying attention to the function of language, I rely on “the theory of semantic articulation by language” advocated by Japanese scholar Toshihiko Izutsu. The premise of this theory is that not only Westerners but also human beings in general live in the world articulated by language. The causality of the representative view of the world, which Thiệu criticized, would ultimately be reduced to the function of human language in general. Izutsu explains about language, stating that “one of its most important functions consists in articulating reality into a certain number of units and crystallizing them into so many discrete entities which then form among themselves a complicated network of closely or remotely related things, qualities, actions, and relations.”¹⁴ We are living in such a world constructed by language and believe that the world already articulated and represented by language as if it is a real world. We can hardly escape from this normal consciousness, hypnotized by language. In this consciousness, human beings grasp things and events in the world as meaningful through and by language, namely, in a manner that the grammatical subject represents grammatical objects.

However, as shown in the famous motto of Zen, “No dependence upon words and letters”¹⁵ or the Vietnamese famous poet Nguyễn Du’s (1765–1820) verse “No-word, it exactly is the true canon,”¹⁶ Eastern Asia historically has types of beliefs that regard language negatively and the representative world through language as not a true world. Specifically, in other words, it is a surface part of a true world. Thiệu’s belief is linked to this type of thought. His concept of total destruction, as well as Nothingness in Zen Buddhism, can be considered to mean annihilation of the consciousness created by language exhaustively to the zero-point of consciousness. Given that language articulates the world and makes things and events appear in the phenomenal world, the consciousness of both the subject and the object that co-exist separately would vanish with the vanishing of the consciousness of language, and then everything would be

¹⁴ Izutsu Toshihiko, *Toward a Philosophy of Zen Buddhism*, Boulder: Prajñā Press, 1982, p. 129.

¹⁵ Suzuki Daisetz Teitaro, *Zen Buddhism*, Edited by William Barrett, New York: Doubleday & Company, INC, 1956, p. 9.

¹⁶ Original in Chinese character: 無字是真經. This verse is in his poem 梁昭明太子分經石台.

reduced to Nothingness. This corresponds to the fundamental idea of Mahayana Buddhism in general—that the world of consciousness and the external world co-occur; following the vanishing of consciousness, the external world also vanishes. Thiệu's Nothingness can be understood as the Reality not articulated by language, rather than a vacuum in which all things never exist.

5. Không Lộ's Howl

However, this is not a goal for the Zen Buddhist view of the true world. There is a further step—to be aware of the state of Nothingness. At that time, the Nothingness will turn into Being and manifest itself to the phenomenal world. The absolute negation that even “leads to the very Destruction of the Nihil itself” will finally become the transcendental affirmation of Being.

Thiệu called for the awakening of this Nothingness of Zen Buddhism (= Heidegger's Being), which modern individuals are unable to grasp through representative thinking. Thiệu discovered it in the Vietnamese Zen traditional verse and illustrated it in a philosophical book entitled *The Silence of the Abyss*. Although the book has a title with the word “silence,” at the beginning of its preface, Thiệu paradoxically introduced the howl of the ancient Vietnamese Zen master Không Lộ (literal meaning “the way of emptiness”; dates of birth and death: ?–1119) as follows:

Zen master Không Lộ[literal meaning “the way of emptiness”] of the Lý Dynasty[1009–1225] of our homeland once climbed up a lofty peak of a mountain alone and howled a lonely voice that chilled the blue sky filled with white clouds.¹⁷

The “blue sky filled with clouds” here is 太虛 in the original, which also means “universe.” Thus, I interpret it as referring to all the universe.

Subsequently, he remarked, “Down there is a desolate abyss, an abyss of homeland,

¹⁷ Phạm, *Im Lặng Hồ Thẳm*, p. 11. Original verse in Chinese character: 有時直上孤峯頂，長嘯一聲寒太虛。As Vietnamese scholars pointed out, this Không Lộ's verse is based on another Chinese verse praising Zen Master Yaoshan of Tang dynasty: 有時直上孤峯頂，月下披雲笑一聲. cf. Lê Mạnh Thát, *Nghiên Cứu Về Thiền Uyển Tập Anh*, Hồ Chí Minh: nxb Thành Phố Hồ Chí Minh, 1999, pp. 442–443.

there the silence of the abyss suddenly resonates Being and Transcendence.”¹⁸ The silence here can be interpreted as Nothingness, i.e., the absolute non-articulated-by-language Reality, and Không Lộ’s howl can be interpreted as the emergence of Nothingness turning into Being as Thiện commented above. Then, it can be interpreted that this howl of Being contains all the universe metaphysically, which trembles with the howl and emerges in the phenomenal world fused within the howl in a flash. The Hua Yuan school of Mahayana Buddhism named this ontological state the interpenetration of all things¹⁹, to which the law of identity ($A = A$) cannot be adopted. Afterwards, Thiện himself commented that this Không Lộ’s verse is the description of the dependent-arising-over-and-over of the domain of the interpenetration of all things.²⁰

Moreover, when he quoted Không Lộ’s howl, I reckon that Thiện did call Không Lộ’s howl as his own, that is, he did not view Không Lộ objectively, but as his embodiment. The howl or even the word “howl” itself includes Zen master Không Lộ; a mountain; a blue sky; white clouds; the time of the past, present and future; the author Phạm Công Thiện who quoted the verse; and maybe readers; all of which penetrate each other. Here, we may determine the realization of the interpenetration of all things.

A word and the entity indicated by the word do not maintain one-to-one correspondence. A mere word connotes all the universe. Here, we may also have a chance to explore nonrepresentative use of language—namely, the poetic function of language.

6. Conclusion

In this paper, I argued why the Vietnamese Buddhist poet-thinker Phạm Công Thiện criticized the concept of “representation” during the Vietnam War, following which I explored one of the Eastern views of the world, which is different from the representative way of thinking.

¹⁸ Phạm, *Im Lặng Hó Thẳm*, p. 11.

¹⁹ Izutsu Toshihiko, *The Structure of Oriental Philosophy: Collected Papers of the Eranos Conference*, Volume II, Tokyo: Keio University Press, 2008, p. 177.

²⁰ Phạm Công Thiện, *Sự Chuyển Động Toàn Diện Của Tâm Thức Trong Tư Tưởng Phật Giáo*, California: Viện Triết Lý Việt Nam và Triết Học Thế Giới, 1994, p. 57. “Dependent-arising-over-and-over of the domain of the interpenetration of all things” in original text: trùng trùng duyên khởi của toàn thể sự sự vô ngại pháp giới. duyên khởi: prañitya-samutpāda in Sanskrit, 緣起 in Chinese; sự sự vô ngại pháp giới: 事事無礙法界 in Chinese.

Based on Heidegger's thoughts, Thiệu claimed that the ultimate cause of the Vietnam War was Western metaphysics and that the most essential feature of metaphysics was its representative way of thinking. For Heidegger and Thiệu, Western metaphysics is essentially characterized by the belief that human beings as subjects represent the world as objects that stand in front of a subject to appropriate and rule them by language, logic, and reason. Thiệu denounced the fact that his motherland had become an object of the anti-war movement as well as the war.

Opposing Western metaphysics, Thiệu advocated another view of the world called New Consciousness, the Consciousness of Nothingness, which had been historically known as a fundamental thought of Zen Buddhist school. According to Toshihiko Izutsu's theory, this so-called Eastern Nothingness is interpreted as a non-articulated world by language. Zen Buddhism, which negates ordinary language because it obstructs the true world, requires the annihilation of consciousness consisting of language that produces illusions of both subjects and objects until there is no consciousness. For Zen and Mahayana Buddhism in general, the consciousness and the external world co-occur, when reaching no consciousness, all things in the external world are reduced to Nothingness.

However, for their thoughts, Nothingness must turn into Being. The ancient Zen master Không Lộ's howl that Thiệu introduced in his book can be interpreted as the emergence of Nothingness =Being that involves all other things, and that it realizes and describes such a peculiar but true world for those who awake to the New Consciousness or attain enlightenment.

On the one hand, the development of modern science and technology by representative thinking has brought convenience to our daily lives. On the other hand, we should not forget that it has contributed to the development of weapons of mass destruction like atomic bombs and chemical weapons, etc. Because of this tragedy in his homeland, Thiệu drew on Heidegger's thoughts to argue that representative thinking and its forgottenness of Being were the fundamental cause of the Vietnam War. He then presented another view of the world that had been cultivated by Eastern thought, which based on the awareness of Being (= Nothingness of Zen Buddhism).

Whether the negation of objectivity and the law of identity (which are fundamental laws of modern science) will result in an alternative form of academic studies or not

requires further exploration and discussion. At the very least, critiquing the concept of “representation” can lead us to reflect on the existing anthropocentric view of the world and the specific use of human language.

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Linguistic Relativity: The Influence of Language and Culture on the Perception of Time, Politeness and Kinship Terms

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Abstract

Understanding diversity and representation is important for the function of society today in all circles including the business world, education, and health sectors. Recently, the news has been focusing on the topic of diversity and inclusion and various organisations are taking the situation into their own hands. By comparing and contrasting how different cultures across the globe view the concepts of time, politeness and kinship, this paper will show how understanding these concepts would make it easier to understand linguistic relativity and communicate more effectively showing how to tackle representation/inclusion in the workplace and language education systems. The perception of time in summary is the way people feel, experience, and evaluate time. The orientation of time is obtained from culture, and this orientation is mirrored in the language used to describe time. Defining politeness is not an easy task as it differs from one society to the next. One way of understanding politeness is by looking at its purpose. Politeness is used to either avoid damaging a relationship or to avoid conflict. Lastly, kinship terms have similarly been studied to try and find the link between language and thought by the diverse ways in which terms such as uncle, aunt, brother, and sister are used and how this determines how behaviour towards these people differs. (Wardhaugh, 2002, p. 229). The concepts of time, politeness and kinship are but a small example of how language and culture shapes and influences our worldview creating a vast diversity. Understanding these is a step closer to managing life in a multicultural world.

Keywords: Culture, language, kinship terms, time perception, politeness, linguistic relativity, language accommodation

1. Introduction

What is language? What is culture? How do the two interact? Different scholars define language from different perspectives. One such definition is language as an arbitrary system of signs constituted of the signifier and signified. A distinction is drawn between language (*langue*) and the activity of speaking (*parole*). Speaking is an activity of the individual; language is the social manifestation of speech (Saussure, 1916).

Having defined language, what then is culture? There are various definitions and theories of culture however, this paper will use the functionalist perspective which views culture as a reflection of society's values. It acknowledges that there are many parts of culture that work together as a system to fulfil society's needs (Spencer, 1876).

A strong bond exists between language and culture, and it is usually an inseparable bond. It is this bond that brought on the theory that the language one speaks has an influence on worldview and thinking. Though linguists are divided in supporting it, the Whorfian theory of linguistic relativity has been cited in many situations. According to Whorf (1956), linguistic patterns in different languages have an impact on people's habitual thinking. Whorf was of the belief that the differences in linguistic structure between languages are seen in habitual thought and habitual behaviour otherwise coined as linguistic relativity. Some aspects of a given language affect the way people perceive and describe the world. In addition, Whorf was of the belief that culture, and language are indivisible (Ji, Zhang, & Nisbett, 2004).

This paper has two main aims: firstly, to show how language and culture influence the differences in perception of concepts such as time, politeness, and kinship terms and secondly, how understanding these differences can be helpful in foreign language education and communication in a multicultural working environment.

The following section of the paper will introduce the theoretical review.

2. Theoretic Review

2.0 The Theory of Linguistic Relativity

Also known as the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis, linguistic relativity is a term that holds two notions. The first is that languages are relative. This simply means that languages differ in how they express concepts in notable ways. Secondly, it supports the belief that the linguistic expression of concepts has to some extent, an influence over conceptualization in cognitive areas, which need not necessarily be linguistically mediated. This theory has two versions: *linguistic relativity* and *linguistic determinism*. The difference between the two is that one version is considered 'weak' because it suggests that there is only some influence on perception from culture while the other version is considered 'strong' as it suggests that humans cannot escape this close link between language and culture and cannot broaden their thinking outside that of how their culture has shaped it. In general, linguists agree that language and culture influence and shape one's thought process or perception of various concepts to some extent. However, the latter version of the Whorfian theory (linguistic determinism) has received criticism. Scholars such as Brown (1958) and Lenneberg (1953) pointed out that Whorf's way of research was too casual and his generalization on the Hopi tribe's perception of time and Native Indians' view of colour was not scientific enough to generalize the results.

Another criticism of extreme Whorfianism is the concept that if language influences thought then it would be presumed that certain concepts would only be comprehensible in the language in which they were first 'thought' - the concept of translatability. He used examples of unique words such as 'saudade' (loosely translated in English as missing or longing) from Brazilian Portuguese. Chandler (1995) proves that there is evidence that this concept of translatability applies in poetry quoting the poet Pablo Neruda lamenting the fact that when his poems are translated the words do not correspond in terms of 'vocalization, or in the placement, or the colour, or the weight of words'. However, he does admit that the sense of what he is saying remains the same. From the perspective of a poet, during translation, the meaning is but a part of the poem. The remaining part is in how the poet sounds to the listener or looks to the reader. In this case, what is 'lost in translation' hence, is less of a linguistic question, and more a musical or artistic one.

Due to these criticisms, linguists prefer the 'weak' version of the Whorfian Hypothesis. They agree that in some instances this theory is true. As culture is reflected

in words and expressions of concepts such as time, politeness, and the use of kinship terminology.

2.1 Language Accommodation Theory

The language accommodation theory will be relevant to the problem-solving part of this essay. This theory, (also called linguistic accommodation, speech accommodation, and communication accommodation) can be defined as the process by which participants in a conversation adjust their accent, diction, or other aspects of language according to the speech style of the other participant. The basis of this theory first appeared in "Accent Mobility: A Model and Some Data" by Howard Giles (Anthropological Linguists, 1973). "According to Giles' (1973, 1977; Giles & Couland 1991) accommodation theory, speakers may alter their speech to sound more like the listeners to attain greater social integration with them. This theory presents a wide-ranging framework to predict and explain many of the adjustments individuals make to create, maintain, or decrease the social distance in interaction. As different cultures have different languages and use of language, this theory plays an important role in managing a multicultural world.

Perception of Time in Different Cultures

i. Perception/Orientation of Time

The perception of time, in summary, is the way people feel, experience, and evaluate time. The orientation of time is obtained from culture, and this orientation is mirrored in the language used to describe time. Diversity is seen in the perception of time by different cultures and how they value its different aspects. (Hickson & Pugh, 2002:86). Expressions of time differ from one culture and language to the next depending on the value of time in that particular culture. For example, in the African language, Schambala, there are no words for past or future. Instead, there is only today and not today. Another example is how in English a watch is said to 'run', in Spanish, it 'walks', 'marches' in French and 'functions' in German (Statt, 2004:82).

One way of perceiving time is a definitive beginning and end, that is to say, it is linear. It is seen as a limited tangible supply and cultures that view time this way structure their

lives around deadlines and milestones of which if not met, could be interpreted as having a poor work ethic or being incompetent. One such example is that of American culture where phrases such as “time is money” show how time is valued as a commodity and because it has a limit, wasting it is frowned upon. Further, time can be ‘saved’, ‘lost’, ‘wasted’ ‘gained,’ ‘planned,’ ‘given,’ made the most of’ even ‘killed’ and so on (Khol, 1984).

Other cultures perceive time as cyclical and endless and an emphasis is placed more on doing things *right* and maintaining harmony, rather than worrying about getting things done “on time.” An example of this is how in India, deadlines are perceived as “targets” to be met in the context of completing tasks and priorities and the potential damage a delay would have on a particular relationship. This does not mean that deadline-oriented cultures are not concerned with doing a job well or nurturing relationships, but getting the job done on time is the primary capitalistic driver of being first to market. In most cases, it outweighs whether relationships may be negatively impacted. What would be considered extremely late and impolite in one culture would be considered acceptable and normal in another (Meyer, 2014)

It is interesting that people from cultures that view time as endless, schedule their days around “event-time”. That is, around an estimated time as opposed to ‘clock-time’. To put this into context, where a typical Indian would say, ‘I will go to the hospital around lunchtime’ a person from a linear culture would be more specific by giving an exact time; “I will go to the hospital at 12 o’clock”. Another example is the difference in the meaning of the word now in linear cultures versus cyclical cultures. When a Mexican says “ahorita” (now) or Batswana says “now”, it is different from when an American says “now”. The difference is that now in Mexican or Tswana culture would mean sometime in the near future whilst in American culture it means immediately. Tswanas would say “now, now” to mean immediately or very soon. That extra “now” makes every difference (Ibid).

ii. Perception of Time among Bilinguals

Recent research on how bilinguals perceive the world shows that people who

speak two languages fluently think about time differently depending on the language context in which they are estimating the duration of events. This proves that lack of exposure to other languages to some extent limits one's perception of certain concepts.

One such study was done at Lancaster University where Spanish-Swedish bilinguals were asked to estimate how much time had passed while watching either a line growing across a screen, or a container being filled. Simultaneously, the participants were prompted with either the word 'duración' (the Spanish word for duration) or 'tid' (the Swedish word for duration). It should be noted that Swedish speakers like English speakers prefer to mark the duration of events by referring to physical distances, e.g., a short break, a long event, etc. Time passing is perceived as distance travelled but Spanish speakers tend to mark time by referring to physical quantities, e.g., a small break, a big event. In this case, the passage of time is perceived as growing volume. The study found that bilinguals seemed to use both ways of marking duration flexibly, depending on the language context (Bylund & Athanasopoulos, 2017).

In summary, people from different cultures perceive time differently and hence value it according to how they perceive it. As seen above, bilinguals switch words describing time depending on the language being used. It should be noted that understanding how the group of people you are working with perceive time and what they value will help get people from multiple cultures to meet an important deadline. Using language accommodation would create solidarity and a sense of belonging despite the members being from various cultural backgrounds.

3. Politeness

Another concept that exists across the world but differs from culture to culture is that of politeness. Politeness strategies are not limited to gestures but are also achieved through the use of language. Like the perception and use of time in the previous section, culture may impose some norms or constraints on people's use of polite language. It can be observed that people from different cultural backgrounds usually adopt different ways of expressing politeness. The best example would be how politeness is expressed in Japanese and Korean cultures. Where the languages spoken in these cultures differ in morphology and syntax when expressing respect or humility, languages such as the English language

are restricted to the use of honorific titles (sir, ma'am) and formal language when expressing politeness (Jing-ping et al, 2005).

Japanese learners of English tend to use very formal and overly polite language when speaking English and would be uncomfortable using informal English when speaking to older people or members of society with higher ranks. Additionally, the use of first names even with a professor which is common in American culture, would be uncomfortable for Japanese speakers. In the same way, the Bemba culture in Zambia also has a culture of strict politeness where elders and members of society with high statuses are respected. Even though the official language in Zambia is English, Zambians from the Bemba culture just like Japanese learners of English tend to use extremely formal English when speaking to older members of society or revert to speaking Bemba as they feel it is more polite. In African culture, phrases such as "Ichisungu tecamucinshi" (English is not a respectful language) are used.

When people from cultures and language backgrounds with differences in understanding and expression of politeness meet, sometimes language use presents a problem. An example of this is in Japanese culture, how one would speak to a university professor would differ from how one would speak to a fellow classmate of the same age and academic year. This is because the entire structure of Japanese society relies on social status, age and seniority and is further reflected in how the Japanese language has different levels of politeness (Jing-ping et al, 2005).

On the other hand, in American culture, one important value is equality and informality, and this dictates that a person's age or social status in no way dictates how language is used. That is to say that one can speak informally with older members of society and those of high societal position such as the boss of a company (Khol, 1984). This concept is used to explain why in Japanese language education, foreign students from cultures without a strict honorific system who are learning Japanese find it harder to grasp the concept of 'Keigo' (Japanese honorifics) and its use as they are usually unable to fully understand the importance of rank and social position when these dynamics are different in their cultures (Supriatnaningsih, 2009).

In summary, politeness may reflect the constraints and norms that culture imposes on people's use of language proving that language use is relative to culture. Hence, there is

a need to include the cultural aspect in foreign language education as today many teachers and students seem to lose sight of the fact that knowledge of a grammatical system [grammatical competence] must be complemented by culture-specific meanings [communicative or cultural competence] (Byram, Morgan et al. 1994, p. 4, taken from Thanasoulas, 2001).

4. Kinship Terminology

Kinship terminology is good for cross-cultural and cross-language comparisons because every culture has a kinship system. Comparative studies of kinship terms have been done over the years to try and find the link between language and thought by the diverse ways in which terms such as ‘uncle’, ‘aunt’, ‘brother’, and ‘sister’ are used and how this determines the behaviour towards these people differs. (Wardhaugh, 2002, p. 229). For example, a comparison of how kinship terms are used in Bantu languages of Africa and European languages like English shows a difference. In Bemba, a Bantu language from Zambia, cousins from the matrilineal side are called brothers/sisters and uncles and aunts are called mother/father. Further research shows that no term exists that is equivalent to the English term ‘aunt’ in the Bemba language. When speaking English, Zambians use the word ‘aunt’ as a form of respect when referring to an older woman who is not a relative.

Another example is that of Hudson (1996, pp. 85-86, taken from Wardhaugh, 2002, pp. 228-229) who explains how the Seminole Indians of Florida and Oklahoma recognize a ‘father’s brother’ to also be ‘father’, as the Seminole recognize same-sex siblings to fulfil the same role. While one culture may distinguish between father and uncle, another may not. The use of the term ‘father’ in a conversation between a native English speaker from say English culture and a Seminole Indian would logically produce a different image for both people, as culturally each may classify the roles and image of this person differently.

5. Conclusion

In the previous sections, language and culture were defined and their relationship was explained through the linguistic relativity theory and examples of perceptions of time,

politeness, and kinship across cultures. Despite there being no definitive conclusion to exactly how language and culture are related, it is evident through the linguistic choices that people employ that a relationship exists. These examples showed how language and culture play a critical role in worldview and how there exists a need for language learners and the business world to understand why people think and speak the way they do, and to understand possible agreements that may be in place between a culture and its language. When working across multiple cultures, companies must learn language accommodation strategies and flexibility in specific environments.

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Panel 1-2: Beginnings

The Royal Cemetery at Ur: Material Diversity and International Links of Ur

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Abstract

The Royal Cemetery at Ur, as one of the most sensational discoveries in the archaeological history of Mesopotamia, has various objects unearthed such as jewellery, bronzes, seals, musical instruments. The Indian-style seals, bleaching beads and semi-precious-inlaid jewellery illustrate the international links maintained by Ur rulers well. All the materials from which they are made have to be imported.

This article attempts to reveal the material diversity and the international links implied by objects found in the Royal Cemetery, through which the diversity can be confirmed. Material diversity of the objects found in the cemetery are main content: Badakshan's lapis lazuli, Anatolia's gold and silver, Deccan's carnelian, Iranian plateau's agate, Egyptian vessels and axes, as well as bleaching beads and seals of Indus valley. The characteristics of the raw materials make it easy for us to determine where they originate from. In addition, the studying of the ratios of various strontium isotopes found in the skulls may tell us that some people killed in the graves are not local, then Archaeological evidence of merchants' activities and foreign artisans are also referred in this article.

As for the existence of "world system" in the Early Dynastic period, the material diversity and international links this article reveals cannot effectively and sufficiently make explanations to it. The opinion of "world system" once noted by Guillermo Algaze (1993) that portrayed the Uruk trade network as a worldwide picture was denied by update and strong evidence in 2001. Whether there existed the "world system" or not, however, the

objects in Royal Cemetery of diverse and wide origins provide us with an effective start point to approach a more accurate understanding to the trade network of southern Mesopotamia in the Early Dynastic period.

Introduction

Ur is one of the oldest and most important ancient cities of Mesopotamia which lies in the desert of southern Iraq. The city was inhabited from the Ubaid period (6500-3800BC)¹, at that time Ur was a coastal city near the mouth of the Euphrates on the Persian Gulf. The excavations of Ur began in the 1850s, especially the meticulous work by Woolley between 1922 and 1934, transformed our knowledge of the early art and history of southern Mesopotamia and left a legacy which would be difficult to surpass.²

The Royal Cemetery at Ur found by Woolley spans the later third millennium BC with the latest burials probably dating to the late Akkadian period or early third Dynasty. Woolley coined the term “Royal Tombs” to describe the sixteen brick and stone burials in the cemetery. A few of these graves were particularly well-stocked with artifacts and contained many individuals. The Royal Cemetery was used as a burial cemetery for many elite groups for a relatively long time, with the most widely accepted chronology ranging from 2600 to 2350 BC³.

There are numerous materials given by the excavation of Royal Cemetery. It demonstrated Woolley’s reasonably comprehensive digging process, as well as extensive descriptions of objects and individuals found in the tombs. The number of graves initially assigned by Woolley had reached a total of 1851, later 260 additional burials were reported, while the numbered objects reached 18212, later reached 20093⁴.

¹ Carter, Robert A. and Philip, Graham, *Beyond the Ubaid: Transformation and Integration in the Late Prehistoric Societies of the Middle East* (Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilization, Number 63), The Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 2010, p2.

² For the rediscovery of Ur, see Harriet Crawford, *Ur-The City of the Moon God*, Bloomsbury Academic, 2015, pp.1-13.

³ Woolley took the dates 2700-2400BC, For the chronology of the Royal Cemetery of Ur, see Nissen 1966; Pollock 1985; Reade 2001; Vogel 2008.

⁴ Woolley Leonard C., *Ur Excavations vol.2: The Royal Cemetery*, London: Publications of the Joint Expedition of the British Museum and of the Museum of the University of Pennsylvania to

A selection of the most important finds from Ur in the Penn Museum are listed in the catalogue of Zettler and Horne. According to Zettler's catalogue, these grave objects mainly fall into six categories: cylinder seals, jewellery, metal vessels, shell vessels and containers, stone vessels, tools and weapons.⁵ Many of these grave goods were likely imported from surrounding regions including Afghanistan, Egypt, and the Indus valley. It's easy to see the diversity in forms, raw materials, and processing techniques of these objects from the catalogue. So, this article will focus on the typical imported items and the diversity of their provenances.

Seals & Beads of Indus Valley

Woolley reported more than 400-cylinder seals of the Royal Cemetery period, among them are some peculiar seals, which are special in subject and style. As shown in the table, there are stamp, button, and cylinder seals. The majority of these seals' subjects are animals (unicorn, scorpion) with inscription in Indus characters. These seals have distinct Indian traits that set them apart from Mesopotamian seals.

No.	Description	Context
U.7027	Stamp seal steatite, of Indus Valley type	From a plundered grave
U.1618 1	Stamp seal of Indus Valley type	Surface find
U.1622 0	Cylinder seal, shell, of Indus Valley type	In the filling of the Dungi mausoleum.
U.1639 7	Button seal of glazed pottery bleached white; Indus Valley type	Surface find
U.1674 7	Stamp seal, steatite, of Indus Valley type	From the upper soil over site

Mesopotamia, 1934, appendix A "Tabular Analysis of Graves" pp.411-484; objects catalogue pp.524-595; Woolley Leonard C., *The early periods (Ur Excavations 4)*. Philadelphia (PA): Trustees of the British Museum & Museum of the University of Pennsylvania. pp.27-45; objects catalogue pp. 167-220.

⁵ Richard L. Zettler, Lee Horne, eds, *Treasures from the Royal Tombs of Ur*, University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, 1998.

U.1118	Steatite stamp, with a scorpion and a sign of writing rectangular with handle above	From PG/791
U.1195	Cylinder seal, white shell, unicorn type, with Indus script	Sargonid period, found loose in the soil
U.1764	Stamp seal, grey steatite originally glazed; button type, with inscription in Indus characters	Found in the filling of PG/1847

Tab. 1 Partial Indus seals in Woolley's report (1934, 1955)

There are more Indian style seals from different periods in Gadd's research⁶.

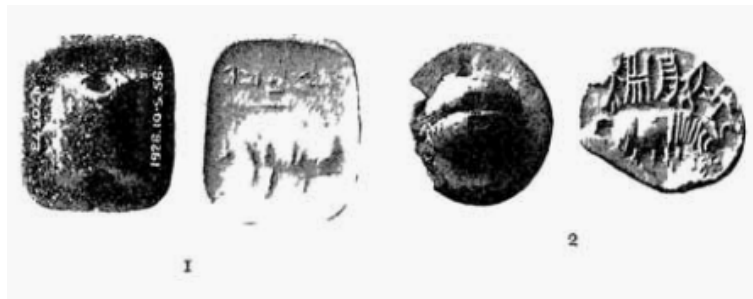


Fig.1 Stamp & button seals of Indian style, by Gadd



Fig.2 Cylinder seals of Indian style, by Gadd

The cutting and manufacture, in addition to subject and style, might reveal a seal's provenance. A stamp seal with Sumerian libation subject (U. 18928), but the cutting is quite unlike any other seal, it's more likely to be an attempt of Indus craftsman to deal with a Sumerian subject. While occasionally there are seals of Indus subject and style but the form argues for Mesopotamian manufacture in cylinder (U. 16220). It would appear that there were certain Indian traders' resident at Ur to whom the true Indus seals belonged, and they might further procure for themselves seals locally cut to suit their own taste.⁷

⁶ See C. J. Gadd, "Seals of Ancient Indian Style found at Ur", *Proceedings of the British Academy*, vol. xviii, 1933, pp.3-22.

⁷ Woolley Leonard C., *The early periods (Ur Excavations 4)*. Philadelphia (PA): Trustees of the British Museum & Museum of the University of Pennsylvania. 1955, p.50.

This was the age when the civilisations of the Indus and the Euphrates came most closely into contact, a dozen or more seals found at Ur testify to the commerce between the two countries, and we have another sign of it in the bleached carnelian beads. While carnelian was manufactured in many areas between India and Iran, the very long carnelian beads and the beads of etched carnelian represent two distinctive types of objects that can most confidently be regarded as originating in India or the Indus region⁸. The bleached parts of these beads are designed in the form of a figure eight, this type can be identified with certainty as imported from a Harappan centre in the Indus valley, more detailed descriptions and pictures see Pittman's article⁹.



Fig.3 String of beads by Pittan



Fig.4 Beads with gold and lapis lazuli by Pittman

Regrettably, the Indian script hasn't been deciphered yet, and there's no textual evidence for the connections between Indus and south Mesopotamia during the 3rd millennium BC. But with the aid of strontium, carbon, and oxygen isotopes, a recent study of tooth enamel from individuals buried at Harappa and at the Royal Cemetery of Ur indicates that it should be feasible to identify Harappans in Mesopotamia¹⁰.

I. Artifacts of Egyptian Style

⁸ J. M. Kenoyer, "Trade and Technology of the Indus Valley: New Insights from Harappa, Pakistan," *World Archaeology* 29, 1997, pp.262-277.

⁹ Holly Pittman, "Jewelry" in Richard L. Zettler, Lee Horne, eds, *Treasures from the Royal Tombs of Ur*, University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, 1998, pp. 110-117.

¹⁰ J. Mark Kenoyer, T. Douglas Price, James H. Burton, "A new approach to tracking connections between the Indus Valley and Mesopotamia: initial results of strontium isotope analyses from Harappa and Ur", *Journal of Archaeological Science* 40, 2013, pp.2286-2297.

It has long been acknowledged that Egypt and Mesopotamia had some direct or indirect communications, and scholar like Wengrow insists that both Egyptian and Mesopotamian society fed from a common “cauldron of civilization”¹¹. Despite Woolley’s denial of Egypt's influence on Sumer¹², several artifacts found in the cemetery are still demonstrated in Egyptian style.

A kind of vessel in form of an ostrich egg is widespread in the 3rd millennium BC, a number of eggshells are found in graves as testified in the Royal Cemetery at Ur and the later Cemetery A at Kish. Woolley recognized more than ten eggshells, the majority of which are shattered and in poor condition, with traces of red paint visible. Only the gold one (Fig.5, U. 11154) found in royal tomb PG 779 is restored, which belongs to the king Urpabilsag.

Ostrich eggs have been discovered as early as the aceramic periods in North Africa being used as containers. In predynastic Egypt, ostrich eggs were placed in the graves, and many of the Egyptian eggs were decorated with paint or incised lines.¹³ Although the materials and decorations of eggshells have evolved in Mesopotamia, they should be inspired by Egypt in the initial shape and idea.

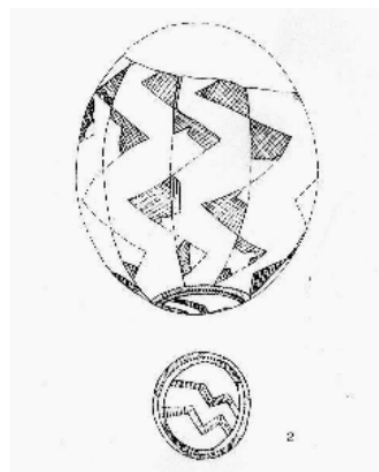


Fig.5 Gold ostrich shell U. 11154, Fig.6 Ostrich egg decorated with download from Ur-online database geometric incisions, Mainz am Rhein,

¹¹ David Wengrow, *What Makes Civilizations?*, Oxford University Press, 2010, xviii.

¹² Woolley argued that “the early Sumerians in either case had attained a higher level than their contemporaries in the Nile Valley”. 1934, pp.395-396.

¹³ Donald P. Hansen, “Art of the Royal Tombs of Ur: A Brief Interpretation” in Richard L. Zettler, Lee Horne, eds, *Treasures from the Royal Tombs of Ur*, University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, 1998, pp. 70-72.

Remains of the Predynastic Settlement,
1989

Besides, a large copper relief found in king Meskalamdug's grave PG 789 (Fig.7) has been recognized as ultimately Egyptian in inspiration. The relief shows the motif of lion associated with naked fallen enemies, which was considered close to neo-Assyrian art of the first half of the 1st millennium BC by Woolley. Hansen stated that it originated from Egyptian art in which the pharaoh as lion tramples his enemies. Perhaps in this context, the lion does not symbolize the king, but rather a warlike god. This particular combination of lion and naked fallen enemies did not survive in the imagery of Sumerian art.¹⁴

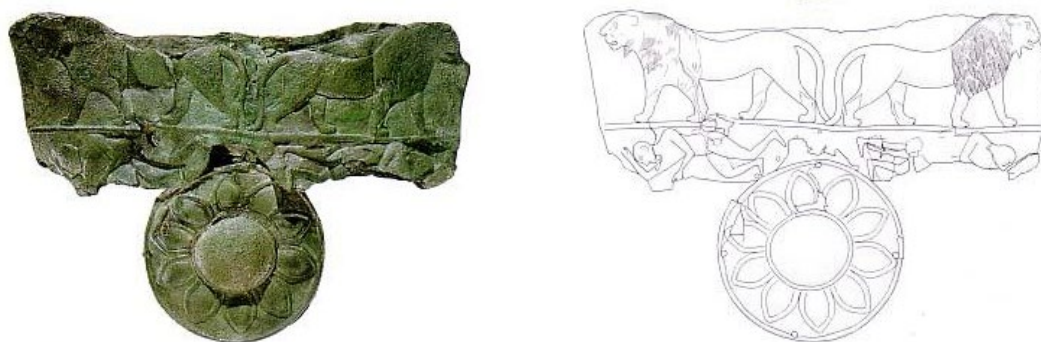


Fig.7 Copper alloy relief, U. 10475, download from Ur-online database

Another object related to Egypt is a mace-head (U.18223) of fine white limestone reported by Woolley in 1955, the form of a flat disk with mushroom stem resembling Egyptian types of First Pre-dynastic date. There are about 70 beads of crystal, agate, carnelian, steatite and granite with this mace-head.¹⁵ Other than that, there is no more information of it. And a metal axe type (Type A13) also had counterparts in Egypt but appeared suddenly and soon was dropped out of use, the axe type not last long in Sumer neither. I will not go into great depth about it in this piece.

Raw Materials and their Provenances

¹⁴ Donald P. Hansen, "Art of the Royal Tombs of Ur: A Brief Interpretation" in Richard L. Zettler, Lee Horne, eds, *Treasures from the Royal Tombs of Ur*, University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, 1998, pp. 67-68.

¹⁵ Woolley Leonard C., *The early periods (Ur Excavations 4)*. Philadelphia (PA): Trustees of the British Museum & Museum of the University of Pennsylvania. 1955, p.186.

The Royal Cemetery at Ur, as one of the most sensational discoveries in the archaeological history of Mesopotamia, is a massive treasure trove, from which the artifacts are incredibly valuable. Not only the manufacturing processes are complicated, but almost all of the raw materials required such as metals and stones only via long-distance trade.

Lapis Lazuli

Lapis lazuli was extremely popular in the Royal Cemetery of Ur, it can be cut into pieces for inlay decoration, beads or jewellery, or carved into statues and amulets. The most widely accepted provenance of lapis lazuli is in the Badakhshan province of Afghanistan. Badakhshan mines are considered as now as the only sources of the lapis lazuli in ancient times, although other sources have been taken into consideration: Chagai Hills of Pakistan, Pamir mountains, Siberia, Iran, and Sinai¹⁶.

Unworked lapis like hair or beards of animal figures in mosaic work found at Ur illustrates that lapis was imported as raw material, and craftsmen must deal with it for their particular intends. The same situation happened to carnelian, crystal, and other stones for decoration use. It's quite common to find unfinished beads of carnelian and crystal, and in the poor grave PG 958 Woolley found a bag containing the stock-in-trade of a bead-maker.¹⁷

But during the Akkadian period, lapis lazuli became extremely rare. Pittman suggests that's because, under the control of Akkadian Empire, the supply that had previously flowed freely through the hands of the maritime merchants had been cut off or diverted. Trading links to the eastern plateau were apparently broken.¹⁸ The discovery of unworked

¹⁶ G. Herrmann, "Lapis Lazuli: the early phases of its trade", *Iraq, Vol. 30, No. 1*, 1968, pp. 21-57; M. Casanova, "The Sources of the Lapis Lazuli found in Iran", *South Asian Archaeology*, 1989, pp.49-56; A. Nibbi, *Ancient Egypt and some Eastern neighbours*, Park Ridge, Noyes Press, 1981.

¹⁷ Woolley Leonard C., *Ur Excavations vol.2: The Royal Cemetery*, London: Publications of the Joint Expedition of the British Museum and of the Museum of the University of Pennsylvania to Mesopotamia, 1934, p. 206.

¹⁸ See Holly Pittman, "Seals and sealings in the Sumerian world", in Harriet Crawford, eds, *The Sumerian World*, Routledge, 2013, pp.321-322.

lapis in Tarut Island proves the existence of maritime trade routes and implies that it was an important centre of exchange on Tarut Island during the Early Dynastic Period.¹⁹

Gold and Silver

Gold was normally utilized in the most prestigious royal tombs at Ur as a precious metal, and it is usually in the form of alloys with silver and copper²⁰. There are ribbons, vessels, weapons, tools, statuettes, and various jewellery made of gold or gold alloys in the cemetery. Before the explosive appearance in the Royal Cemetery, only a few pieces of gold were found in southern Mesopotamia (including a fragment of gold wire from the late Ubaid period at Ur, and a goat amulet from the Late Uruk period at Uruk)²¹.

On the origins of gold, scholars have differing views. Moorey examined ancient textual references, modern source regions, and scientific source detection, but none of the hypotheses could confirm the provenance of Ur's gold. Possible origins are south-east Turkey (Mardin); western Turkey (Pactolus); western Iran; Aratta; Indus Valley (Meluhha); the Gulf (Dilmun); Egypt and Nubia. The ancient Mesopotamians may have imported gold from all the potential areas at various times.²²

A recent research based on geochemical considerations and osmium isotope analysis of the PGM inclusions in the Ur gold suggests potential geographical sources including the placer deposits of northern Afghanistan, which are in close vicinity to the mines from which the much-used lapis lazuli was exploited.²³ There could be more linkages between Ur and Afghanistan expected as this report revealed.

¹⁹ Steffen Laursen and Piotr Steinkeller, *Babylonia, the Gulf Region and the Indus-Archaeological and Textual Evidence for Contact in the Third and Early Second Millennia BC*, Eisenbrauns, 2017, p.15.

²⁰ P. R. S. Moorey, *Ancient Mesopotamian Materials and Industries*, Oxford University Press, 1994, pp.217-218; The latest EDS-pXRF analyses results of gold, see Andreas Hauptmann, Sabine Klein, Paola Paoletti, Richard L. Zettler, Moritz Jansen, "Types of Gold, Types of Silver: The Composition of Precious Metal Artifacts Found in the Royal Tombs of Ur, Mesopotamia", *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie*, 2018, 108(1), pp.100-131.

²¹ P. R. S. Moorey, *Materials and manufacture in ancient Mesopotamia: the evidence of archaeology and art*. Oxford: BAR IntSer. 237, 1985, pp.76-77; P. R. S. Moorey, *Ancient Mesopotamian Materials and Industries*, Oxford University Press, 1994, p.222.

²² P. R. S. Moorey, *Ancient Mesopotamian Materials and Industries*, Oxford University Press, 1994, pp.219-221.

²³ Jansen, M.; S. Aulbach; A. Hauptmann; H. E. Höfer; S. Klein; M. Krüger; R. Zettler, "Platinum group placer minerals in ancient gold artifacts-geochemistry and osmium isotopy of inclusions in

While the provenances of silver are relatively clear: Sumerian literary evidence listed regions in Iran, the Gulf, and the Indus valley, including Dilmun, Aratta, Elam, Marhashi, and Meluhha, all of which are to the east or south of Mesopotamia; Sargon of Akkad referred to a locale in Anatolia as the “Silver Mountain”; moreover, as the lead-silver deposits are widespread in Turkey, Anatolia has the greatest quantity of geologically identified silver-bearing ores of any of Mesopotamia's neighbours. In the 3rd millennium, it becomes evident that silver trading from Anatolia down the line of the Euphrates into Sumer.²⁴

Copper

The Royal Cemetery at Ur provides miscellaneous fittings in copper, arsenical copper, and tin-bronze. As shown by the University of Pennsylvania's Mesopotamian Metals Project, 42 percent of the objects analysed were found to be made of arsenical copper²⁵.

Magan is thought to have been one of the first sources of copper in Mesopotamia. As early as the Jamdat Nasr period painted ceramics of Mesopotamian origin appeared in the Oman peninsula, and it has been believed that this represented the start of a relationship between Mesopotamia and Magan, as the Oman peninsula was known, in part for the procurement of copper, that would last for millennia.²⁶

In the 3rd millennium Sumerian texts, copper reached Uruk from Aratta, and all three of the regions Magan, Meluhha, and Dilmun are associated with copper. Magan was referred to as the “mountain of copper”, which proved that Magan was certainly a land producing the metal.²⁷ Much of the Magan copper, on the other hand, arrived in Mesopotamia via the intermediate Dilmun, which can be found in the late third and early second millennia on the modern-day Bahraini islands.²⁸ During the reign of Lugalanda, various merchants being commissioned by the Lagash royalty to travel to Dilmun with

Early Bronze Age gold from Ur/Mesopotamia”, *Journal of Archaeological Science* 68, 2016, pp.12-23.

²⁴ P. R. S. Moorey, *Ancient Mesopotamian Materials and Industries*, Oxford University Press, 1994, pp.234-235.

²⁵ Muhly, J.D. “Metalle B.-Copper”, *RLA* 8, 1993, p.129.

²⁶ D.T. Potts, *Mesopotamian Civilization: The Material Foundations*, The Athlone Press, p.168.

²⁷ Limet, 1972, pp.14-17.

²⁸ D.T. Potts, *Mesopotamian Civilization: The Material Foundations*, The Athlone Press, p.168.

an objective of purchasing copper and tin bronze. The merchants also served as diplomatic envoys. Copper is included in the list of gifts delivered to the queen of Lagash by the queen of Dilmun²⁹.

However, metallurgical examination of Babylonian copper artifacts from the Early Dynastic III and Sargonic periods shows that Babylonia obtained the majority of its copper from Omani ores throughout these periods. While Makkan strengthened its northern and eastern ties, metallurgical study shows that copper exports to Babylonia increased during the Early Dynastic III and Sargonic periods. Steinkeller pointed out that Babylonian Sea ventures in the Gulf were limited to Dilmun, and Dilmun merchants were essential in the Dilmun-Makkan mercantile connection, they purchased copper and other products like lapis lazuli, gold, and carnelian there. The latter products arrived in Makkan via the trade routes leading from southeaster Iran (Marhaši) and the Indus Valley (Meluhha).³⁰

Lastly, it's worth emphasizing that, despite the lack of direct evidence, Anatolia as a possible origin of copper during the Early Dynastic period cannot be ruled out. The Old Assyrian text suggests a copper commerce inside Anatolia, and Leemans demonstrated that the price of copper in the north was significantly higher than in the south in the early second millennium BC, copper from the north would not have been able to compete in Babylonia with copper from the Gulf.³¹

Conclusion

In this article I have introduced some artifacts in the Royal Cemetery of Ur, as well as the raw materials and their provenances, which demonstrate the diversity in materials, and imply the international links of Ur during the Early Dynastic period. I've left out a few things in consideration of space, some raw materials were omitted (e.g. carnelian, tin,

²⁹ Marchesi, "Goods From the Queen of Tilmun", Gojko Barjamovic, Jacob L. Dahl, Ulla Susanne Koch, Walter Sommerfeld, Joan Goodnick Westenholz, eds, *Akkade Is King: A Collection of Papers By Friends And Colleagues Presented to AAge Westenholz On the Occasion of His 70th Birthday 15th of May 2009*, Nederlands Instituut Voor Het Nabije Oosten, 2011, pp.189-199.

³⁰ Steffen Laursen and Piotr Steinkeller, *Babylonia, the Gulf Region and the Indus-Archaeological and Textual Evidence for Contact in the Third and Early Second Millennia BC*, Eisenbrauns, 2017, pp.19-23.

³¹ P. R. S. Moorey, *Ancient Mesopotamian Materials and Industries*, Oxford University Press, 1994, pp.246.

lead, etc), the processing technology weren't referred to neither. When it came to textual evidence, I did not give the original texts, but use footnotes instead.

We can obviously infer the following conclusions from the provided materials and the diversity they prevail:

Obviously, Ur was strongly linked to the Indus Valley, particularly the Harappan civilization, during the Early Dynastic period. There was not just a lot of trading going on, but also may lots of individuals moving around. In Ur, there were indications of Indian merchants or craftsmen. Although the creative style is influenced by Egypt, it has little direct interaction with the country.

The diverse sources of raw materials and the prosperity of trade shows that Ur had great regional influence during the Early Dynastic period (especially the First Dynasty of Ur), and the local craftsmen and local processing of artifacts also show that craftsmen of Ur had considerable high technical level and production capacity.

As for trade, Ur benefited more from the marine route, mostly through Dilmun and Magan, the crucial transit ports, in order to receive commodities from Afghanistan, Meluhha, and other countries, due to its geographical location at the mouth of the Gulf. We still know very little about how the northern trade road functions since all documentary sources are from southern Sumerian sites. Anatolia's ore raw materials can be utilized as a backup or substitute for other raw material sources.

Besides, although not addressed in this article, there are a few topics that deserve more examination:

The marine commerce route was plainly disrupted, numerous minerals like lapis lazuli were dramatically decreased. Another theory is that the material supply was cut off when the Harappan civilization fell apart. It has been suggested that the eclipse of the Indus Valley civilization in the second millennium BC brought the booming Indus-Mesopotamian commerce up the Gulf to an end, although this has yet to be proven conclusively³². A comprehensive understanding of the links between Ur and the Indus Valley civilization might help us to interpret the connotation behind material diversity.

³² P. R. S. Moorey, *Ancient Mesopotamian Materials and Industries*, Oxford University Press, 1994, pp.246.

No need to say, trade plays a vital part in civilization. G. Algaze's "world system" thesis, which was refuted by updated and solid evidence in 2001, was a leading proponent of trade as the major driver in Mesopotamian state development. In his opinion, trade's crucial role is more of a cause than a result of social complexity. By re-examining how trade was organized and its influence on early Mesopotamian civilization, J.N. Postgate cast doubt on it³³. Returning to Ur, what role does the city-state play in international trade, and how does trade affect its development? That would be a complicated issue to investigate.

³³ J.N. Postgate, "Learning the Lessons of the Future: Trade in Prehistory", *Bibliotheca Orientalis LX N°1-2*, januari-april 2003, pp.5-25.

A History of the Land: A Common Political Narrative Shared by Lugalzagesi and Hammurabi

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Abstract

The advent of the Akkad Empire has long attracted Assyriologists' attention, prompted the scholars to explore its origin and how it was formed. The Akkad Empire brought about unprecedented political power structures, administrative systems and ideology that works within the first large territorial state of Mesopotamia, thus an inquiry to its emergence is significant to understand the political development of Early Dynastic Mesopotamia. The mainstream opinion on this issue is that most dominant features of the Akkadian regime, including aspiration to hegemony, conquest ideology, despotic rulers, centralized administration and stratified social structure, are rooted in northern Mesopotamian tradition, especially the archaic Kish Kingdom, thus regards the northern affect as the driving power of the empire's formation. On the other hand, all recognize the supremacy over main southern city-states achieved by Lugalzagesi, the King of Uruk and *Kalam*, a southern ruler originated from Umma, the southern Babylonia must also have witnessed the reshuffling of regional power, through which it reached a kind of political unification. However, the mainstream opinion is fundamentally incompatible with any dynamic process in the south since it views the political and ideological reality of southern city-states as the counterforce of expanding and building a cross-regional state.

In this paper, I argue that the significance of the role played by Uruk in forming an empire could never be obviated by Lugalzagesi's defeat by Sargon. I will trace a piece of evidence concerning about the ideology of Lugalzagesi's "abortive empire" that was inherited by later Mesopotamian empires to support my opinion: Firstly, I will reveal the common theme of *Lugalzagesi's Vase Inscription* and the *Codex Hammurabi*—to perpetuate the kingship of the Land (*kalam/mātim*) — basing on a new understanding of LVI and textual analysis to CH. Then I will present that in the two texts, the common

theme are developed by parallel discourses marked by temporal phrases *u4 / inu* and *u4-ba/ inūmīšu*, which I called a “Mesopotamian political discourse”. Finally, I will analyze the similarities and differences of the two texts’ time structures and draw my conclusion: LVI and CH possess a common theme — the kingship of the Land, and both elaborate it through a historical narrative.

What is human’s historical thinking origin? Did early Babylonia really in a lack of historical narratives?

Through a discussion of political development of Early Mesopotamia, this paper will present that human’s historical thinking is of diversity.

1. The Story Told by the Vase Inscription of Lugalzagesi

An inscription celebrating Lugalzagesi’s reign of peace and stability in the Land (*kalam*) was found at Nippur on numerous fragments from more than sixty-four vases¹. As the governor of Umma, Lugalzagesi arose from the chaos of the end of Early Dynastic political situation, reached to the kingship over the Land via attaining the political heritage of Uruk from Enšakušana, and brought about the ideological, perhaps also political innovation². Although the existing studies of the textual structure of VIL made sense of some properties of this text, some of the interpretations are obviously self-contradictory. In this paper, I put forward a new interpretation to VIL that maintains a more coherent storyline: the full text of VIL was construct in a three-layered Chiasm according the causal or chronological relations among three categories of events: Lugalzagesi’s dedication to Enlil aimed to pray to the father An (1a, 1c and 1b), his coronation as “the king of the Land” and offerings to Enlil (2a and 2b), and his coming into power at Uruk (3a and 3b). The outer layer of the dedication as a coherent unit could be substantiated by other votive inscriptions, which do not have such elaborate inner part as VIL, but contain the votive formulation *a mu-na-ru* (“I dedicated it for sb.”) and the prayer like VIL. In this essay, I will focus on the past section of VIL and examine its

¹ M. A. Powell, “Texts from the Time of Lugalzagesi: Problems and Perspectives in their interpretation”, *Hebrew Union College Annual*, Vol.49, p.29.

² Wang Xianhua, “The Ideological Innovation of Lugalzagesi”.

temporal and spatial dimensions respectively.

1a (II-35) *^den-lil₂ lugal-kur-kur-ra / lugal-za₃-ge-si lugal-unu^{ki}-ga lugal-kalam-ma / išib-an-na / lu₂-maḥ ^dnissaba / dumu-U₂-U₂ ensi₂-^{ḡi}š KUŠU₂^{ki} lu₂-maḥ ^dnissaba-ka / igi-zi-bar-ra an lugal-kur-kur-ka / ensi₂-gal ^den-lil₂ / ḡešt₃-šum-ma ^den-ki / mu-pa₃-da ^dutu / sukkal-maḥ ^dSuen / šagina ^dutu / u₂-a ^dInanna / dumu-tu-da ^dnissaba / ga-zi-ku₂-a ^dnin-ḥur-saḡ / lu₂-^dmes-sanga-unu^{ki}-ga / saḡ-a₂-e₃-a ^dnin-girim₂ nin-unu^{ki}-ga-ka / agrig-maḥ diḡir-re -ne-ra*

2a (I36-III1) *u₄ ^den-lil₂ lugal-kur-kur-ra-ke₄ / lugal-za₃-ge-si nam-lugal-kalam-ma / e-na-šum₂-ma-a / igi-kalam-ma-ke₄ si e-na-sa₂-a / kur-kur ḡir₃-na e-ni-se₃-ga-a / utu-e₃-ta utu-š₂-še₃ gu₂ e-na-ḡar-ra-a / u₄-ba a-ab-ba sig-ta-ta idigna-buranun a-ab-ba-igi-nim-ma-še₃ ḡir₃-bi si e-na-sa₂/*

3a (III2-25) *utu-e₃-ta utu-š₂-še₃ ^den-lil₂-le gaba-š₂-ḡar nu-mu-ni-tuku / kur-kur u₂-sal-la mu-da-nu₂ / kalam-e a-ne hul₂-la mu-da-e / bara₂-bara₂-ki-en-gi ensi₂-kur-kur-ra ki-unu^{ki}-ge me nam-nun-še₃ mu-na-GAM-e-ne*

3b (II26-III2) *u₄-ba unu^{ki}-ge giri₁₇-zal-a u₄ mu-da-zal-zal-le / ur^{ki}-e gu₄-gim saḡ an- še₃ mu-dab₆-il₂ / larsa^{ki} uru-ki-aḡ₂ ^dutu-ke₄ a-ne-ḥul₂-la mu-da-e ^{ḡi}š KUŠU₂^{ki} uru-ki-aḡ₂ ^dšara₂-ke₄ a₂-maḥ mu-dab₆-il₂ / ki-zabala^{ki}-e u₈-sila₄-gurs-a-ḡin₇ sig₄ mu-da-gi₄-gi₄ / ki-an^{ki}-e gu₂ an-še₃ mu-dab₆-zi*

2b (III3-12) *lugal-za₃-ge-si lugal-unu^{ki}-ga lugal-kalam-ma kiḡ₂-kiḡ₂-ma ^den-lil₂ lugal-ni nibru^{ki}-a nidba-gal-gal e-na-BU-de₃ / a-du₁₀ e-na-de₂-e*

1c (III13-36) *tukum_x ^den-lil₂ lugal-kur-kur-ra-ke₄ an a-ki-aḡ₂-ni nam-šita-ḡu₁₀ ḡe₂-na-be₂ / nam-ti-ḡu₁₀ nam-ti ḡa-ba-daḥ-ḡe / kur u₂-sal-la ḡa-mu-da-nu₂ / nam-lu₂-*

ulu₃ u₂-šim-gin₇ šu-daġal ħa-mu-dab₆-du₁₁ / ubur-an-na-ke₄ si ħa-mu-dab₆-sa₂ / kalam-e ki-sa₆-ga igi ħa-mu-da-dus / nam-sa₆-ga mu-tar-re-eš₂-a šu na-mu-da-ni-bal-e-ne sipa saġ-GU₄-gal₂ da-ri₂ ħe₂-me

1b (III37-40) *nam-ti-la-ni-še₃ ^den-lil₂ lugal-ki-aġ₂-ni a mu-na-ru*

1.1 The Temporal Dimension: A Hypothesis Based on the Dynamic Theory

The past section of VIL (I36-III12) was inserted in the outer dedicatory frame (II-35 and III13-40), in which the verb clauses in the second layer (2a and 2b) have the prefix *e-*, and the clauses in the third layer are opened with the prefix *mu-*. In the term of storyline, the third layer describes Lugalzagesi seizing the hegemony over all lands at Uruk, and the second layer is about the interaction between Enlil and Lugalzagesi at Nippur³. Coincidentally, in the historical reality, Lugalzagesi's control of Uruk indeed precedes the obtaining of the kingship of the Land, because Enšakušana had already taken the title "king of the land" (*lugal-kalam-ma*) to represent his hegemony, and this fact indicates that it was the inheritance from Enšakušana enabled Lugalzagesi to reach the throne at Nippur. Therefore, it seems reasonable to assume that the alternation of verb prefixes in the past section is aimed to separate Lugalzagesi's previous activities at Uruk from the later at Nippur. This hypothesis should be verified by the grammatical evidence.

The function of *i₃-e-* prefixes has challenged Sumerologists for more than a century, and there was a long-standing idea that prefix *mu-* and *i₃-e-* belong to the same rank of the Sumerian verbal prefix chain⁴. Vanstiphout has noticed that *i₃-e-* might relate the immediate clause to the broader text,⁵ Wilcke brought forward that *mu-* and *i₃-e-* belong

³ C. Wilcke has already noticed that III3-11 is probably the counterpart lines of I36-III11: "Hatte dort Enlil etwas für Lugalzagesi getan, so ist etwas nun der König, der Gutes für den Gott tut. Es fällt auf, dass die Verbalformen in beiden Fällen e- Präfixe enthalten." see C. Wilcke, "Orthographie, Grammatik und literarische Form Beobachtungen zu der Vaseninschrift Lugalzagesis", in T. Abusch et al. (eds.), *Lingering Over Words: Studies in Honor of William L. Moran*, Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1990, p.501. Although Wilcke put II4-11, the last sentence with *e-* verb prefix of I36-III11, into the next section according to the temporal phrase *u₄-ba* at II3, which usually introduces the next semantic unit, he conceded that II4-11 is a temporal clause subordinating to *u₄* like the four clauses in the last section and shares the common "Konjugationpräfix" *e-* with them. see *ibid.* pp.499-500.

⁴ H. Vanstiphout, "On the Verbal Prefix /i/ in Standard Sumerian", in *Revue d'Assyriologie* Vol. 79, p.14

⁵ *ibid.*, p.4.

to disparate ranks⁶. Following Vanstiphout and Wilcke, Postgate characterized *i₃/e-* as a mode of verb that provides an additional layer of meaning to the verb, which enables the prefix to relate the clause with other clauses either before or after it.⁷ He described this additional layer of meaning as Dynamic, and argued that the prefix stresses the performance of the action of the verb and it creates a report of what is happening, while the prefixes *mu-/ba-/bi₂-* focus the speech on what has already happened.⁸ However, Postgate pointed out that stands after a sequence of verb clauses beginning in prefixes of the later rank (*mu-/ba-*, etc.) and marks an action occurred most recently, is merely one of the semantic function operated by prefix *i₃/e-*, and the more accurate meaning conveyed by *i₃/e-* depends on to what context it is relevant.⁹ Here more information within or beyond the VIL about the semantic context of *e-/mu-* alternation is in need to testify or emend this hypothesis.

Urukagina Reform 1 lists the abuses perpetrated by the earlier Lagašite rulers and the corresponding correcting acts carried by Urukagina. Similar to the Urukean inscriptions, both of the two sections of abuses and of reform numerate the events that happened in a remote or near past from the present in the texts; additionally, they both apply the temporal expressions *u₄* and *u₄-ba* to these past events and follow *u₄/u₄-ba* with the verb clauses employing *e-*prefix; *Urukagina Reform 1* also contains the verb clauses that open with prefix *ba-* and have *e-*clauses standing before and after them. Therefore, the semantic relation among the *e-*clauses and the clauses without *e-*prefix in *Urukagina Reform 1* might shed light on that of the Urukean inscriptions, including VIL.

a: V 22-VI 3) *sanga-gara-ke₄ kiri₆-ama-uku₂-ra₂ ġiš na ba-ni-ri-ri gi-lim₂ e-ta-keš₂-du*
 “The ... temple administrators ripped out the orchards of the poor and tied up the fruit in bundles.”

⁶ C. Wilcke, Anmerkungen zum ‘Konjugationspräfix’ /i/- und zur These vom “silbischen Charakter der sumerischen Morpheme” anhand neusumerischer Verbalformen beginnend mit i-ib-, i-im- und i-in-, in *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie und Vorderasiatische Archäologie*, Vol.78, pp.2-3.

⁷ J. N. Postgate, More Points on Grammar in Gudea: Resuscitating the Dynamic Mode, in A. Bramanti et. al. (eds.), *Current Research in Early Mesopotamian Studies: Workshop Organized at the 65th Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale, Paris 2019*, Münster: Zaphon, p. 231.

⁸ *ibid.*, pp.20-21.

⁹ *ibid.*, p.23.

b: VII 17-25) *šub-GANA₂-ga-na-ke₄ pu₂-ni i₃-du₃ igi-nu-du₈ ba-dab₅ a-muš-ša₄ gana₂-ga gal₂-la-a igi-nu-du₈ ba-dab₅* “When a subordinate to the king built a well on the narrow edge of his field, the blind workers were appropriated (for the work), and the blind workers were also appropriated for the work on the irrigation canals which were in the fields.”

c: VIII 5-13) *ša₃-lu₂-36000-ta šu-ni e-ma-ta-dab₅-ba-a nam-tar-ra-u₄-bi-ta e-še₃-ġar inim lugal-ni ^dnin-ġir₂-su-ke₄ e-na-du₁₁-ga ba-dab₅* “(When the god Ningirsu) selected him from the myriad people, he restored the customs of former times, carrying out the command that the god Ningirsu, his master, had given him.”¹⁰

The prefix *ba-* is the diametrically opposed counterpart of *mu-*¹¹, both *mu-* and *ba-* belong to the same slot on the verbal chain and place stress on the result on the action¹². For the instance a, packing the fruits together is the endpoint of a series actions of razing in the orchard; For the instance b, only to have appropriate the blind workers from their work and gather them to the narrow edge, the subordinate of the king could build his well. For the instance c, only Urukagina have held the command of Ningirsu in his mind, then he could launch a series of measures to reform the former abuses. In these three examples from *Urukagina Reform I*, all the actions in the static mode (with *ba-* prefix) are logical or chronological preliminaries to the events in the dynamic mode (with *e-* prefix). When the temporal phrases *u₄/u₄-ba* divert the narrative to a past-time point, the following prefix *i₃-e-* forces the attention of readers or listeners to what is performing at that time, while the forms without *i₃-e-* (usually *ba-/mu-* clauses) record what had been done by that time. Through combining the two verb forms, the past world within a certain scope, no matter as wide as a whole country, or as limited as a temple, could be constructed and extended from a time point (*u₄*) of the past. This supposition drew from *Urukagina Reform I* might be suitable for the Urukean royal inscriptions, especially for VII.

¹⁰ D.R. Frayne, *The Royal Inscriptions from Early Mesopotamia, Vol.1: Pre-Sargonic Period*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, pp. 268-269.

¹¹ C. Woods, *The Grammar of Perspective: The Sumerian Conjugation Prefixes as a System of Voice* (Cuneiform Monographs 32), Leiden 2008, p.221.

¹² *More Points*, p.20.

1.2. The Spatial Dimension: A Mental Map Settled in the Past Time Marked by *u₄* and *u₄-ba*

The past section of VIL is introduced by the noun *u₄* “the day”, and the following narrative was divided by the recurring temporal adverb *u₄-ba* “at that day” into three units. The temporal noun *u₄* and adverb *u₄-ba* are both deictic, because their meaning is wholly dependent on the extra-linguistic context of this text¹³ and where the author anchored himself in such context. In the context of VIL, the utterance was oriented from the very moment of the dedication to a specific past time by these deixis. Here the morphological and semantic disparities between the two temporal phrases *u₄-ba* (*u₄.bi.a*) and *u₄-bi-a* need to be clarified: Wilcke attributed the orthographical difference between them to the present or the absence of the near-deictic suffix *-e*;¹⁴ Edzard recognized the probably distinguished temporal concepts of the two phrases, he suggested that *u₄-bi-a* sometimes refers to the primordial days;¹⁵ Crisostomo focused on their pragmatic function within larger discourse structure of the texts in OB period and argued that *u₄-ba* primarily marks perspectival shifts and refocusing, while *u₄-bi-a* indexes sequential and consequential actions.¹⁶ In light of the former studies on *u₄-ba* and *u₄-bi-a*, what is becoming clear is that *u₄-ba* doesn’t indicate any temporal shift and the third-person non-human morpheme *-bi-* in *u₄-ba* means “the aforementioned (day)”.

This is the same case with the past section of VIL: *u₄* establishes a past time framework, the author depicted an ideologically structured space *kur.kur-kalam-kalam-kur.kur-utu.e₃.ta utu.š_u₂.š_e₃*, in which *kalam* located in the centre of the world and was surrounded by *kur.kur*, the boundary of this space reached where the sun rises and sets; then the author shifted the perspective from the east-west to the south-north (*a-ab-ba sig-ta-ta a-ab-ba igi-nim-š_e₃* “from the Lower Sea to the Upper Sea”) by *u₄-ba* and viewed from an even higher point, locating *kur.kur*, *kalam* and *kiengi* in the space constructed in

¹³ Christopher Woods, *The Deictic Foundation of the Sumerian Language*, Harvard University Dissertation, p.13.

¹⁴ Claus Wilcke, “*u₄-ba* and *u₄-BI-a*: Zum Lokativ der sumerischen Possessivesuffixe der Singulars”, in Catherine Mittermayer and Sabine Ecklin (eds.), *Altorientalische Studien zu Ehren von Pascal Attinger*: *mu-ni u₄ ul-li₂-a-aš ĝa₂-ĝa₂-de₃*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck Ruprecht, p.394.

¹⁵ Dietz O. Edzard, *Sumerian Grammar*, Leiden, 2003, p.39, p.50.

¹⁶ This complementary distribution may have been an OB literary innovation, see C. Jay Crisostomo, “The Sumerian Discourse Markers *u₄-ba* and *u₄-bi-a*”, *JCS*, Vol.69 (2017), p.49.

this unit; finally the author moved to a narrower scope and marked individual cities within the ideological space formulated in the former units. Because the position of *u4-ba* in VIL corresponds with the spatial structure in the past section but not the chronological relationship among the events, which was expressed by the alternation of prefixes *e-* and *mu-*, I suggest that these two separate aspects of VIL's purport were developed respectively in the past section of VIL but the author integrated them into a single narrative.

1.3. Summary: VIL as a Royal theory of the Land

According to the 2a-2b part, the kingship was granted to Lugalzagesi and would be perpetuated for him; and the 3a-3b part records the king's glorious achievements that qualified him for acquiring the kingship, it were the achievements numerated in the past section (2a-3a-3b-3b) legitimated Lugalzagesi to perform his ambitious dedication to An, which served to absorb the southern force represented by An of Uruk into his new political construction¹⁷. The three layers constitute a chronologically coherent narrative from the internal 3a-3b core outwards to the external 1a-1c-1b crust, thus VIL integrated the past and the present into a temporal continuity.

Besides this temporal concern, this historical narrative was also controlled by a spatial concern: through a deliberately arranged sequence of geographic terms that noticed by Wilcke as *Rahmenkonstruktion* and enumerating the cities and the areas that prostrated under the rule of Lugalzagesi, VIL drew a political map of the territory under his control and delineated an all-embracing political vision, both of which were conceived on the base of the ruler's practice of "kingship of the Land" and of his further desire for power as a "king of the Land". From the temporal and spatial perspectives, VIL established the chronologically narrative within the scope of the Land (*kalam*), then VIL elucidated the two-fold meaning of the kingship like a royal theory but in a descriptive way.

2. The Story Told by Codex Hammurabi:

¹⁷ Xianhua Wang, *The Metamorphosis of Enlil in early Mesopotamia*, Ugarit-Verlag, 2011, p.136.

VIL is the first definite attestation of the combination between Enlil and the Land (*kalam*), which is likely to be the innovation of Lugalzagesi; and he elevated himself upwards along the political hierarchy among the gods and the human ruler to approach Enlil and make Enlil the patron god of the Land that was under his direct control. The past section of CH exhibits parallelism with VIL in these two aspects.

Firstly, according to CH, Marduk was granted with the Enlil-ship (*Enlilūt*), which means the authority decreeing the fate of the Land (*šā'im šīmat mātim*); qualified by accepting the Enlil-ship, Marduk commanded Hammurabi to enact justice on the Land (*mātum*, the Akkadian equivalency of *kalam*), thus one could view the law stele as an earthly avatar of the Enlil-ship, which is a synonymous of the Sumerian phrase *lugal-kalam-ma* (“kingship of the Land”). Secondly, the commission-fulfilment narrative pattern in Old-Babylonian royal inscriptions has long been recognized by scholars¹⁸. In the normal situation of OB period, firstly the highest god Enlil and An endow Marduk (the state god of Babylon) with authority, after that Marduk commissions the king for military or religious affairs. However, the Codex of Hammurabi shows an abnormal politico-theocratic hierarchy among the gods and the ruler: Hammurabi was selected by An and Enlil directly for the commission of justice, while Marduk only acted as a guide and protector of Hammurabi. This shift of god-ruler relationship promoted the status of Hammurabi and enable him to approach the supra-state gods more closely.

therefore, I argue that the innovative ideology of Lugalzagesi in VIL was embraced by Hammurabi. To conclude, when Hammurabi was searching for building and strengthening a broad territory state at the pinnacle of his dynasty, instead of resorting to the local tradition of Babylon, he turned to adapt himself and the political situation of Babylon into the ideological structure created by Lugalzagesi.

3. Conclusion

The advent of the Akkadian Empire is a huge leap in human-being's pursuit to search for self-governance, since it came forth with an unprecedented political organization

¹⁸ Victor Avigdor Hurowitz, *Inu Anum Šīrum: Literary Structure in the Non-Juridical Sections of Codex Hammurabi*, Philadelphia: Occasional publications of the Samuel Noah Kramer Fund, 1994. pp.23-27.

applied to control a large territory state. The awareness of the leading role played by the monarchy tradition of northern Mesopotamia centred on the city of Kish in this first political unification has been widespread¹⁹. Although postulating the existence of the “Kishite tradition” is indeed relied on its evidence, it still met with some critical reactions indicating that the dominance of Kish does not represent the whole picture of Early Dynastic political development²⁰. On the aspect of this academic debate, the origin of Akkadian empire holds great significance since this issue closely engage with our general understanding of the political history of Early Dynastic Mesopotamia.

In this essay, I traced a piece of evidence concerning about Lugalzagesi’s ideological innovation in his well-known Vase Inscription and demonstrated its influence on Hammurabi’s law code. The parallel between the Vase Inscription and Codex Hammurabi substantiates that the ED political development within central and southern Babylonia culminating at the time of Lugalzagesi gave a large part of the bottom colour of the later Mesopotamian political traditions; and this point could shed some light on understanding the overall configuration of ED political development.

¹⁹ Piotr Steinkeller, “Early Political Development in Mesopotamia and the Origins of the Sargonic Empire”, in M. Liverani (ed.), *Akkad: the First World Empire: Structure, Ideology, Traditions*, Padova: Sargon srl. 1993, p.129; P. Steinkeller, “An Archaic ‘Prisoner Plaque’ from Kiš”, *Revue d'Assyriologie et d'archéologie orientale*, 2013, Vol.107, pp.145-151. All of these studies emphasized the contrast on between the northern and southern Babylonia.

²⁰ Norman Yoffee, “Political Economy in Early Mesopotamian States”, *Annual Review of Anthropology*, Vol.24, p.290.

Panel 1-3: Religious Communities and Cultural Practices

Taoist Culture Without Taoism: A Study of the Uniqueness and Diversity of Korean Talisman (Bujeok, 부적)

Xianlong YU

Abstract

Korean talisman has been deeply influenced by Chinese Taoist talisman, and there are so many similarities between each other. To some extent, the Korean talisman was a new product in ancient times based on absorbing the form and content of Chinese Taoist talisman. However, the Korean talisman gradually has its special characteristics in the development process of its history and culture. Firstly, the main maker and producer of talismans in Korea are not Taoist priests like in China but wizards, shamans, and Buddhist monks. Secondly, not only the Taoist culture but also the cultural elements of native Korean belief and Buddhist all have been contained in the Korean talisman. Finally, the Korean talisman has its futurity and flexibility, which has been adjusting itself constantly and absorbing new elements to meet the needs, aesthetic tropism, and value pursuit of contemporary Korean people. In a word, Korean talisman shows great inclusiveness and diversity of Korean culture in fact, which is often regarded as a single and pure monoculture of a single-race nation.

The research on Korean talisman is not popular, but more and more scholars have begun to pay attention to it. In fact, Korean talisman played a very important role in traditional Korean society. During the Joseon Dynasty, there was "no one who did not post talismans written by wizards".¹ By the middle of the Korean Dynasty, Talisman had occupied a very high position in folk beliefs.

¹ 【韩】金得梲著·柳雪峰译《韩国宗教史》·北京：社会科学文献出版社1992年版，第52页。

In South Korea, many scholars explore and research from the fields of history, folklore, and art design. However, there is still a question that has not been answered: that is, why the Korean talisman is called a Korean talisman, is it just because it is used in Korea? How is it related to the Chinese Taoist talisman? What is the uniqueness of the Korean talisman?

Therefore, to answer these questions, we should first know what kind of influence Taoism had on ancient Korea.

As we all know, Chinese culture is often simply said to be a combination of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism, while Korean culture is deeply influenced by Chinese culture. From the perspective of Confucianism, China's Confucianism was once respected as the state religion by the Joseon Dynasty in Korea. Confucianism has penetrated into all aspects of Korean society.

From the perspective of Buddhism, Chinese Buddhism, which has undergone the transformation of Chinese culture, was introduced to Korea during the Tang and Song Dynasties. The most important Buddhist sects in China have been inherited in Korea, and Korean Buddhist organizations do not shy away from this. The name of the largest Buddhist organization in Korea, Jogye Order(曹溪宗), which read Cao Xi in Chinese. The name comes from a small river in the hometown of Huineng, the sixth ancestor of Zen Buddhism in China.

However, Taoism is the only exception. Taoist culture was introduced into the Korean peninsula very early. Under the influence of the Tang Dynasty, Taoist theory and thought became popular in unified Silla (統一新羅) and became more popular in the Goryeo era. The Koryo(高麗) royal family set up divination in the imperial examination. In their private life and activities, citizens also began to pay attention to the good and bad luck of date, location and direction.

Although we can know that in the Goryeo period in Korea, in the 11th century AD, the first Taoist temple was established in Goryeo which was named Fuyuan Temple, but the traditional Chinese Taoist organizations, such as Zhengyi (正一) in the South China and Quanzhen (全真) in the North China Neither religion nor any branch was established on the Korean peninsula. Therefore, some Korean scholars once believed that although Korea traditionally has Confucianism and Buddhism, there was no Taoism.

Correspondingly, shamanism, or native witchcraft filled in the lack of Taoism. Although this argument is controversial, it is clear that Korean Taoist-like organizations had not been directly inherited from China like Buddhist organizations.

But it should be noted that the absence of Chinese Taoist organizations does not mean that Chinese Taoist culture is also missing. The main elements of Chinese Taoism thought, and culture was introduced into ancient Korea and exerted a huge influence on it, such as Yin-Yang and Five Elements, Feng Shui, numerology and so on. The simplest evidence, if you look at the national flag of South Korea, you will know the influence of the doctrine of yin and yang and gossip of Tai Chi on Korea.

Back to our topic. if it is said that Korean talisman has no relation with Chinese Taoism but is derived from traditional witchcraft and shamanism in Korea, then it is not true. Because from the existing research on shamans, it is known that shamanism in Korea and even in Northeast China hardly use talismans, and their religious activities are mainly medium-ships, mantras, and dancing rituals.

Therefore, it can almost be concluded that Korean talisman are a product of Chinese Taoist culture to some extent. From the content and form of Korean talisman, it is very similar to the Chinese Taoist talisman.

First of all, most of them take the form of writing on yellow or white paper with cinnabar. Except for patterns, most of them use Chinese characters in the text.²

Secondly, almost without exception, Korean talismans contain the content elements of Chinese Taoist talismans. I will select a few representative elements to explain to you below.

For example, 1. Fuwen (复文): The so-called Fuwen, a simple understanding is to write Chinese characters repeatedly to form a whole pattern. This feature of writing talismans was very common as early as the Han Dynasty in China, at least 2000 years ago.

2. Guizi (鬼字) : Ghost characters; In Taoist culture, it is believed that once the name of evil ghosts and monsters are known by others, they will lose their power and be tamed by people. Therefore, writing ghost characters means that Taoists know the details

² 刘晓明：《中国符咒文化大观》，南昌：百花洲文艺出版社 1995 年版，第 67-71 页。

of ghosts and monsters, so that they will not dare to be rampant anymore. In addition, the Wudoumi Dao (五斗米道) founded by Zhang Daoling (张道陵, who was named Zhang tianshi(张天师), is also called "ghost Dao (鬼道)". Zhang Daoling is regarded as the founder of Taoism, especially good at using talismans. The Zhengyi Dao (正一道) he later created is also the main representative of the talisman school. This "ghost Dao (鬼道)" that drives ghosts and gods is also closely related to the emergence of the word "ghost" in the rune. Zhang Lu (张鲁), the grandson of Zhang Daoling, had preached "ghost Dao" in Hanzhong (汉中) area³

3. Yunwen (云纹) : It is spiral-shaped, generally has two meanings, one is from top to bottom, representing the power of the god descending from the sky, it is the line connecting the user of talisman and the gods. The other one is similar to a rope, representing the meaning of restraint and subduing, which is used to subdue the devils.

4. Chizi(敕字) : There is often a word "Chi" in the head of the rune, which means that the rune is issued by heaven or gods, with infinite power.

5. Jijirulvling(急急如律令): which is originated from government documents in Han Dynasty.It means hurry up. Taoist mantras often end with it. Taoists believe that it would strengthen the effectiveness of the talisman.

6. The Big Dipper (北斗七星) : Belief in the Big Dipper is an important part of Taoist culture. Although there are also symbolic records of the Big Dipper in Shaman culture, it is not the most important part for shamans.⁴ It is not necessary to describe it in detail here. However, It is often used as talisman, which looks like the following shapes like a spoon, and sometimes resembles the Chinese character "Shi(尸)".

6. Sanqing(三清) elements: Sanqing is the three deities with very high status in Taoism. The belief in Sanqing was introduced to the Korean Peninsula during the Song

³ “鲁遂据汉中，以鬼道教民，自号师君……其来学道者初皆名鬼卒……”，【晋】陈寿：《三国志·张鲁传》。

⁴ 富育光 孟惠英：《满族萨满教研究》，北京：北京大学出版社 1991 年版，第 223-240 页。

Dynasty. During the Joseon Dynasty, the So-gyeok-seo(昭格署)⁵ offered regular sacrifices to the Sanqing Dynasty. In Korean talismans, small patterns like three circles, triangles and other patterns usually be found, which are all represent Sanqing.

Thirdly, there are a large number of Taoist gods and many gods from traditional Chinese beliefs in Korean talismans. For example, these three talismans were all shot on the Korean Peninsula in the early 20th century. One reads Taiyi (太乙), the Tianzun Taiyi (太乙天尊) Saves the Suffering, a Chinese Taoist god. Taiyi belief still has great influence in Korea until modern times, such as the "Tael religion(太乙教)⁶" founded in Jeonju around 1900. The religion believes that the main way of cultivation is to recite the mantra of Taiyi God.

During the Japanese invasion of 1592, the Chinese Ming army brought the worship of Guan Yu(关羽) into Korea. Guan Yu soon became the representative of the God of war to subdue demons. The popularity of *the romance of the Three Kingdoms* in Korea also contributed to the worship of Zhuge Liang (诸葛亮) and Guan Yu. The Ming army built Guanyu ancestral hall in the battle area, and many of them have been preserved so far. The king of Joseon also built four Gwan temples (關廟) in Seoul, and now only the East Temple (東廟) remains. Korean officials in Joseon dynasty would offer sacrifices according to the system of the Ming Dynasty. Guan Yu belief still exists until modern times. For example, Gwan Seong religion(關聖教) was founded in Seoul in 1920 and Guan Yu was the main object of worship.

In summary, Korean Talismans without exception contain a lot of Taoist elements. However, it still has characteristics different from Chinese Taoism.

First, in addition to Taoist elements, Korean talismans often contain elements of indigenous beliefs and Buddhism. Although Chinese Taoism and Buddhism have influenced and integrated with each other in history, they also have struggled constantly. As an important form of belief, Talisman has always been controlled by Taoism, while

⁵ A government office who is in charge of Taoism's ancestral rites for the sky, the earth and stars in the era of Joseon.

⁶ It also called Jeungsangyo (증산교).

Chinese Buddhism emphasizes inner meditation and epiphany. For Chinese Buddhists, especially Zen believers, let alone foreign Taoist artifacts such as talismans, they even think that the Buddhist mantra is not so important, emphasizing "heart to heart" and "no words".

Therefore, Chinese Buddhism rarely produces and uses talismans. Taoism also tries to avoid Buddhist factors on Taoist symbols. However, even so, Chinese Taoist symbols still have some Buddhist factors more or less, but they are not common. Chinese definitions of runes and talismans often regard them as products of Taoism and have little to do with other religions. For example, the modern Chinese Dictionary clearly states that "talismans all refer to Taoist symbols".⁷ Talismans, runes and Taoist symbols are same, which are all mysterious graphics and characters used by Taoist witches.⁸ Korean talismans have absorbed elements from Buddhism in almost all directions. Because in terms of traditional Chinese culture, Chinese-style Buddhism will not write these that are usually considered to be superstitious; Taoism even believes that if Taoists are writing talisman, when they are intruded or seen by Buddhist monks, the talisman will become invalid. So Taoist always keep the talisman far away from Buddhism as much as possible, even more impossible to actively apply Buddhism elements to Chinese Taoist talismans.

What we see below is all talisman designed and made by Buddhist monks. We can see that there are many Buddhist elements in these charms and patterns. For example, this pattern shows a lotus symbol in Buddhism; this talisman contains a Buddha's hand. You know, The Buddha's hand, Buddha's head, and Buddha's feet have special meanings in Buddhist beliefs. This is an elephant in the left of talisman, which is regarded as one of the sacred objects of Buddhism and the mount of Samantabhadra.

Of course, needless to say, although these talismans are made by Buddhist monks and contain Buddhist elements, we can also find the Taoist elements I mentioned before, such as the Big Dipper, Fuwen, and Sanqing elements.

The photo of talisman you see now was taken by me. I would like to remind everyone that many Chinese and Koreans believe that talismans cannot be seen by anyone other

⁷ 《现代汉语词典》，北京：商务印书馆 2005 年版，第 421 页。

⁸ 刘晓明：《中国符咒文化大观》，南昌：百花洲文艺出版社 1995 年版，第 1 页。

than the users, let alone photographed. Therefore, I obtained the permission of the owner of the talisman before I took the photo. So, the creator of this talisman is not a Buddhist monk, but a native Korean wizard. He not only knows how to shaman but is also proficient in Chinese Taoist magic. It can be seen that this one is in the form of a typical Taoist talisman, with yellow paper and red characters, and the content contains the "Yunwen", communicating with the sky and people. This is Jijirulvling, I mentioned earlier, and Chinese character "cai", represents wealth. However, there are also Buddhist elements, such as the two characters "Buddha" on the left, which is impossible in Chinese Taoism.

In fact, from this example alone, we can see the diversity and tolerance contained in Korean talismans, because it has absorbed all the native Korean beliefs, Taoist forms and contents, and Buddhist elements.

Secondly, Korean talismans have incorporated many elements from native beliefs. In terms of local beliefs, in ancient times, Korea was influenced by shamans and believed animism. Because there are so many mountains in the Korean Peninsula, tigers as beasts live in mountains have been worshiped for a long time, so there are a lot of patterns and charms related to tiger elements in the Korean talismans. Tiger also appeared in the ancestor myth of Korea. The mascot of the Seoul Olympics in 1988 is the tiger, so you know how much Koreans love tigers. Local wizards and priests also made talismans based on the customs and beliefs of various places in Korea.

Shamans like to use dolls, so doll patterns also can be found in many traditional talismans in Korea. For example, the following are all talismans made at the beginning of the 20th century, and their patterns are similar to dolls, though we can find the elements of Chinese Taoist symbols on it. In addition, Cheoyong (처용 處容), an ancient man in Korea, was believed to drive away the God of plague, and his portrait was also used in talismans.

Finally, in a sense, there is another difference between Korean talisman and Chinese Taoist talisman in that it is not only a product of historical tradition, but still has strong vitality and attractiveness in today's Korean society. We know that, except for a few areas, the lives of modern Chinese people are far from the Taoist talisman.

This is a South Korean news photo that reports the hot sale of talismans on the market.

A talisman that is said to be very effective in blessing students to pass the university entrance exam can be sold for 3 million won, worth about 2500 US dollars. This picture is a piece of news from last month. When South Korean presidential candidate Yoon Seok-yeol (윤석열) was attending a campaign discussion, he was found to have written a Chinese character "王" in his palm, which is actually the simplest kind of talisman. Although the Korean people are not new to talisman, it is really surprising that politicians in modern society believe in talismans. The Chinese character "王" means king, monarch, and represents the pursuit of political power, so we also know the purpose of this talisman in Yoon's palm.

In addition, it should be noted the fact Korean talismans have been constantly updated under the impact of modern society. As mentioned before, Korean talismans have the characteristics of inclusiveness and diversity from the beginning. Based on the content and form of the introduction of Chinese Taoism, it also absorbs Korean native witchcraft and Buddhist culture, and even the modern society is still the same as before. Not repelling modern elements, instead, absorb and utilize them to cater to contemporary people's value orientation and aesthetics.

For example, the following talismans are representative of integration into modern elements. For example, there is a car in this talisman, so you can guess its purpose is to protect driving safety; the following talisman shows two cartoon villains, which symbolizes a harmonious relationship between lovers.

There are comics and written directly in Korean in these two talismans. The new style of talismans has been loved by young students. This one is just for the exam review. This one is to bless your memory, and there is a human brain map that could not be found in ancient Korea. In addition, talismans are also used in cultural and creative design, such as mobile phone pendants, car pendants, and fashion jewellery.

Now, many books on talismans in South Korea actively claim that they are written by Taoist figures such as Chinese Tianshi Zhang (張天師) or Guiguzi (鬼谷子).⁹ It can be seen that the Taoist talismans themselves and Korean talismans are closely related

⁹ 장천사 저, 이성처 주석, 내 운명을 뒤바꾸는 부적 대백과, 문원북, 2009
귀곡 저, 만사형통 부적, 이가출판사, 2013

and inseparable, However, although the basic form and content of the Korean talisman is very similar to that of the Chinese Taoist talisman, it is relatively more diverse and inclusive, showing the unique characteristics of Korean culture, and its open side.

As the representative of East Asian culture, Korean traditional culture may be regarded as a conservative culture from the Western perspective. However, in fact, from the characteristics of Korean talisman alone, its inclusiveness, openness and vitality prove that the traditional Korean culture is not completely single and conservative, but very diverse. This also reminds us that we must re-examine the traditional East Asian culture, change the past prejudice, and make a more objective evaluation from different angles.

Research on Japanese Nationality: Inner diversity of Japanese Culture and Religion

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Abstract

The Chrysanthemum and the Sword by American scholar Benedict, published in 1946, is still one of the earliest anthropological works that many Chinese came into contact with Japan, which it is also the starting point for understanding Japanese nationality. The cultural personality school under the influence of Boas believes that culture is the aggregation of individual characters. Characters are not a series of independent physiological characteristics but are rooted in culture and restricted by culture. Japanese nationality is also rich in diversity, and this source has a deep relationship with the feudal society from their history. Unlike the continental regimes, for example China, Japan is not a traditional centralized country. Although Japan is no longer a feudal society after The World War II, the feudal tradition still strongly exists.

Japan is indeed a diverse society. It is usually assumed to be a single nationality. But it is not the case. The spiritual foundation of Japan, Shintoism, is essentially polytheism. It has always been considered to have two sources; one is Buddhism from Eurasia. The other side which the polytheism came from Austronesian. Since 18th century, missionaries came to Japan for preaching. The various tribes of Christianity nowadays have deeply rooted everywhere in Japan. Presbyterian churches, Protestant churches founded by Americans, Korean or Chinese. Muslim immigrants from central or West Asia also found their religious groups in Japan. On the surface, each group abides by the rules of social identity, but each religious group, whether local or foreign, can obtain its own space for survival and development in Japanese society.

Maintaining the identity of social rules is a basic requirement. This consensus is very strong and stubborn in Japanese culture. It is also considered the cornerstone of Japanese social stability. Regardless of the individual's religion, the basic rules of social identity must be observed. But the diversity and richness of personal choices on this basis are free and recognized. On the surface, they are extremely loyal to the government and their organizations, but in fact they retain their true self and way of life.

This is a manifestation of the dual character of the Japanese nationality and the mass basis for the emergence of polytheism. The paper method used is a combination of field investigation and indirect research method.

Keywords: diversity nationality religious diversity feudalism social consensus

In Search of Wellbeing in Two Traditions (A Comparative Study on Ritual Reading Performance in Cultural Communities amid the Pandemic in Java and The Malay World)

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Abstract

Since covid-19 was officially declared to have transmitted in Indonesia on March 2, 2020, there have been many cultural responses held in order to ward off that horrible disease. I assume that those cultural responses to the ongoing pandemic represent ideas, beliefs, and identities of communities, which are reflected in several songs of supplication. This paper endeavors to compare the Five Heirlooms (*Lī Khamsatun*) text and the Song Guarding at Night (*Kidung Rumeksa Ing Wengi*) text through the lens of philology of performance (Arps, 2016). The former is written in Arabic scripts, the latter is marked in Javanese. Both of those ritual songs are famous among the communities through social media. Originally come from literary texts, both of them are better known in oral tradition rather than their literary version. I will specifically address the question: who are the main proponents encouraging the recitation of incantatory poems in both communities? In other words, what groups of peoples are represented through these incantatory poems' traditions? prior to discussing those who are involved the recitation of incantatory poems in both cultural communities, I shall first introduce how the texts are transformed into performance, and how the artefactuality (a textual artefact) and compositionality (improvised or replicated texts) of those texts are arranged.

Keywords: Cultural responses; the Qaṣīdah of the Five Heirlooms (*Lī Khamsatun*); the Song Guarding at Night (*Kidung Rumeksa ing Wengi*); philology of performance.

1. Introduction

On March 2, 2020, covid-19 was officially declared to have been transmitted in Indonesia. Panics and fears also appeared as psychological responses to the unknown phenomenon as reflected in social media. Since then, there are many cultural responses held in order to dispose of that horrible disease and release the fears. Those cultural responses have been performed as ritual traditions that commonly haired from oral traditions that are transmitted from their Javanese and the Malay world ancestors. The ritual traditions as responses to the deadly disease apparently come from different cultural communities which have distinctive forms of ritual performance. One of them is manifested in the form of song of supplication. In performing the songs of supplication by chanting them, the performers expected that the pandemic will end rapidly.

Among other prayers which are recited by the Indonesian Muslim community amid the pandemic covid-19 situation, the Qaṣīdah of the Five Heirlooms (*Lī Khamsatun*) has become a popular supplication (Dewi & Huda, 2020:2). Qaṣīdah is defined as an Arabic poetry (*qaṣīdah* pl. *qaṣā'id*) which is conventionally divided into half-lines form, which is separated apart in the written form even when the word crosses into the caesura. The composition of *qaṣīdah* highly follows Arabic poetry metrical pattern (*baḥar*) and the science of Arabic prosody (*al-'ilmu al-'arud*) (Maling, 1973:9-10). In addition to the performing the *qaṣīdah* amid the pandemic, the performing the Song Guarding at Night (*Kidung Rumeksa ing Wengi*) also massively to be perform in order to throw away the disease, misfortune, and plague among the Javanese. The Song Guarding at Night is a traditional Javanese literature which “characterized by the use of verse form known as *tembang*” (Arps, 1992:1).

Both of those ritual songs are famous among the communities through social media. Originally come from literary texts, both of them are better known in oral tradition rather than their literary version. I will specifically address the question: who are the main proponents encouraging the recitation of incantatory poems in both communities? In other words, what groups of peoples are represented through these incantatory poems traditions? prior to discussing those who are involved the recitation of incantatory poems in both cultural communities, I shall first introduce how the texts are transformed into performance, and how the artefactuality (a textual artefact) and compositionality

(improvised or replicated texts) of those texts are arranged.

2. The Qaṣīdah of the Five Heirlooms (*Lī Khamsatun*)

From Text to Performance

The Five Heirlooms text (*Lī Khamsatun*) employs prophet Muhammad, ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭalīb (cousin and son-in-law of prophet Muhammad), Fāṭimah (the wife of ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭalīb, and the daughter of prophet Muhammad), Ḥasan, and Ḥusayn ibn ‘Alī (the sons of ‘Alī and the grandsons of prophet Muhammad) as “metaphysical shield” or divine vehicles for the purpose of wellbeing during the pandemic outbreak. They are collectively also considered as the people who inside the Yemeni cloak (*ahl al-kisā*). This pentad has also been designated as *aṣḥāb al-kisā*’ as reported in *ḥadīth*, which is accepted in Sunni and Shi‘ī’s tradition ¹. Once, according to *ḥadīth* ² reported by Fāṭimah, the prophet Mohammad went to Fāṭimah’s house, and he felt weak in all of his body, then he ordered Fāṭimah to take the Yemeni cloak and covered his body with it. Short time after, he gradually felt well and his face started to shine again. Soon after that, his grandson and son-in-law came and entered underneath of cloak, and Fāṭimah joined in it as well. This episode informs us, at least two angles. First, the teaching of wellbeing against the disease and misfortune among the Muslims. From my point of view, a narrative telling that the Prophet Muhammad and his nucleus family assembled underneath his cloak is the central idea in the making of the Five Heirlooms text. It is then also transformed into myriad of forms: the supplication of songs (*qasidah*) and the talismans in Java and Malay world settings. Hence they are not only regarded as the historical figures in Islam, but also the mystical figures, who guard their followers from misfortunes and diseases. Secondly, this episode tells us the legitimated sources of doctrines in Islam. It stands to reason that *ḥadīth* appropriate to the Shi‘ī’s doctrine, particularly in the central position of holy family of the prophet Muhammad. The Five Heirlooms text implicitly intensifies the Shi‘ī’s doctrine that the holy families are the holders of authorities in the Muslims community. This prayer undeniably is closely related to the Shi‘ī’s tradition. I will come back to this.

¹ https://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/encyclopaedia-of-islam-3/ahl-al-kisa-SIM_0311

² <https://www.duas.org/mobile/hadith-kisa.html>

The Five Heirlooms text has several versions of redaction which floating around massively in social media. Since there are several versions of the Five Heirlooms text, I consider that the acclaimed text is the one used in performance. The Five Heirlooms text is used commonly in performance as depicted in figure 1 as follow.

(1)

لِي خَمْسَةَ أَطْفِي بِهَا * حَرَّ الْوَبَاءِ الْخَاطِمَةَ

Lī Khamsatun uṭfī bihā * ḥarra al-wabā' al-ḥāṭimah

I have the Five Heirlooms in whom I am capable to ward off the dreadful plague

(2)

الْمُصْطَفَى وَالْمُرْتَضَى * وَابْنَاهُمَا وَالْفَاطِمَةَ

al-muṣṭafā wa al-murtaḍa * wa abnāhumā wa al-fāṭimah

prophet Muhammad (al-muṣṭafā), 'Alī b. Abī Ṭalīb (al-murtaḍa), Ḥasan-Ḥusayn ibn 'Alī (abnāhumā), and Fāṭimah.

Figure 1. the Five Heirloom text

The composition of *qaṣīdah* above highly follows Arabic poetry metrical pattern (*baḥar*) and the science of Arabic prosody (*al-‘ilmu al-‘aruḍ*). The couplets are separated into halflines that are clearly distinguished in print and symbolised with (*). The first of two halflines create a rhymed couplet, and the same rhyme is continued in the rest of the poem. Regarding the Arabic poetry metrical pattern (*baḥar*) which are seen from the mnemonic (مُسْتَفْعِلُنْ مُسْتَفْعِلُنْ مُسْتَفْعِلُنْ مُسْتَفْعِلُنْ), the composition of *qaṣīdah* above can be categorized as *baḥar rajaz* because the مُسْتَفْعِلُنْ (mus-taf-ilun) pattern are repeated eight times in all lines.

The *qaṣīdah* of the Five Heirlooms (*Lī Khamsatun*) originally came from literary texts which were also rooted in the Sufi order (*ṭarīqah* pl. *ṭuruq*) as devotional litany which additionally has a longer text (*rātib* and *ḥizb*). *Rātib* is a prayer book which constitutes collection of Quranic verses, admiration of Allah and the Prophet, and invocation “which the authors claim to have been recommended by the Prophet in some of his sayings” (Abdullah, 2009:51). The reading of *rātib* in the Malay world was firstly introduced by

Hadhrami migrants (sing. *ḥabīb*, pl. *ḥabāib*), which they often claimed their-self to be the descendant of the Prophet Muhammad. The *rātib* authorship is often attributed to Hadhrami Islamic preachers, such as *rātib al-Ḥaddād*, *rātib al-‘Aṭṭas*, *rātib al-Kāf*. Compilations of *rātib* books have been published by ritual groups organization (*majlis taklim* or *majlis dzikir*³), and normally written in Arabic scripts. The members of the ritual groups often purchase its printed-version or directly download its digital-version freely via the website of the organization or from the Whatsapp groups. The members of the groups recite the *rātib* prayers regularly. They perform it individually or collectively in a ritualized setting in order to acquire blessing (*baraka*), and obtain mundane goals. In the context of pandemic, the reciting of *rātib al-Kāf* is believed to repel the covid-19. The devotees consider it potentially effective as a metaphysical shield during the pandemic. As the title says, *Rātib al-Kāf* is composed by al-Ḥabīb Aḥmad b. Muhammad al-Kāf (d.911/1491). The disposal prayers of the plague and the mysterious disease are contained in *rātib al-Kāf* which is a little piece longer than the common the Five Heirlooms text. The Five Heirlooms text is preceded with the supplication to avoid all plague, disease, and misfortune which will come to the earth by repeating *qabla anyakūn* ‘before the plague and misfortune exists’, *qabla anyanzilu* or *qabla nuzūlihi* ‘before the plague and misfortune down to earth’ in each line of prayers. However, the final contains prayer to ward off all diseases is the Five Heirlooms supplication. From the composition of the prayer, it can be interpreted that when the effort has been made by performing the prayer of prevention, but the plague is undeniably come to earth, hence the final instrument to defend against the plague is the Five Heirlooms prayer. It is why the Five Heirlooms text is located at the final line.

The Five Heirlooms text is also engrained in Naqsyabandi sufi order as reflected in *Majmū’at Awrad wa Aḥzāb al-Ṭarīqah al-Naqsyabandiyah* (a spiritual disciplines handbook for Naqsyabandi followers), which is collected by Aḥmad Dhiya’ al-Din bin Mustofa al-Kamasykhānawi (d.1311/1893). He also wrote *Jāmi’ al-ushul fī al-awliyā’* (a collection of essential doctrines of friends of God). His works are regarded as the key book from the Naqsyabandi Sufi order. His treatises were brought to Java by Hajj

³ Extensive study on *Majlis Dzikir* groups ritual in East Java is done by Zamhari (2010).

pilgrimage who have followed Naqsyabandīy Sufi order teaching when they performed pilgrimage during at Mecca in the late of the ninetieth century (Bruinessen, 1992:74). Thence it spread enormously to Java and the Malay world, and then on from there to the entire of Indonesia in the twentieth century. The Five Heirlooms text is mentioned in a chapter containing a long litany of protecting from plague and other diseases (*ḥizb lidafi' al-ṭaūn wa al-wabā' wa kuli al-'alal*). Along with the Sufi personal devotional prayers (for instance *wird* pl. *awrād* which is performed at specific times, usually at least one time in a day or in the night), the Naqyabandī sufi members also recite the Five Heirlooms text for the specific purposes in the Sufi lodge (*zawiyā*) and privately in their own houses. The Five Heirlooms text, therefore, has been established into Naqsyabandi Sufi order tradition probably since the early twentieth century.

The various of artefactuality have shown that reading ritual community has peculiar ways to present the pentad figures. By presenting the pentad figures in many forms of prayers, it means that reading ritual community tried to build intimacy. At this point, the holy family of prophet Muhammad is perceived as the source wellbeing. In order to connect the source of wellbeing the Javanese Muslims and the Malay world recite the Five Heirlooms text frequently within their ritual in private or in groups. In their point of views, the wellbeing would come along with the prophet and his descendant within his cloak. In other words, by reciting the Five Heirlooms prayer, they would be included in the cloak of the Prophet because under his cloak the wellbeing resides. That understanding is established in the mind of devotees when the devotees actively attend spiritual meeting in *rātib* or *ṭarīqah* congregation which is normally delivered by spiritual leaders at their communities. Initially the Five Heirlooms text and how the text is used are apparently exclusive, which means it is only for the followers of Sufi Order or members of *rātib* reading ritual community. When the Five Heirlooms text is transformed into a performance as a *qaṣīdah*, the one that is massively spreaded in the public sphere is the shorter version text than from lengthy devotional litany text in *rātib* or *ṭarīqah* reading ritual communities.

2.2 The Qaṣīdah of the Five Heirlooms [*Lī Khamsatun*] Performance

The *qaṣīdah* of the Five Heirlooms was initially chanted in several mosques around Java from 1950 to the 1970s. The members of the congregation of mosques (*jama'ah*) perform the *qaṣīdah* normally in the sunset prayer (*magrib*) and the evening prayer (*isya'*) before the leader (*imam*) come to the mosque in order to begin the prayer. Performing that song of supplication before the obligatory daily rituals (*ṣalāt*) is quite common in Java. This tradition is designated as *pujian* or *syi'iran*⁴. The formats of the songs are normally alternated between the songs of supplication or other several songs of prayers and blessings for the Prophet Muḥammad (*ṣalawatan*) which are vocalized in Javanese or Arabic, or mixed-Javanese and Arabic. Common themes of *syi'iran* are to promote “didactic-moralistic character” through singing with suitable mnemonic devices in order to “remember the contents more easily” (Wieringa, 2006:96). When covid-19 hit Indonesia, the *qaṣīdah* gained momentum in the public sphere and the social media. The recommendation to read the texts as ritual prayers is coming up from several leading figures such as Islamic clerics and public figures.



Figure 3. Flyer of the Five Heirlooms text (Source: The Board Management of Nahdhatul Ulama of East Java Region, PWNU Jatim)

KH Anwar Mansyur (1938-), an Islamic cleric, the chief leader of Lirboyo Islamic boarding school, Kediri, East Java, and also the leader of the advisory board of Nahdhatul

⁴ A number of transliteration of *syi'iran* are various *syi'ir*, *syiir*, *syi'ir*, and *syair* as depicted by Wieringa (2006:90).

Ulama (*syuriah*) in East Java region, strongly recommended to all Muslims in Java, particularly the member of Nahdhatul Ulama to recite the Five Heirlooms supplication in the morning prayer (*subuh*) and the evening prayer (*ashar*) during the pandemic (see figure 3). He also gave authorization (*ijazah*) to perform it for those who are concerning about it. Authorization of supplication is first and primary among the member of Nahdhatul Ulama. Authorization of prayer is like a license to perform the supplication, and because of that authorization, the efficacy of the supplication can work or cannot work at all depending on the authorization process. In addition to KH Anwar Mansur's recommendation, the recitation of the Five Heirlooms text is also justified by the oral narrative reporting that the late founding father of Nahdhatul Ulama, K.H. Hasyim Asyari (1871-1947) recommended to recite it as well. The narrative of the recommendation to perform the Five Heirlooms text from K.H. Hasyim Asyari is justified by Tebu Ireng Islamic boarding school management, Jombang, East Java, where K.H. Hasyim Asy'ari resided as the pioneer of Pondok Tebu Ireng in formative period. However, there is no strong written evidence reporting that Mbah Hasyim, the familiar name among the members of Nahdhatul Ulama to call K.H. Hasyim Asy'ari, recommended the five Heirlooms text. Only a single explanation coming from the oral narrative kept in the mind of traditional Islamic clerics around Java and beyond that supports it. It then spreads massively to the members of Nahdhatul Ulama.

Due to the authority and the central position of the Five Heirlooms text among the Nahdhatul Ulama, many public figures also popularize and engage to perform the *qaṣīdah*. It should be noted that Nahdhatul Ulama is the biggest Islamic Sunni mass organization in Indonesia, where East Java has the majority of the Nahdhatul Ulama's proponents or Nahdhatul Ulama's traditional heartland. Nahdhatul Ulama, therefore, plays a significant role in social and political realms. When the Governor of East Java, Khofifah Indar Parawansa (b. 19 May 1965), chanted the *qaṣīdah* as published in her Instagram account on April 1, 2020, when the first wave covid-19 hit Indonesia. Politically, she apparently would like to strengthen her affiliation as a member of Nahdhatul Ulama in presenting Nahdhatul Ulama tradition. She also seemingly will show up what she is done is comply to the authority of the Islamic cleric in East Java as she wrote on her Instagram under the caption "the prayer is authorized by K.H. Hasyim Asy'ari (*ijazah doa K.H. Hasyim*

Asy'ari”). In that clip, we see K.H Anwar Mansyur, K.H. Marzuqi Mustamar (1966-), the chief of executive boards of Nahdhatul Ulama in East Java region (*tanfidiyah*), and other Islamic clerics standing to perform the prayer to ward off the deadly disease along with the governor and the vice-governor of East Java cohesively.

In addition to her politically framing through the *qaṣīdah*, it must be stated that she can sing the *qaṣīdah* eloquently with the allure of its diction and its versification⁵. She delivered the *qaṣīdah* in full and total comprehension. The *qaṣīdah* that she performed brought solemnity and tranquility to the listeners. The *qaṣīdah*'s moods and lyrics perfectly describe the situation experienced by the Muslim listeners around Java. At that time, they faced the deadly disease that they did not know precisely from where it came from. They, therefore, make a wishing wellbeing during these uncertain times from God or other figures which they do not cognitively recognize well. It is important to note that Muslims in Java do not all understand historically the family of the prophet. The common perceiving among Muslims in Java considers the *qaṣīdah* as the text that brought wellbeing whether the text is sung as *qaṣīdah* or the text is performed as prayer within the obligatory Muslim ritual. It is true that when the Five Heirlooms text is performed as the *qaṣīdah*, it may stimulate curiosity among the Muslims in developing their capacity to deepen in its composition and its historicity of the *qaṣīdah*. It is no wonder that Khofifah's performance invites many respectable responses from the viewer as reflected on the comment box. Soon afterwards, the *qaṣīdah* of the Five Heirlooms went viral with more than one million viewers in social media and beyond.

Subsequently, the local artists take part in modifying the *qaṣīdah* into another genre of music performance. I notice that there are at least two forms of music genre: Islamic pop music and *dangdut koplo* music. Islamic pop music has become a huge phenomenon in the last two decades in Indonesia. The Islamic pop music genre is characterized by a solo lead singer, commonly female singer with limited accompany of orchestra, normally a rhythm guitar and a bass instrument. The case that I discussed in *Li Khamsatun* Islamic pop music version is the one performed by Laila Rosyida on *Santri*

⁵ She earned the technical skill in performing the classical Arabic sung-poetry from Tambak Beras Islamic boarding school, Jombang, where she resided there as a pupil.

Njoso youtube channel. Her Islamic pop acoustic performance has been uploaded by *Santri Njoso* youtube channel which has an affiliation to Darul Ulum Islamic boarding school, Rejoso, Jombang, East Java. In the caption, the administrator inserts some information to their subscribers as follow: a long before the covid-19 pandemic come and before the *Li Khamsatun* sung-poetry goes viral in social media, the Five Heirlooms text has been prevailed as an introductory song before the evening prayer begin (*pujian*). The translation appeared in the subtitle is sourced from the spiritual manual for the pupils of Darul Ulum Islamic boarding school⁶. Laila Rosyida's performance has been uploaded on youtube since September 26, 2020. Since then, her performance has invited more than two million viewers. What Laila Rosyida has performed represents the trendy and millennial young Muslim audiences in Java amid the pandemic of covid-19.

In addition to the Islamic pop music, another music genre modifying the five Heirlooms text is *qasidah modéren* version. Despite the name of youtube channel, *koplo again*, it does not indicate that the youtube channel contains *dangdut koplo*⁷ music genre. The *qasidah modéren* is defined as “songs possess some of the salient features of the common international pop song format. Their duration is three to five minutes, the typical pop song length. They feature a solo lead singer, who is as a rule female. The accompanying orchestra may consist of synthesizers, an electronic organ, an electric or sometimes acoustic piano, a transverse flute, several violins, a mandolin, electric guitars (usually as rhythm guitars), a bass guitar, bongos sounding like, and in fact referred to as table, rebanas, sometimes trap drums, and round wooden frames with jingling discs (i.e. membraneless tambourines). A female chorus features prominently in all songs” (Arps, 1996b:391-392). The *qasidah modéren* in Indonesia has appeared in national music Indonesia since the 1970s. What the *koplo again* has shown on youtube channel through *qasidah modéren* is performed a cheerful. The administrator of the *koplo again* youtube

⁶ (Syair *Li Khamsatun* ini sebelum viral saat adanya pandemi sudah menjadi bagian dari *pujian* sebelum sholat Maghrib di Ponpes Darul Ulum Jombang. Terjemahan kami tulis berdasarkan buku *Bimbingan Ibadah Pondok Pesantren Darul Ulum*)

⁷ In order to clarify this genre of music, I consider to draw the definition of *dangdut* first before the definition of *dangdut koplo* begins. *Dangdut* is the most popular music genre in Indonesia that is good for dancing, that combines local music traditions instruments (e.g., bongos and ketipung), Indian styles, and Western rock. The *dangdut koplo* music genre is developed in 1990s in East Java, which is characterized by drum rhythm, fast tempo, and heavy metal-inflected music (Weintraub, 2010).

channel is expected that the pandemic will be gone on the next year. At the end of December 2020, the *koplo again* released the Five Heirlooms song with joyful moods and optimism messages through *qasidah modéren* genre music on the occasion of the new year. The *qasidah modéren* genre music, indeed, leads to showing a good mood which is supported by the drumming pattern of the bongos resembles and often invites the body movement for their listeners.

3. The Song Guarding at Night (*Kidung Rumeksa ing Wengi*)

From Texts to Performances

Since the first case of covid-19 was reported in Indonesia, the Song Guarding at Night (*Kidung Rumeksa ing Wengi*) has grabbed public attention. Many people, particularly from Java, engage and perform it in order to dispel the deadly disease. The main reason for performing the Song Guarding at Night is to wipe out the pandemic, or “to change certain precarious or problematic circumstances for the better” (Arps, 1996a:70). The Song Guarding at Night is cast in dhandanggula Javanese verse form. Stanzas in dhandanggula are formed in ten lines. The first line consists of ten syllables, of which the last one contains the final vowel /i/; the second line has ten syllables as well the last of which contains final vowel /a/; the third line has eight syllables the last of which contains final vowel /e/, and so on in the following line. The metrical structure of complete dhandanggula can be illustrated as follow.

	<i>Lir</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>e</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>g</i>	<i>h</i>	<i>i</i>	<i>J</i>
<i>Number of syllabl</i>	10	10	8	7	9	7	z	8	12	7	
<i>Final vowel</i>	/i/	/a/	/e/	/u/	/i/	/a/	/u/	/a/	/i/	/a/	

Figure 4. Metrical structure of Dhandanggula

The distinctive features of verse form dhandanggula among other Javanese verse forms is the flexibility in depicting situations and moods, particularly in delivering advice from the elders (*wejangan*) and in opening a story (*ambabar carita*) (Padmosoekotjo, 1953:13). Despite its complete version that consists of nine stanzas, a common version of the Song Guarding at Night comprises five stanzas. The last fourth stanzas are considered as

additional stanzas explaining how the text of *kidung* is used. The stanza first up to the fifth stanza are believed to be the core because of the embodiment of the prophets, saints, and figures in the early history of Islam resided in the body of the reciters. Nevertheless, the most frequently used stanza performed in the public is only the first stanza. While the rest of stanzas are quite rarely performed. The complete stanza of the Song Guarding at Night has been translated in English by Arps (1996a:54-56). Javanese incantatory texts are stored among in the memory of the elders (*pinisepuh*) as oral traditions, and also kept in written form in courts as explained by (Arps, 1996a) and (Widodo, 2018). It means that those texts have been transferred to the readers society through various forms (see figure 5 written in *Pegon* script or *Jawi* script, and Javanese script). The texts have endured through adaptation programs and text reproduction (Arps, 2019). It also indicates that motivation for adaptation program has changed in time and context, which is reflected ideological views in it, such as Hindu-Buddhist and Islam point of view. The reciting of the Song Guarding at Night, therefore, is an ancient practice that keeps going through the time and context.



Figure 5. The Song Guarding at Night (*Kidung Rumeksa ing Wengi*) written in various scripts (Photo: Courtesy of Nur Ahmad for Pegon script; Java scripts sourced in Or 7528 Leiden Library under the title *Kidung Nabi* ‘Song of the Prophet’⁸)

⁸ There are two roughly categories from many miscellaneous Javanese incantation texts in Leiden Library: Incantation in prose, mixed with magic and incantation in verse (Pigeaud, 1967: 92-93).

There are many expressions in performing the Song Guarding at Night in the context of pandemic covid-19 in Java. I have reviewed the performing the Song Guarding at Night during the pandemic in Java, from April 2020 up to April 2021 in social media. At that time, I have seen that there are two models in performing the *kidung*: (1) the *kidung* is embedded in other ritual, for instance in Javanese shadow play performance for ritual of purification and *slametan* ritual, (2) the *kidung* is applied for supplication and entertainment, which normally performed without any ritual tools or rather entertainment *per se*. The case of the first model is performed by the Javanese master shadow play, Ki Purbo Asmoro (b. 1960). He introduced a solo performance that was accompanied by the only Javanese musical instrument, *gender*, without any crews and audiences under the title “a prayer of wellbeing for people around the world” (*Wayangan Tunggal Ki Purbo Asmoro: Doa Untuk Dunia*). He performed Sudamala’s story (*Durga ruwat*), which was aired on his youtube channel. Sudamala’s story recounts Durga’s purification in order to release misfortunes which is normally performed for purification ritual (*ruwatan*). In the introductory of his performance, he started at the side of the screen while walking he chanted the Song Guarding at Night and brought an offering ceremony stuff (*sajen*) and also Sudamala puppet wrapped in white cotton fabric (*mori*). He performed only the first stanza as by means of prayer to open his solo performance. That he performed in his house, Kadipuro, Solo, Central Java showed that the Song Guarding at Night can be interpreted as the main theme from his whole performance within two and half hours. The main purposes of his performance were reflected in the second line of the song guarding at Night, that was to say, steadfast, unharmed, be free from sickness (*teguh ayu luputa ing lara*) for people around the world.

The case of the second model is performed by Soimah Pancawati (29 September 1980), Javanese artist that presented Javanese tradition in National level. She performed the first stanza of the Song Guarding at Night in an audio recording that spread massively on the social media. Her performance has been replicated in other form that is added and modified with her photo as the background in several YouTube channels in order to attract her fans and viewers. It indicates that her voice in performing the Song Guarding at Night has become a Javanese icon in representing many voices amid the pandemic, that is to

say, the voices of the people searching for wellbeing. Subsequently, the Song Guarding at Night has reverberated in social media account, and many people try to chant it even though they do not know how *dhandangula* verse form should be performed. They only know that performing the Song Guarding at Night is similar to invoking prayer and entertaining them while performing it.

Conclusion

I have tried to discuss in a nutshell how both texts in two traditions are transformed into performances in the context of pandemic. Both traditions have been dug out from the ancient traditions which are rooted in their milieu for centuries. It may would be forgotten soon. However, due to the precarious situation, the main proponent of both traditions apparently is striving to remember what their ancestors do in facing the horrible time in the past. What they found are the texts that are performed and believed to be able to dispose the deadly disease. Here, texts are considered as artefacts (Arps, 2016:43). Artefact, therefore, is not only created but also found as a result of digging and tracing from the past. From their compositionality, both traditions pay attention to the final vowels in their arrangement of the sung poetry as reflected in the *baḥar rajaz* metre and the *dandangula* verse form. It reflects that both traditions have deeply rooted in the area of the pleasures of language use or in the art of sounding the text. In sounding their texts, both performances apparently have contested each other to attract public attention or to confirm the distinctiveness of their point of view amid the pandemic.

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Panel 1-4: Language and Linguistic Ecologies

Plural Expressions in Modern Mongolian

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Abstract

The Mongolian language is divided into several major dialects, including Khalkha, Chakhar, Ordos, Khorchin and Kharchin. Of these, the Khalkha dialect is the most widely spoken and has the largest number of speakers. Buryat and Kalmyk are also very close to Mongolian, and some scholars consider them to be the Northern and Western dialects of Mongolian. In general, the selection and distribution of the plural markers in Chakhar and Buryat is close to that observed in other Mongolian dialects, as well as in Written Mongolian. The use of plural suffixes in the Oirat dialect is sometimes different from that in the Khalkha dialect. For example, a variant suffix with the same function, -(n) uus / üüs is only used with personal pronouns.

In many Mongolian dialects, the plural of *xun* “human being, person” is *xümüüs* “people” (as well as in written Mongolian), implying the existence of a distinct plural suffix of the type *m-uus* / *m-üüs*. According to Sechenbaatar (2003: 25), in Chakhar, however, the regular plural of this word is *xün-üüd*. The plural suffix *-duud* / *-dүүд* is etymologically composed of the two plural suffixes *-d* and *-uud* / *-үүд*. Examples include *šuvuu-duud* (Chakhar), *šuvuu-nүүд* (Khalkha) ‘birds,’ *bjarүү-dүүд* (Chakhar), *bjarүү-nүүд* (Khalkha) ‘calves aged two’. In this presentation, I will briefly explore the different plural suffixes and their characteristics in Khalkha and other Mongolian dialects. At the end of this presentation, I will also present some data on the frequency of each plural suffix in Khalkha Mongolian. This data is taken from the Mongolian National Corpus. It is my intention to continue this research on the differences in and diversity of Mongolic languages.

Keywords: Mongolian, Mongolian dialects, Plural suffixes

0. Introduction

The Mongolic languages are widely distributed around the Mongolian steppe in Central Asia. Mongolic is a general term for the various languages and dialects spoken by the Mongolic people.

The Mongolic peoples include Mongolians in Mongolia and China, the Karmyk and Buryat in Russia, the Dagur, Eastern Yugur, Boanan, and Dongxiang in China.

The Mongolian language consists of seven¹ main dialects: Khalkha², Khorchin, Kharchin, Buryat, Oirat, Ordos, Chakhar. And each one of these has several sub-dialects.

According to Kuribayashi (1992a: 517), ‘there is a close correspondence between meaning and phonology among these languages in the basic framework of grammar and most of the basic vocabulary, which means that they have a systematic relationship with each other.’

In this paper I examine the plural suffixes in the Khalkha dialect, and the differences found between the Khalkha plural suffixes and the ones in other dialects of Mongolian. I will also present some data on the frequency of each plural suffix in Khalkha Mongolian. This data is taken from the Mongolian National Corpus³.

1. Plural suffixes in Mongolian dialects

1.1 Khalkha dialect

The Khalkha dialect has several types of plural suffixes: -uud⁴ (-üüd)/ -nuud (-nüüd), -čүүд (čüüül), -nar, -d, -s. Notably, some of them can be added to adjectives in a manner

¹ According to Mongolian linguist Luvsanvandan.Š (1951) *Mongol xelny züi* (Mongolian Grammar), the Mongolian language is divided seven main dialects: the central dialect of Khalkha, Chakhar and Ordos; western dialect of Oirat (including Kalmyk); the northern dialect of Buryat; and Kharchin and the eastern dialect of Kharchin and Khorchin.

² Khalkha dialect is the most widely spoken and has the largest number of speakers. Native speakers 3.000.000 (2010 census).

³ This corpus is a web corpus developed by Corpus Technologies, Inc between 2007-2009. The total number of words is 1.160.000. National Mongolian Corpus.

⁴ The examples in this paper are transcribed in Roman according to Cyrillic orthography a=a, б=b, в=v, г=g, д=d, е=je/jö, ё=jo, ж=ž, з=z, и=i, й=j, к=k, л=l, м=m, н=n, о=o, ө=ö, п=p, р=r, с=s, т=t, у=u, ү=ü, ф=f, х=x, ц=c, ч=č, ш=š, ъ=”, ы=y, ь=’, э=e, ю=ju/jü, я=ja.

similar to derivational suffixes. The details are below. According to Kuribayashi (1992b: 502), ‘The most productive suffixes in the Khalkha dialect are -uud / -üüd, -nuud / -nüüd.’ Hereafter, I present the information regarding plural suffixes as shown in Kullmann and Tserenpil (1996: 72).

a. Plural Suffixes in Khalkha

I. Plural Suffixes

- 1) -uud / -üüd (-nuud / -nüüd)
- 2) -čuud / -čüül
- 3) -nar / -ner
- 4) -d
- 5) -s

II. Rules of Plural Suffixation

(1) Plural Suffix -uud /-üüd/ (allomorphs: -nuud / -nüüd)

Here are some examples of the plural suffix -uud /-üüd added to various types of noun stems.

Singular		Plural	
nom	‘book’	nom-uud	‘books’
baatar	‘hero’	baatar-uud	‘heroes’
ger	‘yurt’	ger-üüd	‘yurts’
šuvuu	‘bird’	šuvuu-nuud	‘birds’
temee	‘camel’	temee-nüüd	‘camels’
ürüü	‘room’	ürüü-nüüd	‘rooms’
bajšin	‘house, building’	bajšing-uud	‘houses, buildings’
san	‘treasure’	sang-uud	‘treasures’
geree	‘contract’	gereen-üüd	‘contracts’
xarandaa	‘pencil’	xarandaa-nuud	‘pencils’

Kullmann and Tserenpil (1996: 73)

(2) Plural Suffix -čuud /-čüül

This plural suffix is added to adjectives to form nouns representing a group, such as an ethnic group as seen in the examples below. Additionally, if the adjective ends with 'n', the final 'n' will be dropped.

Adjectives	Derivational plural nouns	
bajan 'rich'	baj-čuud/baj-čüül	'wealthy, wealthy people'
jaduu 'poor'	jaduuč-uud/jaduu-čüül	'the poor'
baga 'little, small'	bagačuud	'little ones'

Kullmann and Tserenpil (1996: 74)

Ethnic groups

Mongol-čuud	'Mongolians'
Angli-čüül	'the British'

Kullmann and Tserenpil (1996: 74)

(3) Plural Suffix -nar

According to Yamakoshi (2012: 219), this suffix is added to nouns that refer to humans, such as the plural of personal names, relative names, and occupational names.

Relative names: ax-nar 'older brothers', egč-nar 'older sisters', düü-nar 'younger brothers/sisters'

Occupational names: bagš-nar 'teachers', togooč-nar 'cooks', zolooč-nar 'drives'

Yamakoshi (2012: 219)

This suffix can also be added to personal names. If there are several names, it is only added to the last person's name. For example:

Bat, Dorž, Baasan-nar 'Bat, Dorž and Baasan' Yamakoshi (2012: 219)

(4) Plural Suffix -d

This suffix is mainly added to personal nouns, but it is occasionally added to animals.

Singular		Plural	
oxin	‘daughter’	oxi-d	‘daughters’
xaan	‘king’	xaa-d	‘kings’
noxoj	‘dog’	noxo-d	‘dogs’
mori	‘horse’	mori-d	‘horses’

Kullmann and Tserenpil (1996: 75)

The suffix -d is often added to create the plural of derivational nouns ending with -či(n) /-gč, which are used to indicate people. For examples: “worker-s”.

Singular		Plural	
ažilčin	‘worker’	ažilči-d	‘workers’
malčin	‘herdsman’	malči-d	‘herdsmen’
zoxiolč	‘writer’	zoxiolči-d	‘writers’
suragč	‘pupil, student’	suragči-d	‘pupils, students’
xudaldagč	‘salesclerk’	xudaldagči-d	‘salesclerks’

Kullmann and Tserenpil (1996: 75)

(5) Plural Suffix -s

This suffix is not as productive as the others plural suffixes. It is used with adjectives and derivational nouns that represent human groups.

Singular		Plural	
er	‘man’	er-s	‘men’
ner	‘name’	ner-s	‘names’
üg	‘word’	üg-s	‘words’

Yamakoshi (2012: 220)

(6) Double plural suffixes (-nar+uud), (-d+uud), (-s+uud)

In addition, two types of suffixes can be added to the same noun stem. For example:

er-s-üüd ‘men’, lam-nar-uud ‘Lamas (buddhist priest)’, nojo-d-uud ‘lords’, xaa-d-uud ‘kings’, xün-üü-s-üüd ‘people’

Yamakoshi (2012: 221)

1.2 Plural Suffixes in Other dialects

So far, I have examined the plural suffixes in the Khalkha dialect of Mongolian. Next, I will briefly explain the difference regarding the plural suffixes used in the Khalkha dialect and other dialects.

1.2.1 Ordos

In Ordos, plural suffixes are largely the same as the ones in Khalkha dialect. Ordos is one of the Mongolic languages spoken in the Ordos district of Inner Mongolia, China. Kuribayashi (1988a: 1097) argues that ‘Ordos shares many major linguistic features with other Inner Mongolian dialects but, on the other hand, it has its own features.’

The form -ūs is used as one of the Ordos plural suffixes. For example:

dojong-ūs ‘derogatory term referring to livestock’

Kuribayashi (1988a: 1098)

1.2.2 Oirat

Kuribayashi (1988b: 971) argues the Oirat dialect is relatively similar to the Khalkha dialect.

One of the plural suffixes in Oirat is -mud / -mūd.

Singular		Plural	
ger	‘house’	ger-mūd	‘houses’
baater	‘hero’	baater-mūd	‘heroes’
tenger	‘sky’	tenger-mūd	‘skies’

Kuribayashi (1988b: 973)

1.2.3 Kalmyk

This is one of the Mongolic languages spoken in the Republic of Kalmyk on the northern coast of the Caspian Sea, Russia.

The Plural suffixes in Kalmyk are -s, -d, -ūd, -mūd, -ner.

Singular	Plural
āye ‘cup’	āye-s ‘cups’
noxā ‘dog’	noxā-s ‘dogs’
bagše ‘teacher’	bagše-ner ‘teachers’

Kuribayashi (1988c: 1302)

1.2.4 Chakhar

According to Sechenbaatar (2003: 24), the Chakhar dialect has as many as ten different plural suffixes: (-nüüd / -nuud,) (-nüüs / -nuus,) (-düüd / -duud), (-čüüd / -čuud), (čüül / -čuul), -nar / -ner, -d, -s and -des. These have a varying range of uses and degree of productivity.

-s rare, used only for certain nouns

-des used only with ur ‘child’: pl. ur-des ‘offspring’

Singular	Plural
bjaruu ‘calve aged two’	bjaruu-duud ‘calves aged two’
üxer ‘ox’	üxer-düüd ‘oxen’
šuvuu ‘bird’	šuvuu-duud ‘birds’

Sechenbaatar (2003: 25)

Comparison between the Khalkha dialect and the Chakhar dialect;

Khalkha	Chakhar
bjaruu-nuud ‘calves aged two’	bjaruu-duud ‘calves aged two’
üxer-nüüd ‘oxen’	üxer-düüd ‘oxen’
šuvuu-nuud ‘birds’	šuvuu-duud ‘birds’

2. Numerals

Kullmann and Tserenpil (1996: 76) argue ‘Mongolian plural suffixes are only used when it is not already clear from the overall context that the plural is intended.’ See the following examples.

- a. nada-d gurvan xuurcag bii.
 I-DAT three tape exist
 ‘I have three tapes’

Kullmann and Tserenpil (1996: 76)

- b. bi delgüür-ees olon nom av-laa.
 1SG: NOM store-ABL many book buy-PAST
 ‘I bought many books at the store’

Kullmann and Tserenpil (1996: 76)

- c. bi tavan naiz-taj-g-aa kino uze-v.
 1SG: NOM five friend-COM-E-REFL movie watch-PAST
 ‘I saw a film together with my five friends’

Kullmann and Tserenpil (1996: 76)

As shown in these examples, the Mongolian language tends not to use plural suffixes when expressing numbers.

3. Differences between dialects regarding the use the plural suffixes

Here I present a summary of the previous studies regarding plural suffixes in Khalkha and other Mongolian dialects.

Table 1: Plural Suffixes in Khalkha and other dialects

Dialects	Khalkha	Ordos	Oirat	Kalmyk	Chakhar
Plural suffixes					
-uud/-üüd	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
-nar	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
-d	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
-s	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
-čүүл/-čüül	✓	✓	✓	×	✓
-mūd, / -müd	×	×	✓	✓	×
-ūs	×	✓	×	×	×
-des	×	×	×	×	✓

-uud / -üüd , -nar, -d plural suffixes are used in the Khalkha, Ordos, Oirat, Kalmyk and Chakhar dialects, while -čүүл / -čüül suffixes are not used in the Kalmyk dialect. -mūd / -müd suffixes are used only in the Oirat and Kalmyk dialects, but not in the other dialects. -ūs suffix is used only in the Ordos dialect, and the -des suffix is used only in the Chakhar dialect.

Khalkha	Oirat	
ger-üüd	ger-müd	‘houses’
baatar-uud	baatar-müd	‘heroes’

The Khalkha dialect uses the plural suffix -üüd, while the Oirat dialect uses -mud/ -müd. Also, there is a difference between Khalkha and Kalmyk.

Khalkha	Kalmyk	
noxoj-nuud	noxo-s	‘dogs’

There is a difference between Khalkha and Chakhar as well.

Khalkha	Chakhar	
ür-s	ur-des	‘offspring’

The plural suffix -čuul / -čüül is not used in Kalmyk. Similarly, the -mud / -müd is not used in the Khalkha and Ordos dialects.

4. Frequency of plural suffixes in the Khalkha dialect

The frequency of use of the Khalkha dialect will be investigated using the National Mongolian Corpus, prosecuting each plural suffix and how many instances occur. Previous studies have shown that -uud, üüd in the Khalkha dialect are highly productive (Kuribayashi 1988: 506), and this will be examined in the corpus. The frequency of use of other suffixes will also be examined.

Table 2: Frequency of plural suffixes in the Khalkha dialect

Plural suffixes	Number of examples	Percentage
-uud / -üüd	449	35.7%
-nar	394	31.3%
-čuud / -čüüd	356	28.3%
-čuul / -čüül	56	4.4%
Total	1255	100%

The most productive suffix was -uud / -üüd, yielding 449 (35.7%) examples. The second most productive suffix is the -nar suffix, which yielded 394 (31.3%) examples, -čuud / -čüül is 356 (28.3%) examples, -čuul / -čüül is 56 (4.4%) examples.

Here are some examples.

- | | | | | | | |
|----|-----------------------------|-------------|-------------|---------|-------|-----|
| 1. | ta-nar | ju-g-aa | xij-ž | jav-aa | jum | be? |
| | 2SG-PL | what-E-REFL | do-CVB.IPFV | go-IPFV | thing | Q? |
| | ‘what are you (all) doing?’ | | | | | |

The -nar plural suffix is also used for personal pronouns.

2. bagš-nar zavsarlagaa-n-aar duul-uul-x durtaj
 teacher-PL break, time-E-INS sing-CAUS-VN.NPST like
 baj-dag jum.
 be-VN.HBT thing
 ‘The teachers like to make somebody sing at our break time.’
3. ajl-yn aav-uud amidral-aa av-aad jav-aad
 family-GEN father-PL life-REFL hold-CVB.PFV go-CVB.PFV
 baj-x-a-d....
 be-VN.NPST-E-DAT
 ‘Some others fathers are supporting for their families life very well...’
4. tend bajlda-ž jav-aa cerg-üüd sum-aar
 there fight-CVB.IPFV go-IPFV soldier-PL bullet-INS
 duta-ž magad-guj.
 lack-CVB.IPFV may, be-NEG
 ‘The soldiers when fighting there may not have enough bullets.’
5. emegtej-čüüd ojlgolco-x-d-oo amarxan šüü dee.
 woman-PL understand-RCP-VN.NPST-DAT-IPFV easy MDL MDL
 ‘It’s easy for women to understand each other.’
6. sajn baj-na uu, zaluu-čuud-aa!
 good be-PRS Q young-PL-INTG!
 ‘Hello, young people!’
7. Ene üjldver-ijn ažilči-d žagsaal xij-v.
 this factory-GEN worker-PL demonstration do-PST
 ‘The workers at this factory staged a demonstration’

8. cereg er-s zorigtoj baj-na.
 soldier man-PL courage be-PRS
 ‘Those soldiers are brave’

The use of the plural suffixes -d and -s is limited. The suffixes -d and -s were therefore removed from the search of this corpus. Plural suffixes -nar, -uud / -üüd, -čuud / čüüd and -d are used in both written and spoken Mongolian, but the plural suffix -s tends to be used in written Mongolian.

5. Conclusion

This paper focused on the differences between plural suffixes in Mongolian dialects, centering on the Khalkha dialect. Mongolian has many dialects, and each one of them also has many plural suffixes. -uud / -üüd, -nar, -d plural suffixes are used in the Khalkha, Ordos, Oirat, Kalmyk and Chakhar dialects, while -čuul / -čüül suffixes are not used in the Kalmyk dialect. -mūd / -müd suffixes are used only in the Oirat and Kalmyk dialects, but not in the other dialects. -ūs suffix is used only in the Ordos dialect, and the -des suffix is used only in the Chakhar dialect.

The results from the corpus are most productive suffix was -uud / -üüd, yielding 449 (35.7%) examples. The second most productive suffix is the -nar suffix, which yielded 394 (31.3%) examples, -čuud / -čüül is 356 (28.3%) examples, -čuul / -čüül is 56 (4.4%) examples. As Kuribayashi (1992b: 502) mentioned, the most productive plural suffixes in Mongolian are -uud / -üüd and the corpus has the most -uud / -üüd examples.

In the future, I will focus on the differences between plural suffixes and other types of plural expressions (such as plural pronouns) in Mongolic languages.

Abbreviations

2P: second person, CAUS: causative, COM: comitative, CVB: converb, DAT: dative, E: epenthetic, GEN: genitive, HBT: habitative, INS: instrumental, INTG: interjection, IPFV: imperfective, MDL: modality, NOM: nominative, NEG: negative, PL: plural, PFV: perfect, PRS: present, PST: past, Q: question, REFL: reflexive, RCP: reciprocal, SG: singular, VN: vernal

noun, -: suffix boundary

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Online Resources

“Mongolian National Corpus” <http://web-corpora.net/MongolianCorpus/search/>

The Stakes of the Diversity of Regional Languages and Cultures in China on the Representations of Students of Chinese in Mobility in the Target Country

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Abstract

In the context of globalization, student mobility in the target country becomes a part of a foreign language learner's academic cursus. Immersion in the target country offers a direct confrontation with the linguistic and cultural diversity.

For mobility students, their exchange stay takes place in a specific region, so the languages and cultures they experience are rather those of the region where they will be. As we know, in China the diversity of regional languages and cultures is undoubtedly remarkable. So, we are curious to know what stakes this regional diversity would have on the learners' representations? Therefore, we worked with 13 students from the Chinese Studies Department at INALCO.

We conducted interviews with these students during different phases of their stay in different regions of China, in order to observe the evolution of their representations of Chinese languages, Chinese cultures and Chinese people' identity. We found that their stereotyped and generalized representations were transformed into relativized and concretized ones, and their common representations were replaced by the individual ones. We think that the diversity of regional languages and cultures will allow us to project the possibility and necessity of working on plurilingualism and multiculturalism at the international level between the native country of a foreign language learner and the target country, as well as at the national level within the target country.

Keywords: diversity, representation, regional culture, mobility, teaching of Chinese as a foreign language

Introduction

In the context of globalization, the exchange stay in the target country becomes a complementary element of the academic career of a foreign language learner. International mobility potentially brings about a change in pedagogical methods in the teaching of languages and cultures.

Unlike institutional methods which provide learners a standardized and generalized knowledge base, immersion in the target country offers a direct confrontation with the diversity of languages and cultures. For mobility students, their exchange stay takes place in a particular region, the cultures with which they experience proximity are therefore those of the region where they are. The level of adaptability of students to the local cultural context often conditions their success, both in their studies and in their daily life. As for teaching Chinese as a foreign language, when a learner goes on a mobility trip to China, they are in continuous contact with regional languages and cultures which are very varied and still alive. What would be the impact of regional linguistic and cultural diversity on the learners' mobility stay? Would it be possible to integrate regional cultures, or in a broader sense the plurilingualism and the multiculturalism of China? What pedagogical perspectives could we develop? In order to answer these questions, we have chosen to work with students of Chinese in the Department of Chinese Studies at INALCO who were on an exchange trip to China.

Our paper will consist of three parts. First, we will briefly present the multilingualism and the multiculturalism within China through the diversity of languages and regional cultures. Then, we will analyse the issues of the diversity of regional languages and cultures on the representations of the interviewed students. Finally, we will try to propose some pedagogical perspectives aiming at integrating the plurilingualism and the multiculturalism within China in the teaching of Chinese as a foreign language.

1. Multilingualism and multiculturalism in China: regional languages and cultures

Why "regional" cultures in China? To illustrate the importance of the notion of "region" in China, first of all, we propose a brief geopolitical comparison between the European Union and China. As the third largest country in the world, China is twice the size of the

European Union in terms of area and population. As for administrative units, the European Union comprises 27 member countries, while China is composed of 34 administrative units (23 provinces, 5 autonomous regions, 4 municipalities and 2 special administration regions). Comparing China and France, China's territorial area is 17 times larger than France's. To be more precise, the population and the territorial area of France are roughly equivalent to the province of Sichuan in southwest China. So these vast geographical dimensions of China allow us to explain the differences that could exist from one region to another, particularly concerning the languages, the cultures and the people.

Therefore, in our paper, we will try to make a panoramic presentation of the importance of China's regional cultures from three different angles: the plurality of Chinese regional languages, the diversity of regional cultures, as well as the regional identity of Chinese people.

1.1 Regional Chinese languages

Usually considered as a monolingual country, China is nevertheless, in the true sense, a multilingual country and the Chinese are bilingual or multilingual. Apart from the inter-ethnic linguistic and cultural diversity, the internal differences of Chinese languages are also important.

From the synchronic point of view, ten groups of regional Chinese languages are generally recognized by sinologists (A. Peyraube, 2010; H. Chappell, 2001; X.D. Xiang, 2017). There is mostly no cross comprehension between Northern Chinese languages and Southern languages, as well as within Southern languages. The difficulties in understanding are mainly in the differences in pronunciation, but it also exists in lexicon, grammar and syntax. For example, when a Southern Cantonese speaks to a Northern Beijinger, their communication will not result in mutual understanding. Some researchers have even found that the differences between Chinese languages are sometimes larger than those between French and Spanish.

From a diachronic point of view, Chinese languages are the result of their own evolution, which takes into account the frequent contacts of one with another throughout history. According to the studies of Zhou Zhenhe (1988), the origin and the formation of Chinese

languages can be traced back to different historical periods. For example, the *Wu* (e.g. *Shanghainese*) dates back to more than 3000 BC, even before the Zhou Dynasty, while the *Yue* (e.g. Cantonese) dates back to the Qin Dynasty (221 BC – 207 BC).

As for the use of regional Chinese languages today, despite the successful popularization of *Putonghua*, regional Chinese languages still occupy a prominent place in Chinese society. According to statistics published in 2004 by the National Language and Writing Commission of China (*guojia yuwei*), about 53% of the Chinese population can communicate in *Putonghua*, while 86% of the population can communicate in regional Chinese languages. The use of *Putonghua* is limited to formal situations, for example, in administration, at work, at school and in the media. In informal situations of everyday life, Chinese people are more used to and willing to speak in regional Chinese languages.

1.2 Regional cultures in China

A Chinese saying shows that "The accents of Chinese people are different beyond 5 km and the customs are not the same beyond 50 km" (十里不同音, 百里不同俗). Regional cultures in China are classified in different ways. According to J.C. Yong (2008), three classification criteria are generally recognized by scholars:

- geographical positions (e.g. *Jiangnan* culture which covers the *Yangtze River Delta* area, where Shanghai, *Zhejia* and Jiangsu provinces are located)
- geographical specialities (e.g. the cultivation of grasslands in northern China, where Inner Mongolia is located)
- current or historical administration (e.g. *Bashu* culture covering Sichuan and Chongqing province)

All regional cultures have their own characteristics represented in different forms, such as regional languages, regional operas, cuisine, architecture, literature, etc. For example, the *Jiangnan* regional culture is characterized by its softness and delicacy (M.H. Li, 1992) through the soft and fluffy *Wu* language, the enchanting style of *Yue* opera, and the light, fresh and pleasant-looking cuisine. As for the *Qilu* culture, which covers the Northeastern province of *Shandong*, it is characterized by its modesty, honesty, vigor, and generosity. Its cultural traits are reflected in the respect for Confucian doctrines and traditions, in the rather heavy and hearty cuisine, and in the strong and direct style of local Mandarin.

1.3 The regional identity of the Chinese people

The Chinese people are often seen as respectful, hard-working, disciplined, sincere, family-oriented, collectivist, but not rational or direct. However, in China, as probably in other countries, there is a clear divide between the people of the North who are generally frank, simple, direct, vigorous and the people of the South who are gentler and more skilful.

Another Chinese saying indicates that "The water and the soil of a land nourish its own inhabitants" (一方水土养一方人), it means that the characteristics of an environment shape its inhabitants. In China, Chinese people are marked by the characteristics of their original regional cultures, the distinctions between them are commonly recognized. For Y. Lu (1990), the descriptions of the characteristics of Chinese people from different regions date back to ancient Chinese times and are recorded in many classical works. Today, the studies of Chinese regional identity remain a basis for ethnologists and sociologists. Y.T. Lin (1994) describes the regional identity of the Chinese people from several angles through analyses of literary works, music, and historical figures lived in different regions.

The Chinese sociologist, X.T. Fei, defines the basic Chinese society as a "rural society", which is a structure built both with kinship ties as well as through geographical interrelations. In other words, for the recognition of their identity, Chinese people go either through paternal or maternal kinship or through their regional origin (X.T. Fei, 1992).

Today, with the development of modernization, geographical barriers have faded, but the Chinese people still seem to want to assert their regional identity. This can be seen in the social structure still maintained in the countryside. In the major cities in China, as well as in the overseas Chinese diasporas, the Chinese people organize some communities according to their regional origin. For example, the majority of the Chinese diaspora in France is from Wenzhou, while the Chinese diaspora in the United States is rather more Cantonese.

2. Stakes of the diversity of regional cultures on representations

In order to find out what regional cultures have to do with the evolution of the students' representations before and after their stay in China, we asked them some questions related to the representations they have of China, Chinese (or Chinese languages), Chinese culture (of Chinese cultures), as well as of Chinese people. We also asked them to tell us what symbolized China for them. Through our analyses, we note that the evolution of the students' representations is obvious and directly linked to the regional cultures. Before and at the beginning of their stay, the students have rather general representations, whereas towards the end of their stay, they manage to construct more precise and objective representations. Moreover, the term "region" is frequently mentioned in their speeches.

2.1 Representations of China and Chinese symbols

Before and at the beginning of the students' stay, we asked them to write down their representations of China in three terms. In their descriptions, the terms most often mentioned were "large", "varied" and "complex". Towards the end of their stay, after living in a specific region and traveling to other parts of China, most students confirm that it is very difficult to describe China in three terms, for example, one student expresses that "In China, from one region to another, it is another world" (E13-02).

As for the symbols of China, before and at the beginning of the stay, despite two or three years of Chinese language and culture studies, the students had ideas similar to everyone else'. The most commonly mentioned terms were "Chinese tea", "Chinese food", "the Forbidden City" and "the Great Wall". While at the end of their stay, students state proudly that for them it is the region where they live that is most representative of China. For example, one student said that "China is Sichuan, Sichuan is China" (E09-02) and another confirmed that "When I think of China, I think of Chongqing first" (E13-02). Back in France, when the students communicate with each other, each one speaks almost exclusively about the region where they were. They consider themselves, or are already considered by their colleagues, as people with a Chinese regional label on them. For example, when students introduce themselves or are introduced by others, they often say, "I did my time in Sichuan" or "This is a student who did his time in Beijing", and so on. One student even became deeply attached to the city of his stay, Chengdu. In the interview

at the end of his stay, he repeated several times with great excitement that "Chengdu is my second home. I can't go back to China without going through Chengdu" (E09-02).

2.2 Representations of Chinese language and culture

As for the representations of the Chinese language or Chinese languages, before and at the beginning of the stay, students often focus on standard Chinese which they describe as a "difficult, beautiful and poetic" language. Whereas at the end of the stay, when we asked the same questions, the first reactions of the students were to reject our question by redirecting it to Chinese languages instead of "the Chinese language". While some of them said that "You can't describe Chinese, because there are several Chinese languages and they are completely different" (E05-01; E10-01), others said that "Chinese people speak in dialects in everyday life, it is another language for me and I don't understand anything" (E02-01; E05-01; E09-01; E14-01).

With regard to the representations of Chinese culture, before and at the beginning of their stay, the students found Chinese culture to be "rich, ancient and varied". However, at the end of their stay, the term "varied" is much more frequently mentioned than the other two qualifiers. In addition, all the students took the initiative to cite concrete examples of the culture of the region where they stayed or of other regions they visited. For example, regarding operas, apart from the Beijing opera, some students expressed their pleasure in discovering the Sichuan opera (E08-01) and the Guangxi opera (E09-02). However, before their stay, more than half of the students confirmed that they had no or very little knowledge about the culture of the region where they were going to spend their stay.

2.3 Representations of the Chinese people

Regarding the representations of the Chinese people, before and at the beginning of their stay, the students shared popular ideas. The most quoted terms were "welcoming", "hardworking" and "curious". But at the end of their stay, the students confirmed their former representations, while adding other characteristics, specific to Chinese people from different regions. For example, "Chinese people in Sichuan are very friendly and open" (E08-02; E09-02; E10-02), "Chinese people in Shanghai are very westernized, but indifferent and arrogant" (E01-02; E05-02; E10-02), "Chinese in Beijing are

straightforward, generous but sometimes brutal" (E01-02), etc. In addition, some students testified to the importance of regional identity for the Chinese and confirmed that knowing the regional culture of their Chinese interlocutor was very important, because it helps them to relate to the Chinese people more easily.

3. Pedagogical perspectives

Nowadays, foreign language teaching mainly focuses on cultural otherness between different countries, while national cultural otherness within the target country has not yet attracted enough attention from researchers. Under the impact of globalization, the number of mobile students is constantly increasing. Therefore, the feedback from students deserves a specific analysis for the benefit of teaching-learning of foreign languages.

In view of the issues of regional cultures presented above on representations, we consider that it will be pedagogically favourable to conduct research on the modalities of integration of regional cultures. On the one hand, this will serve to enrich and concretize institutional teaching, thus in the "micro-context". On the other hand, the analysis of the issues of regional cultures will also serve to make better use of the experiences of the students who visit China in the "macro-context".

In this context, we would like to propose some pedagogical perspectives that highlight regional cultures within the teaching of Chinese as a foreign language. Such as

- increase the proportion of regional cultures in textbooks;
- enhancing the value of student mobility experiences through the flipped classroom;
- integrate regional cultures into the training courses before the mobility stay;
- exploit local resources in France concerning regional cultures;
- organize cultural activities or workshops to promote the diversity of regional languages and cultures;
- to design a civilization course specialized in regional cultures whose teaching methods and contents will be adapted to the students' levels;
- discover multimedia resources on regional cultures, etc.

Conclusion

The mobility stay is not only a language exchange, but also a cultural exchange. Immersed in the global culture of the target country, learners are in frequent contact with regional cultures, in a wider sense, it refers to the plurilingualism and the multiculturalism within China. This helps to neutralize social representations and relativize learners' stereotypical representations. At the same time, the otherness of regional cultures encourages learners to mobilize all their skills and develop their adaptability. Research on regional cultures will not only allow teachers to complement current teaching-learning with new pedagogical approaches, but also to value the learners' feedback. Thus, we find it favourable to integrate the target country's internal plurilingualism and multiculturalism (micro context) into foreign language teaching, in conjunction with the integrating international plurilingualism and multiculturalism (macro context), which already have their place, especially through the intercultural approach.

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A Qur'anic Access to Arabic Translation of Chinese Idioms

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Abstract

When we translate Chinese idioms into Arabic, one of the common approaches is to deal with it by means of linguistic skills. Yet sometimes as much effort as we may take, the outcome sounds not so satisfying. The reason is, in a sense, that this approach is no more than conjuring up a temporary representation of a Chinese cultural image from a Chinese perspective. Actually, there can be many ready-made or semi-ready-made expressions in the Qur'an which can serve as a much more muscled representation of Chinese idioms. These Qur'an expressions, if handled well, interpret Chinese idioms more precisely and go deeper into Arab readers' hearts. To accomplish this, the only thing we have to do is just read the Qur'an as an open representation and see the Chinese idioms as open culture, both of which are none than cultural diversities that resonate with each other in their deep roots.

Some Chinese idioms, though not easy to translate into Arabic, can find their representative expressions already there in the Qur'an. These expressions, if handled well, can make our translation more acceptable to the Arabian readers and more vivid as well. This article can be regarded as a primary collection of such expressions.

闭塞视听

خَتَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ وَعَلَى سَمْعِهِمْ وَعَلَى أَبْصَارِهِمْ غِشَاوَةً وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ

真主已封闭他们的心和耳，他们的眼上有翳膜；他们将受重大的刑罚。

¹(2. 7)

¹ All Qur'anic verses cited in this article were translated by Prof. Ma Jian 马坚译《古兰经》法赫德国王《古兰经》印制厂 1987 年

أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ طَبَعَ اللَّهُ عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ وَسَمِعَهُمْ وَأَبْصَارَهُمْ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْغَافِلُونَ

他们是真主将封闭其心灵和视听的人。这等人是轻率的。(16. 108)

الَّذِينَ كَانَتْ أَعْيُنُهُمْ فِي غِطَاءٍ عَنِ ذِكْرِي وَكَانُوا لَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ سَمْعًا

他们的眼在翳子中，不能看到我的教诲，他们不能听从。(18. 101)

充耳不闻

وَإِنِّي كُلَّمَا دَعَوْتُهُمْ لِتَغْفِرَ لَهُمْ جَعَلُوا أَصَابِعَهُمْ فِي آذَانِهِمْ وَاسْتَعْصَمُوا بِأَنفُسِهِمْ وَأَصْرُوا وَاسْتَكْبَرُوا اسْتِكْبَارًا

我每次召唤他们来受你的赦宥的时候，他们总是以指头塞住他们的耳朵，以衣服蒙住他们的头，他们固执而自大。(71. 7)

断子绝孙

فَقَطَّعَ دَابِرَ الْقَوْمِ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا

不义的民众，已被根绝了。(6. 45)

对牛弹琴

إِنَّكَ لَا تَسْمَعُ الْمَوْتَى وَلَا تَسْمَعُ الصُّمَّ الدُّعَاءَ إِذَا وَلَّوْا مُدْبِرِينَ

你必定不能使死人听（你讲道）。你必定不能使退避的聋子听你召唤。

(27. 80)

放下架子，谦和

لَا تَمُدَّنَّ عَيْنَيْكَ إِلَىٰ مَا مَتَّعْنَا بِهِ أَزْوَاجًا مِنْهُمْ وَلَا تَحْزَنْ عَلَيْهِمْ وَخَفِضْ جَنَاحَكَ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ

你不要觊觎我所使他们中各等人所享受的事物，你不要为他们而悲哀。你应当温和地对待信士们。(15. 88)

وَخَفِضْ لَهُمَا جَنَاحَ الذُّلِّ مِنَ الرَّحْمَةِ وَقُل رَّبِّ ارْحَمْهُمَا كَمَا رَبَّيَانِي صَغِيرًا

你应当必恭必敬地服侍他俩，你应当说：“我的主啊！求你怜悯他俩，就像我年幼时他俩养育我那样。(17. 24)

وَخَفِضْ جَنَاحَكَ لِمَنِ اتَّبَعَكَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

你对于跟随你的那些信士，应当加以慈爱。(26. 215)

风水轮流转

إِن يَمَسَّنْكُمْ فَرْحٌ فَقَدْ مَسَّ الْقَوْمَ فَرْحٌ مِّثْلُهُ وَتِلْكَ الْأَيَّامُ نُدَاوِلُهَا بَيْنَ النَّاسِ وَلِيَعْلَمَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَيَتَّخِذَ مِنْكُمْ شُهَدَاءَ

如果你们遭受创伤，那末，敌人确已遭受同样的创伤了。我使气运周流于世人之间，以便真主甄别信道的人，而以你们为见证。(3. 140)

皇恩浩荡

وَرَحْمَتِي وَسِعَتْ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ

我的慈恩是包罗万物的。(7. 156)

رَبَّنَا وَسِعْتَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ رَّحْمَةً وَعِلْمًا

我们的主啊！在恩惠方面和知觉方面，你是包罗万物的。(40. 7)

混淆是非，以伪乱真

يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لِمَ تَلْبَسُونَ الْحَقَّ بِالْبَاطِلِ وَتَكْتُمُونَ الْحَقَّ وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ

信奉天经的人啊！你们为什么明知故犯地以假乱真，隐讳真理呢？(3. 71)

既往不咎

عَفَا اللَّهُ عَمَّا سَلَفَ وَمَنْ عَادَ فَيَنْتَقِمُ اللَّهُ مِنْهُ وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ ذُو انْتِقَامٍ

真主已饶恕以往的罪过。再犯的人，真主将惩罚他。真主是万能的，是惩恶的。(5. 95)

قُلْ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِنْ يَنْتَهُوا يُغْفَرْ لَهُمْ مَا قَدْ سَلَفَ وَإِنْ يَعُودُوا فَقَدْ مَضَتْ سُنَّةُ الْأَوَّلِينَ

你告诉不信道的人们：如果他们停止战争，那末，他们以往的罪恶将蒙赦宥；如果他们执迷不悟，那末，古人的常道已逝去了。(8. 38)

家财万贯；身外之物

زَيْنَ لِلنَّاسِ حُبُّ الشَّهَوَاتِ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ وَالْبَنِينَ وَالْقَنَاطِيرِ الْمُقَنْطَرَةِ مِنَ الذَّهَبِ وَالْفِضَّةِ وَالْخَيْلِ الْمُسَوَّمَةِ وَالْأَنْعَامِ وَالْحَرْثِ ذَلِكَ مَتَاعُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَاللَّهُ عِنْدَهُ حُسْنُ الْمَبَإِ

迷惑世人的，是令人爱好的事物，如妻子，儿女，金银，宝藏，骏马，牲

畜，禾稼等。这些是今世生活的享受；而真主那里，却有优美的归宿。(3. 14)

وَأَنْ أَرَدْتُمْ اسْتِبْدَالَ زَوْجٍ مَّكَانَ زَوْجٍ وَآتَيْتُمْ إِحْدَاهُنَّ قِنطَارًا فَلَا تَأْخُذُوا مِنْهُ شَيْئًا

如果你们休一个妻室，而另娶一个妻室，即使你们已给过前妻一千两黄金，你们也不要取回一丝毫。(4. 20)

قناطر مقلطرة is also an expression of the same kind as آلاف مؤلفة

敬而远之

وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَشْهَدُونَ الزُّورَ وَإِذَا مَرُّوا بِاللَّغْوِ مَرُّوا كِرَامًا

他们不做假见证，他们听到恶言的时候谦逊地走开。(25. 72)

口是心非

هُمْ لِلْكَفْرِ يَوْمَئِذٍ أَقْرَبُ مِنْهُمْ لِلْإِيمَانِ يَقُولُونَ بِأَفْوَاهِهِمْ مَا لَيْسَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا يَكْتُمُونَ

在那日，与其说他们是信道的人，不如说他们是不信道的人。他们口里所说的，并不是他们心里所想的。真主是知道他们所隐讳者的。(3. 167)

骆驼穿过针眼，铁树开花，大海捞针

وَلَا يَدْخُلُونَ الْجَنَّةَ حَتَّى يَلِجَ الْجَمَلُ فِي سَمِّ الْخِيَاطِ وَكَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي الْمُجْرِمِينَ

他们不得入乐园，直到缆绳能穿过针眼。我要这样报酬犯罪者。(7. 40)

排兵布阵

وَإِذْ غَدَوْتَ مِنْ أَهْلِكَ تُبَوِّئُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ مَقَاعِدَ لِلْقِتَالِ وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ

当时，你在早晨从家里出去，把信士们布置在阵地上。真主是全聪的，是全知的。(3. 121)

仁者乐山，智者乐水

كُلُّ حِزْبٍ بِمَا لَدَيْهِمْ فَرِحُونَ

各派都因自己的教义而沾沾自喜。(23. 53)

كُلُّ حِزْبٍ بِمَا لَدَيْهِمْ فَرِحُونَ

各派都喜欢自己所奉的宗教。(30. 32)

فَلَمَّا جَاءَتْهُمْ رُسُلُهُم بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ فَرَحُوا بِمَا عِنْدَهُمْ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ وَحَاقَ بِهِمْ مَا كَانُوا بِهِ يَسْتَهْزِؤُونَ

当他们族中的众使者昭示他们许多明证的时候，他们因自己所有的学问而洋洋得意，他们所嘲笑的刑罚，遂降临他们。(40. 83)

如数家珍，了如指掌

الَّذِينَ آتَيْنَاهُمُ الْكِتَابَ يَعْرِفُونَهُ كَمَا يَعْرِفُونَ أَبْنَاءَهُمْ وَإِنَّ فَرِيقًا مِّنْهُمْ لَيَكْتُمُونَ الْحَقَّ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ

蒙我赏赐经典的人，认识他，犹如认识自己的儿女一样。他们中有一派人，的确明知故犯地隐讳真理。(2. 146)

赏心悦目

يُطَافُ عَلَيْهِمْ بِصِحَافٍ مِّنْ ذَهَبٍ وَأَكْوَابٍ وَفِيهَا مَا تَشْتَهِيهِ الْأَنْفُسُ وَتَلَذُّ الْأَعْيُنُ وَأَنْتُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ

将有金盘和金杯，在他们之间挨次传递。乐园中有心所恋慕，眼所欣赏的乐趣，你们将永居其中。(43. 71)

十八层地狱

إِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ فِي الدَّرَكِ الْأَسْفَلِ مِنَ النَّارِ وَلَنْ تَجِدَ لَهُمْ نَصِيرًا

伪信者必入火狱的最下层，你绝不能为他们发现任何援助者。(4. 145)

水中捞月，镜花水月，竹蓝打水

لَهُ دَعْوَةُ الْحَقِّ وَالَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِهِ لَا يَسْتَجِيبُونَ لَهُمْ بِشَيْءٍ إِلَّا كِبَاسٌ مَّاءٍ لَّيْلَجٌ فَاهُ وَمَا هُوَ بِبَالِغِهِ

真实的祈祷只归于他，他们舍他而祈祷的（偶像），一点也不能答应他们的祈求。但他们好像一个人，把两只手掌伸向水中，以便水达到他的口，其实，水绝不会达到他的口的。(13. 14)

天崩地裂

تَكَادُ السَّمَاوَاتُ يَتَفَطَّرْنَ مِنْهُ وَتَنْشَقُّ الْأَرْضُ وَتَخِرُّ الْجِبَالُ هَدًّا

天几乎要破，地几乎要裂，山几乎要崩。(19. 90)

天长地久

وَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ سَعِدُوا فِي الْجَنَّةِ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا مَا دَامَتِ السَّمَاوَاتُ وَالْأَرْضُ

至于幸福的，将进入乐园，而永居其中，天长地久。(11. 108)

天上一日，地上千年

وَأَنَّ يَوْمًا عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ كَأَلْفِ سَنَةٍ مِمَّا تَعُدُّونَ

在你的主那里的一日，恰如你们所数的一千年。(22. 47)

يُدِيرُ الْأَمْرَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ إِلَى الْأَرْضِ ثُمَّ يَعْرُجُ إِلَيْهِ فِي يَوْمٍ كَانَ مِقْدَارُهُ أَلْفَ سَنَةٍ مِمَّا تَعُدُّونَ

他治理自天至地的事物，然后那事物在一日之内上升到他那里，那一日的长度，是你们所计算的一千年。(32. 5)

五体投地，顶礼膜拜

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ إِذَا يُتْلَى عَلَيْهِمْ يَخِرُّونَ لِلْأَذْقَانِ سُجَّدًا

在降示它之前已获得知识的人们，当听到人们诵读它的时候，他们俯伏叩头。(17. 107)

وَيَخِرُّونَ لِلْأَذْقَانِ يَبْكُونَ وَيَزِيدُهُمْ خُشُوعًا

他们痛哭著俯伏下去，《古兰经》使他们更恭敬。(17. 109)

悉听尊便，听之任之

وَمَنْ يُشَاقِقِ الرَّسُولَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُ الْهُدَىٰ وَيَتَّبِعْ غَيْرَ سَبِيلِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ نُوَلِّهِ مَا تَوَلَّىٰ وَنُصَلِّهِ جَهَنَّمَ

وَسَاءَتْ مَصِيرًا

谁在认清正道之后反对使者，而遵循非信士的道路，我将听谁自便，并使他入于火狱中，那是一个恶劣的归宿。(4. 115)

心提到嗓子眼儿了

إِذْ جَاؤُكُمْ مِنْ فَوْقِكُمْ وَمِنْ أَسْفَلَ مِنْكُمْ وَإِذْ زَاغَتِ الْأَبْصَارُ وَبَلَغَتِ الْقُلُوبُ الْحَنَاجِرَ وَتَظُنُّونَ بِاللَّهِ الظُّنُونًا

当时，他们从你们的上面和你们的下面来攻你们；当时，你们眼花心跳，并对真主作种种猜测。(33. 10)

وَأَنْذِرْهُمْ يَوْمَ الْأَرْفَةِ إِذِ الْقُلُوبُ لَدَى الْحَنَاجِرِ كَاطْمِينٍ

你应当以临近之日警告他们，那时他们的心将升到咽喉，他们满腹忧愁。

(40. 18)

心术不正，不怀好意，居心不良

يَا نِسَاءَ النَّبِيِّ لَسْتُنَّ كَأَحَدٍ مِّنَ النِّسَاءِ إِنِ اتَّقَيْتُنَّ فَلَا تَخْضَعْنَ بِالْقَوْلِ فَيَطْمَعَ الَّذِي فِي قَلْبِهِ مَرَضٌ وَقُلْنَ قَوْلًا مَّعْرُوفًا

先知的妻子们啊！你们不象别的任何妇女，如果你们敬畏真主，就不要说温柔的话，以免心中有病的人，贪恋你们；你们应当说庄重的话。(33. 32)

لَئِن لَّمْ يَنْتَهِ الْمُنَافِقُونَ وَالَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِم مَّرَضٌ وَالْمُرْجِفُونَ فِي الْمَدِينَةِ لَنُغْرِبَنَّكَ بِهِمْ ثُمَّ لَا يُجَاوِرُونَكَ فِيهَا إِلَّا قَلِيلًا

伪信的、心中有病的、在城中煽惑人心的，如果他们仍不罢休，我必命你制裁他们，他们就不得久居城中与你为邻了。(33. 60)

هُوَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ مِنْهُ آيَاتٌ مُحْكَمَاتٌ هُنَّ أُمُّ الْكِتَابِ وَأُخَرُ مُتَشَابِهَاتٌ فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ زَيْغٌ فَيَتَّبِعُونَ مَا تَشَابَهَ مِنْهُ ابْتِغَاءَ الْفِتْنَةِ وَابْتِغَاءَ تَأْوِيلِهِ

他降示你这部经典，其中有许多明确的节文，是全经的基本；还有别的许多隐微的节文。心存邪念的人，遵从隐微的节文，企图淆惑人心，探求经义的究竟。(3. 7)

信口雌黄，一面之词，随口一说

ذَلِكَ قَوْلُهُمْ بِأَفْوَاهِهِمْ يُضَاهَوْنَ قَوْلَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِن قَبْلُ

这是他们信口开河，仿效从前不信道者的口吻。(9. 30)

لَعَلِّي أَعْمَلُ صَالِحًا فِيمَا تَرَكْتُ كَلَّا إِنَّهَا كَلِمَةٌ هُوَ قَائِلُهَا وَمِن وَرَائِهِم بَرْزَخٌ إِلَى يَوْمِ يُبْعَثُونَ

也许我能借我的遗留的财产而行善。”绝不然！这是他一定要说的一句话，在他们的前面，有一个屏障，直到他们复活的日子。(23. 100)

وَيَجْعَلُونَ لِلَّهِ مَا يَكْرَهُونَ وَتَصِفُ أَلْسِنَتُهُمُ الْكُذِبَ أَنَّ لَهُمُ الْحُسْنَىٰ لَا جَرَمَ أَنَّ لَهُمُ النَّارَ وَأَنَّهُمْ مُّفْرَطُونَ

他们以自己所厌恶的归真主，他们妄言自己将受最佳的报酬。无疑的，他们将受火狱的报酬。他们是被遗弃的。(16. 62)

一物降一物

فَهَزَمُوهُمْ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَقَتَلَ دَاوُدُ جَالُوتَ وَآتَاهُ اللَّهُ الْمُلْكَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَعَلَّمَهُ مِمَّا يَشَاءُ وَلَوْلَا دَفْعُ اللَّهِ النَّاسَ بَعْضَهُم بِبَعْضٍ لَفَسَدَتِ الْأَرْضُ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ ذُو فَضْلٍ عَلَى الْعَالَمِينَ

他们借真主的佑助而打败敌人。达五德杀死查鲁特，真主把国权和智慧赏赐他，并把自己所意欲的（知识）教授他。要不是真主以世人互相抵抗，那末，大地的秩序必定紊乱了。但真主对于全世界是有恩惠的。(2. 251)

وَكَذَلِكَ فَتَنَّا بَعْضَهُم بِبَعْضٍ لِيَقُولُوا أَهَؤُلَاءِ مَنَّ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنْ بَيْنِنَا أَلَيْسَ اللَّهُ بِأَعْلَمَ بِالشَّاكِرِينَ

我这样使他们互相考验，以便他们说：“难道这等人就是我们中特受真主恩宠的人吗？”难道真主不是最了解感谢者的吗？(6. 53)

قُلْ هُوَ الْقَادِرُ عَلَى أَنْ يَبْعَثَ عَلَيْكُمْ عَذَابًا مِّنْ فَوْقِكُمْ أَوْ مِنْ تَحْتِ أَرْجُلِكُمْ أَوْ يَلْبَسَكُمْ شِيعًا وَيُذِيقَ بَعْضَكُمْ بَأْسَ بَعْضٍ انظُرْ كَيْفَ نُصَرِّفُ الْآيَاتِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَفْقَهُونَ

你说：“他能使刑罚从你们的头上和脚下袭击你们，或使你们各宗派相混杂，从而使你们这宗派尝试那宗派的战争。”你看，我怎样阐述许多迹象，以便他们了解。(6. 65)

While translating “尝尝某人的厉害”，we can also take such expressions into account, just as the following verse:

كَذَلِكَ كَذَّبَ الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ حَتَّىٰ ذُاقُوا بَأْسَنَا

他们之前的人，曾这样否认（他们族中的使者），直到他们尝试了我的刑罚。(6. 148)

至人无梦

اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ لَا تَأْخُذُهُ سِنَّةٌ وَلَا نَوْمٌ

真主，除他外绝无应受崇拜的；他是永生不灭的，是维护万物的；瞌睡不能侵犯他，睡眠不能克服他。(2. 255)

罪孽深重，多行不义

بَلَىٰ مَنْ كَسَبَ سَيِّئَةً وَأَحَاطَتْ بِهِ خَطِيئَتُهُ فَأُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ

不然，凡作恶而为其罪孽所包罗者，都是火狱的居民，他们将永居其中。

(2.81)

Some points need to be mentioned in the end. First, the Chinese idioms in this article were put forward from the perspective of Chinese-Arabic translation, so none of them should be regarded as the precise translation of its corresponding original Arabic text, but rather, they are only recommended for utilization during our translation. Second, this article aims at introducing a Qur'anic access to translating Chinese idioms into Arabic, and thus serves only as a suggestion, so as for practical translation, it need consideration from more than this one access. Finally, this article includes only examples each of which consists of translated Qur'anic verses headed by a suggested Chinese idiom and thus lack theoretical details. But what matters here is just the suggestion of the Chinese idioms, which comes as a result of heart-to-heart reading of the Qur'an, not theoretical analyses.

Panel 1-5: Decolonizing History I

Analysis of the UNESCO Silk Roads Programme from the Perspective of China

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Abstract

Since 1949, China has attached great importance to the role of international cooperation in cultural heritage. In the era of globalization, human society is not only faced with the problem of economic development, but also needs to learn from other civilizations and carry out intercultural dialogues, and promote the research, interpretation, protection and utilization of cultural heritage by international community from the aspect of humanistic community. As a great link between East and West, the silk road connects many great civilizations. Today, it still has profound practical significance and has become a symbol of global world heritage protection.

In 1988, under the theme "decade of world cultural development" (1988-1997), UNESCO launched the large-scale interdisciplinary international cooperation project "Silk Road: a comprehensive study of the road of dialogue", accelerate the all-round cultural dialogues and exchange between East and West. As of August 2020, 17 countries have participated in the intergovernmental coordination committee for the cross-border heritage application of the Silk Road, which not only ensures the effective monitoring and protection of the "Silk Road: the network of Chang'an-Tianshan corridor" project listed in the world heritage list, but also lays an institutional foundation for the continuous extension of the Silk Road World Heritage network. At the same time, the joint World Heritage Application of the maritime Silk Road has been pushing forward steadily. Through the coordination with UNESCO, the Chinese government is exploring the history and

heritage of the maritime Silk Road with relevant countries from the academic perspective, analysing the types and values of the maritime Silk Road heritage sites, in order to provide other countries with ideas for the future research on the maritime Silk Road.

Police Diversity and Ethnic Difference in Palestine Mandate

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SOAS

Abstract

The Palestine Police underwent a major reorganisation in the aftermath of the 1929 riots. The guiding principle was to bring the force closer to the inhabitants they policed so to facilitate recruitment and cooperation (Kroizer, 2004). This entailed the expansion of the language training programme, the equalisation of the uniforms for the British and Palestinian sections, Arabs and Jews alike, in everything except the hat, and the elimination of the ethnic segregation of the service mess. Some British officers complained about the “Palestinisation” of the institutions and what they considered was too much fraternity with the colonised. These claims were promptly rejected by the police directorate, but it is evident that the Palestine Police force had a moment in the 1930s when experience was more important than ethnic background, and both Arabs and Jews claimed up the ranks having British recruits under their mandate. This move towards a diverse police force concealed the ethnic quotas carefully maintained to prevent upsetting the status quo and to facilitate the repression of communal violence.

Parallel to this process of civilianisation, the central government advanced the dissolution of municipal police forces and their merge into a centralised Palestine Police. While most of the towns were happy to relinquish their control and its economic burden, the Tel Aviv municipal police were not subsidised by the central government, which gave it leverage to negotiate. Among the demands they submitted was the preservation of a different service hat and belt, items which could visibly differentiate them from the rest of the “Palestinian” section. Thus, while the British government in Palestine attempted to disguise difference as diversity, Zionist corporations maintained and emphasised their difference from the indigenous population.

In this light, this paper will ask two questions. First, which sort of diversity is colonial difference? And second, if the intention of the Zionist settlers was not only to displace the indigenous population, but also to replace them (Wolfe, 2006), how was visible difference furthering this strategy?

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Representations of Diversity in South India and Construction of Indian Federalism (1919-1956)

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Abstract

At independence, the Indian Union was built on the slogan 'Unity in diversity'. This principle is now threatened by the Hindutva ideology that has driven the country's BJP leadership since 2014. The results of the 2021 regional elections raise the question of whether Indian federalism can resist the unifying wave of Hindu nationalism. However, from the 1940s onwards, Indian political elites, favouring unity over diversity, abandoned a 'coalescent nationalism'. The federalism of the Union of India is asymmetrical and leaves little room for discretion to the federated states.

The paper proposes to go back to the foundations of this political system and to re-read the archives produced during the institutional reforms' elaboration of the colonial and post-colonial era to show how representations of diversity in India were constructed at different levels (central, regional, local).

Four moments will be examined:

- The colonial reforms of 1919 and 1935, which laid the foundation for Indian federalism, while claiming that Indian diversity prevents the establishment of a true Self-government;
- The debates of 1946-1948 (Report of the Linguistic Provinces Commission) and 1953-1955 (Report of the States Reorganisation Commission) centred on the creation of linguistic states.

Throughout the period, South India was agitated by sometimes violent movements for the recognition of regional specificity. This contributed to an institutional recognition of linguistic diversity, to the detriment of other forms of diversity. The paper also aims to show how, in this part of India, the way of projecting diversity on the territory in order to simplify its claims and management has led to the homogenization of entire regions, to

the detriment of multiculturalism inherited from its turbulent history, from ancient migratory movements and from the artificial divisions of the colonial era.

Beyond the (often well-known) arguments put forward by national and regional elites in the debates under consideration, the aim is to study the local mobilizations that opposed the representations imposed 'from above' on South Indian diversity and to understand how the questioning of an inherited multicultural reality was able to weaken rather than strengthen Indian democracy.

Panel 1-6: Decolonizing History II

Diversifying Representation of 16th Cent Gujarati Sultans and Portuguese Colonisers

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Abstract

Early Portuguese colonisers and chroniclers, during the first half of the 16th Cent imposed a sombre representation of Gujarati Sultans. Conversely Portuguese navigators / traders were pictured in very conventional ways by either Indian or Portuguese chroniclers. A novel way of representing them and challenge that is to compare the biography of two historical characters of 16th Cent Gujarati political and economic situation: Diogo de Mesquita, Portuguese navigator and soldier (in India, mostly Gujarat c.1520-1537) and Sultan Bahadur Shah Gujarati (c.1505-1537, reigning 1526-1537), through their representations among Indian and Portuguese chroniclers. Indeed, they knew each other and fought each other. Should one accept a clear cut representation by the classical Portuguese historiography: Gujaratis (Indians) were of two kinds: the so called *Moors* (Muslims, and Bahadur Shah was one of them) opposed to the so called *Gentiles* (Hindus) with deeply diverging interests, belonging to two very different societies or *races* as the Portuguese chroniclers would say ? Should one take for granted the figure of the Christian *cavaleiros* (knights) fighting and conquering for their King and Roman faith (and Diogo de Mesquita is *represented* as one of them)? Or is there a diverse reality behind the curtain? What about the figure of Bahadur Shah Gujarati according to Indian somehow contemporary chroniclers opposed to representation and testimonies both Indian and Portuguese? What can we infer from those texts about the veiled personality of Diogo de Mesquita? Looking at some key features, modern historiography can question and

compare not only the classical representation of the so called (colonial) conquest of Gujarati ports by the Portuguese but also the classical /medieval representation of the Gujarati Sultans.

Some key concepts: early colonialism, Inquisition, conversion, New Christians, 16th Cent Gujarat, Hinduism, Indian Islam

The End of Mongol Imperial Diversity

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Abstract

When the Mongol empire fell, the Ming dynasty of China sought at once to distance themselves from, and in other ways to imitate, the legacy of Mongol overlordship. This paper lays out ways in which they sought to distance themselves from the pan-continental diversity that had obtained under the Mongols, who had intermingled the storied cultures of their territory without much concern for the formerly bold boundaries between those cultures. The Ming energetically re-established many of those boundaries.

The Mongol empire of 1206-1368 may have begun as a terror visited upon the medieval great powers of Eurasia, but by the end of its first and only full century it had become a melting pot of those powers' religious, literary, and proto-scientific traditions. The Mongols enforced a certain degree of melting, initiating vast transfers of expert populations both toward the front lines as their conquests progressed, and then in circulation among the lands they securely held. Famous examples include the research teams and contacts of Rashīd al-Dīn, who helped him to write his world history and either brought to him information all the way from China, or brought him there for that information;¹ and the staff of the Maraga observatory in Iran, some of whom were sent to take up office in Beijing alongside practitioners of the Chinese astronomical-astrological tradition.² Earlier in their reign, countless siege engineers were moved westward from North China in stages, and innumerable translators and scribes were

¹ The long-distance communications, and perhaps travels, of Rashīd al-Dīn while composing the *Compendium of Chronicles* are widely examined in Thomas Allsen's *Culture and Conquest in Mongol Eurasia* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2001.)

² This cultural-proto-scientific exchange has received less attention than that surrounding Rashīd al-Dīn, but it's covered in

scattered all about the young empire in order to make its communications possible.³ Monks from Europe who came to the courts of the Great Khans found them aflutter with scriptorial activity.⁴ The need was great, after all, for subjects speaking many languages to understand the *yasa* proclamations of their new overlords, and to communicate with them via translators into Mongolian working from Chinese, Arabic, Persian, Turkic, Greek, and many other languages.

When the Red Turban rebels ousted the Mongols and founded the Ming dynasty in China in 1368, they did not sustain this level of government subsidized diversification. They returned the China region to rule by Chinese speakers — or more aptly, by writers of modern Chinese’s precursor Literary Sinitic — for readers of Chinese. Borders with the rest of Eurasia that had formerly been quite porous became some of the most precociously bureaucratized sites of the premodern world. These land borders had formerly intersected with the pan-continental roads of the Mongol courier-relay system, itself a congeries of different empires’ former systems in each their own region. In 1368, they intersected instead with the remains of that system, which still drew merchants and missionaries along the same routes, but on the border of China such people found a closed door instead of an open one. On the sea border as well, the Ming successor state to the Mongol empire inaugurated a series of policies, both power projective and paranoiacally defensive, that gradually turned the South China Sea from a hub of global interactions into a demilitarized zone.⁵ The tale of an accidental Korean embassy is illustrative here: Korean sailors shipwrecked on the Chinese shore in the late Ming period, and were treated well as subjects of the Ming empire’s most preferential vassal, but at the same time, they

³ For these processes we have far less documentation than for later Mongol-Yuan policies, or for early Mongol policies enacted in the Persian and Russian worlds, but John Masson Smith penned the classic, if brief, treatment of it, “Mongol Manpower & Persian Population” (*Journal of the Economic & Social History of the Orient* 18, 3, Oct. 1975: 271-299).

⁴ These monks’ observations are very well-documented. Four of them are compiled in Chistopher Dawson, *Mission to Asia* (Toronto: U. Toronto Press, 1980).

⁵ The natural harbors of Southeast Asia remained trade hubs, but the Ming cut itself off from this trade after it mothballed the Treasure Fleet in the mid-14th century, and in stages it cut as much of its population off from the trade as it could. Commerce did continue of course, with smugglers replacing many Chinese merchants, and a land trade picking up the slack from foreign ports.

were ferried as quickly as possible to the capital, shown as little as possible of the coastal interior, and then shuffled back to Korea in a summary manner.⁶

The present study examines these two border regions — the north-western land border along the land silk road, and the south-eastern sea border along the maritime silk road — showing how policies new to the Ming era effectively concluded a period in which these regions had formerly been sites of cosmopolitan globalization and diversification for at least a century.

The Land Border

Of concern here is the pass at Jiayu 嘉峪, along the northern terrestrial silk road, within the Gansu Corridor, in present-day Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. This pass sat upon what had been the primary corridor of the Mongol courier-relay system, by far the most maintained and traveled route, and the one that had best withstood the period of violent disunity among the Khans that prevailed in the late 13th century.⁷ Under the Mongols, this pass was at one end of the dilapidated remains of the Great Wall, in ruins at least since Northern Song authors bemoaned the state of the wall on their diplomatic trips into the territory of the Liao empire (916-1125), which housed the Wall at that time. The early Ming emperors repaired the Wall, and fortified the border in other ways. Jiayu Pass became the checkpoint for all travelers who would previously have traveled freely, and often by subsidized means. That freedom of travel was replaced with a regime according to which certain *ethnies* were allowed to cross at Jiayu, in certain numbers, if they possessed the imprimatur of a figure representing a vassalized ally state of the Great Ming, and if that figure had arranged in advance for one of their state's intermittent tribute missions to take place at that time. Just inside it, the majority of those allowed to

⁶ Kauz, Ralph. "The Postal Stations (*yizhan* 驛站) in Ming China." In Schottenhammer, Angela, ed., *Trade & Transfer across the East Asian Mediterranean* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2005): 75-90.

⁷ Kim Hodong, "The Unity of the Mongol Empire & Continental Exchanges over Eurasia," *Journal of Central Eurasian Studies* 1 (December 2009): 15-42; and Hosung Shim, "The Postal Roads of the Great Khans in Central Asia under the Mongol-Yuan Empire," *Journal of Song-Yuan Studies* 44 (2014): 405-469. Kim shows that the main trans-continental route did for the most part maintain functionality during the civil war among the Khans, and with assistance from Kim, Shim demonstrates the amount of investment that flowed into that main route, putting many other Mongol post roads to shame.

enter Ming territory were effectively denied further access. They stayed in a border town that, alongside other border towns just inside other major passes, were probably among the most diverse places in Ming China. The leading figures from their diplomatic-mercantile party were allowed to go on to the capital, but only by means provided by the Ming state, with frequent stops in Ming courier relay stations, and a schedule provided for them by their hosts. Even the ‘gifts’ that they brought the emperor, in order to earn an audience with his ministers and the invaluable trade opportunities that came with it, were moved separately from their party by Ming hands on to the capital. In this way, foreign goods and foreign ideas were ensconced within the Forbidden City, and otherwise seen mostly in these border towns. When their visit was deemed concluded, foreigners were ushered back along the same route to the pass and told to take their retainers waiting in the border town out of Ming territory.

Persian-language records of two such journeys have been handed down to us, one by an embassy from Shah Rukh (r. 1405-1447) of the Timurid empire, and one a century later by a man representing the very young Ottoman empire. In the former party, a court painter kept a diary of his group’s time on the post roads within Ming territory, and the Timurid court historian Hafez-e-Abru transcribed it into a chronicle upon the group’s return to Herat.⁸ In the latter party, the man known only to us as Alī Akbar al-Khatāyī — meaning the Ali the Great of China — summarized a year spent traveling to and from Beijing along this route, a century later.⁹ Neither persiphone chronicler reviewed their time in Ming territory poorly; in fact both seem to have been shocked by the safety, luxury, and ease that they experienced along the courier-relay system between Jiayu Pass and Beijing. Neither expected to encounter many Muslims or other countrymen of their own, however, and these nonexpectations were fulfilled. Where before North China had been a place so diverse that one conservative Confucian literatus used the loan word from Persian *bazār* for a market,¹⁰ it was by the early 15th century, according to the first of

⁸ Maitra, K. M., trans. *A Persian Embassy to China, being an Extract from Zubdat’ut Tawarikh of Hafiz Abru*. NY: Paragon Book Corp, 1970.

⁹ Afshār, Irāj, ed. *Khatāy-nāmah* (Tehran, 1978).

¹⁰ Buell, Paul D., and Eugene N. Anderson. *A Soup for the Qan: Chinese Dietary Medicine of the Mongol Era as Seen in Hu Szu-Hui’s Yin-shan Cheng-Yao*. Leiden: Brill, 2010.

these two accounts, a place scarcely influenced by West Asian culture. A century later, Alī Akbar repeated such preposterous rumors as that the emperor himself either had converted or planned to convert to Islam, a rumor made believable by the sheer unfamiliarity with Islam that most people in North China had in the 16th century.

Indeed, the Ming state's culture war against things foreign extended into the semantic realm. The relay stations that lay along these courier routes had formerly been referred to *zhan* 站, the word in use today in the sinosphere for train and bus stations of all kinds. This word derived from the Mongolian *jam* or *yam*, carrying the same meaning, and so its use was offensive to Ming rulers. As an act of culture war against their former overlords and then-contemporary enemies, they mandated that the only term usable for these stations would be *yi* 驛, the term once in use for Tang courier-relay stations, themselves a predecessor to the larger Mongol network. The Ming state would brook no implication that they owed anything to the Mongols, including their highly effective means of contact within their realm and with the rest of Eurasia. Subjects continued to use the term *zhan* very widely, of course, but one would not know it merely from reading Ming official documents.¹¹

The Sea Border

Of concern here are the multiple related ports of south China that, in ancient times under the Han dynasty and again from around 700 CE, served as entrepôts for the bustling trade in silk and spices that brought so many of west Asia's sailors to the general vicinity of Southeast Asia. These ports at the time included: Quanzhou, at one time among the world's busiest and most diverse ports; and Guangzhou, both then and now among the most commercialized and urbanized places on Earth. To a very great extent, these ports were the source of untold wealth for the Tang, Song, and Yuan dynastic governments. The Song had established a regime whereby Quanzhou served as an official entrepôt for all or nearly all of the trade across the Indian Ocean from and to Arab-controlled lands — trade,

¹¹ Serruys, Henry. *Sino-Mongol Relations during the Ming*. Brussels: Belgian Institute of Chinese Studies, 1959.

for instance, in the spices and incense of Southeast Asia, and in ambergis which no one fully understood and thus which fetched nearly limitless profits.

Traveling along trade routes buoyed by cities like Guangzhou and Quanzhou, first the former and then the latter took on traits more common in West Asia than East Asia. Guangzhou housed a large population of wealthy and powerful Muslim merchants in the 8th century,¹² and then Quanzhou became host to a mosque at the centre of a Perso-Arabic population there, to many of whose graves we still have access, the carvings on them explicating routes by which those people had come to the city on the Pacific Coast.¹³ In the Mongol-Yuan period, Marco Polo wrote of Quanzhou as ‘Zaitun,’ meaning olive in both Persian and Arabic. Then as the Mongol empire fell, the Sunni Arabic family that had practically run the place under the Mongols was overthrown by Shi’a Persians who ruled it independently for a time.¹⁴

As the Ming rose in place of the Mongol Yuan, they inscrutably put an end not only to much of this diversity but also to the commercial and fiscal success made possible by these maritime border regions. Citing the threat of pirates branded as ‘Japanese’ by many in China and Korea, the Ming began a series of policy initiatives, increasing over time in intensity, that effectively stripped the southern coastline of all professional opportunities *other than* piracy and smuggling. Many an historian has scratched their head and wondered why a state would, in a series of strokes, chop off one of their own most capable limbs like this, and in so doing greatly exacerbate the very problem they claim to have sought to solve.

¹² Many works on Tang history describe this Muslim enclave and the tragic end that befell it. One such is Nicholas Tackett’s dissertation book, *The Destruction of the Medieval Chinese Aristocracy* (Cambridge: Harvard U. Asia Center, 2014).

¹³ This archaeological evidence has also inspired many a study. An exemplary one is John Chaffee’s “Diasporic Identities in the Historical Development of the Maritime Muslim Communities of Song-Yuan China” (*Journal of the Social & Economic History of the Orient* 49, 4, 2006, 395-420).

¹⁴ Of the countless shortlived microstates that have existed in the many interregna of Chinese history, this one, often called the ‘Persian Garrison’ in English, is very likely the only one ever ruled openly by Muslims. Even in Yunnan where the Muslim statesman Sayed Ajal Shams al-Dīn Omar al-Bukhārī was put in charge by the Mongols over a decidedly non-Muslim population, acting as a magnet for Muslim migrants and building up quite a population there, the rump state that obtained after the empire fell was run by a cousin of the Golden Lineage of Chinggis and Qubilai Khan, not by Muslims.

The answer to this quandary may be that putting an end to the diversity was the point. Japanese pirates, Southeast Asian tradesmen and slaves, Indian yogis, Persian and Arabic sailors and imams — it was all too much for the Ming to control, and control is what they sought above all else. In pursuit of this control, they issued sweeping proclamations that were hardly enforceable, making up for their lack of bureaucratic capacity with draconian punishments for non-compliance — execution of a single individual was one thing, but the Ming was known to execute offenders out to the 9th degree of separation, thereby excising an entire extended family that might continue an illegal practice or seek vengeance on behalf of an executed patriarch.

The Ming Maritime Restrictions or *Hai Jin* 海禁 were the conscious model for the Qing dynasty's (1644-1911) similar if less severe policies, for the famously severe maritime policies of the Tokugawa Shogunate (1600-1868), and for the more short-lived but also biopolitically intensive 'isolationist' policies of the late Joseon dynasty (1392-1897) of Korea during the mid-nineteenth century.¹⁵ They can even be said to influence the maritime border regime of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea today. For at least six centuries, the end of the Mongol empire made itself felt, as states continued to react against the cultural intermingling and resultant diversity that the Mongols had enforced, even as other states and indeed some of the same states claimed descent from the Golden Lineage of Chinggis Khan as part of their legacy of political legitimacy.¹⁶

¹⁵ Isolationism is a misnomer for these many policies, itself being a word in our English vocabulary due to propaganda against leftists and others who opposed the US' entry into World War I. Like *hinayana* Buddhism, it is a pejorative term pasted onto one group by that group's opponents, and thus misrepresentative even in its original usage. What these policies did do, however, among other things, was sever their countries from many foreign influence and prevent any cosmopolitan efflorescence like that obtaining under the culturally neutral Mongols.

¹⁶ The Romanovs (1613-1917), Ottomans (1299-1922), Mughals (1526-1827), and indeed once more the Qing are all examples.

**Panel 2-1: Revisiting Oe Kenzaburo's "The Village": Ambiguities,
Narratives Diversities, and the South (TUFS)**

**The Life that Breaks Out of Boundaries: The Representation of "Being in
Japan" in Kenzaburo Oe's Novels**

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Abstract

From the beginning of his career as a writer, Oe Kenzaburo's writings have featured a series of dichotomous patterns. However, as is shown in the relationships of the dead body, the dog and the narrator "I" in "Lavish are the Dead" and "The Strange Work," or in the "intimate" relationship between the captured black soldier and the protagonist in "The Catch," the division of the two sides gradually fades away as the plot advances. Later, in collections of essays like *For the New Literature*, he advocates the "alienation," which aims to deviate from the normal meanings of the everyday images and use of language. In this light, his use of the dichotomous patterns also suggests a deviation from the irreconcilable division of the two sides. In his writings, the two sides always find their own "life" in its seemingly opposing other, and, therefore, the boundaries between the subject and the object naturally fall apart.

The structure not only functions at an individual's level, but also further stands out at the level of the opposing communities. In one of his major novels, *The Silent Cry*, Oe thematizes the conflicts of his own home village and the Korean communities in the mountains of Shikoku. The mythical community of the village, which is the background of the story, is not an autonomous whole held together by a set of traditional ethics, but an opened-up space, whose own traditional festival is abolished five years ago due to an external influence. On the contrary, one of the once oppressed Koreans has obtained the capital power to control the economic foundation of the village by his supermarket.

Furthermore, the acceptance of traditional Korean food in the village suggests that the boundaries between the two communities are more ambiguous than absolute. In this sense, the protagonist Takashi's robbery of the supermarket serves as a re-enactment of the riot that had happened one hundred years before, and, in the robbery, Takashi tries to re-evaluate the ethics of the community. But the violence, even as the revival of the legend, loses its validity in the present reality. Since Takashi stakes his whole life in the robbery, its failure inevitably damages his sense identity, and he commits suicide as the consequence.

Minorities "in Japan" called "Zainichi" (Koreans living in Japan) in Oe's works are always represented as ambiguous presence that crosses boundaries. I, therefore, would like to investigate Oe's concerns with history and the nation, as well as diversity, through an investigation of the representation of minorities "in Japan" in his early work *The Cry*.

The Cry is an early full-length novel by Japanese Nobel Prize winner Kenzaburo Oe whose early and mid-career works deeply reflect the social conditions of postwar Japan. In the novel, I, the narrator, share a communal life with Tora, a mixed-race child born to a black soldier and a Japanese-American woman, and Takao, a Korean living in Japan, in the apartment of Darius Serbezov, a Slavic-American. We spend our days in a cheerful mood, riding around in Darius's car, and planning to build a yacht, *Les Amis* so that the four of us can travel to Africa. The narrator felt that this hopeful and stable community life was the time of his golden youth. The first half of the novel depicts the collapse of this small community, the end of their golden time of youth.

The Cry begins with the following recollections of a French philosopher who lived through a time of terror:

In the time of terror that all human beings are long for the rescue that is too late, if someone cries out for a far-off deliverance, all who hear it will doubt whether it is their voice.

The first-person narrator is also one of those who can hear such cries. However, he does not hear it in the time of terror, but rather in peaceful post-war Japan. In the seemingly peaceful society of Japan in the 1960s, many violent incidents and political

movements such as the Anpo Struggle took place. The climax of the novel's plot, the rape, and murder of a high school girl by Takao, is also based on an actual incident committed by a young Korean man living in Japan at the time. In other words, post-war Japan is still an age of terror for many people, who cannot adapt to social reality and are forced out of the social system.

To see through the ever-changing events in front of us and to live our daily lives in social reality, we must not directly grasp the generative changes of the events themselves but through some unchanging framework. It is, in other words, the concept. Every human being lives a conceptualized life, protecting themselves from a reality full of terror and struggle. One such conceptualization is the representation of Koreans living in Japan and its history, which troubles one of the protagonists, Kure Takao.

As Norihiro Kato has pointed out, instead of the emperor, Japan seeks its pride in the Peace Constitution as the core of its politics after the war. Thus, instead of the Emperor System, the new nation-state is rebuilt around a different kind of grand narrative. However, in this process, the voices of those who are forced out of the mainstream discourse formation and conceptualization of the society, such as the Takao and other Koreans living in Japan, are silenced.¹

I think that the "cry" heard by someone like Takao and the narrator, who are unable to adapt to a conceptualized and stable reality, is the effect of something that cannot fit into the conceptualization and is thus forced out. And since it is impossible to be conceptualized by words, it becomes a "cry". I believe that the impossibility of representation of "the cry", which refuses the stable conceptualization, presents the relationship between representation and diversity in the early and middle works of Kenzaburo Oe.

In this work, the narrator identifies himself as an ordinary college student, but sometimes he feels anxious about his own life, so he willingly joins the small community. Taka and Tora, unable to feel the society around them as their true land, are aiming for their true land in the distance. That is, they are unable to adapt to the social reality of postwar Japan and constantly driven by the desire to depart from it. When the narrator

¹ Kato, Norihiro (2015), *Introduction to Postwar Japan*, Tokyo: Chikumashobo.

reminisces his past communal life in the middle of the novel, he feels that his departure on Yacht "Les Amis with Darius is not a sign of youth, but eternity itself. At that moment, he has already known that Darius had invited the three of them into the shared house for homosexual purposes. He even feels a sense of hatred towards Darius. Still, he feels that the three of them are residual orphans after Darius left. It is believed that Darius and the Yacht Les Amis itself, which was built with his funds, play a legal role in the name of the Father to stabilize the community.

The small community maintained under the aegis of Darius, who is an American, itself can be considered as a metaphor symbolizing postwar Japan. The narrator represents the Japanese, while KureTakao, a Korean living in Japan, signifies the historical contradictions of Japan. And the presence of Tora, a mixed-race child of a black soldier and a Japanese-American woman, symbolizes the symbiotic relationship between Japan and the United States after the war. Therefore, the fact that these different peoples maintain a communal life under the patronage of Darius, an American, is a microcosm of the social reality of post-war Japan. Moreover, Darius's Slavic-American status probably alludes to the influence of the Soviet Union in the post-war period.

Here, Darius's existence becomes a conceptual existence that departs from his personal truth. He created this small community because of his homosexual desires, however, to maintain it, he must hide his truth from the three community members. In other words, he is constantly repressing an anti-conceptual personal reality. This ambivalent feeling periodically appears on his body in severe epileptic fits and the resulting cries. It is also why he lashes out in unnatural outrage at the shooting of a Japanese farm woman by an American soldier, an incident that threatens Japan's post-war regime based on the agreement between Japan and the United States. However, he is soon attacked by Japanese youths who demonstrate the shooting. This causes the most violent epileptic attack he has ever had. That night, their communal house is surrounded by the painful cries of Darius, which can also be seen as a sign of the overflow of his personal truth repressed by his conceptualizing role. As a result, he is forced to leave the country due to a violent incident in which he imprisons a Japanese boy.

Tora is the purest among the three boys who share their lives in the communal house. When Darius tells the three of them that he has invited them to the communal

house to atone for shooting a boy in Korea after he committed the crime, only Tora really believes him. And in the novel, unlike the narrator and Takao with their multi-layered worries, Tora's every action is to build the yacht and return to his real land, Africa. And he is the only one of the three who does not feel the "cry". Later, when Takao remembers his life in the community before committing the crime, he feels that Tora's presence brought equilibrium to the community, just like the yacht. He also feels that Tora's desire to go to Africa is the actual embodiment of his own metaphysical dissatisfaction. Many of the characters in Oe's novels have mysterious names. Except for the narrator, whose name is not explicitly mentioned, the other two boys in the community have Chinese characters representing a kind of animal in their names, Taka (hawk) and Tora (tiger), respectively. However, unlike Kure Takao, Tora is only a nickname. This implies that Tora is positioned between the narrator, a transparent being who has no name in the novel, and Takao. If the narrator, as a university student, represents those who feel uncomfortable with the social reality of Japan but still try to adapt to it, Takao represents those who cannot adapt to the reality at all and are detached from it. At the end of the novel, the narrator hears himself and Takao's desolate cries. If the narrator and Takao are essentially the same, the two sides of one, then Tora is rather a symbolic embodiment of their anxiety and desire. This is also why the narrator thinks that Tora is the only person worthy of being on the yacht's crew, symbolizing the time of their golden youth with hearts of pure gold.

So, what does Tora's desire to go to his own true land signify? It seems to be the desire for conceptualization that stabilizes their identities. The narrator has an intense syphilis phobia after spending a night with a prostitute. It can be said that he willingly seeks the identity of a syphilitic, as he feels disconnected from reality. Later, he voluntarily joins a community to attain a stable individual reality. And that is why Takao is so obsessed with his identity as a monster. Therefore, the yacht and the voyage to Africa give them hope of a stable conceptualization in their community. In this sense, the desire to go beyond and the cry in the work can be considered as two effects of the same thing. The cries that emerge with death and violence signify the return of what had been repressed in the process of conceptualization, while going to one's true land was a desire for a conceptualized personal reality that did not yet exist. Both may be a kind of effect

of historical truths which is forced out from the social reality of post-war Japan.

After the disappearance of Darius, Tora disguises himself as an American soldier and attempts to rob a bank to earn money to build a yacht. However, when the "Tora" preliminarily wears the uniforms in a bar area near the base in Yokosuka, he is found by the U.S. military police and shot dead. The incident itself in which Tora, symbolizing Japan's post-war reality, is shot dead by the U.S. military reflects a critical consciousness of post-war Japan. More importantly, however, it symbolizes the eventual futility of the narrator and Takao's efforts to find a stable, conceptualized reality.

In the novel, Tora positions himself as a racial tiger, a speck of black and yellow blood. Tora's undefinable and ambiguous quality draws out the desire of the narrator and Takao to transcend the boundaries defined by the concept of reality. Tora, an ambiguous being created by the post-war society, ultimately becomes a victim of it. The very existence of Tora in the work illustrates the ambiguity of social reality in post-war Japan and the power of the conceptualization. In the face of the power of conceptualization, all defiance is ultimately reinterpreted and then incorporated into the system.

In the novel, Takao gives himself two different definitions: the "demon of masturbation" and the monster. In *The Cry*, when things repressed by social reality come to the surface, it is always in the forms of absurd sexuality and violence that contradict conceptualization and rationalism. In the novel positions his masturbation as the best form of self-enclosed sexual activity. However, after Tora's death and the collapse of the community, Takao discovers that he once was able to masturbate successfully because he felt the presence of Darius and his friends behind him. In other words, it was only in the community, balanced by the yacht and Tora, that he was able to complete his self-enclosed sexuality. With the collapse of the community, he loses his definition of himself as the "demon of masturbation". So, he becomes obsessed with his own monstrosity more than ever before. As a consequence, he commits the rape and murder of a high school girl.

Takao sees his crime as a way to claim the land of monsters and to take revenge on his enemies, the ordinary people of this country. In other words, to assert his existence as an outsider to the conceptualized social realities and the people who live in adaptation to them. The specific scene of Takao's crime is also full of absurdity and coincidence. When he accidentally goes up to the rooftop to see if the fish in the pool of the high school,

he used to go to are dead, he happens to see the girl there. The night before, he had thrown a single stone towards the houses in order to vent his anger. However, the stone he threw did not make a single sound, as if it is sucked in by something huge and invisible. He understands this mighty thing to be the god that protects the ordinary people without anxiety. As we have seen, god here is a chain of various concepts and representations that constitute the social reality of post-war Japan. It has an immensity that covers the whole of society and invisibility like the air that people breathe. However, at the very moment when Takao kills the high school girl, he hears the words from the god, "These things cannot happen in reality." At the very moment Takao committed his crime, the absurdity of what is repressed by external reality defeated the rationalism of conceptualization. At that point, he became a veritable monster. In this sense, this high school girl who died an absurd death is also a victim of the social system of post-war Japan.

However, Takao's defiance is eventually reinterpreted and incorporated into the conceptualization process by two systems of social reality. These are the mass media and the judicial system. After committing the crime, Takao sends a statement to the newspaper to assert his monstrosity. Soon, however, more and more people started sending statements in his name. The media began to interpret his crimes as they pleased. Unable to bear it, he eventually gives himself up to the police. The judge, however, is indifferent to the reason for his crime, which he claims to be his own monstrosity, but is concerned with the specific details of the crime. In these two processes, Takao's voice of his own truth is completely silenced.

Eventually, the narrator receives a letter from Darius. He is now an English teacher in Paris. The narrator sends him a letter telling him about the death of Tora and the crime of Takao. He accepts Darius' invitation and leaves for Paris after submitting his withdrawal form to the university. He will be the only one of the three to leave Japan and head for a distant country. However, this journey is not filled with hope as he once dreamed but covered with a kind of vague desolation. It is because he realizes that the world on the other side of the border is also regulated by conceptualization, just as Japan is. This gives rise to a kind of desolate feeling of helplessness to escape the shackles of conceptualized social reality personal truth, no matter how much it collides with personal truth. The narrator describes this feeling of desolate helplessness as "desolate toshite

desolate to desolate tari." Here, "toshite", "to", and "tari" all mean "be" in Japanese. The sentence itself is grammatically incorrect, but the three consecutive "be" words add weight to the narrator's sense of helplessness. The contrast between the grammatical error in the sentence and the intense heaviness he feels from it tells that, like the "cry," my sense of desolation is also impossible to represent through language and concepts.

When the narrator arrives in Paris, he meets Darius in a café in Bastille, in the midst of a demonstration against the OAS. Seeing Darius persuades him that they must love each other in their own way in the name of the community without accepting the reality of his homosexuality, the narrator hears a "desolate and painful cry of dawn" deep inside him. It seems to be a cry of fear from Kure Takao and himself.

The Cry is a novel full of despair about the frustrations of youth, but it also shows us the path to diversity through this experience. If one defines anything with a single concept, it will always draw a boundary and suppress those who cannot conform to this concept. In the novel, the very concept of Koreans in Japan and Japanese becomes a kind of violence that represses Takao and ultimately leads to his crime. Therefore, the effects of the cry and desire outside the concept's framework should be considered an embodiment of the diversity that obscures the concept itself. This is represented in Oe's text by the conflict between the subjectivity that cannot be defined with one certainty and the conceptual reality.

In the novel, multiple entities try to speak for Takao himself, including the people who impersonate him after his crimes, the mass media and the judicial system, as well as the narrator. All the other chapters in the five-chapter novel are told from the first-person perspective of the narrator, except for the fourth chapter, which describes Takao's behaviours and psychological changes from a third-person omniscient perspective. In chapter 4, we can see a timid, ordinary side of Takao that was made invisible by the narration of the other chapters. Eventually, the narrator could not understand Takao until the end of the novel. Thus, the voice of Takao is arbitrarily interpreted and silenced. In this sense, *The Cry* once again reminds us of the question posed by Gayatri Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?"² In the novel, all who try to speak for Takao in turn repress him

² Spivak, G.C.(1988)'Can the Subaltern Speak' in *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, Cary Nelson and Larry Grossberg(eds),Urbana: University of Illinois Press,pp.271-313.

and turn his voice into cries. This kind of characterization in Oe's novels requires the readers to focus on the minorities on the margins who are repressed by social reality and differences of their personal experience.

The Portrayal of “the Others” in William Faulkner’s “Yoknapatawpha” and Kenzaburō Ōe’s “The Village (*Tanima no Mura*)”

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Abstract

Numerous Japanese writers have admitted to a direct influence of Faulkner’s works on their writings, but Kenzaburō Ōe, one of the leading writers and pacifists of Japan’s postwar era, is the author who actually seems to embody not just Faulkner’s narratives and styles but also his beliefs. They both wrote about despair and disastrous reality that underscore the toughness and endurance of humans in their attempts at conveying a universal truth that speaks to so many people.

Besides making use of Faulkner’s techniques and the metaphysics of temporality, Ōe has set the locales of his writings in a mythic cosmos he refers to as “The Village (*Tanima no mura*),” which is a very similar space to Faulkner’s fictional “Yoknapatawpha” county. And, just as Faulkner introduces “Yoknapatawpha” as a microcosm of the American Southern “community” and its culture that fostered him, Ōe constructs “The Village” as a remote place, which resembles his native village. He often represents Japan from the perspective of this marginal, off-center region of the countryside.

In both Faulkner’s “Yoknapatawpha” and Ōe’s “The Village,” “the others” play crucial roles in shaping that “community” they’re portrayed within. The “black mammy” stereotype attached to one of the central characters Dilsey in Faulkner’s *The Sound and the Fury* (1929) provides a more restricted and inadequate reading than the ones that carefully examine her actions. One might argue that she displays a loyal servitude, which is signature trait of a black mammy, but her loyalty is out of fulfilling her employment obligations. While being an authoritative presence to both the Compson children and her own community, she also holds onto a unique morality and belief system which marks her as an individual. She subverts the authenticity of the stereotypes, transcending their restricting limitations even within the stereotypical settings. In *Absalom, Absalom!* (1936),

Clytie, the mulatto daughter of Thomas Sutpen and an unnamed black slave, shows the most heroic endurance of all, though from birth to death she is Sutpen's "victim." Symbolically, it is she who sets fire to the mansion to mark the fall of the "design," perishing herself in the blaze that brings all to ruin, seeing the first and the last just like Dilsey.

While, in "Yoknapatawph," African Americans are mostly portrayed as "the Others," we see different types of "the Others" in Ōe's "The Village." In "The Catch" (1958), the black American soldier, who is captured by the villagers, transforms the community. Even though he is murdered at the end, he still contributes to changing it irrevocably. "The Others" are also portrayed in *Cry* (1963), *The Silent Cry* (1967), and other novels, appearing as Japanese Koreans and even as Japanese characters at other times.

By comparing different novels by the authors, I try to look into the ways Faulkner and Ōe portrayed "the Others," their tested existence, and their identities in a hybrid, yet ambiguous "community," and also reveal how "the Others" both directly and indirectly shape the "community" as it collapses, while transcending stereotypes and relativizing their socially and historically defined image as "the others."

Numerous Japanese writers have admitted to a direct influence of Faulkner's works on their writings, but Kenzaburō Ōe, one of the leading writers and pacifists of Japan's postwar era, is the author who truly seems to embody not just Faulkner's narratives and styles but also his beliefs. They both wrote about despair and disastrous reality that underscore the toughness and endurance of humans as both attempt to convey "universal truths" that speak to many people, and the absence of this truths in any story shall make it ephemeral as Faulkner once pointed out¹.

"During the last catastrophic World War, I was a little boy and lived in a remote, wooded valley on Shikoku Island in the Japanese Archipelago, thousands of miles away from here."²

With these words Ōe opened his Nobel Prize acceptance speech in Stockholm in 1994,

¹ William Faulkner. Nobel Lecture, December 10 1950. <https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/literature/1949/faulkner/speech/> October 15 2021

² Kenzaburo Ōe. "Japan, the Ambiguous and Myself." Nobel Lecture, December 7 1994. http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/literature/laureates/1994/oe-lecture.html October 15 2021

Strongly emphasizing his special childhood in this village hemmed in by the forests of Shikoku, which later became the place where he had set many of his novels referring to as “The Village (*Tanima no mura*).”

Besides making use of Faulkner’s techniques and the metaphysics of temporality, Ōe’s “The Village,” is a very similar space to Faulkner’s fictional “Yoknapatawpha” county. Just as Faulkner introduces “Yoknapatawpha” as a microcosm of the American Southern “community” and its culture that fostered him, Ōe constructs “The Village” as a remote place, which resembles his native village while representing Japan from the perspective of this marginal, off-center region of the countryside.

Both Faulkner’s “Yoknapatawpha” and Ōe’s “The Village,” seem *uncannily* similar in a Freudian sense as both are somewhat alike and different at the same time. Although the two Nobel laureates are different in terms of nationality, culture and the language they both created their worlds in, it’s hard to overlook the similarities both their mythical worlds share, especially the portrayal of “the Others”. In both of their worlds “the Others” play a crucial role in shaping that “community” they’re portrayed and othered within. While in “Yoknapatawph,” African Americans are mostly portrayed as “the Others,” we see different types of “the Others” in Ōe’s “The Village,” sometimes appearing as Japanese Koreans (*ZaiNichi Chousenjin* 在日朝鮮人) or even as Japanese characters at other times.

By comparing different novels by Faulkner and Ōe, I try to look into the ways they portrayed “the Others,” their tested existence, and their identities in a hybrid, yet ambiguous “community,” and also reveal how “the Others” both directly and indirectly shape the “community” they exist within as it collapses while transcending stereotypes and relativizing their socially and historically defined image as “the Others.” I will also examine how otherness helped to highlight the liminality portrayed in both Faulkner’s and Ōe’s worlds.

Faulkner’s 4th novel and the 2nd to be set in “Yoknapatawpha” county *The Sound and the Fury* (1929), which didn’t receive that much attention when it was first published, is one of the very first novels that examines closely “the Others” in “Yoknapatawpha” with the character of the “black mammy” Dilsey.

The novel, which revolves around the rise and the fall of the aristocratic 19th century

Southern Compsons that advocated conventional Southern values, is divided into four sections and while the first three sections are narrated by the Compson sons Benji, Quentin and Jason telling the story of the fourth Compson child their sister Caddy, the fourth and last section isn't narrated by Caddy as first time readers would assume, but in this section Faulkner changes the first person narration seen in the first three sections into an omniscient narrator having Dilsey as the central figure. Which begs the question why Dilsey not Caddy? and why is it narrated by an omniscient narrator not Dilsey herself? The answers to these questions can be found through analyzing Dilsey who's portrayed as "the other."

Dilsey is never given a narrative voice throughout the novel and we're not given the chance to see things through her marginalized perspective or even get a closer look into her past to understand more about her personhood. She is also called "mammy" by other characters as early as page 4 of the novel before we even get to know her name which attaches the "black mammy" stereotype to her, providing a more restricted and inadequate reading than the ones that carefully examine her actions. One might argue that she displays a loyal servitude, which is a signature trait of a "black mammy" but Dilsey's role is much more central than just being the "black mammy" and the marginal other. During a 1957 interview at Virginia University³ Faulkner remarked "there was Dilsey that held the whole thing together and would continue to hold the whole thing together for no reward."

Starting with Benji who experiences life through "smell", Dilsey seems to be the only one besides Caddy that actually cares about him, as she tells Quentin "He smell what you tell him when he want to. Don't have to listen nor talk" (*TSATF* 74), which shows a deep understanding of Benji's mind that only she has. Although Quentin doesn't mention her often in his section, for him it's she who resembles home not his careless and selfish mother as Dilsey's memory floods his mind during the moments leading up to his suicide. "I didn't know that I really had missed Roskus and Dilsey and them until that morning in Virginia" (72). Dilsey also appears as the nurturer and the mother figure of the Compson children including Caddy's daughter Miss Quentin who when brought into the house as a

³ Writing and Literature Classes at Virginia university May 2 2021.
https://faulkner.lib.virginia.edu/display/wfaudio26_1.html#wfaudio26_1.24 October 15 2021

baby Dilsey says, "Who else gwine raise her cep me? Aint I raised ev'y one of y'all?" (168). Dilsey continues doing her best to keep the Compsons from an inevitable "Doom" while simultaneously caring for her own family the Gibsons maintaining an authoritative presence to both. Dilsey's loyalty is out of fulfilling her employment obligations and she also holds onto a unique morality and belief system which marks her as an individual. She subverts the authenticity of the stereotypes, transcending the limitations enforced within a stereotype such as the "black mammy". More importantly, while the Compsons couldn't accept the past and each one of them seemed to "have one foot inside "now," and the rest of their body in "yesterday","⁴ almost trapped in a liminal space, Dilsey is the only one who seems to be in a post-liminal space "accepting the moment in which "now" becomes "will be""⁵ under whatever circumstances.

While Dilsey wasn't explicitly verbally expelled, Clytie from *Absalom, Absalom!* (1936) was.

Absalom! details the rise and fall of Thomas Sutpen, a white man born into poverty in West Virginia, who comes to Yoknapatawpha in Mississippi with the complementary aims of gaining wealth and becoming a powerful family patriarch through building a plantation. When coming to Yoknapatawpha, Sutpen brought in twenty slaves of whom two were women and one of them was Clytie his mulatto daughter who he never acknowledged.

Clytie (Clytemnestra) like Dilsey never gets a narrative voice, and all we get to know about her is either told by Sutpen's first friend in Yoknapatawpha General Compson to his son Mr. Compson, or Sutpen's sister-in-law and one-time fiancée Rosa Coldfield to Quinten. The first time we're introduced to her through Rosa's words as the "coffee-colored" Sutpen face and as the one who always kept Judith's company, Sutpen's daughter from his white wife Ellen Coldfield. Furthermore, when Rosa is reminiscing her childhood she remarks, "Even as a child, I would not even play with the same objects which she and Judith played with...[my childhood] had also taught me not only to instinctively fear her and what she was, but to shun the very objects which she had touched"(AA/140). Also when Rosa was explaining about the time she went to live at

⁴ Ibid, Faulkner's definition of a "not wise" person.

⁵ Ibid, Faulkner's definition of a "wise" person.

Sutpen's Hundred during the war she recalls how difficult it was to live at the same place where Clytie lived saying that "[Clytie] *was so foreign to me and to all that I was that we might have been not only of different races (which we were), not only of different sexes (which we were not), but of different species, speaking no language which the other understood,..*" (153,154). Moreover, she describes her as the "Cerberus of his [Sutpen's] private hell." Rosa isn't the only one who physically and verbally excludes Clytie but even Quentin's friend Shreve when trying to offer his interpretation of Quentin's past and his first encounter with Clytie, he imagines Clytie to be "*..a little dried-up woman not much bigger than a monkey and who might have been any age up to ten thousand years, in faded voluminous skirts and an immaculate headrag, her bare coffee-colored feet wrapped around the chair rung like monkeys do, smoking a clay pipe and watching you with eyes like two shoe buttons buried in the myriad wrinkles of her coffee-colored face...*" (214).

Despite the exclusion and dehumanization Clytie suffers, and the "mulatto" stereotype she had to live within, she's treated Rosa with "*More grace and respect than anyone else*" as she saw through her and everybody else which makes her the character that possesses more knowledge than any of the other Sutpens. When Mr. Compson tells Quentin about Sutpen's secret visit to New Orleans in which he had met up with his first wife whom he'd left with his son once he knew that she might be an octoroon, Mr. Compson emphasizes saying, "No one but your grandfather and perhaps Clytie" (p. 70) ever knew that Sutpen made this journey. Which shows how Clytie knew her father's secret problems in New Orleans just like she had known that Judith's suitor was their half-brother, and that Henry was guilty of fratricide, yet again "for the sake of the man who had been her father too as well as for the sake of the family" (350) she decides to bury Sutpen's secrets in flames.

Faulkner suggests that, just like the "mammy" label with Dilsey, the "coffee-color" epithet and the "mulatto" label both doesn't faithfully reflect the reality of Clytie's personhood but rather carry the speaker's will to other her to solidify themselves, yet within that Clytie shows the most heroic endurance of all. Despite being Sutpen's victim from birth to death, it is she who sets fire to the Sutpen's Hundred to mark the fall of the "design," perishing herself in the blaze that brings all to ruin, seeing the first and the last

just like Dilsey who “seed de first en de last” of The Compson Family.

“The Others” In Ōe’s “The Village” seem to possess as much knowledge or power or even both as those portrayed in “Yoknapatawpha.”

Ōe’s Literary talents were first recognized in Japan when he won the prestigious Akutagawa prize with his novella *The Catch* (1958) which depicts a very unique image of a perpetuated cycle of othering and otherness.

The catch is set in a time near the end of the Pacific war and chronicles how children in a rural Japanese village “The Village” react to the detainment of a downed black American airman in their midst after his plane crashes into the deep woods surrounding “The Village” while on an air-raid. “I,” also called Frog by the town’s clerk, is one of the villagers’ children who spends a lot of time observing the captivated soldier with his younger brother and one of his friends Harelip.

In one of his essays, Ōe states that “The soldier clearly represents, almost to the point of allegory, what lies "outside" of the village.”⁶

Just like Clytie, the black soldier, who never gets a narrative voice and is considered as an “outsider,” gets both verbally and physically excluded by both the adults and the kids of “The Village.” The villagers don’t only call him *Kokujin* which is the Japanese term for black people, but they also call him *Kuronbo* which is a derogatory term that shows their power over the him gained through “othering” him with that term that portrays him as something beneath them. When the villagers found him they were “Surrounding the catch [The black soldier] solemnly as they surrounded the wild boar they hunted in winter” (*TC* 149), and when “I” asked his father why are they rearing him like an animal his father said, “He’s the same as an animal” (153). The villagers including “I” repeatedly call the black soldier an “animal” while also treating him like one and dehumanizing him in what could be considered as an attempt of solidifying their own idea of self and that’s because they themselves were “othered.”

The word “animal” in this story appears 18 times, but they’re not all referring to the soldier. When sharing a meal with his younger brother “I” says, “Eating away like a

⁶ Kenzaburo Ōe. "An attempt at self-discovery in the mythic universe of the novel." University of Oklahoma. 2002

contented animal” (147) referring to his brother. He also refers to himself as animal at other times. “I” sees himself and his brother as animals because people from the “town” treated them like ones. After the only bridge connecting them to the nearest town got crashed due to a flood and they got further cut off, “I” remarks,

“being cut off from the town caused our old but undeveloped homesteaders’ village no very acute distress. Not only were we treated like dirty animals in the town, everything we required from day to day was packed into the small compounds clustered on the slope above the narrow valley.” (140)

The villagers who were othered by people in the town and confined at the bottom of the hierarchy seem to have an undeniably similar characteristics to *Burakmin* (Japan’s untouchables) who were regarded as unclean due to their “*Kegareta* (unclean)” occupations just like “I”’s father who “made his living shooting rabbits, birds, wild boar... and trapping weasels and delivering the dried pelts to the town office” (143). That could be the reason why the clerk calls “I” Frog (*Kaeru* in Japanese) as the Japanese saying “*Kaeru no ko wa Kaeru* (A frog’s child is a frog)” which is the equivalent to “Like father, like son,” seeing “I” as no different from his father with the unclean occupation.

As “I” remarks, “to us the war was nothing more than the absence of young men in our village ,...The war did not penetrate the tough outer skin and the thick flesh.” (143,44), it was the absolute power and authority of the town over “The Village” and the otherness that the villagers struggled with that intimidated them. Their struggle only gets highlighted with the appearance of an outsider; the black soldier, as the villagers, who thought that they had finally gained a type of power through controlling and othering him, realize that they would always be othered and at the bottom of the hierarchy.

The black soldier who eventually gets killed by the villagers, might have not had Dilsey’s power or Clytie’s knowledge, but as the villagers cremate his body despite a prefectural order forbidding it, an inaudible scream from the black soldier’s corpse “encircled us [the villagers] and expanded limitlessly overhead as in a nightmare” and the smell of his melting flesh “had settled over the entire valley like the luxuriant lower branches of a giant, invisible tree,” remarking how his existence will keep affecting this community that othered him, just like Dilsey and Clytie. While his existence highlighted the otherness in the story (the town othering towards the village and the villagers’ othering

towards him,) his death highlights how “I” becomes an adult arriving to a post-liminal space where he’s no longer a child who fears death but an adult who’s used to it.

While the black soldier wasn’t given an evident power, “the Emperor of Supermarkets” in *The Silent Cry* (1967) was.

Set in the 1960s, *The Silent Cry* follows the Nedokoro brothers, Mitsusaburo a reclusive scholar and Takashi, who just returned from the United States, as they return together to their ancestral home in “The Village” in Shikoku retracing the history of their family and negotiating the sale of some family property to “the Emperor of Supermarkets,” a Korean brought to Shikoku as a slave during World War II who has since come to dominate “The Village.”

Japanese Koreans (*ZaiNichi Chousenjin*) have appeared multilabel times in Ōe’s novels but “the Emperor of Supermarkets,” is by far one of his most powerful *Zainichi* characters. Besides his offer to buy the Nedokoros’ ancestral storehouse being the reason that got the two brothers to meet again and to visit their hometown that they haven’t visited in a long time leading them to start a search in which they try to solve their family’s mystery piecing together the fragments only to create another version of history, he also displays autonomy climbing the social ladder and becoming the most dominating figure in “The Village” even with being a minority and even with the history of some members of his Korean community getting killed by the villagers in the past.

Takashi who senses discomfort towards the emperor’s rising power, pushes the youths of the village into a riot against the Emperor, looting and destroying his supermarket. After this incident one of the villagers explains to Mitsusaburo why no one sympathizes with the emperor remarking, “[the villagers] have had nothing but trouble ever since the Koreans came here” (TSC 251). While it may seem that Takashi causes the incident out of revenge for his older brother S who was killed in a raid on the Korean settlement near the village, He actually seeks reviving his family’s rebellious past that only exists within his memory. The fear of not belonging and of becoming the other is what destabilizes Takashi, driving him to believe that he can acquire respectably and status through the process of placing the Emperor as the other. Yet eventually Takashi commits suicide leaving the Nedokoro’s home to the Emperor. Like all “the Others,” the existence of the Emperor who sees the beginning and the last, highlights the liminality and the ambiguity

of this village and its history.

In post-war Japan, it wasn't only difficult for Japanese Koreans to find jobs, but it was also impossible for them to have any type of power over Japanese people like the Emperor. Although Ōe doesn't give the Emperor a narrative voice, he gives him power over those who have a narrative voice questioning the structure of history and highlighting its ambiguity.

Ōe once pointed out the importance of using fiction and imagination to change and solve problems of today, and that's what both Faulkner and Ōe did through their diverse portrayal of "the Others." While delving into the past of "the Others," Faulkner and Ōe portrayed how "the Others" were alienated and excluded physically and verbally within the narratives of those who could be considered their signifiers and in a world where otherness perpetuates endlessly, both writers presented a past, that was not available in history, where "the Others," held either power or a significant knowledge or both, thus prevailing and transcending the stereotypes that history had tried to limit them within.

Diversifying Histories and Narratives: William Faulkner's Ghost and Oe Kenzaburo's Spirit

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Abstract

Much critical attention has been paid to the influence of one of the greatest American writers William Faulkner on the Japanese Nobel laureate Oe Kenzaburo. He adapts not only Faulkner's motifs in his works to represent the local village in Shikoku but also the multi-layered and mythical narrative structures. I would like to focus on Faulkner's influence on Oe's novels, examining the image of the ghost with which both Oe and Faulkner attempt to make an issue of the representation of history.

When Oe and Faulkner started to create their major works, they both came to the historical points where the grand narratives of the history in their own regions and countries were unable to represent the realities they were experiencing. For Faulkner, the reality of the declining post-bellum South could no longer uphold the racist myths of white supremacy. Oe, living in the post-war Japan, also found himself in a situation where he had to deviate from the realistic traditions of the modern Japanese novels. Faulkner's creative imagination, as he had admitted himself, comes from the "sublimation of the actual to the apocryphal," of which *Absalom, Absalom!* serves as the best example. The novel shows the process of how the four narrators attempt to reconstruct the actual but unrecoverable past of Thomas Sutpen, a "ghost" whose career mirrors the history of the South and whose fascination for the narrators suggests the lingering influence of the Southern myths on the present. The results of their retelling are the different versions of the Sutpen story told from the respective points of view of the narrators rather than a single, truthful account of his career.

It is not difficult to note that Oe's mythical native village in *The Silent Cry* borrows the narrative structure and the image of the ghost from Faulkner's novels. The history of the riot, which had happened one hundred years before, is revived in the form of an abolished

local festival called “Mireisai,” where people dress themselves as the dead so that the ghosts of past could revisit the present. But the eventual failure of the re-enactment of the history indicates the loss of the centrality of the traditional Japan.

The methodology of multiple narrative perspectives negates the absolute power and authenticity in both their novels. The lost realities of the past are, therefore, represented as mere possibilities in diverse narratives. I intend to explore how Oe transforms Faulkner’s use of the image of the ghost, which represents the history of slavery, to the local festival and folklores to reveal the loss of centrality in the post-war Japan; and, furthermore, how their narratives broaden the possibilities of the representations of history through their very refusals to grant authority to narratives.

American writer William Faulkner is mostly known for his series of novels and short stories set in a fictional world called Yoknapatawpha County, which is based on his hometown, Oxford, Mississippi. In his novels, Faulkner always experimented on new ways for representation. *Absalom, Absalom!*, like his previous novels, continues his exploration of technique and structure to further stress the racial problems inherent in the narratives of the Southern history and reality. *Absalom, Absalom!* focuses on the interactions between different perspectives, and on how such interactions expand the legend of the past and perpetuate it as a public truth. *Absalom, Absalom!* is critically acclaimed as his best work, and Faulkner himself showed great confidence in it: “I think it’s the best novel yet written by an American” (364).

The 1994 Nobel Laureate Oe Kenzaburo is generally considered as a Japanese writer who has received most influence from writers all over the world among the post-war Japanese writers. In his novel, he frequently quotes the lines of other writers and poets to enrich his own fictional world; and, among all the others, William Faulkner’s works might have offered abundant imaginative resources for Oe’s creation. According to *Oe Kenzaburo Chronology* by Hurubayashi Takashi, Oe read Faulkner’s novel as a twenty-year-old student in the autumn of 1955, and Faulkner’s influence can be found in Oe’s major works such as *A Personal Matter* (1964) and *The Silent Cry* (1967). Born in a mountain village in Shikoku, Oe adapts his local world to his novels like Faulkner. Oe’s parallel to the Yoknapatawpha county is a mythical space called “the village.” In his essay *A Human Being as a Fragile Article* (1970), Oe says he had been attracted to the narrative

structure in Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha Saga, in which a third person narrates a savage hero who drives himself towards self-destruction due to his excessive passion; and Oe finds a similarity between the Yoknapatawpha and the village he had known as a child (204-205).

The Silent Cry is an example of Oe's adaptation of Faulkner's narrative structure and techniques to his own writings. In *Absalom, Absalom!*, Faulkner highlights the gothic image of the "ghost" throughout *Absalom!*. He adopts the image to illustrate not only the qualities of the characters but also those of the Southern social structure; and, in this way, he presents the history as a narrative open to interpretation rather than as a fixed truth. Oe's counterpart of Faulkner's "ghost" is the "spirit." In the traditional Japanese religion, it is believed that the dead would return to the real world during the local festival called Bon festival, and it would possess the living people in the performance called Nembutsu dance. The "spirit" serves as an important element in the novel to connect the past and the present, and also to diversify the historical narratives. I would like to explore how Faulkner and Oe broaden the possibilities of the representations of history through the image the "ghost" in *Absalom, Absalom!* and the "spirit" in *The Silent Cry*.

1. The Make-Believe of the History

The story of *The Silent Cry* revolves around Nedokoro Mitsusaburo and Natsuko, a couple agonized by the disabled child left in an institution, and Mitsusaburo's brother Takashi. After returning to Japan from the United States, Takashi invites Mitsusaburo and Natsuko to go back to their hometown village in the forests of Shikoku for a new life. Takashi is extremely obsessed with his great-grandfather's brother, who had been a leader in a peasant revolt a hundred years ago, and his brother, S, who had been killed in a raid of the Korean settlement. In attempt to become a violent hero, Takashi organizes a football team, and later leads an uprising against the "Emperor of the supermarket," a Korean settler who takes the economic dominance in the village.

The image of the "spirit" in *The Silent Cry* is an important element in Oe's representation of the past. According to Mitsusaburo's account, the "spirit" is directly related to the Bon festival, during which the Nembutsu dance are performed. He says, "these beings who came back from the forest to be greeted with such reverence by the

inhabitants were ‘spirits’... and it was to placate them that people devoted so much energy to the Bon festival” (124). And Takashi’s admiration for the warrior’s death of S mainly comes from the dance during the festival. He recalls that,

As a kid I actually saw...the ‘spirit’ of S...fighting the men from the Korean settlement at the head of a party of young men, until he was finally beaten to death...That’s taken directly from a sudden moment of stillness in the Nembutsu dance... it wasn’t a memory of the real-life raid on the Korean settlement, but an experience in the world of the dance, in which the facts were reworked in visible form through the communal emotions of the people of the valley.” (123).

It is evident that Takashi regards, or makes himself believe, the representation of S in the performance as the true history.

In *The Silent Cry*, the past is represented as a space open to diverse interpretations. Although Takashi believes in the heroic images of S and the great-grandfather’s brother, Mitsusaburo holds a totally opposite view on the death of S. In his memories, contrary to a charismatic and heroic leader of the raid as Takashi believes, S is only a scapegoat in compensation for the death of a Korean in an earlier raid. Takashi’s obsession with his great grandfather’s brother is also contradicted by other records and narratives. It is generally believed that the great grandfather’s brother had been the only survivor in the revolt; he had later escaped to the United States, according to John Manjiro’s words. Even among the villagers who know the events of S and the great grandfather’s brother, the interpretations of the past are quite different to each other due to their personal biases.

The myth-making of the past in *The Silent Cry* is one of the major motifs borrowed from Faulkner’s *Absalom, Absalom!*. In the novel, Thomas Sutpen is a key character closely related to the image of the ghost. He is depicted in the following words: “the ghost [who] mused with shadowy docility as if it were the voice which he haunted where a more fortunate one would have had a house” (AA, 6). In the narratives, readers know that he has been born as a poor white who determines to establish a dynasty of his own and his white descendants. But his plan eventually fails because the son Henry somehow shoots his friend Bon at the threshold of Sutpen’s Hundred. The consequent flight of Henry from his home costs the heir to Sutpen’s dynasty and, thus, voids the

whole plan of Sutpen.

Sutpen is a non-existence that can only reside in words, long dead, without substantial or physical traces of his being, just as “the deep South dead since 1865 and peopled with garrulous outraged baffled ghosts” (*AA*, 6). His career is the reflection of the first settlers to arrive in the South who established the traditions of the planter class based on slavery. The establishment of Sutpen’s Hundred is a similar process that the antebellum Southern plantation owners must have gone through; they had built not only an economy based on slavery, but also the supremacy of the whites by denying the identities of the Africans and the African-Americans.

The story of Sutpen is transmitted from the others to the central character Quentin in an impeded form. It does not make sense and lacks coherence, but the narrators refuse to fill out the blanks lest the narratives of Sutpen based on the white supremacy should fall apart. They have to keep the narrative incomplete, as Quentin’s father Mr. Compson does in face of the confusion in the Sutpen story, saying “perhaps that’s it: [the stories] don’t explain and we are not supposed to know” (*AA!*, 83). By concealing some crucial information of the Sutpens, the characters try to perpetuate the myth of the Southern values and history represented by Sutpen’s career.

Absalom, Absalom! interweaves different narratives from different characters revolving around Sutpen. The information of Sutpen’s career is presented in the form of conversations between four characters: Rosa Coldfield, Jason Compson, Quentin Compson and Shreve McCannon. Each of them provides an interpretation based on their respective understandings and biases. By using the image of the ghost to represent Sutpen and the Southern values he embodies, *Absalom, Absalom!* illustrates that the generally believed “history” is only one of the versions of “*the lost irrevocable might-have-been*” (*AA!*, 113). It also suggests that fiction can be truer than the “history,” since Quentin’s imagination is perhaps “*a might-have-been which is more true than truth*” (*AA!*, 118).

By means of the multiple narratives of the past in their novels, Oe and Faulkner question the validity of the single absolute narrative of the history exclusive of any other possibilities.

2. The Search of the Identity through the Past

The image of the ghost in *Absalom, Absalom!* highlights not only the history, but the influence of the past on the present as well. Quentin serves as an example of how the individual in the present is afflicted by the myths of the South. As the reorganizer of the narrative, he projects his own incestuous desires onto the Sutpens. Although personally biased, his interpretation is the most convincing version of the story, and it does reveal how the narratives of histories are passed on in the South by the omission of the past.

Born to a Southern aristocratic family in decline after the Civil War, Quentin fails to establish a solid identity as a Southern gentleman according to the social codes, because he can neither prevent his sister Caddy's sexual maturation nor control her sexuality by confining her to the house. Therefore, he tries to make sense out of his failure in the real world and to find a complete identity through the narrative of Sutpen by projecting himself onto the character of Henry. However not until his confrontation with Henry in the Sutpen's Hundred does he realize that his ideal Henry is a frail person lying in bed waiting for his death. Trapped in the racial dichotomy and the belief in the absolute narrative of the South, Quentin expresses his ambivalence towards his home land in a desperate voice: "*I don't. I don't! I don't hate [the South]! I don't hate it!*" (AA!, 311).

Like Quentin in *Absalom, Absalom!*, who cannot fully identify himself as a member of the Southern upper class, Takashi feels a similar loss of the sense of identity, and tries to find his identity. When he returns to the mountain village, he says,

now that I've come back to the valley in an attempt to make sure of my own roots, I find they've all been pulled up. I've begun to feel uprooted myself. So now I've got to put down new roots here, and to do so I naturally feel some action is necessary (59).

Takashi's loss of his sense of identity reflects a general post-war experience in Japan. The traditions gradually give way to the consumerism represented by supermarket in the novel. When he returns to the village, the traditional Bon festival has not been held for five years. The villagers have become less concerned with the local culture and have adapted to the western styles of interiors in the house.

It is in such a situation that Takashi decides to "start another rising here, to reproduce the rising of our ancestors a century ago even more realistically than the Nembutsu dance" (182). And he chooses the Nembutsu dance as the form of his rising

against the Emperor. During the uprising, “The music for the Nembutsu procession, large and small hand drums with gongs, had been continuously audible” (184). The uprising of Takashi in the form of the Nembutsu dance, therefore, provides a space for Takashi to relive the past of the “spirits,” and for the “spirits” to return to the present, by repeating what had happened in the past. In doing so, Takashi tries to identify himself with the leaders of the past revolts and raids in his own family, so that he can find his roots.

3. New Narrative Space of the Past

In *Absalom, Absalom!*, Sutpen’s career exposes the problem inherent in the racial divided South. Both Sutpen and the narrator who retell his story presuppose a set of social codes as absolute truths of nature. In presenting the process of the rise and fall of Sutpen’s design, Faulkner depicts how Sutpen has to conform strictly to the pre-existing rules in order to found his dynasty. Because Sutpen has not been born in the typical Southern community, he has to comply even more than the Southern planter class with the Southern principles, and, thus, his career literally embodies the Southern constructs of the class and racial divisions in their extreme forms. In the whole process, he does not question the validity of the white supremacy even for a single time.

Since the Sutpen story lacks necessary motivation, therefore, it is incomprehensible to the narrators. The major confusion remains unclear why Henry has to kill Bon. According to Quentin’s narratives, Charles Bon is the son of Sutpen and his first wife, Eulalia Bon, who is suspected of being partly black. In order to complete his plan, Sutpen has to repudiate them before he arrives in Jefferson. Years later, Bon comes to Sutpen for his recognition. Henry, after knowing the truth from Sutpen, has to kill Bon to prevent not only incest, but the most unacceptable possibility in the Southern society, of miscegenation. Quentin’s imagination of Sutpen’s past reveals that the white supremacy is only a social construct rather than the absolute of the nature. Quentin’s version of the story opens up the narrative space for the omitted African-American presence, and it demonstrates that the fiction can do what the “history” refuses to do—the recognition of the black presence the “history” tries to erase.

In *The Silent Cry*, Mitsusaburo and Takashi are depicted as doubles of each other. Contrary to Takashi’s violent passion, Mitsusaburo cannot identify with his family history:

Among the various human types found in the Nedokoro family, I'm the kind that refuses to be inspired to heroic thoughts by the 1860 business. It's the same even in my sleep: far from identifying with great-grandfather's intrepid brother, I have wretched dreams in which I'm a bystander cowering in the storehouse, incapable even of firing a gun like great-grandfather (177-178).

In the contrast of the two characters can be found an opposition between the overemphasis on the pre-war traditions and history, and the complete loss of identity in the post-war life.

After the death of Takashi, the discovery of the cellar under the storehouse provides new lights to the identity of the great grandfather's brother and Mitsusaburo. He had not abandoned his fellows or escaped to the U.S. Rather, he might have lived in the cellar before he had joined another revolt ten years later. The great grandfather's brother is neither a heroic leader as Takashi tries to be, nor a coward as Mitsusaburo imagines himself to be; he is both a participant in a revolt and a person who locks himself in the cellar. The family history is, therefore, not represented a narrative of either his or Takashi's; rather, both of their narratives contain certain aspects of the truth of the history. The new discovery of the past shows that the great grandfather's brother might have been a figure whose identity combines the traits of both Mitsusaburo and Takashi.

Oe's "spirit," like Faulkner "ghost," represents the unknowability of history, and the image opens up the possibility for multiple interpretations of the past. Moreover, the identity of the "spirit" is not fixed but more fluid than Faulkner's "ghost."

**Panel 2-2: The Spaces of Diversity in Post-War Japanese Literature:
The Ambiguities of the Outside/Inside, Tsutomu Mizukami's China,
and Yu Miri's Metaphor of the Mind (TUFS)**

**Opening Up the Spaces for Diversity in Post-World War II Japanese
Literature: An Overview**

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Abstract

As Norihiro Kato's *Haisengo Ron* [*After the Defeat*] in the late 1990s would symbolize, the trends in the study of literature in Japan have been rather conservative, often in the vein of old and new historicism.

However, we should keep in mind there have been more varied dimensions in pre- and post-WW II Japanese literature. Even before the war, Hideo Kobayashi's double-edged declaration of the death of "the private novel form" pointed to an open space for literature in the future while mystifying the private self as a mythological lost ideal. Yasunari Kawabata's *Snow Country* also hints at the latent openness in its representations of traditional Japanese values through its modernistic designs.

After the war, Osamu Dazai and Yukio Mishima dramatized the conflicts of traditional values and the changing realities and possibilities in *The Setting Sun*, *The Golden Pavillion* and other works. Oe Kenzaburo foregrounded the ambiguities of the post war period much more strikingly in "The Catch" and his subsequent works, which feature writings as the locus of ambiguities and diversity peculiar to what Nakagami Kenji later called Japan's "South."

While Oe's contemporaries such as Kobo Abe, Yasushi Inoue, and Mizukami Tsutomu explored otherness in surrealistic visions and Asian cultures, the next generation followed his lead in demystifying, "Americanizing," and diversifying Japanese culture: Yoshikichi

Furui, Ryu Murakami, Haruki Murakami, and Kenji Nakagami presented uncharted territories in their respective styles, and paved the way for the freedom of younger Japanese writers more dedicated to diversities such as Banana Yoshimoto, Eimi Yamada, Hikaru Okuizumi, and Yoko Ogawa. They also anticipated trans-national, trans-cultural writers such as Yu Miri, Levy Hideo, Mari Akasaka, or Yoko Tawada, who write from no-man's land even beyond the ambiguity of Japanese culture, which Oe defined in his Nobel Prize Lecture in 1995, "Japan, The Ambiguous, and Myself."

All the three sessions this morning, plus Carlo Stranges' presentation later in the conference, came out of our Ph.D. seminar on "cultural multiplicity" in the spring semester at TUFs, in which we read Japanese texts from Kawabata Yasunari's *Snow Country* (1935) to Ryu Murakami's *Almost Transparent Blue* (1976). Two of the students major in American literature, while the others study Japanese literature. Having worked chiefly in the field of American literature as a Japanese scholar, I have always had to recognize the two fields are intertwined inextricably with each other, particularly in the pre- and post-World War II period. The problematics related to the period resurged at the end of the 1990s when Japan faced the economic, political, and cultural realities of the time after the "bubble period," whose aftermaths were felt until the mid-90s. It was then Kato Noruhiro published his controversial book *After the Defeat* (1997) that alerted me to the trend of the time it represented.

After the progressive period of the economic boom, when "others" and new possibilities were accepted and interpreted favourably, the book took me by surprise, bringing me back to the primary scene of aggression, loss, and death. It was almost with consternation that I realized Kato was taking us back to Dazai Osamu's "Toka Ton Ton," one of his commentaries on the spiritual vacuum after the war as well as to "For Esmé— with Love and Squalor," one of the most popular representations of the war on the American side by J.D. Salinger (Kato 215-21). He alerted me to the fact that memories do not cease to exist in the individual and collective mind, which has been like an obsession among academics, writers, and readers here for good or bad. The heyday of literary theory was apparently coming to an end. The British critic Terry Eagleton was lecturing on "the illusions of postmodernism," and his American counterpart Fredric

Jameson later aired his ruminations on modernity rather than postmodernity in his book *A Singular Modernity* published in 2002.

Kato's book represented, it seemed to me, the trend back to the old historicism and the individual and collective Japanese subjectivity that was still suffering from the trauma of the War and clamouring for the recovery of its pristine, intact whole subjectivity that had been marred by the post-War Japanese constitution "tainted" by the American intervention according to him (Kato 71-71). Kato was also known for his writings on Murakami Haruki, who chronicled "our" national trauma about the *Oumu Shinrikyo* cult and their terrorist attacks in the subway system of Tokyo in his novel published in 2000. They made me wonder if the Japanese still belonged to the collective national mind, as Kato suggests in his employment of the pronoun "we" in the book.

Murakami Haruki, who represents the contemporary Japanese literary scene much more prominently than Kato or any other writers and critics both in Japan and abroad, has targeted his works for the Japanese upper-middle class, and, in stark contrast to his counterparts elsewhere such as Paul Auster and Kazuo Ishiguro, has been committed to the construction and empowerment of the rather old-fashioned Japanese male ego and subjectivity like the older generations of American writers such as Ernest Hemingway. He has treated the past and history as something that must be transcended by the progressive, intellectual, independent Japanese young male protagonists like Tazaki Tsukuru, who, according to my former colleague Professor Shibata Shoji, could be an allegorization of Japan's national body that has to deal with the buried memory of its past violence against others.¹ The romantic nostalgia for the harmonious pristine past constitutes the basic tone of Murakami's novel *The Colorless Tsukuru Tazaki and His Years of Pilgrimage* published in 2013.

In the novel, Tsukuru Tazaki goes in search of his past to heal his trauma so that he can recover the integrity of his identity and possibly get married to his girlfriend Sara, exonerating himself of his trauma to his original harmonious self, caused by the loss of a girl he used to know, significantly named "Shiro" or "White." She has vanished from life as the victim of rape and murder, and her surviving counterpart named "Kuro" or "Black,"

¹ Shoji Shibata suggested the idea to me in our conversation at Tufts.

now living in Finland, tells Tsukuru Tazaki what had happened to "White" and fills in the blank in his memory and understanding to make him whole again.

The logic of the popular novel is very familiar to Japanese readers. In *After the Defeat*, Kato bases his arguments about the postwar Japanese literature on the same logic of nostalgia, by which he affirms the purity of the original national body while denigrating the impurity of the intervention from the United States. He defines his term "After the War" as follows,

What I am trying to talk about here is the "perversity" that still prolongs the time called "After the War [*Sengo*]." "After the War" is an inverted world when everything is turned upside down. And, since nobody recognized it as such, we started calling it "After the War." (Norihiro Kato 10)

Furthermore, he adds later in his argument that it is a world after "we" have experienced "the destruction of the system of truth that had supported us." It is also a world where "there is no right answer" (Norihiro Kato 12).

Tazaki Tsukuru loses the system of truth and his sense of identity fostered in his harmonious relationship with his high school friends and nearly dies when he is, significantly, twenty years old. He starts regaining his self when he sees himself reflected in a mirror in an almost Lacanian moment, in which he realizes his intrinsic otherness to himself. However, instead of accepting his alienated status quo in his adult life, he feels split into his former pristine self and the otherness of his current self since he never forgets the moment of separation from the illusion of total identification and therefore cannot be satisfied with his imperfect, passive life in the present. The familiar problematics related to cultural and political situations before and after the war is concisely summarized here, being repeated over and over again in Kobayashi Hideo's influential pre-war essay on the private confessional novel form "Shishosetsu Ron," published in 1935 or Yukio Mishima's suicidal performance, for example.

Kobayashi's essay presents what is very similar to Kato's and Murakami's nostalgia for the lost pristine personal and national subjectivity. As you may know, he begins the essay with the quotation from Jean-Jacques Rousseau, thereby associating Japanese confessional novel form with the lost origin of the romantic self in Europe (Kobayashi 158-59). In the course of his argument, Kobayashi blames Japanese society that had

lacked a mature cultural environment like the European bourgeois society to support the mature individual self and the modern novel form and chastises the dominant trends in Japan at the time that allowed the otherness of naturalism and social realism to eclipse the centrality of the self so that the authentic novel form had receded into the background of the contemporary literary scene and died (Kobayashi 162).

Apparently, his argument is part of the controversies on the future directions Japan was to take in the face of the eclipse of the centrality of Europe, the surge of American and Soviet influences, and the attempted unification of Asia by Japan's military forces and its "liberation" from the powers of the West that led to the well-known discussions about Japan's "Transcendence of Modernity" in 1942 by mainstream critics of the time, including Kobayashi. One of the reasons he admits in his 1934 essay that the private novel form of European origin has died must also have been the diversification of the international power relations at the time. His defence of the private novel form and the declaration of its demise relegate it into a region where it cannot be harmed by the emerging new trends of the time.

However, Kobayashi, at the same time, acknowledges the power of other art forms such as social realism, naturalism, and jazz in the very act of recognizing the need for differentiating the private novel form as a privileged "pure" style, as he suggests in the essay (159, 161). His Rousseauian genealogy may be the product of the emerging other possibilities in contemporary literature and art rather than an authentic genealogy in its own right. The matured self at the core of the private novel form and the other styles of literature are the reflections of each other, but, in Kobayashi's essay, the belief in the centrality of the self becomes, through its death, the past lost origin exactly like Rousseau himself in the essay.

We have to note, however, writers like Kawabata Yasunari, whose views on gender Kumazawa Masaho will examine in the next session, do not understand the dichotomous reflections in the same way Kobayashi does. In *Snow Country*, which has been believed to be one of the most typical representations of traditional Japanese beauty, the hierarchical order of the dichotomy between the traditional and the modern is levelled in the alternations of the real and its reflection that are most conspicuously played out by the two female characters Komako and Yoko. While Komako precedes Yoko in the male

protagonist's acquaintance, Yoko precedes Komako in the order of appearance in the first scene of the novel, where the protagonist watches her as she is reflected in the mirror-like windows of the moving train as if she were projected onto the screen of the windows of the moving train like a figure in a motion picture (Kawabata). The traditional Japanese beauty is at the same time the origin and the product of the modern technology and the modernistic design of the film with which Yoko is associated throughout the novel. The former is imbued with the nature of the latter, and vice versa. Although the novel was serialized in a journal in the same year as Kobayashi's essay, Kawabata sees through the nature of the inconsistency in the dichotomous logic of the original purity and later degeneration in a more deconstructive vision. Yoko as the origin of the reflection in the windows is the reflection and double of Komako, whom the protagonist expects to see in his destination in his second visit to her. There is probably nothing familiar and original in *Snow Country*: the beauty is always the defamiliarized reflection of something else.

Nor does Dazai Osamu's representative post-war novel *The Setting Sun* (1947) about the downfall of an aristocratic family present the past as the ideal origin. Rather than mourning for the dead or dying male authorities represented by the heroine's brother and her lover, both of whom are the male doubles of the dying author himself, the novel leaves the authorship to his yet another feminine double in the fictional diary based on the actual diary of the author's lover at the time and celebrates the survival and the triumph of the ongoing present. Although it would not be appropriate to say the novel is wholly egalitarian, it discovers the possibilities of writing from the point of view of a disinherited female writer figure, by whose initiative a new family without a father is founded.

Mishima Yukio's writings and his logic in his infamous suicidal death are probably most similar to Kobayashi's, but he registered the corollaries of the defeat in the War and the end of the imperial sovereignty in his "queer" writing in *The Confession of the Mask* (1949), as Teng Mengwei will argue in the following session, in the heroine of *Thirst for Love* published in the following year, and in *The Temple of Golden Pavillion* published in 1956, which also affirms the present and the liberation of the protagonist through the loss of the absolute authority of beauty embodied in the ancient architecture.

Dazai's method in *The Setting Sun* may explain part of the similarity between post-war Japanese literature and the literature of the American South represented by William

Faulkner who has been the source of inspiration for post-war Japanese writers. Dazai recognizes the primacy of narrative acts rather than of the original past as tangible presence in *The Setting Sun*, exactly as Faulkner does in his works, particularly in *Absalom, Absalom!*, which Li Zidong and Sarah Sherweedy discussed in the session preceding this one. The situation Kato laments, in which “there is no right answer,” has not necessarily been a disadvantage for writers. I would not have to point out here that, if there is no right answer, all possible answers are valid. Such post-war writers as Inoue Yasushi and Mizukami Tsutomu, as Yang Liuan would argue, came up with unacknowledged, other visions of history and reality. Mizukami revisited familiar loci in China after the normalization of its relationship with Japan in 1972 and presented versions of historical Sino-Japanese exchanges in his imaginative reconstructions of the past.

As the previous panel, particularly Zhan Xiyi must have shown, the most influential writer who has explored the uncharted territory with determination is Oe Kenzaburo, who, from the outset of his career, has pursued the otherness of reality and history in such a work as "The Catch" (1958) that showcases the interactions between the otherness and the sameness and the openness and closure of the communal reality after the War. In the structure of his novels that usually feature doublings of characters similar to those in American novels by Mark Twain and Faulkner, he has always incorporated both aspects of the dichotomies that accompany the traditional modern construction of the self: the high and the low; the center and the margin; male and female; Japanese and non-Japanese; sanity and insanity; chastity and squalor; the real and the fictional. In one of his essays, he explains his method as the de-familiarizing process of the exchanges and reflections between the real and the fictional. He says reality for him always takes on the nature of representations in art, citing his experience of understanding and appreciating the beauty of nature through its representations in films (Oe, *Watakushi*). For him, reality and history in fiction are always their de-familiarized other versions, as he explains in his book *The Method of the Novel* (1978) referring to the theory of Russian Formalism. His 2009 novel *Death by Water*, with its apparent allusion to, and appropriation of, T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*, Herman Melville's *Moby-Dick* and *Pierre, or the Ambiguities*, exposes the underside of Japan's post-war bureaucracy through a bureaucrat's sexual exploitation of his niece, who offers another version of reality in theatrical performances probably as a

means of resistance. His alternative realities and histories in such works in *A Personal Matter* (1964) and *The Silent Cry* (1964) are protests against the consensus on what they are and present other possibilities in public reality and history that repress what one of Faulkner's characters calls "might-have-been which is more true than truth" (Faulkner 115). It is no wonder, then, he dedicated his last work *In Late Style* to his late friend Edward W. Said. Oe and his peer Abe Kobo, in his works such as *Woman of the Dunes* (1962) and *The Face of Another* (1964), pointed to the radical otherness of reality and the self in modern society.

Ryu Murakami's *Almost Transparent Blue*, Nakagami Kenji's serial novels set in a marginal area similar to Faulkner's "Yoknapatawpha," and some of Murakami Haruki's early works further pursued their paths. Ryu Murakami's deconstruction of boundaries is the most radical in *Almost Transparent Blue*, which opens with the humming of an insect flying in the room that sounds like an airplane from the American base nearby. The hero of the novel is both sane and insane, Japanese and American, white and black, and homosexual and heterosexual in his life full of violence, drugs, and promiscuous sexual intercourses that just pass through him as if he were an empty vessel. Nakagami Kenji is also most radical in his re-vision of the novel form. He found patriarchy and traditional family structure empty of significance in one of his early works *The Sea of Withered Trees* (1977) and continued writing his novels with the recognition the Imperial model of the family and the nation has never been real. He was strongly aware of his affinity to Faulkner and African American writers such as Toni Morrison, whom Carlo Stranges is going to speak about on the last day.

Contemporary Japanese writers, it seems to me, inherit much from that generation of writers that made their debuts from mid- to late 1970 that marked the transition period in Japanese literature after Mishima's and Kawabata's deaths. Banana Yoshimoto is a unique presence, but Yamada Eimi and Yu Miri, one of whose works Zhang Itsuki will discuss, probably owe a lot to Ryu Murakami's transgressive approaches to reality. Ted Goossen, for example, describes Ryu Murakami's works and Yamada's novels as the process in which the self gets identified with the other (Goossen 406). Yoko Ogawa also has opened up an original territory in her exploration of the transience and tenuousness of the self. In their works, otherness, borderlessness, and multiplicity are central: Yamada's experiment

in writing on love and sex with an African American man in *Bed Time Eyes* and Korean Japanese writer Yu Miri's explorations of the marginalized people in Japan. Levy Hideo, a Jewish American writer living, teaching, and writing in Japan, blurs the concept of the national boundary in Japanese novels and proves what is supposed to be an outsider's experience is not outside. So do Tawada Yoko, Akasaka Mari, and Imamura Natsuko. I cannot here mention all the writers working now, but I can assure you diversity and multiplicity are being discovered in the once sacred world of Japanese literature for us to appreciate.

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**The Presentation and Disappearance of Religious and Cultural Diversity in
Sino-Japanese Exchanges--Focusing on *The Flute of Xuzhu: A Study on
Shakuhachi***

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Abstract

Since the 1970s, with the restoration of Sino-Japanese relations as the background of the times, Tsutomu Mizukami visited China more than twenty times and wrote many essays, travelogues, novels related to China.

It is generally known that, around the 1920s, Japanese writers such as Junichiro Tanizaki and Ryunosuke Akutagawa also went to China and created many literary works, but their recognition of China was based mainly on the fantasy of Chinese classical literature. Unlike the former two writers, Mizukami presents China as a more diversified region. To be more specific, China in his works has a more multi-layered nature.

There are several levels in Mizukami's representations of China. The first level is the experience in the old Manchuria during the war. The second level is the common people's culture he saw when visited the southeast of the People's Republic of China after 1975.

The third and the most important level is the pursuit of Zen that originated in China. Mizukami used to be a monk in the temple, received Zen education, and was influenced by the Zen environment from his youth. Therefore, for Mizukami, China is the source of the undercurrents of his thought. China in the works By Mizukami includes his yearning for Song Dynasty and his high praise for the country's rich spirit. However, in reality, due to the Communist Party's non-belief policy, the diversity of Chinese thoughts and beliefs gradually disappeared.

The 2001 work *The Flute of Xuzhu: A Study on Shakuhachi* by Mizukami was first published in 1981. After several revisions, it was expanded into a long story. In the novel, Mizukami explores the history of the Shakuhachi, an ancient Chinese flute made of a bamboo stem. Through the history of Zen exchanges between Japan and China during the

twenty-year process for the revision of this work, one can observe the changes in Mizukami's understanding of Zen, as well as the changes and corrections in the representations of China in the process of tracing history. And, in his revisions, he saw the ideal image of a diverse world.

Tsutomu Mizukami (1919-2004) is a post-war Japanese social writer who won the 45th Naoki Prize in 1961 and became a best-selling author in the Showa period. Born in Fukui Prefecture in a poor family, Mizukami was sent by his parents at the age of ten to become an apprentice monk at the Rinzai sect's Zuishun-in Temple in Kyoto, where he remained until he left and resumed secular life at the age of seventeen. The Rinzai sect is a sect of Zen Buddhism that originated in China. In other words, while Mizukami spent his youth in the temple, he received Zen education and read [red] many Buddhist scriptures. This experience was often referred to in his later autobiographical works. Therefore, for Mizukami, Zen consciousness formed the undercurrent of thought and influenced his life. In 1938, he went to Manchuria. After working in Shenyang for half a year, he returned home due to illness. During his convalescence, he read a lot of novels and gradually embarked on the road of literary creation. After the 1970s, Sino-Japanese relations returned to normal. In 1975, as a member of the delegation of Japanese writers, Mizukami visited China for the first time after the war. Since then, he visited China frequently. Until his last visit in 1997, Mizukami visited China more than twenty times. It is considered that he had a close relationship with China. For this reason, after the 1970s, Mizukami turned his attention to China instead of focusing only on his hometown, and produced many essays, travelogues, novels, and so forth with China as the theme.

As the last historical novel of Mizukami's before his death, *The Flute of Xuzhu: A Study on Shakuhachi*, published in 2001, won the second Shinran Prize in 2002 with the feature of 'Taking Xuzhu and others who introduced shakuhachi into Japan as the theme, and describing the exchanges and customs between China and Japan in a combination of prose and fiction'¹. This novel is arguably the full expression of the two main themes that most concerned Mizukami in his later years, Zen, and China. It was first serialized in the

¹honganjifoundation.ShiranPrize.<https://honganjifoundation.org/culture/shinran/index.html/>(accessed 2021-10.29).

magazine *Subaru* from 1997 to 1999. In fact, as early as 1981, he once wrote a short story entitled '*The Flute of Xuzhu*'. Mizukami began trying to conceive of this novel in the early 1980s. The expansion from an initial twenty-page short story to a two-hundred-and-seventy-two-page novel is the product of nearly twenty years of conception and constant revision. The subtitle of this book, 'A Study on Shakuhachi', also reflects the fact that this is a historical novel linking shakuhachi with Sino-Japanese exchanges. As the text contains numerous references to Chinese and Japanese historical figures and allusions, poems, and books, it is considered that to create this novel, the author made many fieldworks to China, and consulted many literature surveys. On the other hand, precisely because this novel contains many historical figures and Zen vocabulary, it is not very easy to understand. As a result, there are few preceding research papers about it so far. However, I believe that this novel, as the last masterpiece of Mizukami and the end of the China series, plays a vital role in studying the appearance of China in his works. This novel is the most comprehensive, concrete, and profound reflection of Mizukami's understanding, knowledge, and views of China. It also fully embodies his religious and historical views.

China in historical novels by Japanese writers has long been often set in the background of the Tang Dynasty. The works of Mizukami's contemporaries such as Yasushi Inoue and Ryotaro Shiba are more visions of the Tang Dynasty that was inclusive, open, and diverse, and celebrates the memory of the glory of the Silk Road. However, what is different from them is that the China series of Mizukami rarely show the worship of the Tang Dynasty. This novel covers many dynasties and particularly focuses on the Southern Song and Ming. He used his imagination to conceive of the originator of Japanese shakuhachi, and monks who travelled between China and Japan throughout the ages, dedicated to cultural, religious, and artistic exchanges, as well as the Japanese samurai, generals, and so on, all of which are placed in the same grand historical arena. The main characters are:

1. Ikkyu Sojun (1394-1481): an iconoclastic Zen monk of the early Muromachi period. It is generally held that he was the illegitimate son of the Southern Court Emperor Gokomatsu. Although he had never been to China, Mizukami thought that, as can be seen from his Chinese style poetry work *Kyoun Shu*, Ikkyu had been reading Chinese

Quotations and Zen books. Moreover, with a deep love for the musical instrument shakuhachi, he once wrote a poem called Shakuhachi.

2. Kakushin Shinchi (207-1298): he went to study in China during the Southern Song Dynasty in 1249, practiced at Jingshan Temple in Tianmu Mountain. He is the ancestor of the Houtou sect of the Rinzai sect in Japan. It is said that when he returned, he brought his Chinese disciple, Xuzhu, and other four monks back to Japan, where he passed on his skills of shakuhachi.

3. Monk Xuzhu (the First Generation): was born of mixed race to a Japanese monk and a Chinese woman. He lived in the caves on Nanping Mountain around the West Lake. In the text, Kakushin is attracted by the sound of shakuhachi, and as he follows the sound, he finds that 'A man in the shape of a prodigal monk sitting on the edge of a Cruise boat on the West Lake, playing the shakuhachi' (350), he is none other than Monk Xuzhu.

4. Monk Zetsugai: the full name is Zetsugai Mineo. He was the vassal of Yoshitada Yamana in Kishu. After his defeat in the army, he secretly practiced playing the shakuhachi and learned from Xuzhu in China.

5. Shiota: A Satsuma-born bamboo craftsman, particularly good at making shakuhachi. As a Japanese Pirate, he went to China and met a man who resembled Xuzhu playing the shakuhachi on the West Lake.

6. Jiyou: The Abbot of Rensho Temple in Yugawa-mura in Kumano. He belonged to a branch of the Ippen monks of the Jishu sect and specialised in playing the shakuhachi.

In this novel, neither Xuzhu nor shakuhachi is a mere noun or a specific person or object, but both possess a high degree of symbolism. All the major characters above have a connection with shakuhachi and China. They exchange and inherit in a shakuhachi bodhimanda of Gyokko Temple, in Uji. The name 'Xuzhu' here refers not only to a person but also to the title that can be passed down to those who are good at playing or making the shakuhachi and who love shakuhachi. It has been used for three generations in Gyokko Temple, from Monk Zetsugai to Shiota to Jiyou. People from different countries, different times, different backgrounds, different hometowns, and different identities have been connected by shakuhachi. 'The people who guarded the soul of Xuzhu and the shakuhachi bodhimanda of Gyokko Temple were Traveling Monks. It is written that a

half monk and half profane of the Belief in the Buddha Amida named Jiyou, a disciple of Jikai, the Abbot of Rensho Temple in Yugawa-mura in Kumano, took over the career of Xuzhu' (369). Especially at the end of the work, Jiyou, the descendant of the Jishu sect, inherited the name of 'Xuzhu' and took over the Gyokko Temple, it can be said to be a 'mixed-race' fusion.

In the first part of this novel, Mizukami quotes the following poem Spring Rain by Su Manshu.

The sound of shakuhachi in spring rain just likes the sound of xiao.
When will I return to West Lake? The hometown I'm really pining for.
A poor walking monk comes along, and no one knows him.
I can't remember how many bridges were covered with cherry blossoms I have
walked across (79).

The two instruments mentioned in this poem, shakuhachi and xiao, express Manshu's endless longing and sorrow for his homeland in a foreign country. In the afterword of this novel, Mizukami clearly states: 'I wanted to write this novel because Su Manshu, a poet who was concerned about his country and people in the late Qing Dynasty, once said that 'the Japanese shakuhachi is very similar to xiao, the classical Chinese flute, which was introduced by the people of Jin Dynasty'. Therefore, the flute and the shakuhachi in the novel's title correspond precisely to Manshu's statement. In addition, Mizukami's quotation of Manshu's poetry is also related to his special status as a mixed-race Zen monk who was born to a Japanese woman and a Chinese man in Yokohama. Moreover, the two unique attributes of 'mixed race' and 'Zen monk' are exactly consistent with the theme of this novel, and there are similarities between Manshu's status and shakuhachi's features and history. As Mizukami states in this novel, 'I feel that the sound of shakuhachi is full of the soul of the people of mixed race' (79). Then, the Monk Xuzhu of Lin'an (now Hangzhou), was also a mixed-race monk. Ikkyu is also considered a mixed-race person in some sense: a mix of the upper and lower social classes. The deeper meaning, of course, is that it represents the exchange and fusion of ancient Chinese and Japanese cultures.

A comparison of Mizukami's short story and novel reveals that, though the themes of

these two works appear to be the same, the main themes and points of view are completely different. The former depicts Mizukami's memories of his visits to the old places of Kakushin and Xuzhu in Japan, while the latter one is a sublimation of the 'real to the imaginary'. As critic Susumu Nakanishi points out, 'It is interesting to turn the vertical axis of history into a horizontal one'². In other words, by tracing the records of past exchanges between China and Japan across space and time, we can imagine a 'mixed-race' with a larger historical perspective. Also, in that short story, Kakushin is mentioned as cultivating at the Jinshan Temple in Zhenjiang. In this novel, however, Mizukami sets the stage of China besides the West Lake in Lin'an, the capital of the Southern Song Dynasty. And the reason for the setting is that this period was the heyday of Sino-Japanese Zen exchanges. Lin'an was also the centre of Jiangnan Area with its 'Five Mountains and Ten Monasteries System'. This system was also adopted in Japan during the late Kamakura period. Lin'an was the centre of development for the Rinzaï sect. Therefore, it also reflects the return of the religious thought of Mizukami in his later years.

In addition to the Southern Song, there is also a focus on the Ming Dynasty, because of the close exchange between Japan and China during the period of trade, when lots of Zen monks went with merchant ships to China. It is also worth noting that bamboo is used throughout the novel. According to Mizukami, the bamboo native to Japan is called 'Nigatake', while the Moso bamboo was introduced from Fuzhou. 'The Moso bamboo was transplanted from China through Ryukyu in the early Edo period. It was not until about three hundred years ago that Japanese people saw the sight of many kinds of bamboo bushes flourishing' (154). Furthermore, bamboo was also transplanted from China to Japan, since it was a necessary material for making shakuhachi and it even determines the tone and soul of shakuhachi. The text describes that 'The sound of shakuhachi can embody the sound of the land where bamboo grows' (168). 'The monks of Gyōko Temple say that bamboo is similar to Zen thought' (219). Anything that is transmitted is also inextricably linked to the environment of the land where it was nurtured. Thus, that's why 'Just as bamboo changed when it came to Japan, as well as the

²Susumu Nakanishi, Tsutomu Mizukami. *The Flute of Xuzhu: A Study on Shakuhachi* (Tokyo: Shueisha, 2006), 506.

tenets of Zen sect changed when it came to this country' (169). Shakuhachi, as a vessel made of bamboo, represents Zen thought and culture that have changed accordingly as it has adapted to the Japanese environment. It can also be understood as an expression of a mixed culture.

As mentioned above, the sound of the shakuhachi is related to the soul of mixed-race people, and in this novel, he repeatedly describes this sound. Then, what does the sound symbolize? The first is 'the feeling of missing hometown', as the expression of nostalgia for hometown is repeated throughout the text in this sound, and we can understand the hometown here as an actual home, which can also be understood as the hometown of Zen thought - China. The second is 'the sound of chanting Buddha'. 'Attracted by the sound of shakuhachi, Kakushin thought it was the sound of chanting Buddha' (357). 'The shakuhachi is also played to Namu Amidabutsu Chanting, prayed to the most typical Buddhist chant phrase 'Namu Amidabutsu,' as the headman used to say' (321). In other words, although the form is different, playing shakuhachi is just like praying to Amitabutsu, which is the same as ordinary believers chanting Buddha. The shakuhachi is a dharma instrument used to recite the Buddha's teaching, and its sound is an expression of the faith that is held within. As he travelled to Hangzhou, Suzhou, and Huangmei in Hubei to visit the Holy Places of Zen, to seek the footsteps of the Sixth Patriarch Huineng and to pursue the way of practicing Zen with pure mind. In this novel, Mizukami repeatedly mentions the 'Way of Shakuhachi', which can be understood as the 'Way of Pure Zen', because he believes that pure Zen should be free from formalities or details and has nothing to do with difference in region or status but is closely linked to the common people. Mizukami himself always admired Huineng and Monk Ikkyu, because of their unconventionality. Similarly, the Komu Monks of the Fuke sect originated in China and are closely related to shakuhachi. They have no doctrine but practice by playing shakuhachi. In Mizukami's view, this can also be called the 'Way of Pure Zen'.

In the novel, Mizukami interweaves the centuries of history of Sino-Japanese exchanges, as well as many events, to build this huge fictional world of historical tales. The core and essence in this novel are the exchange and inheritance of religious and cultural diversity, namely, the 'mixed-race' and intermingling. And this process includes the lives of countless aspiring individuals. As Mizukami writes in the novel, 'At Nan

Mountain, there are graves left by Japanese monks who came to study during the Song, Yuan, and Ming dynasties and died of illness' (118). In addition to those who returned safely to Japan to spread shakuhachi and Zen thought, like the Monks from Gyokko Temple, many other monks died during their journey before they could realize their aspirations to deepen their Zen understanding.

At the end of the short story, Mizukami writes:

'I feel both China and Japan come from the same root.'

'The shakuhachi has a root. When I put my ear to the hole of the root, I hear the sound from distant, ancient China'.³

As he states in the quotations above, Mizukami believes that China and Japan share the same cultural and historical origins. Playing the shakuhachi is essentially a way of sending sound from the inside out, which symbolizes the inheritance of Chinese religious culture to Japan. It carries traces and memories of the Sino-Japanese exchanges. However, there are several descriptions of Chinese Zen temples destroyed in the novel.

'I heard that, during The Chinese Cultural Revolution, there were young soldiers who destroyed temples and Buddhist statues everywhere' (44).

'I also thought of the temple suddenly appearing in the valley of ChanYuan Temple on Tianmu Mountain, which was burned down by Japanese military aircraft No.8' (64).

As the quoted text suggests, although many of the Zen resorts in China still exist today, there were more that were destroyed through the war of aggression launched by Japan and The Chinese Cultural Revolution started by The Gang of Four. In the long history, the Chinese Zen culture that countless Japanese monks once staked their lives for gradually disappeared. Although Mizukami does not explicitly express his feelings of

³Tsutomu Mizukami, *The Flute of Xuzhu*. Persimmon in Beijing, Tokyo: Usio, 1981.(251)

sadness, regret, and disappointment, he quotes a specific poem called ‘Song of the Japanese Sword’ in the text, which was written by Ouyang Xiu, a famous poet of the Northern Song Dynasty. On the one hand, the poem reflects the close official and private contacts between China and Japan during the Song dynasty and expresses his feelings about Japan and the legend of Xu Fu (Xu Fu's eastward voyage), while, on the other hand, it combines the legend of Xu Fu with the burning of books and the burying Confucian scholars by The First Emperor of the Qin Dynasty. According to Ouyang Xiu, it was because Xu Fu had brought a lot of books to Japan before that those precious books destroyed in China proper were survived. Here, the significance of quoting this poem is to imply that the destroyed Zen sites and Buddhist classics had also been reborn in other places because of the exchanges and the spread of their culture. In other words, although China's once diverse religious culture has been slowly hollowed out for various reasons today, the cultural and religious carriers represented by shakuhachi and the countless generations of Chinese and Japanese ‘Xuzhu’ who have dedicated themselves to the exchange and inheritance of Chinese and Japanese religious cultures, have made it possible for those who disappeared in their homeland of China to continue living in another form. Therefore, the novel reflects both the mixture born of the Sino-Japanese exchanges of a long history and tells the disappearance of Chinese historical, cultural, and religious diversity from the aspect.

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The Tiles as the Basis for Diverse Representations: Metaphorical Meanings of Yu Miri's *Tile*

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Abstract

Yu Miri was born in Japan to Korean parents in 1968. She writes in Japanese and has won two major literary awards, the Noma Literary Prize and the Akutagawa Prize, not long after her debut. Yu's recent work, *Tokyo Ueno Station*, won the National Book Award for Translated Literature in 2020. *Tile* is one of Yu's early works in the 90s. The story of *Tile* is told from the perspectives of three different characters: a man with a grand vision of renovating his apartment entirely with mosaic tiles in order to deal with his frustrations caused by divorce and sexual dysfunction; the landlord called Emoto, who bugs the man's apartment to seek adventures and excitements; and a novelist called Natsumi Kaori, who has lost her motivation for creating new stories and handles her slump by writing erotic fiction. While Yu's next work, *Gold Rush*, was well received in both Japan and the United States, *Tile* has not drawn much attention from academics and critics.

The tile in the work is the metaphor of the medium for creative activities. The man installs mosaic tiles all over his apartment to create a world entirely for himself. The tile is a necessary basis for him to achieve that purpose. It also enables freedom and diversity in creation. In the novel, the tile is highly related with impotence. It is impotent because it has no means to resist, and therefore, inevitably reflects all marks, colours, and letters imposed upon it like a blank sheet. By such nature, it also embodies a capacity to register everything it faces. Its capacity is passive but at the same time generous. Therefore, it creates an open space that allows for diversity in representations. The fact that the man is making a copy of *Battle of Issus* mosaic using tiles shows this is a simulation of the process of interiorization, a parody of an inner self, which is the traditional topos of Japanese literature. Yu's inner self is not an immediate given, but an ongoing work in progress without a source or origin. In this fashion, Yu's *Tile* approaches the topic of

interiorization in a unique way, and points to the possibility that the image of oneself is built upon multiple reflections of diverse others, which traditional Japanese literary works that feature strong self would have repressed and excluded from their centralized systems of representation.

Yu Miri was born in Japan to Korean parents in 1968. She writes in Japanese and has won two major literary awards, the Noma Literary Prize and the Akutagawa Prize, not long after her debut. Yu's recent work, *Tokyo Ueno Station*, won the National Book Award for Translated Literature in 2020. *Tile* is one of Yu's early works in the 90s. While Yu's next work, *Gold Rush*, was well received in both Japan and the United States, *Tile* has not drawn much attention from academics and critics.

The story of *Tile* is told from the perspectives of four different characters: a man with a grand vision of renovating his apartment entirely with mosaic tiles in order to deal with his frustrations caused by divorce and sexual dysfunction; the man's landlord called Emoto, who bugs the man's apartment to seek adventures and excitements; A 19-year-old student, Saiko, who helps the man finish his mosaic renovation; and a novelist called Natsumi Kaori, who has lost her motivation for creating new stories and handles her slump by serializing an erotic novel.

Early in the story, Emoto is perplexed with the sound and the conversations from the man's room and wants to find out what is going on in there. He eventually gets acquainted with the man. The man confesses to Emoto that he is a fan of Natsumi Kaori and wants to meet her in person.

Emoto and the man hold a fake meeting as an excuse to invite Natsumi as a guest. Natsumi shows up, and they lock her up in the man's room. The man threatens her and tells her to write the finishing part of her erotic story by cutting off his own fingers. She writes a few paragraphs and is killed by the man in the end. Blood spills over the mosaic tiles and soaks into the seams. In the last scene, the man is lying on the tile with Saiko. He can finally have a peaceful sleep.

One of the features that stands out in this work is the depiction of the man's impotent self. In traditional Japanese literature such as works written by Tayama Katai and Shiga Naoya, the self is constructed through the process the exploration of the inner self.

Narratives based on the central presence of such a strong self tends to exclude representations that nullify the distinction of oneself from the others. On the contrary, in *Tile*, the man's self is hollow and fragile from the beginning.

Throughout the whole story, the man does not have a social identity. His name is not mentioned until the end, and he has no proof of identification on him. When Emoto asks the man to rent videos for him, the man says that he does not have the insurance card or the driver's license on him and has mailed his passport to another country.

The man does not have a sustaining ego. At the beginning of the novel, he is very susceptible to the outside world. Rays of the sun and the fluorescent light agonize him, and he cannot shut off the deafening rumble of the train, as the narrator says in the following paragraph.

The street is coated with strong rays of sun and has lost its perspectives. The man gazes at the street, waggles his head from left to right, and stands still for a second in front of his apartment. The man feels all his senses are shook again by the rumble of the train passing by (...) / His back feels the sting of the sun, and the back of his head is hot as if it had been heated by a hair dryer.

(陽射がべつとりと貼り付き遠近を失った街並を眺め、首を左右に振ったあと男はマンションの前で一瞬立ちすくんだが、ふたたび通過する電車の音に感覚のすみずみまで揺さぶられ [...] / 背中がひりひりして後頭部がドライヤーの熱をまともに受けたように熱い) p. 4-5.¹

The man's psyche is 'porous'. His state of mind is severely affected by the circumstances around him. The tenuity of emotions and the fact that his consciousness constantly internalizes matters from the outer world imply the ambiguity of the demarcation of the inside and the outside. As critic Shigeta Mariko has pointed out, the lack of 'self' is a common theme of Yu's early works during the 90s. She says,

¹ Since there is no available English translation of Yu's *Tile*, I did the translation from Japanese which is the language of the original text. The page numbers are from the hardcover version of *Tile*, published by BUNGEISHUNJUN in 1997.

The 'I' in the network of relationships with others is a blank space. The 'I' is, not rendered by claiming 'this is me', but rather rendered by claiming 'I am not others' -- a 'negative' identity.²

In the case of *Tile*, the man does not gain a 'negative' identity through comparison with others. This makes his inner self even more fragile. He has no choice but to build his identity from scratch. The man pastes mosaic tiles all over his apartment to create an entire world only for himself. The tile serves as a necessary basis for him to achieve that purpose. The mosaic tiles compose a copy of the Alexander Mosaic, which is traditionally believed to be a depiction of the Battle of Issus, and therefore the man does not define himself by self-expression, but rather through the appropriation of the ancient image. His creative process lacks any sense of originality. However, this activity does make him less susceptible to the external world as the following passage suggests,

'The train is so loud!' Saiko covers her ears with her hands. / When the man just moved in here, the noise sounded as if the room was being penetrated by a drilling machine. The vibration gives him an illusion that the bed is spinning and has once made him fall off from it. He has not been bothered by that problem in the past few days. He hasn't heard the rumble of trains since the tiles took his attention.

(「うるさい！ 電車」彩子は両手で耳をふさいだ。／引っ越したばかりのときは削岩機で部屋に穴を開けられてると思って飛び起きたり、振動でベッドが回転していると錯覚し転げ落ちたこともあるのに、この二、三日電車の音が気にならない。タイルに関心を奪われてから電車の音は聞こえなくなった) p. 74。

The mosaic tiles become a shelter against external influences and offer a fictional

² 「関係性の網の目の中心にいる〈私〉そのものは、その無色透明さにおいて空白であり、それを〈私〉というかたちとして成り立たせているのは「自己である」というアイデンティティというよりもむしろ、「他者ではない」という、「負」のアイデンティティである」茂田真理子「〈私〉は空洞であるが故に「敵」を仮想する：柳美里論」、p. 154。

world to stabilize his subjectivity. While the man is lying on the tiles, a very strange idea runs through the man's mind. He thinks,

It is unfair that no heart, lung, stomach, or any kind of internal organs can ever feel the touch of the tiles. Nevertheless, his heart senses something from them, and reacts faintly over the flesh.

(心臓、肺、胃、内臓にタイルの感触を味わせてやれないことがひどく理不尽に思えたが、心臓は肉越しになにかを感じてわずかに反応している) p. 101。

By renovating his apartment, the man reinvents himself. He yearns for the tiles to make up his interiority. He's driven to substantiate his inner self by integrating external objects. Here happens a shift in his relationship to the outer world. Through pasting mosaic tiles, the man creates an alternative externality, so that the outer world stop being a threat that constantly invades his consciousness. The Mosaic becomes a material support of his identity.

Eventually, his creation becomes part of his reality. The man has a dream of being one of the cavalries in the Mosaic. In his dream, he charges towards the enemy, gets stabbed on the back, and sees himself as a dead body. When the man wakes up, he feels an intense pain on his back, and thinks the death in his dream has invaded into his reality. The integration is a success. He has made himself an extension of his mosaic creation. However, this process of self-establishment is also self-destructive, as Saiko senses,

Saiko feels this is the first time she ever stares into such a hollowed-out hole. This hole is very different from the others she knew. Everyone she knows strives to fill it up, but this man keeps digging it. She remembers the instructor from a design school once saying what is under the stone pavement is the desert. But if the tiles in this room were teared off, only a bottomless hole will remain.

(彩子は生まれてはじめて空虚な穴をのぞき込んでいるような気がする。自分が知っているひとたちとは異なった形の穴。みんなはその穴をなにかで埋めようとしてあがいているのに、このひとは穴を掘りつづけている。専門学校の文化祭に招かれた講師が、石畳の下は砂漠だったといったのを記憶して

いるが、この部屋のタイルを剥がすとその下は底無しの空洞になっている気がして [...] p. 124-5。

The mosaic tiles are the essential agency to support his identity. On the one hand, the tile painting is irrelevant to the man's life experiences. On the other hand, pasting tiles almost becomes the sole experience of the man's life. Reinventing himself as an extension of his creation, the man simulates himself as a fictional being. He is transformed into a man deprived of biographical information. The more he indulges in his fantasy, the more hollowed he seems to be.

As I have suggested above, the man does not have a strong self. His identity depends on the tiles, which constitute the medium for creative activity. For the man, the tiles are the necessary basis, but they are even more impotent than he is.

As the man gets obsessed with tiling, the impotent aspect of the mosaic tiles is revealed. They are vulnerable to external forces and can be violently destroyed. Moreover, they have no means to resist, and, therefore, their surfaces inevitably reflect all marks, colours, and letters imposed upon them like a blank sheet. By such nature, they also embody the capacity to register what it faces. Their capacity is passive but, at the same time, generous. Therefore, it creates an open space that allows for diversity in representations.



Alexander the Great defeating the Persians under Darius at the Battle of Issus; mosaic from the House of the Faun, Pompeii (based on a Hellenistic Greek painting) (p. 1). (n.d). [Images].

The Alexander Mosaic is believed to be a copy of an early Hellenistic painting³, but this mosaic art's origin is unidentifiable. As the illustration shows, most of the left part of the mosaic is blank. In fact, this piece of art is never finished.

This mosaic art is a metaphor of the man's situation. The blank space is the absence of his social identity and his lack of 'self'. In addition, this piece of art is also a metaphor which shows the formation of one's inner self. The fact that the man is making a copy of the Alexander Mosaic using tiles shows it is a simulation of the process of interiorization, a parody of an inner self. Self-exploration through confession is the one of the major topics in traditional Japanese literature. In Yu's work, the inner self is not an immediate given, but an ongoing work in progress without a source or origin. The Alexander Mosaic itself is a copy without the original since the original work is lost. Moreover, this art piece

³ Toshihiro, Osada. "An Essay on the Interpretation of the Alexander Mosaic: Focusing on the Image of Barbarians in Greek Art." *Orient*, vol. 53, no. 2, p. 95.

is not a realistic representation of the Battle of Issus. Many depictions in it are generic expressions, the soldier stabbed by Alexander, for example, which had been taken from other paintings⁴. Using the Alexander Mosaic as a metaphor of inner self, Yu's *Tile* approaches the topic of interiorization in a unique way and points to the possibility that the image of oneself is built upon multiple reflections of diverse sourceless others.

When the man is working on tiling his room with Saiko, he comes up with the image of himself as a stranger. 'The man imagines, a man and a woman in swimsuits covered in sweat are creating the Alexander Mosaic, just like the Moors.'⁵ This self-image is fictional. There is nothing to suggest that the mosaic mentioned above was created by the Moors. Nonetheless, by simulating himself as a fictional being, the man is able to produce a self-image that is opened to diverse others, which traditional Japanese literary works featuring strong selves would have repressed and excluded from their centralized systems of representation. Narratives in those works distinguish self from the others, but, at the same time, the self is also a social being. The self-image is, in fact, an other-image which is under the influence of the outside world. While the self in traditional narratives is disguises as something unique, Yu's inner self challenges the belief in the existence of an original self and points to the possibility that the so-called 'self-image' is an assemblage of diverse others. Her preoccupation with the homeless people in Ueno Park in her recent book probably shares the same recognition with this novel that inner spaces of any kind are always imbued with the nature of the other.

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⁴ Ibid, p. 98.

⁵ 「男は想像してみた、水着姿の男と女が汗にまみれてイッソスの戦いのモザイクを創造する、ムーア人のように」 p. 73。

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Panel 2-3: Kawabata, Sagan, and Mishima: Queer Representation and Cultural Discourses on Sexual Diversity in Transwar Japan as Seen through Literature and Film (TUFS)

Queer Representation in Kawabata Yasunari's Works: Gender Diversity and Resistance to Patriarchy in Wartime Japan

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Abstract

Kawabata Yasunari (1899-1972) wrote several girl's love stories before and during WWII. In particular, *Otome no minato* (*A Port of Girls*, 1938) was serialized in the popular girls' magazine *Shojo no Tomo* and read widely among girls at the time. The novel depicts the pseudo-romantic relationships between students calling each other 'S' ('sister') at a girls' Christian school.

This novel has been analyzed as shojo shosetsu (a novel for girls) published in 'shojo magazines'. In this paper, I would like to widen the framework and re-consider Kawabata's work from the angle of diversity, focusing on clothing, location, and queer theory. While the readers learned about the general fashion trends among young women during the 1930s-40s, such as sailor-style school uniform, workout clothes, dress, kimono, and yukata, it is significant that many girl students in the novel admire the crossdressing female actors 'Mizunoe Takiko' and 'Ashihara Kuniko', 'dansō no reijin' ('a lady in menswear'). Most of the young female readers of shojo magazines aspired to be such a cross-dressing star of the Takarazuka or Shōchiku theatre. The 'port' (minato) in the title can be said to stand for marginality.

A port is where one starts out on (or end) a journey, and for the girls their school in

Yokohama, a historical gate to foreign countries, is a kind of marginal topos from where they go out into the world. Karuizawa, another location was known as international summer resort for foreign missionaries and diplomats. When Michiko and Katsuko stay in Karuizawa for the summer, they admire Western culture while at the same time feeling a sense of inferiority to the West. Here, I argue for the novel's conflict containing a strong aspect (the West/the East). Finally, the girl students are oppressed by a complex, modern authoritative system consisting of males, teachers, and parents. In other words, they are not allowed to love freely, be it heterosexual or lesbian. Female students at a Christian school in Japan were educated to be *ryōsai kenbo*, 'good wives and wise mothers'. The marriage system forced Japanese young women to follow patriarchy and when female students graduated from school, most of them entered an arranged marriage. The diverse and queer representation in Kawabata's works, I argue shows resistance to the Japanese patriarchy under and beyond wartime conditions, contributing to gender diversity in the twenty-first century

Girls in Uniform (1931) and Japan: Representational Diversity and Transnational Film Culture

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Abstract

Girls in Uniform (Mädchen in Uniform, 1931, Sagan) was in many ways a groundbreaking film. Shot in Germany at the very end of the Weimar Period, with a fully female cast, partly directed by a woman (Leontine Sagan with Carl Froehlich) and based on a book and play written by a woman (Christa Winsloe), it is likely the first known film with an emotionally sympathetic treatment of lesbian desire at a girls' boarding school. It was also a woman (Kawakita Kashiko) who selected it for and insisted on its import to Japan in 1932. Here, it was released as *Seifuku no shojo* in 1933 to critical acclaim.

As has been frequently pointed out, the film's topic of queerness was not commented on much, something the Japanese discourse shares with the German one. The films thus received attention for its topics of humanism, antiauthoritarianism, and antimilitarism at a time when the discourses in both countries turned towards the opposites, but its contemporary status as an LGBTQ 'cult film' was only achieved in the 1970s. However, as this paper argues, the silence on the topic of lesbian desire is symptomatic of hegemonic readings within patriarchal structures, rather than grounded in the topic being absent either in the film or in its reading in the 1930s. The film's success in Japan, according to a male film critic, was 'clearly due to Carl Froehlich. There is no way that an unknown female director could have achieved this level of editing and artistry' (Nanbu, 1987) While part of the lesbian attraction in the plot in fact had been tempered by the male dramaturg, the issue of an almost all-female cast and crew as well as the topic of 'same-sex love' were the reasons for the Japanese importer's initial reluctance to buy the film on his wife's request.

“They are daughters of soldiers and, so god will, will be mothers of soldiers,” as a line of dialogue in the film describes the girls. Queer self-realization therefore was an anathema, and diversity in production, representation, and society became suppressed by the dominant narrative of male creativity and ability as well as subsumed under the masculine militarist mood of the 1930s. However, a section of the international audiences was clearly aware of and attracted by the motif. Fan letters to the actors in Germany and the boom for buying ‘Manuela stockings’ (named after the main character) in Bulgaria attest to what—if anachronistically—could be called a ‘cult following’. And this concept opens a space beyond the homogenizing narrative. As my fellow panellists demonstrate, the film arrived in Japan in a cultural landscape of literary works with similar topics. It also immediately linked with the vibrant ‘schoolgirl culture’ of the time as well as, indeed, with the related ‘female same-sex love panic’ (Kanno, 2010). ‘Girls in Uniform’ becoming a synonym for ‘schoolgirls’ reveals a cult following that was at least partially related to a queer subculture. Finally, its Japanese remake in 1936, *Girls Before Marriage* (Yomeiremae no musumetachi, Yoshimura), capitalized on this ‘cult’ and it was penned by a female scriptwriter (Suzuki Noriko). *Girls in Uniform* therefore, far from uniformity, tells a story of creative female contribution, of diversity in social discourses, of subcultures in oppressive frameworks, and of the transnationality of film cultures.

Introduction

The 1970s were an exciting and frustrating time to be a woman. The second wave of feminism challenged and started to change social, political, and cultural norms, but it also drew a stark light on the many as yet unresolved issues. It is no co-incidence that one of the most influential essays in film theory, Laura Mulvey’s feminist manifesto ‘Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema’ emerged out of this atmosphere, and in 1975 decried the structuring of cinema’s narrative and screen space by the (in-)famous ‘male gaze’ and, in extension, the patriarchal social order that relegated woman to mere objects. Her criticism was particularly directed at directors of the classical Hollywood cinema that continued to restrict ‘itself to a formal mise-en-scène reflecting the dominant ideological concept of the cinema’ (Mulvey 1999[1975]: 843). And while Mulvey was advocating for an alternative cinema ‘which is radical in both a political and an aesthetic sense and

challenges the basic assumptions of the mainstream film' (ibid.), feminist activists were looking for inspiration and alternatives in historical or foreign cinema as well.¹

As film scholar B. Ruby Rich² recalls of her involvement in the women's film festival circuit at the time, these events drew much-needed attention to female filmmakers, challenged sex-role stereotypes, and in their political and social outlook, very much' had a mission' (1998: 30). This is what the women's film festivals shared with other specialised film festivals related to new social movements, such as 'feminist, Black and African-American, indigenous, gay and lesbian, as well as those advocating for other human rights, dis/ability and the environment' (Dawson and Loist 2018³:). It is in this temporal and ideological context that in the USA a historical German film was 're-discovered' that would come to be seen as a, if not the, LGBTQ cult classic.⁴

Girls in Uniform in Weimar Germany

Mädchen in Uniform (*Girls in Uniform*, 1931) is set in the Prussian era, before the First World War, with its rigid militarist codes of conduct. Manuela von Meinhardis is the fourteen-year old daughter of an army officer. After her mother's early death and due to her father's absence and implied indifference, she was brought up by her emotionally cold aunt, who now enrolls her in a boarding school for military daughters. The intimidating head mistress, with her traditional Prussian morals and oppressive bearing is portrayed in a stark contrast to the youngest teacher at the school, Fräulein von Bernburg. Her compassionate and liberal views on girls' education do not fit in with her colleagues, but

¹ To establish a link to Japan here, this move is reminiscent of the Japonisme trend of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century that looked for alternative aesthetics and perspectives to break with Western artistic conventions. In film history, the move occurred in the 1950s, with Japanese film impacting on the formation of film studies and film theory.

² 'Film scholar' does not quite do justice to Rich who is a film critic, film festival programmer, cultural theorist, and professor is perhaps best known for her work in feminist film criticism and the creation of the term 'New Queer Cinema'.

³ Much in the same vein as consequent criticism directed at feminist (film) theory for its 'blind inclusionism, for claiming to speak for all women while really talking about a predominantly if not overwhelmingly white, educated middle-class experience, Rich stresses that in the desire to showcase women's work and capability in filmmaking, mostly no ideological distinctions were made. Hence, the screening of one of Leni Riefenstahl's films at the *Films by Women/Chicago '74* festival and the invitation of the controversial director to attend caused much controversy (1998: 35-37).

⁴ See for instance (https://lgbt.wikia.org/wiki/M%C3%A4dchen_in_Uniform; https://www.lesbengeschichte.org/film_filmliste_d.html.

make her a favourite among the girls. A classmate warns Manuela not “to fall in love” with von Bernburg, as “all the girls have a crush on [her]”. Eventually, this is what happens, and in contrast to a mere schoolgirl-crush narrative, the teacher feels the same. Their kiss on the lips in the dark dormitory is very sensual, yet, “You must not love me like that, Manuela”. Slightly tipsy after celebrating her performance in a school play—and perhaps crucially still dressed for her breeches role—Manuela declares their love in front of the entire school. The scandal leads the headmistress to forbid Manuela to speak to von Bernburg and to ordering the teacher to leave the school. In the final act, the hopeless Manuela is about to commit suicide by throwing herself down the stairwell. While von Bernburg and the headmistress argue, the other girls rescue Manuela.⁵ The girls gather around von Bernburg, as the headmistress slowly walks down the corridor and into the shadows as the film fades to black.

Interpretations differ. The film’s antiauthoritarian criticism of and revolt against Prussian drill, values, and education is the easiest common denominator. This can also be extended to include the generational conflict that contributed to the dissolution of the monarchy in 1919, nine years after the film’s temporal section, the formation of the Weimar republic, and later the descent into the Third Reich. The girls, in their small ways, revolt against or ridicule the rigid system that von Bernburg speaks against more openly. In this sense, the film is very much a child of its time. As one of the girls wonders: “My mother was here for four years, has she forgotten how awful it is?” It is also not surprising that the film received such a warm welcome within the second wave of feminism.

Another factor also draws attention: *Mädchen in Uniform* features an all-female cast,⁶ and it was based on play and script written by a women as well as directed by a

⁵ In the play as well as the subsequent book, Manuela completes suicide; the plot change in the film seems to have been due to the male dramaturg, Fröhlich, attempting to lessen the radical aspects. Suicide due to the impossibility to achieve love and a future with their chosen partner, of course, is a common trope in cultural representations of queer desire, designed to either evoke sympathy or to lessen the perceived threat to social order. In the Japanese context, as Kanno has shown, double suicides by lesbian couples fostered the ‘same-sex love panic’ of the early twentieth century, as they forced the public and authorities to acknowledge the very existence of female homosexual love (Kanno 2010, 54).

⁶ Credited as actors are: Dorothea Wieck, Herta Thiele, Ellen Schwannecke, Emilie Unda, Hedwig Schlichter, Lene Berdold, Erika Mann, Gertrud de Lalsky, Marte Hein, Else Ehser.

woman. Christa Winsloe (1888–1944) worked through her own life at a Prussian girls boarding school in her theatre play,⁷ which Leontine Sagan (1889–1974) directed in 1931 as *Gestern und heute* (Yesterday and today) in Berlin to very favourable reviews.⁸ Despite the heavy involvement of the male dramaturg Carl Fröhlich in the film,⁹ this ensemble brings to the fore the female participation in the creation of audio-visual culture at the beginning of the last century, which still needs to be appreciated more fully. The film project also broke new ground by being the first cooperatively financed film in Germany, with cast and crew members forming a company (Deutsche Film Gemeinschaft) and receiving shares rather than salaries.

But what about the representation of and contemplation on lesbianism that makes it a cult film of the queer movement (see Gramann and Schlüpmann 2000, 91)? Is this an a-posteriori reading, enabled only by the freer spirit of the 1970s (e.g., Meyers 1976 or Scholar 1975)? The way that casting, camerawork, lighting and editing creates a space for queer desire has been amply discussed (e.g., Rich 1981) and due to space restrictions will not be further explored here. Yet, much research remarks on the fact this topic did not play a role “then” (see Zwerger 2021). I argue that it is myopic to ignore the (albeit) late Weimar Period’s *zeigeist* and space for social, personal, and sexual experimentation and exploration.¹⁰ It is inconceivable, for instance, that the members of the various queer clubs, attendees of nightclubs, members of political parties, or subscribers to lesbian magazines did not “see” then what we see now. Also, particularly in Germany, this was not the first film to depict homosexual topics—the most well-known being Magnus Hirschberg’s different *Anders als die Anderen* (Different from the Others, 1919)—but it was perhaps the first with this emotionally profundity and affective power, and it might be argued that the female direction and point of view together with its high artistic quality

⁷ She wrote the script with F. D. Andam (né Friedrich Dammann, 1901-1969).

⁸ The play’s first iteration as *Ritter Nérestan* (Knight Nérestan) had been a surprise hit in Leipzig. The one male role (a fencing teacher) was removed for the Berlin run.

⁹ Fröhlich was an experienced filmmaker in contrast to Sagan with her exclusively theatre-related background at the time.

¹⁰ The infamous paragraph 175 had made homosexuality illegal in 1871, yet this law was constantly contested throughout the Weimar Republic. In 1929, the criminal justice committee (*Strafrechtsausschuss*) recommended the legalization of ‘simple homosexuality among adults’. The recommendation would not be realized due to the Republic’s political crisis and the National-Socialists’ election; they strengthened §§ 175 in 1935.

(including the acting, lighting, stage design and use of sound) made it stand out. It is also not the case that ‘we’, or the feminist film festival organizers read something in the film that was highly context dependent and just was not in the material, as just mentioned with regard to the style. Winsloe, who had based the play on her own childhood, openly lived with women after her divorce and treated queer topics in her work.¹¹ While another cultural-political current started strangling the liberal atmosphere, her theatre play was even more outspoken; it was male dramaturg Carl Fröhlich who tempered the topic out of concern for the film’s success (Thiele, Schlüppman and Gramann 1981). He also cast Dorothea Wieck for the crucial role of vern Bernburg, instead of the more masculine-looking Margarete Melzer from the stage play. Yet, he achieved the opposite effect; Wieck (1908-1986) and Hertha Thiele (1908-1984) who played Manuela being both twenty-three made their supposed relationship even more plausible.

And, indeed, while critics such as the eminent Siegfried Kracauer praised the film for its quality and collective nature, and in particular Thiele for her acting, he does not acknowledge the mutual, emotional and physical attraction between two women (Kracauer 1931).¹² The audience, however, welcomed this realistic and sympathetic treatment: Thiele received fan letters from ‘all social classes’, one woman wrote multiple times to invite her and ‘I will paint you, all in blue, just like a fine mist’ (Thiele, Schlüppman and Gramann 1981, 40) and as the film began moving around the world, Romanian fans bought ‘Manuela stocking’ and the distributors wrote to the producers to ask for ‘twenty more meters of kissing’ to splice into the copy because of the enthusiastic reactions (Invisible Women 2020). In the U.S., the film only achieved distribution after the censoring. distribution, all scenes hinting a Bernburg sharing Manuela’s feelings (Zwenger 2021, 3 fn. 4). All this indicates the existence of a ‘cult’ around a film, which, for whatever reason, possesses the ‘capacity to foster a sense of community among viewers with nonnormative tastes (Church 2008), in the case of 1931 for instance the gay subculture of Berlin, or the 1970s film festival organisers. The nonnormativity,

¹¹ After the National-Socialists seized power, Winsloe and her partner Dorothe Thompson left Germany. In 1944, Winslow and her then-partner Simone Genet were murdered, being mistaken for German spies.

¹² The high artistic quality was also acknowledged at the Venice Film Festival 1932, where *Girls in Uniform* won the audience award for ‘Best Technical Perfection’.

transgressiveness and opposition to mainstream tastes often ascribed to the somewhat elusive genre of ‘cultfilm’ (Kun and Westwell 2012), interestingly did play an important role in *Girls in Uniform*’s marketing, albeit by silencing the lesbian topic: Fröhlich worried about the film’s unusual female-only and relatively unknown cast impeding audience interest, and consciously changed the original title *Then and Now*, in order to evoke the titillating image of uniformed young girls, reminiscent of the dance revues and club entertainment of Weimar Berlin (Thiele, Schlüppman and Gramann 1981, 42).

Girls in Uniform in Shōwa Japan

Something similar can be observed when the film arrived in Japan, and perhaps contrary to expectations was it not for my fellow-panelists’ papers, hit the spirit of the times and was able to embed itself and interact with social discourse and (sub-)cultural practice of romantic relationships between women and in particular the young women and girls of the modern boarding school system. But how did the *Girls in Uniform* get to Japan in the first place? This is the story I would like to focus on in the final part of this paper, as the participants’ tales about its selection and marketing reveals much about the awareness of the lesbian topic.

Kawakita Nagamasa (1903-1981) had launched his company Tōwa Shoji, concerned with the import of mainly European films into Japan in the late 1920s.¹³ In 1932, he took his wife Kashiko (1908-1993) on a rather belated honeymoon to Europe, the pleasure trip quickly changing into one of business (Kawakita 1980). In Berlin, Nagamasa negotiated with film studios, while Kashiko went to the cinemas and screening rooms to ‘watch one film after the other’ and wrote down information on the roughly 615 films she saw (ibid.). ‘Our job was to select good films and to discard bad ones’ (Kawakita and Satō 1991, 34). When Kashiko first saw *Girls in Uniform*, she was immediately struck by Sagan’s delicate directing, by the all-women cast, by the topic of resistance against a strict regime and the focus on an ‘affection close to same-sex love (*dōseiai ni chikai aijō*)’ (ibid., 35). It also strongly reminded her of her own days at boarding school—she was of the same age as the two main actors and had been educated at the prestigious Ferris Japanese-English

¹³ The Kawakitas also produced and pushed the export of Japanese films to the West, and would continue their sponsorship and promotion of cultural exchange through films throughout their lives.

Girls' School (*Ferisu waei jogakkō*) in Yokohama. She strongly recommended it to her husband, who was much more critical as towards its chances on the Japanese market: 'Of course, the cast was all female, and the directing, original work, as well as the script were all done by women, too. It had no star value at all, and with its same-sex love like sentiment set in an all-female world, the male audience would simply ignore it. Which cinema would risk something like this?' (Kawakita 1980).

This, of course, echoed the original concerns by the more experienced, male members of the production, which had led to the change of title and cast. Kashiko, however, liked the film and wanted to bring it back to Japan so much that, after much discussion and 'badgering', he agreed to try and buy it for a low price to mitigate the anticipated risk and as a belated wedding present (*ibid.*).¹⁴ The film was released in Japan on 1 February 1932, traditionally the worst month for the entertainment industry together with August (Kawakita and Satō 1991, 36). Yet, like in Germany, the Japanese distributor, Tōwa Shoji, cleverly titled the film 'Maidens' or 'Virgins' in Uniform (*Seifuku no shojo*, 制服の処女) an unusual and 'bold' choice of translation for 'girls' (*Mädchen*), which does not connote this sexual nuance (*ibid.*). On the day of the premiere, an unexpected crowd of people was waiting before the cinema in the cold rain, and the reception by critics and audience alike was tremendous; *Girls in Uniform* was awarded the prestigious *Kinema Junpō* Award for Best Foreign Language Film that year and just like with the silence attributed a posteriori to the reception of lesbian love, later critics attributed the film's success to Fröhlich, '[t]here is no way that an unknown female director could have achieved this level of editing and artistry' (Nanbu 1978, 20). Yet, the actual discourse at the time attributed the film's quality and delicacy to Sagan, as for instance director Itō Daisuke (1898-1981)', who claimed that the film had taught him much, and that 'a male director could not have made the film as perfectly' (Itō 1934). Furthermore, the advertisement in Japan very explicitly pointed towards queer desire rather than antimilitarist revolt: Tōwa's pamphlets used images of von Bernburg and Manuela, and reprinted parts of the dialogue (translated into Japanese), that are about the girl's desire

¹⁴ It should be mentioned that the film did very well at the box office in Germany; produced for about 55,000 RM, it made about 6,000,000 RM from its premiere until 1934 (also contradicting rumours of its immediate banning by the National-Socialists). This might be the reason why Kawakita's negotiations for a low purchase price proved lengthy.

for her teacher and the teacher's conflict (Tōwa Shoji. 1933). And this was possible because, as my fellow panellists also show, and as Kanno has examined, *Girls in Uniform* dropped into a fertile context of the young subculture of 'girls' culture' (*shōjo* culture) (Kanno 2010, 57-94).

This *shōjo* culture emerged with the establishment of legislation for girls schooling as part of the foundations of a strong, modern nation in the late 1890s. The gendering of 'young women and men as national subjects' (Kanno 2010, 58.) created the new social category of 'female students' (*jōgakusei*), the forerunners of the *shōjo*. Like with the young Prussian girls in the film, the system was supposed to train them into capable wives and mothers of the nation. "They are daughters of soldiers and, so god will, will be mothers of soldiers" says the headmistress, and the idealized Japanese state doctrine of the 'good wife and wise mother' (*ryōsai kenbō*) also only allowed for one way of being for the girls and women of the nation. At the same time, as with the film and in the film, the very school system conceived to produce these ideal female citizens also provided a liminal space and time for alternative visions and lifestyles. Manuela in the film speaks to this sentiment, when she confesses to Bernburg, "And I think of when I get older and have to leave the school, and every night you will kiss other girls ... I love you so much". In Japan, a similar discourse harks back to the import of Western theories of sexology in the 1910s, when for instance Krafft-Ebings *Psychopathia Sexualis* was translated into Japanese (1913). In line with these theories, female homosexuality was interpreted as a temporally limited phenomenon, a period of deviation and adjustment, and girls' schools were seen as 'the biggest training centres for artificial homosexual desires' (Kuwatani 1911, cited in Kanno 2010, 54-55). By the time of *Girls in Uniform*'s Japanese release, the discourse was ongoing, the strong nationalism of the turn of the century being repeated by the new wave of the 1930s. In 1934, the women's magazine *Shufu no tomo* published a roundtable discussion led by medical and educational professionals on the topic of female same-sex love. Titled 'A warning for mothers who have daughters', *Girls in Uniform* and its popularity among Japanese schoolgirls became the discussion opener. A professor at a women's college explained that 'it is a very common phenomenon in any girls' school. A teacher of a girls' school told me that there are at least two deeply involved same-sex couples in every class. I think there are more if you take the meaning of same-

sex love in a less serious way' (cited in Kanno 2010, 65). The intimate relationships between the students and sometimes between students and teachers were known as 'S' (*esu*, for the English 'sister'),¹⁵ and involved passionate letter-writing as well as tender care and affection (ibid. 58). While aspects of this could safely be interpreted as parts of young women's transitional period and even training for wife- and motherhood, Kanno shows how this discursive split between emotional and sexual desire was an artificial one, which was also cleverly exploited by 'the key players of girls' school culture [who] slipped same-sex desires into the literary tropes and visual motifs of friendship and sisterhood' (ibid.). Hence, it is not surprising that *Girls in Uniform* offered its subculture audience something as familiar as interestingly foreign, and alternative imaginative horizon that nevertheless resonated with their own experiential one.

Conclusion

Soon, the phrase 'virgins in uniform' began to appear in newspapers and magazines as a synonym for 'schoolgirls' (Kawakita and Satō 1991, 37). Together with the film's popularity and it hitting the nerve of shōjo culture, this audience engagement of what can be labelled a subculture accounts for *Girls in Uniform* being a 'cult film' in Japan as well. This idea is further supported by its Japanese remake in 1936: *Girls before Marriage* (*Yomeirimae no musumetachi*, Yoshimura) featured the same setting, an all-female cast, and the script was written by Suzuki Noriko who, like Christa Winsloe, lived in a same-sex relationship (Orbaugh 2016: 216-217). The Manuela character was played by Hara Setsuko (1920-2015), one of the great actors of the Japanese cinema, and she was never able to shed the label of the 'eternal virgin' that is strongly related to her role in this and other schoolgirl roles. It is striking that she met Dorothea Wieck in Berlin, during a promotional tour for the German-Japanese co-produced film *New Earth* (*Atarashiki tsuchi*, 1937, Fanck and Itami) in 1937, an occasion that strengthened her star persona as both a (potential) international superstar and the epitome of Japanese girlhood and femininity, with all its cultural connotations.

To observe the transnational flow of discourses, films, theories, imagination, and

¹⁵ Kanno also lists the alternative terms *shisu*, *ome*, *odeya*, *okachin*, *bau*, *ohaikara*, *hando-in*, *goshinyū*, and *onetsu* (2010, 57).

people at the time helps shed a light on the very possibility of alternative lifestyles and cultural representations at the time that is often seen as restricted and restrictive—in both countries we have observed here. As Fräulein von Bernburg confronts the headmistress after Manuela’s confession: “What you call sin, I call the great spirit of love which takes a thousand shapes”. These thousand shapes of an essential aspect of our shared humanity, are woven—sometimes explicitly, sometimes subliminally—throughout *Girls in Uniform* as well as through the two specific contexts of reception discussed in this paper, accounting for the film’s warm reception not only by ‘subcultures’ as well as its enduring appeal.

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Beyond Homosexual Representations: The Fluidity and Diversity of Identity in *Haruko* (1947) and *Confessions of a Mask* (1949)

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Abstract

Mishima Yukio is a Japanese writer who is well known for his works about male homosexuality. Especially his second, semi-autobiographical novel *Confessions of a Mask* (Kamen no kokuhaku, 1949), in which the protagonist confesses his homosexuality, firmly established Mishima's position in the post war Japanese and international literary arenas. While male homosexuality in Mishima's works has attracted a lot of attention in the past, lesbian motifs in Mishima's works are relatively ignored. This disregard, this paper argues, is related to the patriarchal society in Japan. To draw out and explore these hitherto neglected lesbian and other, more complex, homosexual motifs, this paper focuses on two of Mishima's works written and published in early post-war Japan, *Haruko* (1947) and, indeed, *Confessions of a Mask*.

Haruko, a novel in the first-person narrative, depicts a lesbian relation between Haruko and Michiko through narration from the male perspective. The protagonist has relations with Haruko and Michiko respectively, but in front of either of them, he feels a strong desire to transform into the other girl. This indicates a cross-gender identity that is deeply rooted in his mind. *Confessions of a Mask*, again a first-person narrative, depicts the protagonist's confessions of homosexual love, which also involves his desire of becoming the opposite side, someone with a strong constitution. The protagonist is physically attracted to strong, young men, but also places his mental love on the girl Sonoko; all the while he is suffering from impotence. Deeply influenced by contemporary theories about homosexual love, he attempts to develop a perception of himself as homosexual but ultimately fails.

The post-war reception of both works is closely related to the depicted desires, to war and to the immediate post-war discourse: *Haruko*, whose main characters did not go

to war, has been relatively ignored in post-war Japan due to its motifs of lesbianism and emasculation. On the other hand, male homosexuality in *Confessions of a Mask* has received a lot of attention under the masculine militarist mood that prevailed in Japan after World War II. As this paper shows, however, in both novels, within the homosexual relations, homosexual love appears to be involved with a third person of the opposite sex, which in effect represents the intrinsic fluidity and diversity of identity.

Mishima Yukio is a Japanese writer who is well known for his works about male homosexuality. Especially his 'I-Novel' (shishosetsu, 'confessional' narratives related to the author's life) *Confessions of a Mask* (Kamen no Kokuhaku, 1949), in which the protagonist confesses his homosexuality, firmly established Mishima's position in the postwar Japanese and international literary arenas. *Forbidden Colors* (Kinjiki, 1951), which depicts the Japanese homosexual world such as gay bars, caused a sensation in literary circles (Noguchi, 1988). As a work with a lot of autobiographical elements, it is often compared to *Confessions of a Mask* for its homosexual theme.

While the topic of male homosexuality in Mishima's work has attracted much attention in the past (e.g., Atogami, 2000, Saeki, 2015), lesbian motifs in Mishima's works have often been neglected. This disregard of lesbian motifs in Mishima's works, I argue, is related to the patriarchal society in Japan. To explore these hitherto neglected lesbian and other, more complex, homosexual motifs, this paper focuses on two of Mishima's works written and published in the early postwar period: *Haruko* and *Confessions of a Mask*.

Haruko (1947), is a novel with a lesbian theme, but is closer to *Confessions of a Mask* than *Forbidden Colors*. Like *Confessions of a Mask*, *Haruko* is an 'I-Novel' in the first-person narrative, and it is easy to see that the protagonist and Mishima were similar in age and experience. More significantly, both of these two works try to construct the protagonist's identity by connecting war and sexual experiences.

Haruko tells the male, first-person narrator's memories of his aunt, Haruko Sasaki, in 1944 during the war. Haruko is a count's daughter, and her elopement with a driver is all over the news. The narrator is longing for her 'unruliness', and 'lonely and

dangerous' way of life (*Haruko*, 512)¹. Her husband died in the war, so she returns home to live with her sister-in-law, Michiko. After a first, disappointing meeting with Haruko, the narrator shifts his attention to Michiko and comes to realize the lesbian relationship between Haruko and Michiko.

It is important that this work depicts the lesbian relation between Haruko and Michiko from a male perspective. The narrator 'I' starts a sexual relationship with Haruko on the day his mother and younger brother go to visit the evacuated area. On the second night of Haruko's stay in his home, he hears Haruko sleep-talking of 'Micchan' and that makes 'me' feel like 'I' have become Michiko. Hearing Haruko call Michiko's name instead of her husband's, 'I' have 'a certain feeling of guilt' (*Haruko*, 527). At the same time, the narrator feels an urge to respond to Haruko as Michiko, feeling he is assimilated with her.

The narrator asks Haruko for a chance encounter with Michiko, and she invites him to join them shopping. However, he becomes so deeply fascinated by seeing them sharing an umbrella and appreciating a vase together that he forgets this is his first date with Michiko. He cannot help but think they are not separate but united into one woman. He says, 'It is unacceptable for me to look at Michiko without Haruko' (*Haruko*, 534-535) . After that, when he is alone with Michiko, an apprehension that 'comes from a strange desire to be seen by someone' surges in him (*Haruko*, 538). His obsession with Michiko is constantly stirred up by the fear that Haruko may see them alone together. He feels, 'When I become oblivious to Haruko's attention, my desire for Michiko diminishes at the same time' (*Haruko*, 543) . His deep love of Michiko is aroused by Haruko's presence. And, when he approaches Michiko, he feels as if 'I'm not myself', which suggests that he transforms into someone else. His first kiss with Michiko does not make him happy, since it was not seen by Haruko. He wonders, 'Did her lips taste like Haruko's?' (*Haruko*, 545).

At the end of the novel, the narrator visits Michiko and finds a pair of vases that Haruko and Michiko bought, noticing that everything in the room is in pairs. It turns out they even wear yukatas of the same pattern. When he wears one of the yukatas and faces

¹ All translations of *Haruko* are my own, unless indicated otherwise.

Michiko, it feels like 'the woman's shameless kindness' would come to 'me'. He thinks that she is 'not afraid of anyone, even god' (*Haruko*, 552-553). Michiko invites him to play makeup with her before going to bed, as she always does with Haruko. It is as if 'my' lips are occupied by someone, probably Haruko, when Michiko puts lipstick on 'me' (*Haruko*, 554).

Instead of feeling jealous, the narrator appreciates the love between the women. He has relations with Haruko and Michiko respectively, but, in the presence of one of them, he feels a strong desire to transform into the other girl. It indicates that a cross-gender identity is deeply rooted in him. It can be said that the lesbian relationship between Haruko and Michiko is not important in this work. Haruko's heterosexual love can be read in her action of giving cigarettes to a labourer by mouth and having sex with the narrator. We can also find that Michiko does not show any resistance to physical contact with the narrator. However, I argue, the narrator sees them as a lesbian couple. It is hard to judge from Michiko's compliance and obedience to Haruko whether their relationship has gone beyond common sisterhood. After seeing them being intimate in the greenhouse, 'I became mad and ran home with no awareness where I were and how I did it'. As the narrator confesses that 'my memory is a little bit messed up', the scene in the greenhouse can be a 'my' delusion in a frenzy.

It is important to note the narrator of *Haruko* to discover his identity in the two women's lesbian relationship. This is an 'I-Novel' to confess one's sexuality, just as the narrator stated at the beginning of his recollection that Haruko's name is associated with 'every embarrassing memory', 'madness curiosity' and 'ineffable respect for lust' of 'me' (*Haruko*, 510). The lesbian relationship between Haruko and Michiko finally converges on the self-confirmation of sexual identity. The feeling that 'I' has transformed into a woman in front of them and experiences lesbian desire is clearly presented in this work.

Confessions of a Mask, again a first-person narrative, depicts the protagonist's confessions of homosexual love. It also involves his desire of becoming the opposite, someone with a strong constitution. The narrator was born as a skinny boy and always catching a cold, raised in his grandmother's sickroom where 'stifling with odours of sickness and old age' (*CM*, 6). His earliest memory that keeps 'tormenting and frightening

me all my life' is about 'someone coming down the slope'. Looking at the young nightsoil man, the narrator chokes with desire, 'I want to change into him', 'I want to be him'. He remembers there were two focal points in his desire. One was the close-fitting "thigh-pullers" of the youth that plainly outlined the lower half of his body. The other was the occupation that gave him the feeling of 'tragedy' and 'self-renunciation' (*CM*, 9). The vitality and self-renunciation of the youth gave 'me' inspiration and aroused 'my' desire to become him.

The narrator confesses his first ejaculation was caused by Guido Reni's painting of 'St. Sebastian' (c.1615, Palazzo Rosso, Genoa). The youth's body shows 'the springtime of youth, only light and beauty and pleasure' (*CM*, 39). Since becoming obsessed with the painting, the narrator always crossed his hands over his head to imitate the pose of St. Sebastian unconsciously. He images his frail body changing into St. Sebastian's strong one and a mysterious sexual desire comes over him at the same time.

Being aware of his abnormal sexual desires, the narrator never built a homosexual relationship with a man, but merely indulges in masturbation. Then, a strong young man called Omi, someone like St. Sebastian, appears in his school and in his life. The narrator always skips gymnastics class due to his sickly body. However, in contrast, Omi is called to show how to exercise on the horizontal bars and received admiring exclamation from his classmates. The narrator thinks that the cheers are 'for youth, for life, for supremacy', as Omi's 'abundant growth of hair' in his armpits symbolizes (*CM*, 77-78). He looks at his own, skinny body in the mirror and 'forcibly found reasons for believing I would someday have a chest like Omi's' (*CM*, 83). After that, the narrator continues to search for something in common with Omi, and as summer approaches, his eyes shift towards his armpits where black hair had sprouted. A mysterious sexual desire is aroused and causes him to masturbate. He clearly realizes that Omi was involved in 'my' sexual desire, but 'my' desire was directed toward 'my own armpits' (*CM*, 88). Because 'I was ashamed of my own thin chest, of my bony, pallid arms' (*CM*, 126), Omi's strength and life force are emphasized repeatedly from the perspective of the narrator. His love for Omi was full of longing, even jealousy to maturity and strength as a skinny boy.

Neither Omi nor St. Sebastian is the direct object of his sexuality, but what he is admiring is a representation of youth and vitality. 'I' have a longing for 'the sheer

extravagant abundance of life-force' represented by their youthful body and abundant growth of armpit hair, and 'my' sexual desire is aroused by the image that 'I' have turned into someone like them.

Confessions of a Mask is often considered to be the narrator's confession of being gay². However, it is actually difficult to say exactly whether he is gay. *Confessions of a Mask* consists of two parts: the first part talks about the desire for men, and the second part talks about physical incapacity for women. As mentioned above, his desire for men also reflects narcissism for himself. In the second part, the narrator is in love with a girl named Sonoko, but at the same time, he is suffering from a lack of sexual desire for her. At the end of the novel, the separation of his physical desire and spiritual love is obvious. In other words, while he does not have sexual desire for his spiritual lover Sonoko, it is aroused by strong young men like Omi, but goes no further than imagination and has never once turned into actuality. It is very hard for him to seek a stable, unified consciousness in such struggles between his soul and body.

This novel ends with the last meeting with Sonoko. It can be speculated that, after the meeting, the narrator 'I' gives his confessions and tries to find out the reasons for his break-up with Sonoko by tracing his memories. It should be noted that the purpose of mobilizing the memory has to do with the present, rather than the past. Therefore, the problem is how to set a standard for reorganizing 'my' history. The names of sexologists and homosexuals, as well as theories about homosexuality can be found in *Confessions of a Mask*. These suggestions lead the readers to the conclusion that his break-up with Sonoko is because of his homosexual tendency. However, there is an issue of reverse causality. In other words, the narrator knows some theories about homosexuality first before reorganizing his memory and interpreting his history. Despite his spiritual love for Sonoko, as long as he feels no sexual desire for her, he will assume that 'I' am gay and try to verify it. Furthermore, he has been pursuing the homosexual idiosyncrasy from his birth. All of this is because he is deeply influenced by the theories of Magnus Hirschfeld, whose name is mentioned several times in the novel (e.g., *CM*, 41, 123, 240). Hirschfeld

² For example, Meredith Weatherby says, 'This is the story of a boy's development towards homosexuality.' (*CM*, inside front cover).

is a German sexologist, who explains homosexuality³ as a biological phenomenon and interprets it as an innate and natural thing. He came to Japan in March 1931, and a popular magazine *Hanzai Kagaku* (Forensic Science) at that time organized a project about him to introduce his theories in Japan.

In this confession, the narrator attempts to interpret homosexuality personally with contemporary theories and knowledge. However, at the end of the novel, his understanding of physical desire, spiritual love, homosexuality, etc. is still ambiguous, and actually, he is not sure about his sexual identity. As he stated before, ‘this does not mean that my emotional life was set to rights by my intellectual understanding of these scientific theories’ (CM, 241). At the end of the work, the narrator is fascinated by a young man in a dance hall and indulges in his imagination. When being awakened by Sonoko’s voice, ‘I’ felt, ‘something inside of me was torn in two with brutal force’ and ‘I had witnessed the instant in which my existence had been turned into some sort of fearful non-being’ (CM, 253-254). That is to say, the narrator gave up confirming and interpreting his sexuality that is hiding in his physical reaction, and the confession ends up with his split and feeling of non-being.

Another common point between *Haruko* and *Confessions of a Mask* is the connection of the narrators’ sexual experience and the war experience. *Haruko* does not depict the war directly, but the war is something essential in the narrative. For example, the narrator has the opportunity to meet Haruko and Michiko because Haruko’s husband has died in the war. And he gets acquainted with the two women because his family evacuated to the suburbs and only, he was left at home for labour. It should be noted that none of the characters in *Haruko* go to war. As the narrator recalled a scene of women exercising in preparation for air defence on the street, without men, at that time. Therefore, I argue, the intimate relationship between Haruko and Michiko, and the lesbian atmosphere in this work were formed among women excluded from the war. Furthermore, women who cannot go to the battlefield, due to labour mobilization plans, are recruited as productivity forces and their labour is directly linked to the contributions to the country (Kanda, 1981).

³ Mishima never uses the word ‘homosexuality’ in the novel. It is called ‘inversion’ (*tousaku*) or ‘sodom’ (*sodomu*) because the word was not publicly acknowledged at the time.

However, in this work, Haruko's act of asking for enrolling Michiko into 'my' father's company to escape the labour represents the image of a woman who deviates from the war.

In this climate, it is easy to understand 'my' sympathy with women and being feminized because, just like women, old and young men are not recognized as part of military resources. In *Haruko*, the narrator is strongly aware of his age: 'I'm nineteen', 'I' said, 'When I think of the age, I used to blush because it was awkward as if I do some bad thing and seen by someone' (*Haruko*, 517). The age of nineteen has a special meaning at that time. This is because the conscription of student soldiers, which began in 1943, set the age limit for conscription to twenty years. In December, a temporary special exception reduced the age limit to nineteen (Fukuma, 1980). However, in this novel, set during the summer and fall of 1944, while the narrator sees off a friend to the battlefield, he does not go himself and there is probably no possibility he would go in the future. This suggests that 'I' was not recognized as a military resource in terms of age or body.

Confessions of a Mask clearly state why the narrator did not go to war. To escape from being drafted, he takes the physical examination in a rural area where a weak physical constitution would attract more attention. He is judged to be a 'frail student' but passes. When he joins his unit, he is misdiagnosed as having incipient tuberculosis due to the high fever of his cold and ordered home the same day. He is released from the fear of death in the war, but it can be said that his complex regarding physical strength was enforced. In this work, many memories of 'me' before the war are described, but it should be noted that the time of speaking is after the war. As mentioned above, the narrator's beloved male image emphasizes physical strength and life force. In his love for them, there is a desire to strengthen himself.

The longing of the narrator for strong masculinity is linked to blood and death, which suggests his consciousness links war and masculinity. It is obvious in the memory that he reorganized about homosexuality. As the feeling of 'tragedy' and 'self-renunciation' of the nightsoil man was emphasized by the narrator, the picture which captures his fancy shows a knight mounted on a horse, who would be killed the next instant, he believed. And when he understands that it is actually a woman named Joan of Arc, he thought it was the 'revenge by reality' (*CM*, 12). It is the same case with his

memory of the soldier's odour of sweat. The odour intoxicated 'me' and 'did gradually and tenaciously arouse within me a sensuous craving for such things as the destiny of soldiers' like 'the way they would die' (*CM*, 14). The tendency to associate masculinity with war also can be found in his hobby of imagining a strong young man with scenes of cruel bloodshed rather than eroticism. It can be said that the narrator's sexual complex is coming from his experience of being excluded from the war. His homosexual desire for strong men is associated with the masculine militarist mood during the war.

The post-war reception of both works is closely related to the male-centred ideology on gender in the period. *Haruko*, whose main characters do not go to war, has been relatively ignored due to its motifs of lesbianism and emasculation. On the other hand, the male homosexuality in *Confessions of a Mask* has received a lot of attention under the masculine militarist mood that prevailed. However, I would like to emphasize at the end, in both novels, homosexual love appears to be involved with a third person of the opposite sex. Therefore, the works do not only represent the solidity of exclusively male bonding through homosexual love but also depict the intrinsic fluidity and diversity of identity constructed through the process of mediation based on difference. The family-state ideology, which was based on the heteronormative constructions, was no longer absolute and unshakable after the war since the divinity of the Japanese Emperor, Tennō, was denied. Though the homosexual motif was suppressed in pre-war Japan, it was presented as one of the representations of post-war diversity in Mishima's works.

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Toshinori Fukuma, *Gakuto dōin gakuto shutsujin: seido to haikai*, Dai-ichi Hoki Co., 1980

Panel 2-4: Diversity and Unity in Interpretations and Representations (SOAS)

This chapter explores the formation and incentives of diversified interpretations and representations in cultural productions and activities. It discusses how the diversified interpretations and representations are informed by different positions and perspectives as well as the objectives that these interpretations and representations seek to achieve. It contributes to the understanding of diversity in interpretation and representation as well as the organic relations within the diversity. In particular, the three panellists consider the “Diversity and Representation” from the perspectives of linguistic diversity, cultural diversity, ethnic diversity, religious diversity and diversity of ideas and opinions.

Speaker 1 Jinjian Li looks at the English, Swahili, and Chinese texts of the *Merchant of Venice* and analyses the factors affecting and generating the multiple translations. Through his triangulated comparison, he explains how the translated versions and the original text are different but related. He argues that language, literature, and cultural development of the target language are dynamically participated in the translation process.

Speaker 2 Fiefei Zhan looks at how diversity is represented through the translations of different languages and the performance of flowery cultural differences in CHUANG 2021, a Chinese boy group survival show. Her paper explores the meanings of cultural diversity and internationalism, and how these are constructed, in the current Chinese society. She argues that the multiple perspectives and diverse positionalities in this show are, ultimately, a construction from a Chinese perspective which contributes to an imagination of a multicultural China.

Speaker 3 Yue Han looks at the diversified representations of Palestinian resistance in Palestinian Cinema in the post-Oslo period. By analysing films, *The Wanted 18* (2014) directed by Amer Shomali and Paul Cowan, *Wajib* (2017) directed by Annemarie Jacir

and *It Must Be Heaven* (2019) directed by Elia Suleiman, she examines the approaches and techniques that the filmmakers use to diversify their representations and the incentive behind it. She argues that the diversified cinematic representation of Palestinian resistance serves the objective of Palestinian filmmaking in the post-Olso period which endeavours to increase sympathy from the audience for the Palestinian cause.

A Triangular Study of the Merchant of Venice, Mabepari wa Venisi and 威尼斯商人

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Abstract

Different understandings and interpretations of the source texts generate different translations. The multiplicity of translation offers new research angles to translations studies. The relation of the different translations of one original work is two-sided. One is that they are different, especially in the case of translations in different languages; the other is that they are closely related. In such an understanding, as Matthew Reynolds (2019, 3) has suggested, the metaphor of translation would change from a ‘channel’ to a ‘prism.’ The diversity of translation offers us a window to look at the differences of the literary traditions in the different target languages in the way of comparing the different colours coming from one prism.

The multiple translations are very common in the classics such as Shakespeare. In this paper, applying the prismatic approach, through a triangular comparison between the English, Swahili, and Chinese text of *the Merchant of Venice*, I will try to look at the multiple ways of translating a same source text in these different languages. From the linguistic and cultural dimensions, I will look at the factors affecting and generating the multiple translations. I will argue, firstly, that the phonological features and the spelling system of Swahili and Chinese and their similarities and differences to English influence the strategies of the translators; secondly, the cultural backgrounds of the Swahili and Chinese literary system influence the form of the translations. The idea of prismatic translation studies and the method of triangular comparison between different languages gives us new perspectives to look at the translations in both languages.

The Linguistic Dimension

English, Swahili, and Chinese are three different languages which have no shared origin(s). English is a West Germanic language of the Indo-European Language Family, Swahili is a Bantu language from the Niger – Congo family, while Chinese is a language from Sino – Tibetan Language family. English is originated in the Western Europe, Swahili is originated from Eastern African, while Chinese is Originated from Eastern Asia. The phonological system, prosodical system, and syntax of the three languages is not related, this gives us the advantage (offering us a prism), in the research of the translations of the same source-language text (which is *The Merchant of Venice* in this case), to see what the different choices made by the translators in order to provide a ‘good’ translation to his audience. However, the purpose of this study is not to scrutinize the ‘right’ or ‘wrong’, ‘good’ or ‘bad’ of the translations. The linguistic and cultural background behind the choices of the translators is the interest of this study. Through comparing specific texts, let’s see the different strategies applied by the Swahili translator Julius Nyerere and Chinese translator Zhu Shenghao in their translations due to the different phonological systems.

For example, the speech of Antonio, who is a young aristocrat protagonist of Venetian in the beginning of the play goes as:

Antonio:

In sooth I know not why I am so sad.

x / x / x / x / x /

It wearies me, you say it wearies you;

But how I caught it, found it, or came by it,

What stuff ’tis made of, whereof it is born,

I am to learn;

And such a want-wit sadness of me

That I have much ado to know myself.

(Act 1 Scene 1, 1-8)

The symbols (x for stressed syllables; / for unstressed syllables) under the first line marks the beats of the line. The following lines, except the fourth line, can be marked by the same pattern – iambic pentameter.

See the examples Antonio and Launcelot’s speeches in *Swahili* by Nyerere and in *Chinese* by Zhu Shenghao

Nyerere (in Swahili)

Antonio: Kusema kweli sijui kisa cha huzuni yangu,
Inanitabisha sana; wasema yakutabisha;
Bali nilivyoipata au kuiambukizwa,
Au imejengekaje, imezawa jinsi gani,
Ningali sijafahamu.
Na huzuni yanifanya kuwa kama punguani,
Kunifanya nisiweze kujifahamu mwenyewe.

Zhu Shenghao (in Chinese)

安东尼奥：真的，我不知道我为什么这样闷闷不乐。你们说你们见到我这样子，心里觉得很讨厌，其实我自己也觉得很厌烦呢；可是我怎样会让忧愁沾上身，这种忧愁究竟是怎么一种东西，它是从什么地方产生的，我却全不知道；忧愁已经使我变成一个傻子，我简直有点不了解自己了。

The verse pattern applied by Nyerere is blank verse, which is a term introduced from English prosody, also known as ‘unrhymed iambic pentameter’. As previously mentioned, in English, the blank verse is combined by the unstressed and stressed syllables. One

unstressed syllable and one stressed form an iambic foot, five iambic feet forms an iambic pentameter. There are no rhymed syllables at the end of each line, so it is unrhymed. The blank verse in Swahili prosody has two characters. First, it is a verse, and it is the number of the syllabus makes it a verse. In the example of Antonio's speech, each line except for the fifth line has 16 syllables. In Nyerere's translation of the play, most of the lines are 16 syllables, in rare cases, it could be 14, 15 or other numbers, while the blank verse in English combines by 10 syllables. The number 16 is the same of the *Mashairi* type of poetry in Swahili. Different from *Mashairi*, which has rigid rhythm in each of the middle and the end of the line, the blank verse has no rhythm, which is its second character. See the same sentence in English and Swahili:

Antonio:

In sooth I know not why I am so sad. (10 syllables)

Ku- se -ma- kwe- li- si-ju-i ki-sa- cha- hu-zu-ni yan-gu. (16 syllables)

Zhu Shenghao's translation is in prose. The divided lines in the original text became continuously sentences in Chinese:

安东尼奥：真的，我不知道我为什么这样闷闷不乐。

For the same original text, Nyerere and Zhu Shenghao have different strategies to do the translations. Before analysing the translations, we should look at the characters of the three languages. The pattern of the units of stressed and unstressed syllables is different between languages. All Germanic languages, for example, instantly push the stresses of the words to the first syllabus. These languages have an impulse to be trochaic. However, there are many iambic words in English (e.g., alone, submit, greet, adjust...); the combining of *a* or the propositions with monosyllabic words are iambic; the combining of pronouns with monosyllabic words: I know, I cry, I do, I see... are iambic. (Wright, 1988: 1-2) The pentameter of the English verse is regarded as the most speechlike English line-length, especially when it appears without rhyme. The other line length tends to be

divided to two parts in the sentences, whether it is 6 foot or 7 foot or 9 foot. In a 5-foot-pentameter, it is impossible for the poets or speakers or act or in the case of drama playing, to divide it in to two parts while keeping the metrical balance. For it would always be 2 stressed syllables on one side and 3 unstressed syllables on the other, and vice versa. As Wright (ibdi) put it,

Pentameter, then, is the most speechlike of English line-lengths, especially when. it appears without rhyme. Long enough to accommodate a good mouthful of English words, long enough too to require most of its lines to break their phrasing somewhere, it also resists the tendency to divide in half. In fact, it cannot do so. (5)

The four-foot iambic lines are lack the amplitude of the five-foot lines, which partly limits their power to seem convincingly speechlike. (ibid) Thus, the unrhymed iambic pentameter, or blank verse, is the most suitable verse type to be used by Shakespeare in the dialogues of the aristocrats in his plays.

For the Swahili language, there are two characters worth to be mentioned. First, the Swahili words are all stressed in the second to last syllables. Second, all the Swahili words are ended with a vowel, which are one of the flowing five: a, e, i, o, u. These two phonetic characters make Swahili language a natural language of rhyme and beats. Let come back to the former example:

Antonio: Kusema kweli sijui kisa cha huzuni yangu

The stressed syllables are: *se, kwe, ju, ki, cha, zu, yan*. *Cha* is a one syllabus word, so the syllabus is stressed. The ending vow of the words in the line are a, i, i, i, a, i, u.

Through translation, the iambic pentameter of Shakespeare becomes 16-syllabus *Mashairi*-type of blank verse. In his translation, Nyerere not only introduced blank verse, in certain cases, his translation is also creative in the sense of creating beats where the original texts don't have. For example:

Shakespeare:

Shylock: This kindness will I show:

Go with me to a notary; seal me there

Your single bond, and — in a merry sport —

If you repay me not on such a day,

In such a place, such sum or sums as are

Expressed in the condition, let the forfeit

Be nominated for an equal pound

Of your fair flesh, to be cut off and taken

In what part of your body pleaseth me. (Act 1 Scene 3, 141-150)

Nyerere:

Shailoki: Nitaonya wema huu: tufuatane kwa mwandishi

Tuwekeane shahada; na kwa jinsi ya furaha,

Ukishindwa kunilipa kwa siku kadha wa kadha,

Pahala kadha wa kadha, kiasi kadha wa kadha,

Kilotajwa na shahada, malipo yake na yawe,

Ratili iliyo sawa ya mwili wako mzuri

Ikatwe po pote pale mimi nitapochagua

In this translation we can easily observe three pairs of arrangements of rhyme structures. The first is the *kadha* pair:

English:

Swahili:

Such a day

siku kadha wa kadha

Such a place

pahala kadha wa kadha

Such sum or sums

kiasi kadha wa kadha

In reading the lines, the six *kadhas* in Swahili combine special beats and rhymes. In standard Swahili, *kadha* means ‘several’ or ‘various.’ Literal translation of the original text should be ‘siku flani,’ ‘pahala fulani,’ and ‘kiasi fulani.’ If they were in such translations, the syllables will not be 16 in the lines and the special rhyme and beats will be lost.

The second pair is

<i>English:</i>	<i>Swahili:</i>
<i>Seal me there your single bond</i>	<i>Kwekeane shahada</i>
<i>Expressed in the condition</i>	<i>kilotajwa na shahada</i>

The ‘bond’ and ‘condition’ are both translated as *shahada*, while in standard Swahili ‘condition’ has a more accurate equivalence which is ‘kanuni.’ By putting two ‘shahada’ in line 1 and 5 of the speech, a certain kind of rhyme is formed.

The third pair is

<i>English:</i>	<i>Swahili:</i>
<i>Let the forfeit be</i>	<i>malipo yake na yawe</i>

In the Swahili translation, there is the word *Yake*. *Yake* is the possessive noun in Swahili meaning ‘your,’ while there is no possessive pronoun in Shakespeare’s original English sentence. The literal meaning of the Swahili sentence is ‘Your compensation shall be.’ One can argue that in terms of equivalence, Nyerere’s translation is faulty. But in the sense of organizing a good rhyme of Swahili verse, it is a proper choosing of words. The only difference of the two words are the middle letter *k* and *w*. The same ‘ya-’ in the front are both the stressed syllabus of the two words while the same *e* at the end makes a rhyme. The other arrangement is the middle word *na*, which means ‘and’ in Swahili. Grammatically, the conjunction *na* is not needed in this Swahili sentence. ‘*Malipo yake yawe*’ is the correct structure. But the previous lines have the prepositions *ya, wa, wa, wa,*

in the same position in each line. Putting *ya* between *yake* and *yawe* also a concern of prosody of the lines. The structure is as follows:

Swahili

Jinsi ya furaha

Kadha wa kadha

Kadha wa kadha

Yake na yawe

As we have discussed, the Swahili translation is creative in several ways. In order to make the sentence in the form of a blank verse (unrhymed *mashairi* form), in certain cases, including this one, Nyerere has to sacrifice the accuracy of his translation. But such adjustment and creations do not damage fidelity of the translation, certainly also not the literary values of the translation.

Let us look at how Zhu Shenghao dealt with his translation in the same lines:

夏洛克：我要叫你们看看我到底是不是一片好心。跟我去找一个公正人，就在哪儿签好了约；我们不妨开个玩笑，在约里载明要是不能按照约中所规定的条件，在什么日子、什么地点、还给我一笔什么数目的钱，就得随我的意思，在您身上的任何部分割下整整一磅白肉，作为处罚。

We can see that Zhu Shenghao used plain prose form in the translation. There are not the pairs of beats and rhymes to be compared as the English – Swahili case. In his introduction of the translation, Zhu Shenghao explained his translation principle:

余译此书之宗旨，第一求于最大可能之范围内，保持原作之神韵，必不得已而求其次，亦必以明白晓畅之字句，忠实传达原文之意趣；而逐字逐句对照式之硬译，则未敢苟同。（芳文华，2005：334）

For the principle of my translation, first is to keep the romantic charm of the original work as possible as I can, if it's impossible, second is to convey the interest and the meaning as clear and faithful as possible; For a word-for-word direct translation, I dare not to agree. (My translate)

From the previous analysis and comparison, we can see that the phonetic feature of Swahili and English is close. English and Swahili are all alphabetic writing in Latin characters. (Swahili was original alphabetic writing in Arabic characters and was transformed into Latin characters by the western missionaries and linguists) Many English words are iambic, which makes the iambic pentameter its natural verse, while all the Swahili words are stressed in the second last syllable, which makes it has natural beats. Linguistically, in his translation, Nyerere can easily apply the *Mashairi* form to translate Shakespeare's iambic pentameter. The phonetic closeness between English and Swahili is not exist between English and Chinese, for Chinese is ideographic writings, every character has its independent meaning and phonetic feature. Zhu Shenghao applies the meaning-for-meaning strategies in his translation.

The Cultural Dimension

To make their translations acceptable in the target literary system, in certain cases, the translators have to domesticate the SL texts in different ways. Through comparisons, we can have a better understanding how the cultural background of the TL literary system influenced the strategies of the translators. Let see the examples of how Nyerere and Zhu Shenghao dealt the erotic humours in the texts.

There are quite a few erotic humours in Shakespeare's plays, and the *Merchant of Venice* is not an exception, for example:

English:

Gratiano: Thanks, I'faith, for silence is only commendable

In a neat's tongue dried, and a maid not vendible.

Swahili:

Gratiano: Asante sana; maana ukimya unafaa tu

Kwenye ulimi wa ng'mbe uliokwisha kukausha

Chinese:

葛莱西安诺:

那就再好没有了；只有干牛舌和没人要的老处女，才是应该沉默的。

The English phrase 'a maid not vendible' was omitted in Nyerere's translation, while in Zhu Shenghao's translations, it was translated as '没人要的老处女'. This Chinese phrase was not a word for word translation, the meaning of it is 'an unwanted old virgin'. The word 'maid' usually refers to a virgin in Shakespeare's plays and it appeared many times. (Williams 2006, 199) In the traditional Chinese society a maid is supposed to be silent. It is a virtue for a maid or even a woman to have a reserved character. A young Chinese female aristocrat was supposed to be at home all the time and avoiding meeting any stranger, especially a man. In the English text, silence is certainly not a virtue of a maid, her pity is 'not vendible.' In the Chinese translation, Zhu Shenghao added the word '老' which means old, for unmarried till an old age could be regarded as a shame for a woman in the ancient Chinese society.

Like the traditional Chinese society, in the traditional Swahili society, where most of the people have an Islamic belief, a maid is also supposed to be silent. Interestingly, Nyerere did not translate 'a maid not vendible'. If Nyerere was to translate this phrase, then the image of a silent young maid who is not vendible will be confusing for the Swahili audience, for an unmarried maid is supposed to be silent. But that is not the only reason for Nyerere's omission of the original text. The other reason is that Nyerere's

anticipated audience is the students, some of them will be Muslim girls. As a teacher who considers the cultural and religious taboo, Nyerere may think that the language with erotic humour is not proper for them.

The other example of the omission of the erotic humour is Shylock's metaphor about the interest. Jacob' puts a wand before the ewes when they are breeding with the rams, so the lambs of the ewes and rams would be parti-coloured which shall belong to him. Shylock saw Jacob's deed as righteous for 'thrift is blessing if men steal it not.' (Act 1 Scene 3, 89)

In the end of autumn turned to the rams
And when the work of generation was
Between these woolly breeders in the act,
The skillful shepherd peeled me certain wands,
And in the doing of the deed of kind
He stuck them up before the fulsome ewes,
Who then conceiving, did in eaning time
Fall parti-coloured lambs, and those were Jacob's.

Nyerere omitted the details of Jacob's thrift and only gave the result:

Kwamba wana wa kondoo wote wataozaliwa
Na mila na madoa watakuwa wa Yakobo.
(Gloss: That the lambs which they breed
Are striped and dappled will be Jacob's.)

Zhu Shenghao' s translation is:

到晚秋的时候，那些母羊因为淫情发动，跟公羊交合，这个狡狴的牧人就趁着这些毛畜正在进行传种工作的当儿，削好了几根木棒，插在淫浪的母羊面前，

他们这样怀下了孕，一到生产的时候，生下的小羊都是有斑纹的，所以都归雅各所有。

There are two phrases in the translation which makes a sharp contrast to Nyerere's Swahili translation. One is '淫情发动' and the other is '淫浪的'. The former phrase means 'rutting', describing the ewes when they are preparing the mating, while the latter means 'lascivious', describing the ewes when they are mating. These two words are not in the English text. Zhu Shenghao may use them in the Chinese translation to improve the dramatic sense of the play.

Another example of the omission is from Portia's comments on the Neapolitan prince. Shakespeare Original text is:

Portia:

Ay, that's a colt indeed, for he doth nothing but talk of his horse, and he makes it a great appropriation to his own good parts that he can shoe him himself. I am much afeard my lady his mother played false with a smith.

Nyerere's translation is:

Naam, yeye hasa ni mwana farasi wake; na hufanya maongezi mengi. ila juu a farasi wake; na hufanya kuwa ni nyongeza ya sifa zake kwamba yeye mwenyewe anaweza kumvisha chuma miguuni.

Zhu Shenghao's translation is:

鲍西娅：嗯，她真是一匹小马，他不讲话则已，讲起话来，老是说他的马怎么怎么；他因为能够亲自替自己的马装上蹄铁，算是一件天大的本领。我很担心他的令堂太太是跟铁匠有过勾搭的。

Nyerere and Zhu Shenghao treated the sentence ‘I am much afeard my lady his mother played false with a smith,’ in different strategies. Nyerere omitted it while Zhu Shenghao translated it directly.

Conclusion

Form the previous comparison and analysis, we can see, firstly, the phonological closeness and the same Latin alphabetic spelling system of Swahili and English make Nyerere easily applies the *Mashairi* verse to translate the iambic pentameter of Shakespeare and to make some creations in the translation, while in Chinese, such advantage does not exist, which makes Zhu Shenghao to apply different strategies according to his translation principle; secondly, the different cultural background of Swahili language and Chinese language influences the decisions of the strategies of translators. To make their translations acceptable, even admirable, the strategy of omitting or adding certain contents is applied. The idea of prismatic translation studies and the method of triangular comparison gives us a clearer observation of such differences.

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From Creating Visibility to Increasing Empathy: The Diversified Cinematic Representations of Palestinian Resistance in the Post-Oslo Period

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Abstract

Palestinian resistance to Israeli occupation has always been the main theme of Palestinian Cinema since 1967 when Israel occupied the West Bank, including East Jerusalem during the Six-Day War. In the period between 1968 to 1982 when Palestinian Cinema was sponsored by Palestinian Liberation Organization, most of all over 100 films produced were following the same pattern of militant documentaries and shorts that filmed and photographed the activities and events of fida'i groups. With the Israeli invasion of Beirut in 1982 and subsequent departure of the PLO from Lebanon, film production within PLO diminished greatly. Then the outbreak of the First Palestinian Intifada in the late 1980s and the Oslo process in the 1990s brought political and economic changes to the Palestinian society that consequently affected its film industry by enabling a more thorough, diversified and complex representation of Palestinian resistance.

This paper looks at how Palestinian Cinema diversifies its representations of Palestinian resistance in the post-Oslo period when Palestinian filmmakers are getting more diversified sponsorship and exploring creative forms of representation in their film production with fewer restrictions, as opposed to the film making in the period when the PLO defined the cinematic agenda. It also explores the effect of such diversified representations on strengthening Palestinian soft power by analyzing two Palestinian films: *Wajib* (2017) directed by Annemarie Jacir and *It Must Be Heaven* (2019) directed by Elia Suleiman. It argues that by blending in animation, mundane life flavor and humor, the diversified Palestinian cinematic representations of the Palestinian resistance find a

way to make the Palestinian narrative easier to be heard and to be understood and accepted. The diversity in representation enables a transformation of the objective of Palestinian filmmaking from creating visibility for the Palestinian cause to increasing empathy to support their cause by mobilizing shared human emotions and experiences of the audience.

Introduction:

The history of Palestinian cinema is generally divided into four periods by Nurith Gertz and George Khleifi from 1935, when Ibrahim Hassan Sirhan made a 20 minute-long film documenting the visit of Prince Saud to Jerusalem and Jaffa, which marked the beginning of Palestinian cinema.¹ The four periods echo the various stages of the national Palestinian struggle.

The first period is the beginning period from 1935 to 1948, the year of the Palestinian *Naqba* (“disaster”). The traces of the film production in this period are mainly relied on the testimonies of those who claimed that they participate in cinematic undertaking and the written evidence that documented the establishment of film production institutions.

The second period is dubbed the “Epoch of Silence” from 1949 to 1967 when almost no Palestinian films were produced. There was even no evidence of personal reminiscence, press announcements or documents regarding Palestinian film production.

The third period is named “Cinema in Exile” from 1968 to 1982 which is marked by the 1967 Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip and the strengthening status of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) and other Palestinian institutions. Palestinian cinema during this period is mainly created in Beirut, Lebanon, where filmmakers found refuge with the departure of PLO members from Jordan in 1970. This period also ended due to the departure of PLO from Beirut following the Israeli invasion

¹ Nurith Gertz and George Khleifi, “A Chronicle of Palestinian Cinema,” in *Palestinian Cinema: Landscape, Trauma and Memory* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2008), pp. 11-12.

of Lebanon. During these years, the principal film production bodies, the Film Institute and the Division of Palestinian Films' halted their operations, as did the production institution of the Democratic Front. Only a few groups continued to function, including the PLO's Department of Culture, which produced some of the more mature films of the period. The films that were created during this era are grouped together and referred to, in the terminology of researchers and historians, as the "Cinema of the Palestinian Revolution"² or the "Cinema of the Palestinian Organizations." According to Nadia Yaqub, the films shot in this period created a cinematic language consonant with the Palestinian Revolution and its needs. The result is a body of work that engages with some of the same ideas surrounding visibility, the photographic image, and media circuits that preoccupied prominent experimental filmmakers of the left in Europe and Japan but remains focused on the processing of violent events and loss necessary for sustaining agential subjectivities and active engagement in the Palestinian political project. She maintains that the Palestinian films of this period are important as an archive of a particular Palestinian experience—one in which Palestinians attempted to control their own destiny in an organized and relatively cohesive fashion. Besides, she also points out that these films created a type of visibility for the Palestinian cause, one that was rooted in the ongoing experience of participating in the Palestinian Revolution.³ As representations of the Palestinian experience, they contributed to the fabrication of the Palestinian Revolution, rendering it visible to its participants as a revolution. Their works documented events and conditions related to the Palestinians and situated them within the ideological frame of a struggle for national liberation. They sought to connect Palestinians living under Israeli rule with those in exile. They participated in the production and dissemination of a Palestinian national culture and its recurring tropes, and solidified relationships with allies around the world.

The fourth period, starting in 1980 and continuing to the present day, is characterized by

² Abu Gh'nima, 1981; Mdanat, 1990; Ibrahim, 2000

³ Nadia G. Yaqub, "Palestinian Cinema in the Days of Revolution," in *Palestinian Cinema in the Days of Revolution* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2018), pp. 10.

the product of several artists' individual initiatives. During this period, the First and Second Intifadas have determined the agenda of Palestinian society and of the Palestinian Authority that was established as a consequence of the Oslo Accords. Palestinian film directors, whether in exile or in the homeland, have once again been compelled to find their own funding. As a result of the absence of any institutional support, however, they have also enjoyed creative freedom. Hence, despite pressing demands on this cinema to align itself with the aims of the national struggle, diverse, independent, groundbreaking, and internationally recognized and esteemed films have been created during this time.

This paper focuses on analysing the cinematic representations of the Palestinian films in this period, especially in the last two decades when the feature of the changes in modes of expression, ideological stances, as well as means of production becomes clearer. If Palestinian cinema in the third period is considered playing a significant role in generating visibility of the Palestinian cause, then in the fourth period Palestinian cinema is devoted to promoting understanding of such visibility. To achieve this goal, Palestinian filmmakers have taken great advantage of cinematic representations. This paper explores two popular techniques that have been shared widely in the Palestinian filmmaking in the last two decades: laughter and mundane life flavour, by looking at two Palestinian films *Wajib* (2017) directed by Annemarie Jacir and *It Must Be Heaven* (2019) directed by Elia Suleiman. It argues that by blending in mundane life flavour and humour, the diversified Palestinian cinematic representations of the Palestinian resistance find a way to make the Palestinian narrative easier to be heard and to be understood and accepted. The diversity in representation enables a transformation of the objective of Palestinian filmmaking from creating visibility for the Palestinian cause to increasing empathy to support their cause by mobilizing shared human emotions and experiences of the audience.

Mundane Life Flavour:

Wajib is a 2017 Palestinian drama film directed by Annemarie Jacir. It was screened in the Contemporary World Cinema section at the 2017 Toronto International Film Festival. *Wajib* means “duty” and there are all manner of duty and customs observed herein, from the endless salutations and shows of respect to the ritual that forms the basis of the film.

Bethlehem-born writer-director Annemarie Jacir, whose producer husband was born in Nazareth, displays a keen instinct, in her third feature, for how the line between public and private lives can become blurred in small towns, where everyone knows each other's business. The result is often very funny, but the premise is also a way into deeper themes of identity, exile, idealism and compromise.

The story happens in Nazareth, as we are reminded by a huge flag and Star of David sculpture in the middle of a freeway roundabout that the father and son pass a number of times in the film, is a town situated in Israel, despite the fact that its population is overwhelmingly Palestinian. This fact brings an unmistakable tension and edge to the film.

Architect Shadi (Saleh Bakri) has returned from Rome, where he lives with his Palestinian girlfriend, back to Nazareth where his sister Amal (Maria Zriek) is to be married. According to tradition, Shadi and his divorced dad, Abu Shadi (Mohammad Bakri), must drive around town delivering wedding invitations. So it is, the viewer buckles into an old Volvo for this low-octane, but endlessly revealing ride among family and friends. There are plenty of cultural and personal collisions here, wonderfully and touchingly illuminated by the duo (played by real life father/son actors Mohammad and Saleh Bakri). They are quickly found in harsh disagreement behind the wheel — over everything from politics to cigarettes — but display a united front to the world as they are ushered into the front rooms and kitchens of various relatives and friends. It is in such background that this Palestinian comedy drama *Wajib* extends and touches the soft parts of its audience as it is quickly evident that these problems are inherent to every family from Iceland to Damascus, and everywhere in between, and in much the same way.

Of course, the intension of this film is far from barely sharing a funny story of sending wedding invitations according to Palestinian customs or exposing the gaps between Palestinian generations. What makes it eye-catching is how the filmmaker merges the factors of Palestinian cause into such a life story. For example, in the sequence when the son goes to send an invitation to his grandmother, the audience are reminded of the special

monitoring mechanism specially aimed at Israeli Arabs. Jacir does not uncover this issue ponderously but indicates it through the grandmother's family gossip with Shadi instead in a very natural way. The grandmother explains that she calls her telephone company many times but still cannot solve her problem of getting network signal due to the barrier of language and the poor service from the company's staff. It reminds us of the difficulty of Israeli Arabs in living in Israel.

Moreover, when Abu Shadi knocks down a dog while driving in the Jewish neighbourhood, he becomes very nervous and scared as if this matter is as big as heaven. He takes his son and drives away from the scene in panic and is afraid of being discovered as he believes that knocking down a dog in a Jewish neighbourhood and being discovered will get him into a big trouble, especially if the master of the dog is Jewish. This incident provokes the audience's thinking of the low status of Israeli Arabs in an Israeli society.

Besides, if we look at the major conflict between the father and the son, we will realize that it is also related to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. For son Shadi, his homeland inspires love and hate. He finds the townfolks' gossip and obsession with keeping up appearances hard to bear, especially after living away from home for so long. Abu Shadi, a respected teacher in line to become headmaster, is assiduously wedded to his country and his place, rejecting outside influences and accepting the struggles and compromises of his conflicted, ancient land. Shadi is disappointed by what he views as his father's willingness to live in a state of permanent compromise. He wonders why the old man doesn't mind that Israeli soldiers in full uniform eat at a neighbourhood café, or that one of the wedding guests is his father's boss, a man who informs to the government. But if he bristles at how much his father seems resigned to life's compromises in Nazareth, the older man in return criticizes his son for being unrealistic and reserves a few jibes — delivered with hilarious understatement — for the younger man's taste in Italian pastel shirts.

Jacir's achievement is that she manages to straddle comedy and drama with such a lightness of touch. She also manages something more: to underpin her film with a deep,

thoughtful exploration of the status of Israeli Arabs which is made approachable through the rich mundane flavour in her film.

Humour:

Elia Suleiman is famous for making surreal comedy and modern tragedy about the Israeli occupation of Palestine. In his well-known trilogy: *Chronicle of a Disappearance* (1996), *Divine Intervention* (2002) and *The Time That Remains* (2009), laughter is an important and successful factor in shaping his unique representations of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In his latest feature film, *It Must Be Heaven* (2019), humour is, beyond all doubt, the mainstay of his representation techniques but functions in a slightly different from that in his trilogy, as this time, Suleiman's sarcasm is not only targeted at the militarism raging in Israel and Palestine, but also directed at militarism tumour globally. By representing the "portrait of Palestine abroad", Suleiman manages to facilitate his audience in better understanding the Palestinian problem.

Continuing to chart his own path in a Palestinian film landscape generally perceived as monolithic, Elia Suleiman turns his delightfully absurdist, unfailingly generous gaze beyond the physical homeland, where parallels and dissonance abound. By now Suleiman's distinctive style is not just well-known but eagerly anticipated, his wide-eyed, expressive face forever compared with Buster Keaton as he looks out at a world full of small wonders and incongruities. It's been a decade since the writer-director-star's last feature, and while "It Must Be Heaven" has all his hallmarks, the vision shifts from the struggle in Palestine to the condition of the global Palestinian. Whimsical and wistful yet infused with a yearning for the stability of place, "Heaven" will have gates opened throughout the European indie circuit and potentially further afield.

Suleiman's previous three features saw him as witness to the surreal in Palestinian life, always linked to individuals rather than to ideology and relishing the minutiae of daily life in the Occupied Territories, where a hefty dose of humour is needed at the most unexpected moments. "Heaven" begins in Palestine — Nazareth, to be precise — before moving to Paris and New York, where what it means to be Palestinian is circumscribed

by expectations bearing little relationship to the reality at home. Always his own protagonist, Suleiman's robe of bemusement protects a more fragile body both at home and abroad, where the possibility of exile adds a further level of destabilization: What does it mean to carry one's roots to a different soil?

"Heaven" has a certain narrative linearity but is made up of small vignettes, frequently beginning with an observational shot, then cutting to Suleiman watching the action play itself out, then editing back and forth between the two. The opening is an exception, when a bishop (Nael Kanj) leads a night-time procession to the portal of a church, where the custodians refuse to open the doors. Multiple metaphors can be read into the scene, most especially the idea of a people refused entry to their communal space, but on a fundamental level it's also simply a hilarious moment, as Suleiman plays the churchman's fury before his flock for laughs.

Suleiman's life in Nazareth is full of such fragments, snippets of lives passing before his eyes that underscore tensions between people as well as the inherent beauty of a graceful gesture. Neighbours alternate between selfishness and generosity (the latter most often only when they know they're being observed), leaving the impression that people broadcast fraternal solidarity but really look after their own interests.

A wheelchair, a walker, and other items belonging to a recently deceased loved one are packed away, and Suleiman leaves for Paris, where a delicious slo-mo montage of stunning young women in colourful, leg-baring outfits pass by the café where he's seated, accompanied by Nina Simone's "I Put a Spell on You." Paris is seen as fulfilling all the stereotypes, yet only at the start: The choreographed dance of cops on Segways, their circular movements matching the swirling patterns of the cobblestones, is a pleasure to watch, yet the mere presence of policemen means something is amiss. An amazing sequence of army tanks rolling past the Banque de France on Bastille Day is a reminder that militarism isn't limited to the Middle East, and while the Parisian ambulance service offers a homeless man a fine two-course meal, the threatening mien of a tattooed punk (Grégoire Colin) on the metro is a sign that menacing encounters can happen everywhere.

Suleiman has come to Paris looking for production funding for his next movie, but in a comical meeting with a producer (Vincent Maraval) undoubtedly based on real encounters, he's told his film isn't Palestinian enough and therefore doesn't correspond to their profile (the art directors did a great job designing the office). In New York he faces even stronger expectations of who and what he should be, from a taxi driver (Kwasi Songui) thrilled to have a real Palestinian in his cab, to a pretentious film professor (Guy Sprung) wanting him to embody the cause in one particular way. Unlike in Paris, where the producer insisted he conform to a French vision of Palestine, the industry exec whom his friend Gael García Bernal introduces him to hasn't the slightest interest in hearing any Palestinian story.

In each new location, Suleiman looks with wonder at the cities' charming qualities, yet time and again, he finds echoes of familiar elements, as on a Williamsburg street corner, where everyone he sees at the supermarket or on the street casually carries a gun over his or her shoulder. It's a funny, highly embellished moment, illustrating how foreigners perceive Americans' enthusiastic right to bear arms. It echoes the militarized situation in Israel and Palestine.

Palestine may have pressure-cooker features, but so have most parts of the world, in their own particular way. Being a Palestinian abroad demands the dexterity of a slalom champion, constantly negotiating obstacles imposed by Western expectation, tricked by disruptive signs of familiarity and foreignness. In a club back in Palestine at the end, Suleiman watches a room packed with mixed couples raising their arms in the air and joyously dancing: It's a vision of a vibrant, youthful population, the kind that can be seen in most cities around the world. This is Palestine, as much as the Wall, or the martyrs' posters, or the checkpoints, and it's telling that none of those are even glimpsed here. Instead, there's the club and before that, peaceful olive and lemon groves with only the sounds of songbirds.

It's not like the film ignores the Occupation — a scene of two Israeli soldiers exchanging

sunglasses while a blindfolded young woman sits in the back of their car ensures that no one will think the director is pretending all's well. But Suleiman, the eternal observer, trusts his audience already knows the facts. What they generally don't get elsewhere is a new perspective, a different way of understanding what it means to be Palestinian in a global context. Nowhere is heaven, but that doesn't mean he thinks his home is hell.

Through his humorous representation of Palestine in Paris and New York, the audience are informed that what happens in Palestine is also happening elsewhere around the world. This greatly helps the audience quickly and easily get familiar and understand the Palestinian problem and link their own experiences with it, which strongly arouses intense responses.

Conclusion

Palestinian filmmakers in the fourth period are focusing on using different representation techniques to draw the distance between their works carrying the cause of increasing visibility of Palestinian struggle and their audience in order to facilitate their understanding of the Palestinian cause. This is mainly achieved by using mundane life flavor and humor in their films, which enables the audience to receive a feeling of familiarity and thus evoke sympathy.

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Panel 2-5: Cross-Cultural Perspectives on Women: Resistance, Negotiation and Representation (SOAS)

This panel brings together cross-cultural and inter-disciplinary approaches to explore diversity and representation of women in different African and Asian contexts. Gender, as a primary socio-cultural category, in relation to class, religion, sexuality and race, is critical in the discussion of diversity. This panel looks at gender representation in fields as diverse as literature and art, as well as cultural and political activities. The papers explore how diverse cultures represent women diversely, how women find diverse ways to represent themselves and the interconnection between representations of women and their diverse political contexts.

Three of the panellists examine representation of women in literature and art.

Yunzi Han focuses on the representation of the bodily practice of self-sacrifice of single mothers in Chinese and Iranian cinemas. Through a comparative analysis of Iranian film *The May Lady* (Rakhshan Banietemad, 1998) and *Fengshui* (Wang Jung, 2012), she will discuss how the representation of the two women's lines of finding their positions brings pondering over agency in different modalities, especially under the tyranny of patriarchy.

Ruixuan Li looks at how Somali women are represented in poetry made by Somali women themselves. Through a close reading of Hawa Jibril's poems in different genres and on diverse topics, she will describe and account for the use of certain aspects of language which she suggests reflects the changes in not only the poet's intents of the poems made under different background in different periods of her life, but also in how she perceives her position as a Somali woman.

Titling his paper "An Ideal Woman" in quotation marks, Dylan Wang explores cross-dressing and male homoerotic desire in modern Chinese literature. Through a close

reading of four literary works, he seeks to offer a glimpse into the “sexual anarchy” that once dominated (and to an extent still does) the literary discourse on gender and sexuality in modern China.

Two of the panelists explore diversity and representation in cultural and political activities.

Ze Zhou Yang looks at various, even contrasting representation of current female Chinese Ambassador Hou Yanqi in Nepal in the context of contemporary Nepal-China contacts. He intends to investigate the mirroring nature of representations and how a small country like Nepal mobilises various representations of the Chinese female political representative to counter China's increasingly prominent presence in its land.

Xianan Jin's paper is set to contest the diversity in women's political inclusion in Rwanda. By focusing on two socio-economic classes of women in her research, female informal workers who failed to become imidugudu leaders and were regarded as surplus labour, and female imidugudu leaders who were directly elected by the villagers, she argues that researchers should think beyond liberal feminist theorisation of gender pluralism based on elite women's political empowerment, and centre the experiences of low-class women's political life as the focal point of gender equality.

The Making of An Exemplary Mother: A Critical Comparative Analysis of *The May Lady* (Rakhshan Banietemad, 1998) and *Fengshui* (Wang Jing, 2012)

Yunzi Han (Final Year PhD Student)

SOAS Film Studies.

Abstract

This paper focuses on the reassessment of divorced women's agency under patriarchal social structures, in this case, the Iranian and Chinese societies, through reflecting on the knowledge framework when evaluating agency and exploring the relationship of the woman and her society. Therefore, the paper aims to answer the two questions: what modifications shall one apply to one's conceptual disposition when articulating women's agency under a patriarchal structure? and how do the social norms restrict her and, at the same time, are used by her to gain a place in her society? To answer the two questions, the paper applies the epistemic framework of looking at agency in conditions and proposes to break out from the binary of resistance and subordination to turn the focus to the in-betweenness when assessing women's agency through a comparative analysis of the two films *The May Lady* (Rakhshan Banietemad, 1998) and *Fengshui* (Wang Jing, 2012).

Introduction

Let me start my paper by introducing the two films that I am going to analyse.

In *The May Lady*, Forough, a documentary filmmaker and a divorced single mother of a rebellious teenage son, is doing a project called "The exemplary mother". During her meetings with the candidates, she keeps comparing the sacrifices those candidates have made for their children with her own situation; she is struggling between motherhood and her desire as a woman because she is in love with a man. Caught between her son's rejection of her love life and the society's requirements for a mother, Forough attempts to

negotiate a balance between them. In the end, she decides to continue to keep her love life concealed to achieve peace at home with her son.

In *Fengshui*, Baoli, her husband, and her son move into a new flat; however, afterwards, her husband decides he wants a divorce, but Baoli refuses. He then cheats on her, whereupon she reports his affair to the police and his workplace. Unable to bear the stigma, he eventually commits suicide. To survive, she becomes a yoke-bearer and devotes herself to working hard to support her son financially so he can get into a good university. However, after years of sacrificing herself to support the family, she finds her son treats her like a stranger; eventually, he forces her to move out. In the end, she realizes that everything happened after they had moved into this new flat. Is the *fengshui* (geomantic omen) of the flat to blame?

This paper is inspired by a conversation I had about Rakhshan Banietemad's film *The May Lady* with one of my supervisors, Dr Saeed Zeydabadi-Nejad, who specializes in Iranian cinema. During the first year of my PhD, when I first watched the film, I could not understand why Forough keeps hiding her love relationship. She wants another man in her life; however, she chooses not to confront Mani (her son) with her desire of having a love life when he refuses to accept it, even though he is already an adult. In my opinion, hiding instead of confronting, repressing instead of expressing will not bring women what they want. In my view, the only effective way, or even the "right" way to take control of one's life is to confront and resist the oppression.

I could not help asking: "Why doesn't Forough just tell her son that she is done with being alone for all these years, and now she is in love and wants to make the relationship public?" However, Dr Zeydabadi-Nejad disagreed: "You don't take your lover's phone call in front of your son, especially since he has such a strong rejection of the lover."

"But after all these years, her son still does not accept that she is not just a mother but also a woman with desire. If she keeps enduring, how long will it take for her son to accept this? How long will it take for her and her lover to be together officially?"

"If you take a closer look at all of Rakhshan Banietemad's films, you will find that her films are more about negotiation rather than confrontation when dealing with differences

and conflicts regarding feminist issues. This is her approach.”

“But without confrontation, how could she solve her problem? Keep hiding for even more years?”

“There are a lot of practical issues in life. You need to consider the consequences when making a choice. No matter whether it is negotiation or confrontation, sometimes, due to practical circumstances, irrespective of which approach you choose, the problem still cannot be solved. Then, you will have to find a way to live with it.”

Similar things happen to Baoli in *Fengshui*. She chooses not to pay attention to her body’s needs, that is, neither her outward appearance nor her inner desire as a woman. Instead, she chooses to devote herself to the hard work of supporting her son’s education. She even chooses physically exhausting grunt work, yoke bearing, as her livelihood. The two films have different approaches to showing the bodily consumption of the two women. *The May Lady* focuses more on the inner consumption of Forough while *Fengshui* pays more attention to the physical consumption of Baoli’s body. However, in the end of both films, neither female protagonist has achieved the hoped for result. Both women are caught between the social norms of motherhood, their desire to gain a place under a patriarchal structure, and their desire as a woman.

The conversation I had with Dr Zeydabadi-Nejad, though very frustrating for a first year PhD student, provoked a key question in post-colonial feminist discourse when locating women’s agency, as Saba Mahmood posed at the beginning of her book *Politics of Piety* on women’s involvement in the Islamist movements in Egypt: “How should issues of historical and cultural specificity inform both the analytics and the politics of any feminist project?”¹ More specifically, when discussing topics such as feminism, women’s rights, sexual politics, etc., under a patriarchal structure, such as in Iranian and Chinese societies, how should one assess women’s agency in a feminist discourse?

There are two aspects that need to be considered when answering this question. The first

¹ Saba Mahmood, *Politics of Piety: The Islamic Revival and the Feminist Subject* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2005), 1.

aspect is the framework of knowledge one holds when evaluating women's agency in a patriarchal structure. What modifications shall one apply to one's conceptual disposition when articulating women's agency under a patriarchal structure? The second is the relationship between the woman and the society she lives in. How do the social norms restrict her and, at the same time, are used by her to gain a place in her society? Colloquially, as a woman, how can she maintain a liveable life in the society?

The knowledge framework of evaluating women's agency under patriarchal structures

In this short paper, I am not going to elaborate on why Iranian and Chinese societies are considered as patriarchal societies and how their patriarchal structures are formed distinctively; instead, I will focus on how this shared social structure affects women's agency, and on how women try to maintain a liveable life under this social structure in the two cultures represented in the two films. By patriarchal structures, I mean social structures that are formed and dominated by the centrality of male power. However, this does not mean that men have the total privilege in society. Indeed, both men and women² are restricted and oppressed by the different social norms that patriarchal structures set for them. This paper belongs to a bigger project about the complexity of assessing the agency of men and women under patriarchal structures in Iranian and Chinese societies. However, due to the limit of the word count, this paper focuses only on patriarchal structures' restriction of women's agency, more specifically, assessing divorced women's agency under the oppressive patriarchal structure of Iranian and Chinese societies.

To bring the two contexts together, I propose to think about divorced women's agency in the shared condition, that is, the oppression of patriarchal structures, rather than in certain cultures. Sumi Madhok gives a concise clarification of this knowledge framework:

In thinking about the question of agency in oppressive conditions/contexts, I am not engaged in exploring the lack of freedom in a non-western context nor am I concerned with identifying the different impediments to the realisation of autonomy in non-western cultures, or indeed in identifying a different

² In this paper, by 'men and women', I mean cisgender men and women in heterosexual relationships.

conception of agency upheld in another culture.³

Therefore, the aims of looking at agency in specific conditions are, firstly, to reduce the oppositional tensions between different cultures, for instance, the binary of Western/non-Western, Chinese/non-Chinese, Iranian/non-Iranian, Islamic/non-Islamic, etc., to look at issues that we as humans, regardless of our cultural backgrounds, all face. Indeed, applying this epistemic framework is not about ignoring the cultural specificities but is about where to place the analytical focal point. Secondly, in doing so, the aim is to break out of the research patterns of, as Madhok points out, “either explore(ing) the impact of oppression or coercion on restricting agency/autonomy of persons or investigating empirical states of relative negative freedom and instances of resistance to subordination.”⁴ Instead, the aim is to discover the modalities of women’s agency under various conditions rather than concentrating on the social structure’s one-way oppression of the individual or trying to categorize women’s doings as either resistance or subordination.

To apply this epistemic framework, one needs to jump out from the binary of resistance and subordination and place the focal point on the in-betweenness when assessing women’s agency under oppressive patriarchal structures. The reason for looking at agency in a range of conditions is because the conceptual accounts of agency that are applied in oppressive contexts are usually models of “universalist, ahistorical, acontextual liberal humanist agency which are almost always conceptualised in oppositional terms – as challenging/resisting existing power relations and articulating universalised models of emancipatory politics.”⁵ It focuses on the evidence of resistance or action stemming from free will.⁶ However, under oppressive conditions, such as patriarchal structures, action

³ Sumi Madhok, “Action, Agency, Coercion: Reformatting Agency for Oppressive Contexts,” in *Gender, Agency, and Coercion*, ed. Sumi Madhok, Anne Phillips, and Kalpana Wilson (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 102.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 103.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 104.

⁶ Marina A.L. Oshana, “Autonomy and Free Agency,” in *Personal Autonomy: New Essays on Personal Autonomy and Its roles in Contemporary Moral Philosophy*, ed. James Stacey Taylor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 183-204.

stemming from free will or as a sign of resistance could very possibly have negative consequences for women. In addition, as Mahmood questions “how do we conceive of individual freedom in a context where the distinction between the subject’s own desires and socially prescribed performances cannot be easily presumed, and where submission to certain forms of (external) authority is a condition for achieving the subject’s potentiality?”⁷ Therefore, applying a universalist liberal discourse regardless of contexts when assessing women’s agency would usually result in arbitrarily categorizing women’s actions as either resistance or overall subordination.

Therefore, I propose two modifications when assessing women’s agency under oppressive patriarchal structures. The first is to turn the attention to the in-betweenness of the action-based binary of resistance and subordination, that is, as Madhok proposes, to “shift our theoretical gaze away from these overt actions to an analysis of critical reflections, motivations, desires, and aspects of our ethical activity.”⁸ The second is to focus on the relationship of the individual and the society rather than the one-way oppression by the society of the individual. The two can be combined into one question: Regarding a woman’s agency, how do the social norms restrict her and at the same time, are used by her to gain a place in her society? which leads to the second part of the paper.

The relationship of the woman and the society

In this section, let me explore this topic by coming back to the film texts. In *The May Lady*, Forough is caught between her son’s strong rejection of her love life, her own desire to be with her lover, and the social norms for a mother. In her conversation with a friend following Mani (her son)’s emotional reaction to her lover (*The May Lady*, scene 1), Forough tells her chosen way when dealing with this dilemma of being a mother and a divorced woman at the same time, that is, evasion. As she emphasizes, with the film cuts to a close-up of her, “When you’re a woman, a middle-aged woman and a mother, you cannot speak of love so easily.” She also points out the consequence that she will possibly receive if she follows her desire as a woman, “The moment I say I want to live with the

⁷ Mahmood, *Politics of Piety*, 31.

⁸ Madhok, “Action, Agency, Coercion,” 106.

man I love, I will immediately lose the honour of motherhood.”





The May Lady, scene 1.

Moreover, the life stories of the candidates of her project “The exemplary mother”, who are all single mothers, show clearly what the social norms and standards are for a single mother, that is, devoting herself completely to taking care of her children and sacrificing her desire as a single woman. One visual account also highlights these norms. When Forough visits the homes of those candidates, most of the times, she needs to walk down a narrow, high-walled ally to reach the house, implying that these “exemplary mothers” live in hidden spaces, protected and isolated from the public, hard to reach and to get distracted from motherhood, as the two pictures of the candidates’ homes shown in *The May Lady*, scene 2. During the making of her project, she constantly compares herself with these “exemplary mothers” and asks herself where she stands among them as a mother. Her desire to find a place as a mother in the society, her love for her son, and her longing for love as a woman are incompatible to each other. In short, the identities of a mother and a divorced woman clash to each other under the patriarchal structure of her society. The social norms and standards of single motherhood show what is accepted and honoured under the patriarchal social structure, and at the same time, what is not. She is fully aware of how powerless a woman could be in this society when losing her marriage by hearing the stories of the candidates, not to mention losing the honour of motherhood as a divorced woman afterwards.



The May Lady, scene 2.

Another scene metaphorically shows her struggles to negotiate a place among the social norms and her own desire. Nearly every time she comes home from visiting the candidates, the film shows the scene that she walks up the staircase, which is dark, narrow, and shadowed by the stair handrails on the wall. In the scene below (*The May Lady*, scene 3), after interviewing a candidate, we see she goes through the shadow of the bars of the handrails and falls in thoughts. Each of the bars could metaphorically represent the social norms for a single mother, her son's rejection, her own fear of losing either her son or her lover in her life, and her desire to have a place as a mother in the society. Then, we see a close-up of her, where does she, this individual, stand? Where is her position, as she questions, among the two important pillars in her life, as she says in *The May Lady*, scene 1, her son and her lover? What she wants is not to overthrow those pillars, it is locating herself among them. What she wants is to find a position, a powerful one, an even exemplary one, in her society among those pillars under the social structure. The dilemma of the in-betweenness shows clearly in Forough's life. For maintaining a liveable life, she chooses evasion and negotiation, and keeps her love life underground.



The May Lady, scene 3

So, how to judge her agency then? After all these analyses of her struggles, desires, motivations, and self-reflections, the action-based binary of resistance and subordination

clearly does not work in her case. Forough's agency does not lie in subverting the social norms, but lies in her ways of inhabiting norms, that is, to find a position for herself, a harmony for her life – a modality of agency under the patriarchal social structure.

For Baoli in *Fengshui*, what is represented in the film is that she goes to an extreme by doing physically exhausting grunt work for years to support her son all by herself after her husband dies. Indeed, what she does is action based, out of her will, however, not necessarily her free will. As pointed out above, “how do we conceive of individual freedom in a context where the distinction between the subject's own desires and socially prescribed performances cannot be easily presumed, and where submission to certain forms of (external) authority is a condition for achieving the subject's potentiality?”⁹ In Baoli's case, she devotes herself to supporting her son's education in expecting his gratitude in the future and sacrifices her own body's needs for years. Ostensibly, she is fighting with her fate – the unfairness of a woman having a cheating and cowardly husband and an ungrateful son – a life seems ruined by men. Through being a yoke-bearer, usually seen as a men's occupation, to prove to her family and the society that she is capable to do what men do.

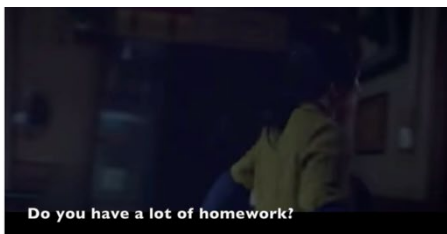
However, her doing is far away from resistance, though action-based. What she does is trying to gain a position, an exemplary and powerful one under the patriarchal structure. As seen in the scene below (*Fengshui*, scene 1), she is empowered when hearing her son does well in exams and ready to sacrifice more if her son needs her to do so. She makes herself look fitting in the social standards of an “exemplary mother” perfectly. But her doing is much more complicated than subordination. By analysing her desires and motivations – the in-betweenness, her agency lies in her trying to achieve a powerful position as a single mother through inhabiting a series of socially prescribed performances, after all, to keep a liveable life as a single woman with a failed marriage under the patriarchal structure.

⁹ Mahmood, *Politics of Piety*, 31.



Fengshui, scene 1

After the scene of Baoli showing off her son's grade, the film cuts to a sharp contrast to the scene of her at home trying to ask her son about his exam preparation (*Fengshui*, scene 2). Her son's reaction is the opposite to her expectation – refusing to talk to her and no gratitude or acknowledgment to her hard work at all. As we know, in the end, he even forces her to move out after he gets into a good university. The sharp contrast of the efforts that the two female protagonists make to achieve what they want and the ending of both films makes one wonder: what went wrong? After all the inner struggles and negotiations, Forough's love life still must remain underground; after all the hard work to support her son for years, Baoli is kicked out by her son.



Fengshui, scene 2

This comes to the second part of the question of the relationship of the woman and the society – how are the social norms used by her to gain a place in her society? As analysed above, both female protagonists have a strong desire to gain a powerful position as a mother under patriarchal structures. Failed marriages leave them powerless as a single

woman. Their chosen way is to gain a powerful position through performing motherhood. In doing so, they inhabit the socially prescribed performances of sacrifices, that is, devoting themselves fully to taking care of their sons and put their desires as women aside. Forough remains single for her son for more than a decade, so does Baoli. In the end, for keeping an ostensible harmony at home, Forough chooses to remain her love life underground; Baoli moves out obediently and still in expecting her son's understanding in the future. From the perspective of the social standard of an "exemplary mother", their doings would gain them acceptance and even honour as a single mother. However, from the perspective of agency under patriarchal structure, their sacrifices could be seen as stakes they put in to gain them a powerful position under the patriarchal structures. Therefore, how is motherhood, as a source of power, manipulated by women, regardless of culture or background, to gain a place in societies that are against them as divorced women? I look forward to discussing more about this question and the topic of women's agency under patriarchal structures in the conference.

Speaking up as a Somali Woman: Gender Representations in the Poetry by Hawa Jibril

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Abstract

This paper looks at how Somali women are represented in poetry made by Somali women themselves. For as long as Somali poetry is made, there have been women making their voice heard by the way of poetic art. From the female genre *buraambur*, *hoobeyo* (lullabies), and the *hees hawleed* (work songs), to the outstanding male genres, especially the gabay poems, a Somali woman persuades her audience of her position, her feelings, and even her political opinions in various forms. Their words not only express what they want to express as individuals, but also represent the perspectives of Somali women collectively.

In this paper, I intend to make a close reading of some of the poems by a Somali woman called Hawa Jibril. Hawa started to make poetry from the age of twelve and had been commenting on the world around her in the form of poetry throughout her life. From a complaint about her brother as a sister, a warning to her husband as a wife, to an appeal to unite as a female nationalist during the struggle for independence, her diverse identities and positions are represented in her own words. I shall examine the poems with a view to describing and accounting for the use of certain aspects of language which I suggest reflects the changes in not only her intents of the poems made in different periods of her life, but also in how she perceives her position as a Somali woman.

This paper looks at how Somali women are represented in poetry made by Somali women themselves. I shall take a few poems by a female poet called Hawa Jibril as an example and examine, albeit briefly, how she interprets and addresses her identities and her experiences in different periods of time throughout her life.

Oral poetry plays a crucial role in Somali culture. As John Johnson observes, Somali poetry is “employed as a running commentary on the latest news, a lobbying pressure device for social and political debates, a record of historical events, a revered form of aesthetic enjoyment, and an expression of deep feelings about love” (Johnson 1974, p.1). Following the functions, the scholar introduces the status of a poet and writes: “the poet is a prominent public figure who commands a following, and his prestige corresponds to his poetic ability” (Ibid.). We see here the scholar uses the masculine possessive pronoun “his”, which implies that the poet who has such a high status, must be a man.

Indeed, for as long as Somali poetry is made, it has been a man’s domain. The patriarchal society and Islamic customs impose a great deal of discrimination and restriction on women. Poems in Somali can be broadly categorized into two types, *maanso* and *hees*. *Maanso* is what some scholars may call ‘classical poetry’ that deals with important political and social matters, whose composer is known. *Hees* is poetry performed in association with work or dance whose composer is not generally known. Among the *maanso* poetry, four major genres are the *gabay*, the *jiifto*, the *geeraar* and the *buraambur*. The first three are considered adult men’s genres, with the *gabay* being the most prestigious form, whereas the *buraambur* is specifically the female genre. Among the *hees* type, women also sing different sub-genres of *hees hawleed* (work songs) while they do different kinds of work allocated to them.

While men could travel freely and carry a piece of poem over vast distances to transmit it to larger audiences, women were not allowed such an opportunity. Somali scholar Axmed Cali Abokor quotes the saying in his book (1993, p.42), “Bravery, generosity and eloquence are laudable in men but shameful in women.” He argues that women’s genres were regarded as “unsophisticated and less serious and important” than adult men’s genres only because the composers were women (Ibid). Since memorising and reciting poetry is a male occupation and these men feel that it is “unmanly or demeaning” for them to recite poems by women, a woman’s poem would only be memorised and recited, most of the time, within a limited circle of female relatives and friends.

However, are women's poems really unsophisticated or less important than poetry by men? Female Somali scholar Zainab Mohamed Jama (1991, p.44) argues that over the centuries and generations, there have been women making poetry on political and other serious matters. Not only have they used the female genre *buraambur* to make their voices heard, but some of the poets have also made poetry in the most prestigious male genre, the *gabay*. They persuade their audience of their position, their feelings, and even their political opinions bravely and eloquently, despite the bias and restrictions. Hawa Jibril is one of them.

Born in 1920, Hawa started to make poetry from the age of twelve and had been commenting on the world around her in the form of poetry. Her poems were collected and translated by her daughter Faduma Ahmed Alim in the bilingual book *Saa Waxay Tiri: Maansaddii Iyo Waayihii Xaawa Jibriil* (And Then She Said: The Poetry and Times of Hawa Jibril) published in 2008. She has adopted not only the *buraambur* genre but also the male-dominated *gabay* and *geeraar* to speak up as a sister, a daughter, a wife, a woman, a nationalist and a female individual of the masses. In this paper, I shall examine three *gabay* poems of hers, made in 1932, 1943, and 1952 respectively. These poems were made on different occasions, addressing different issues, but in each, the female gender and Somali women's views and values are prominently represented. I intend to look at the texts with a view to describing and accounting for the use of certain aspects of language which I suggest reflects the changes in not only her intents of the poems made in different periods of her life, but also in how she perceives her position as a Somali woman.

I shall start with Hawa's first poem "*Waa ii Gunuunucahayaa? (Why Is He Grouchy?)*" It is a short *gabay* poem in which the poet complains about her little brother:

Waa guridambayskii waxaas, ii gabayahayaaye
Waa ii gunuunucahayaa, godobna ii qaadye
Sidii niman ganbiya yuu cawada, guure ii yahaye

Oo waa i gawrici lahaa, taydi baan geline
Geestiisa weel uu ku jirey, oo ganfaha haysto
Muxuu iigu goodinahayaa, gurey docdiisiye?

He is the youngest of the house, that thing who is making gabays to me
He is grumbling at me and brought a grudge against me
Like men who are fighting in the night, he is one who comes upon me
And he would have slaughtered me, (but) my time did not enter
At his side a vessel he was in and of which he holds the edge of the mouth
Why is he threatening me, he has collected his share

All poems in Somali follow the formal rules of metre and alliteration. As a girl as young as twelve, the poet proved her competence in making *gabay* poetry by strictly following the formal rules. Hawa's daughter Faduma gives us some background to this poem. It was made in response to the squabbles over a piece of meat between Hawa and her youngest brother Xasan. In Somali households, men and women generally eat separately. On occasions when a Somali family slaughters an animal for food, the tradition is that the male family members get the noble cuts of the meat while the female family members have the remaining and less noble cuts (Alim 2008, p.73). However, Hawa's father loved her dearly and hence made her eat with her brothers, sharing a big common wooden bowl, which led to a fight between the girl and the boy, and eventually the composition of this *gabay*.

The first four lines describe the action of the brother. The use of the word "*waxaas*" (that thing) is quite striking. It is a dismissive term and in using such a term at the beginning of the poem, she is setting a certain tone. The word "*guridambeyskii*" (the youngest of the house) also helps set this tone because she is emphasising not only who he is, but his being the youngest.

A prominent feature shown in this poem is the use of pronouns. We find the word "*i*" (me) or "*ii*" (to me) is repeatedly used throughout the poem. When the poet describes what

happened during the meal, she is saying what “he” is doing to “me”, with the third person masculine pronoun being the subject and the poet herself being the object. The poet talks about what she sees, hears, and thinks that her brother would do to her, although in an exaggerated way, yet we don’t know how she feels directly. It is her voice in the poem, but her voice is not presented as the subject. Her voice is passive. We might even say she is made the object of her brother’s actions in the poem. I suggest that the passivity of the voice may be a reflection of the passivity of the poet herself in the family. Hawa, as the daughter in the family, wouldn’t have the chance to eat the meat together with her brothers, had it not been the father of the family who gave her the permission. Yet it is her little brother here, as the youngest son in the family, who is acting in the patriarchal way with his male sense of entitlement.

Gabay is a form which at that time was very much used for serious poems in the context of kin groups, and in conflict resolution between lineages. In this poem, there is a dispute but, of course, it’s one which is just within the family, not between clans. Why did she choose the *gabay* form? Clues can be found in the text itself. In the first line, she uses “*gabayahayaaye*” (making *gabay*) to metaphorically refer to her brother’s grumbling. We might say that she is almost presenting the interaction as an exchange of *gabay* poems in the way that they are used in conflict resolution between clans at the time. The word “*godob*” in the second line is also one which is used in the context of conflict resolution in Somali society. The “*waa i gawrici lahaa*” (he would have slaughtered me) in the fourth line is even more striking as killing of animals and even people had been a means of conflict resolution at that time. All these explain why she used a *gabay* rather than another form. Making this poem in the *gabay* genre and in the way she expresses herself, we may say that the poet shows us an awareness not just of the situation in which she finds herself with her brother, but also of the situation in which women and girls find themselves more generally in relation to men and boys.

In 1943, Hawa, at the age of twenty-three, made this next poem called *Awr Qabbiran Maahi* (I Am Not a Burden Camel). By that time, Hawa has experienced a lot in her life. The poem is a response to her second husband who abused her harshly and tried to

frustrate her efforts to get a divorce by threatening to get himself another wife, thus declaring her a *naakiro*, which is a term in Islamic law describing the legal status by which a woman who rejects her husband sexually, but neither divorced nor free to marry someone else (Kapteijns 1999, p.42). Humiliated by the man and determined to leave him, she says:

*Inkastoo albaabada qafilan, laygu soo qariyo
Oo qolalaka gaalshire wax badan, gaalo igu quuddo
Naag kale haddaad qaadatao, qaalliga aad geysa
I qabi maysid oo maanta, waa kaa quluub go'ay e
Adigaa isqaafinahayee, waa ku qaadacay e
Awr kuu qabbiran maahiyoo, reeryo qaayibay e
Qushigayga weeyoo wallaan, qabanayaa meele
Abadkayba uma qaawanaan, maro aan qaataaye
Qalabkaan sameeyaa ka badan, qadiyo dheeraad e
Qalbi gaabanaayey, muxuu aniga ii quuray!*

Even though I am hidden by the locked doors
And infidels feed me in the rooms of a colonial jail for a long time
But if you take another woman and take her to the *qadi* (Islamic legal expert who will transact the marriage)
You will not have me (as your wife) and today there is a broken heart
It is you who has put on airs, I have cut you off
I am not a burden camel tethered for you and which families have taken for granted
It is my resentment and I will go wherever I please
Never have I needed to be clothed by others
The utensils I make are more than my daily meal
O the heartless man, why did he disrespect me?

Men's authority over women and women's obedience and forbearance are commonly presented in, and enforced by Somali oral literature, mostly composed by men. Verbal

and physical abuse are very commonly practiced by men to ensure their power and their wives' obedience. Women's attitude towards these was recorded in the orature composed by themselves. In her study of Somali women's work songs, Lidwien Kapteijns finds that in the female genre *buraambur* and many categories of women's work songs, Somali women often explicitly challenge men's authority and reject such obedience. In this poem, we see Hawa Jibril resisting in the form of *gabay*.

We could see a prominent difference in the way she expresses between this *gabay* and the previous piece. In this poem, the poet used a direct address to send a message to her husband. While in the first poem, she made her voice the passive object, here "I" has become the subject. It is most salient in lines 5-7. Line 5 starts with an independent pronoun "*adiga*" (you) emphasizing the subject, followed by a statement "*baa isqaafinahayee*"¹, which means "acted importantly" or "put on airs". That being the reason, the poet says, "*waa ku qaadacaye*" (I am cutting you off). Grammatically, the poet didn't use a first person verbal subject pronoun to combine with the mood classifier "*waa*", but from the context, it is clear that the subject is the voice itself. The object, however, is an explicit one. The "*ku*" is the second person object pronoun which here refers to the husband. She has decided to cut the husband off and she is telling the husband that in the form of *gabay*. Then she asserts the titular line, "I am not a burden camel". The Somalis attach great importance to camels. Therefore, it is a very crucial image she chose to use here. The alliterating word in this half-line is the adjective "*qabbiran*", which means "tied up of a camel". Together with the "*awr*" (burden camel) and "*kuu*" (for you), she is saying "I am not a burden camel tethered for you".

Often being tied up and loaded with heavy household equipment, the burden camel here symbolizes the obedience, the forbearance and the hard work of a married woman. What adds to the poet's burden is her husband's humiliation and abuse. By saying "I am not a burden camel", she is asserting her rejection. Then in line 7, she boldly declares her autonomy and her will to leave. She is not passive in this poem. She is determined, making

¹ The focus marker here is contracted and becomes part of the pronoun "*adiga*" it is focusing.

her own decision. While men were told by the oral literatures that one way of keeping women obedient is to make sure that they had no wealth of their own (Kapteijs 1999, p.40), Hawa asserts her ability to produce, her competence in making household utensils, implying that she can live a life independently. This notion of self-sufficiency is the poet's value against those of the male-dominated world.

Kapteijs (1999, p.75) finds "speech drawing on the power of women's overwhelming private passion and pain" to be a form of women's literary self-expression. In a world where their thoughts and speech are trivialized, Somali women have always been composing poetry about their experience of love and jealousy, anger and sorrow, in their relationship with men. Abokor (1993, p.2) believes that the *buraambur* dealing with relations between women and men were "conventionally considered personal secrets that cannot be exposed to a third party" and could therefore not be recorded by him. Hence when a woman articulates about her intimate gender relations and her gender-related feelings in a *buraambur*, it is confined to the private sphere of husband and wife or intimate women friends (Kapteijs 1999, p.75). Yet here, we have a valuable testimony of a *gabay* poem in which a woman bravely and firmly confronts her husband and goes against the ways in which oral texts stereotyped the female gender. As mentioned earlier, the *gabay* genre deals with serious matters and is often used in conflict resolution. By using the *gabay* genre, she has chosen the most powerful verbal weapon to speak up and send that firm message to her husband, "I am leaving you, because I am an independent woman, not a burden camel."

The last poem I shall bring into this paper is one that Hawa made in 1952, at the age of thirty-two. By that time, she had dedicated herself to the political struggle for national independence led by the Somali Youth League (SYL). According to Faduma, women formed the backbone of the League and took active part in the nationalist struggle. Not only did they generously donate their jewels, organise fund-raising campaigns and make clothing and food for men who were fighting for the League, they also organised and participated in the pro-independence rallies and demonstrations, inspiring the masses with their poems (Alim 2008, p.88).

However, many men within the SYL were not happy about the confidence that women were showing, their omnipresence at all the meetings, and above all, their new fashionable dresses, which clearly showed that they were wearing bras underneath. The *gabay* as followed is a response to an anonymous male critic who made a *gabay* to mock the activist women for wearing bras to keep up what he called “sagging breasts” (Ibid, p.90).

Waa noo xarrago naasahaan, kor u xiraynaaye
Xornimada hablihii haystay baa, xeerkan soo rogay e
Markuu xabadka joogiyo hadduu, nabasta xaabaayo
Xubbi ninkii yaqaan naaska waa, lagu xanteeyaaye
Oday xiisowaa arkee, lama xusuusteene
Xifaalada aad sheegteen afkaan, kala xishoonnaaye
Idinba xubinta waad leedihiin, xagal ka daacaaye
Xaq miyaad ku hadasheen ragyohow, waad na xamateene.

For the sake of elegance, we lift up our breasts
Young women who have freedom took on this way of dressing
Whether they are up on the chest or sweeping the lower area
For a man who knows about love, one touches him through the breast
If an old man didn't show his interest (in the poem), no one would have been remarked upon (us wearing the bras)
We as women are embarrassed to reply from the mouths
But you also have an organ that has lost its vigour
Oh you men, did you speak truthfully? You slandered us.

Traditionally, in a Somali poetic combat, a poet must use the same alliteration that the first person employed to counterattack. Hawa did so as the rule demands. A distinct feature of this poem is that she is not speaking up for only herself, but for all women who were offended. The word “*noo*” in the first line is a cluster made up of a first person plural pronoun “*na*” (us) and a preposition “*u*” (for). What's more, in the last line, we see that

she is also addressing, not just that one male poet, but men in plural. It is a *gabay* made by a woman in response to a *gabay* made by a man. Yet we could consider the two poets as spokespersons of the male and female community at that time, and they are debating over the matter of women wearing bras, which is no doubt, political.

Body shaming, especially shaming of breasts, is a behaviour that women in any patriarchal society have to confront. Breasts are the symbol of femininity, power and sexuality of a woman which is threatening and grotesque for patriarchy. In order to be a part of the male dominant society, women have been burdened with norms forcing them to repress their femininity. In a world where women are oppressed in many aspects, Hawa stood up to fight for her fellow women who, just as she said, were “embarrassed to reply from the mouth”. Not only did she dare to speak about the matter directly and explicitly, saying that it is women’s “freedom” to wear bras, but she also mocked back, targeting men's genital organs, in a genre that is said to be a man’s domain.

This poem is very empowering as Hawa is asserting that wearing or not wearing a bra is women’s own choice. It is a matter of bodily autonomy and not a social norm decided by men. These lines represent Somali women’s own interpretation and consciousness of their identity as well as their sexuality, which unsurprisingly challenge the gender expectations normalised by men.

From a complaint about her brother, a serious message to her husband, to a counterattack to a male poet’s assault on the matter of women’s body, Hawa used poetry to not only express her private experience and emotions in her relationships with men, but also assert women’s collective and own views and values against those of the patriarchal world. Although the gender-based realities of Somali women’s life have been and are still harsh, one thing we shall learn from Hawa’s experience and poems is that, however the male-dominated world tries to mute them, women fight.

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‘An Ideal Woman’: Cross-Dressing & Male Homoerotic Desire in Modern Chinese Literature

What’s up? You came without changing? Wearing your costume into the real world can sully the character you play on stage. Don’t do it again.¹

According to Marjorie Garber’s ground-breaking study, cross-dressing is a universal phenomenon occurring with particular frequency in the performing arts.² Charlotte Suthrell expounds this point further: ‘The whole context of theatre and acting acknowledges the production of an illusion, in which clothing plays a crucial part; that the participant is not part of a “real life” situation, thus opening doors which usually remain closed.’³ This is especially relevant in the case of China where the theatrical convention of female impersonation had been firmly established by the Song (960-1279) and the Yuan (1271-1368) dynasties.

In *Zhang Xie zhuangyuan* 張協狀元 (Top-Graduate Zhang Xie), the earliest extant specimen of *xiwen* 戲文 (dramatic text) and dated sometime between 1234 and 1279,⁴ we find the following exchange between a *dan* 旦 (female character), a *jing* 淨 (clown) and a *mo* 末 (male character):

¹ Mei Lanfang 梅蘭芳 (Forever Enthralled), directed by Chen Kaige 陳凱歌, China Film Group/China Magnetics Corporation Company, 2008.

² Marjorie Garber, *Vested Interests: Cross-Dressing & Cultural Anxiety* (New York and London: Routledge, 1992).

³ Charlotte Suthrell, *Unzipping Gender: Sex, Cross-Dressing and Culture* (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2004), 39.

⁴ Qian Nanyang 錢南揚, ed. *Yongle Dadian xiwen sanzong jiaozhu* 永樂大典戲文三種校注 [A Collated and Annotated Edition of Three Xiwen Plays in the Yongle Canon] (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju), 1979, 1-3. All translations from the Chinese are mine unless otherwise noted.

Dan: Greetings to you!

Jing: This is a fake lady. ...

Dan: I am a woman.

Jing: If so, why aren't your feet bound?

Mo: You are supposed to focus on the upper part of her body.⁵

With a flourish of licensed tomfoolery, the clown provokes laughter by drawing attention to the fact that the female role is actually played by a man in drag. However, we find a drastically different attitude toward cross-dressing in a different context. A law of the Zhenghe 政和 era (1111-1118) of the Song dynasty punished *nanzi wei chang* 男子為娼 (young males who act as prostitutes) with 100 blows of the heavy bamboo and a fine of 50,000 cash. Another contemporary source mentions the prosecution of cross-dressing male prostitutes for the offence of *bu nan* 不男 (being not male).⁶ These young men, 'all heavily powdered and richly bedecked with ornaments, were proficient in needlework and addressed each other with appellations appropriate for women.'⁷ Here the practice of cross-dressing is singled out as the most heinous aspect of their offence, potentially more damaging to social mores than prostitution itself.

A comparison of the two cases points to a situational logic in the characterization of male cross-dressing: when safely confined within the invisible walls of the stage, it was not only tolerated, but indulged; but when a female impersonator intrudes into the realm of everyday life, chaos ensues.

During the following Ming (1368-1644) and Qing (1636-1912) dynasties, the literati class developed a lasting fascination with female impersonators which manifested in the forms of patronage, intimate friendship as well as blatant prostitution, and this left a profound influence on literature.⁸ The late 1930s and the early 1940s witnessed a

⁵ Ibid., 160.

⁶ Zhu Yu 朱彘, *Pingzhou ketan* 萍州可談 [Casual Talks of Pingzhou] (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2007), 1-3. See also Matthew H. Sommer, *Sex, Law, and Society in Late Imperial China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000), 119.

⁷ Zhou Mi 周密, *Kuixin zazhi* 癸辛雜誌 [A Miscellany of the Year Guixin] (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1988), 109.

⁸ See Cheng Yu'ang 程宇昂, *Ming Qing shiren yu nandan* 明清士人與男旦 [Ming and Qing Literati and Female Impersonators] (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2012).

tendency to desexualize the actor-literati relationship, accompanied by a parallel tendency to heterosexualize the image of the *dan* actors,⁹ largely a result of contemporary intelligentsia's yearning for a strong, virile Chinese figure, as opposed to China's old emaciated, feminine image. The most bellicose among the guardians of the masculinity of the Chinese national character was Lu Xun, who relentlessly censured female impersonators for the confusion they caused in gender roles and singled out none other than Mei Lanfang 梅蘭芳 (1894-1961), the world-renowned Peking Opera maestro, as a primary target.¹⁰

However, between the early years of the Republic and the late 1930s was a brief interval when 'sexual anarchy' was allowed to prevail and issues as sensitive as premarital sex, homosexuality and even sadomasochism were subject to public discussion and debate.¹¹ It was during this intermezzo that the two pieces of literary works under discussion here appeared, reinterpreting the stock character of female impersonator in the light of male anxiety over the emergence of the New Woman while pushing *her* offstage and into real life.

Elaine Showalter in her seminal study *Sexual Anarchy* discusses how the emergence of the New Woman at the turn of the twentieth century threatened male identity and self-esteem, as a result of which men became 'unwilling to link themselves with emancipated women who might have needs and ambitions of their own.'¹² In addition, as pointed out by the pioneering sexologist Edward Carpenter, the feminist movement seemed to have been 'accompanied by a marked development of the homogenic passion among the female sex.'¹³ The contemporaneous feminist movement in China, starting from the late Qing, demonstrated similar trends: while some women preferred devoted sisterhood and

⁹ Wenqing Kang, *Obsession: Male Same-sex Relations in China, 1900-1950* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2009), 135-44.

¹⁰ David Der-wei Wang, 'Impersonating China,' CLEAR vol.25 (December 2003): 133-63.

¹¹ Tze-lan D. Sang, *The Emerging Lesbian: Female Same-Sex Desire in Modern China* (Chicago, IL and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2003), Chapter 4 and Frank Dikötter, *Sex, Culture and Modernity in China: Medical Science and the Construction of Sexual Identities in the Early Republican Period* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1995).

¹² Elaine Showalter, *Sexual Anarchy: Gender and Culture at the Fin de Siècle* (London: Virago Press, 1992), 25.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 23.

refused to marry men,¹⁴ others went a step further from the archetype of the New Woman towards that of the Modern Girl who manifested either as a self-absorbed woman searching for subjectivity or as a dangerous *femme fatale* devouring the urban male.¹⁵ In any case, the New Man now found the New Woman, whom he had helped to create, either unwilling to marry him or unmarriageable.

Now that real women could no longer fulfil their traditional roles, who may be counted on to play ‘the ideal woman’?

In 1930 during his North America tour, Mei Lanfang performed a short scene in front of the camera. When the clip was later released, a prelude was added where an exaggeratedly dressed Chinese woman introduces the great actor in English:

Mr Mei Lanfang takes the part of woman characters, but he is not a female impersonator according to the Western sense of the word. He does not attempt to imitate the real woman in nature, but through line and movement he tries to create *an ideal woman*.¹⁶

In a most uncanny way, the theatrical female impersonator as ‘the ideal woman’ found *her* way into literary imagination and manifested *herself* in fictional and dramatic works that constitute a marginal yet spectacular phenomenon and that represent a largely unchronicled counter-current to the onrushing discourse of the New Woman.

The first case in point is Ba Jin’s 巴金 (1904-2005) ‘Di’er de muqin’ 第二的母親 (The Second Mother), a short story published in 1933 about an orphan who is determined to find his mother and family. After his parents’ death, this young narrator/protagonist is entrusted to a widowed uncle. Our boy leads a lonely life, though surrounded by servants, and he envies a page boy who, despite his humble status, always finds solace and pride in talking about his mother. One night the narrator is taken by his uncle to a

¹⁴ Sang, *The Emerging Lesbian*, Chapters 2 and 5.

¹⁵ Sarah E. Stevens, ‘The New Woman and the Modern Girl in Republican China,’ *NWSA Journal* vol. 15 no. 3 (Autumn 2003): 82-103.

¹⁶ Ci Hu 刺虎 (Assassinating the Tiger General), Fox Movietone News Story 5-281 (Los Angeles: Fox Films, 1930): <https://mirc.sc.edu/islandora/object/usc%3A48285>. Emphasis mine.

Sichuan opera theatre. Right in the middle of the show, he is approached by an elegant young man who is obviously on intimate terms with his uncle. This young man expresses fond feelings to the boy, who responds to him affectionately too. He holds the happy boy for the rest of the evening. When the theatre is over and the boy and his uncle are about to bid farewell to him, he asks the boy: ‘... You haven’t called me anything yet. What do you think you should call me?’ (37)¹⁷ As if spellbound, the boy calls out ‘Mother!’ two times, to the amusement of his uncle, but the young man is touched and brings the boy to his exquisitely decorated home. Having given the boy some snacks, he goes away to attend his own business. When the boy becomes impatient from waiting, he walks into the inner quarters and is consternated by what he sees:

No sooner had I entered the room than I was astonished by what I saw: a woman applying powder to her face while looking into the mirror! Yes, a woman; she wore a pink tight-fitting outfit and a coiffure hung behind her neck. The man who had escorted me in was nowhere to be found. (44)

She then tells a story. A victim of poverty and social injustice, a sixteen-year-old boy sold himself to a traveling opera troupe to make life better for his mother and younger brother. He was forced to learn to play female parts because of his fine features: ‘God knows how many lashes he had sustained before he started to resemble a woman. Every day, he used what a woman would use, wore what a woman would wear and imitated the voice and gait of a woman.’ (54) He proved an immediate success once he started performing, but was forced to prostitute himself on the side. Some ten years later when he was replaced by younger female impersonators an old man redeemed him. Henceforth he changed many hands before eventually being bought by the little boy’s uncle. ‘I have completely become a woman. I am but a woman, nothing more than a plaything.’ (57) It is then that the boy realizes that *she* is no other than the *he* in the story. Surprised as he is, he is neither scared nor appalled. Instead, he embraces his new mother. Later on, whenever his uncle joins them, the three enjoy a wholesome family life of its own kind. He lived happily with

¹⁷ Here I translate from the first version published in *Mabu ji* 抹布集 [The Rag Collection] (Beiping: Xingyun tang shudian, 1933), 27-68.

his 'second mother' for two years until his uncle dies and they are separated.

Most previous studies interpret the story as one of a series of Ba Jin's social exposés that presents the *dan* actor as a victim of sexual and financial exploitation.¹⁸ This reading tallies well with the usual characterization of Ba Jin as a left-wing writer and with the fact that the relationships between the actor and his various patrons are portrayed, through his own mouth, as unequivocally exploitative. But to read the story exclusively along this line is to erase the meaning of cross-dressing itself. In fact, this reading is to some extent belied by the narrator's own conflicting sentiments: on the one hand, the narrator realizes retrospectively that the actor's 'sex change' has been forced upon him and is particularly inhuman, and proclaims to devote his life to the abolition of this repressive system; but he nonetheless longs for the return of his 'second mother'. When she first reveals her true identity and proposes to demonstrate for him by removing the fake coiffure, the boy resolutely stops her: 'Leave it on! You have combed it so glossy. If you disturb it, you'll have to go through the trouble all over again!' (46) Our boy is perfectly content with a mere illusion even when he knows it to be so.¹⁹

The issue is further complicated by Ba Jin's later rewriting of the story. A heavily revised version, retaining the original title, appeared in 1936.²⁰ In this version when the actor is dressed as a woman when meeting the boy for the first time in the theatre; it is only later at his home that his true sex is revealed to the narrator. The reversal has many implications, not the least of which is the potential scandal of a man in drag walking freely in the public space while in the original version cross-dressing is strictly confined in the domestic space. When reissued under an abbreviated title 'Muqin' 母親 (Mother) after the foundation of the People's Republic, the story was further expurgated and the actor

¹⁸ See for example Kang, *Obsession*, 138-9.

¹⁹ David Wang offers an alternative explanation for this discrepancy in 'Impersonating China', 138-44.

²⁰ *Bainiao zhi ge* 白鳥之歌 [The Song of White Birds] (Shanghai: Wenhua shenghuo chubanshe, 1936), 105-34. David Wang has based his reading entirely on this revised version while Bonnie McDougall seems to have been unaware of its existence. See Bonnie S. McDougall, 'Cross-Dressing in Modern Chinese Fiction, Drama and Film: Reflections on Chen Kaige's *Farewell My Concubine*,' in *Fictional Authors, Imaginary Audiences: Modern Chinese Literature in the Twentieth Century* (Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press, 2003), 115-31, especially 130 n25.

became a woman all along.²¹ Paradoxically, the series of self-imposed as well as external suppressions have made the ‘second mother’ more and more of a woman.

The second text is an one-act play titled ‘Qinai de zhangfu’ 親愛的丈夫 (Dear Husband) published in 1924. The playwright Ding Xilin 丁西林 (1893-1974) taught physics at Peking University during the heyday of the Literary Revolution. From 1923 to 1939 he produced a series of highly successful one-act comic plays and earned himself the epithet *dumuju shengshou* 獨幕劇聖手 (master of the one-act play).

The plot is a simple one: The newly-married wife, Mrs Ren, who sleeps alone behind locked doors turns out to be a Peking Opera female impersonator; once discovered, *she* leaves home but persuades her husband to allow her occasional return visits. It is only toward the end that we are let in on the secret and the motive behind the actor’s extraordinary decision: the male protagonist has attended a public debate on whether or not to introduce female actor into Peking Opera to play the female role and he has resolutely defended the necessity of preserving female impersonation. Therefore, *she* has married him to repay his kindness.

While lavishing praise on those of Ding Xilin’s plays with more urgent social messages such as ‘Yizhi mafeng’ 一隻馬蜂 (A Wasp, 1923) and ‘Yapo’ 壓迫 (Oppression, 1926), contemporary critics almost unanimously slighted ‘Dear Husband’. Typical comments include ‘too unrealistic’, ‘far too removed from real life’, and ‘too bizarre, a tongue-in-cheek piece with an emphasis on an idealistic and Platonic vision of spiritual love which is entirely unfounded in reality.’²² After all, how could someone live with his new bride for two months without realizing that *she* is actually a man in drag? While this critical partiality seems perfectly justifiable in view of the urgency of social reform and national survival besides the play’s seemingly implausible subject matter, Ding seems to have anticipated these criticisms and pre-empted his critics in a short preface:

Should an aesthete-director take serious interest in ‘Dear Husband’ and condescend

²¹ *Ba Jin wenji* 巴金文集 [Collected Works of Ba Jin] (Beijing: Renmin wenzue chubanshe, 1958), vol. 9, 450-63.

²² Sun Qingsheng 孫慶升, ed., *Ding Xilin yanjiu ziliao* 丁西林研究資料 [Research Materials on Dong Xilin] (Beijing: Zhongguo xiju chubanshe, 1986), 140, 148 and 171.

to stage it as an experiment, I profoundly believe that the protagonist Mrs Ren should better be played by Huang Fengqing *himself*. If the director does not know where to find Huang and is willing to make do, he should invite a woman to take Huang's place.²³

What is intended by this curious remark is indeed impenetrable: Does this mean Huang Fengqing is based on a real person and the plot on real events? Is Ding referring to one of the hugely popular Peking Opera *dan* actors at that time such as Mei Lanfang? In any case, the one thing that is clear is that in the absence of Huang Fengqing himself, only a *real woman* can be as convincing—or maybe even not.

In the final confrontation scene, we read the following exchange:

MR REN (shakes her): Who on earth are you? Who on earth are you?

MRS REN (coquettishly): Why are nine out of ten men so rude? There you go, trying to bully a woman.

YUAN: Oh, a woman!

MRS REN: A woman, yes, a pure woman, an ideal woman.

MR REN: Let me ask you, why did you come here?

MRS REN (indignantly): Why did I come here? As if I've done any harm to you! In the two months I've been here, I've kept your house neat and clean, I've made your life more comfortable, I've kept your hair nicely trimmed, and I've kept your clothes fresh and tidy. Let me ask you, have I ever lay you down? You've enjoyed the kind of happiness that even the newly-weds have never experienced, not to mention the love of a woman such that most men have never known. If you don't believe me, wait till you've married again, once, twice, ten times, even a hundred times, and then you'll miss your first wife, because although they can flatter you, serve you, obey you, depend on you, fear you, resent you, grieve over you, suffer over you, cry over you, or even sacrifice their lives for you, but they can never love you as I do. (70)²⁴

²³ Ding Xilin 丁西林, *Yizhi mafeng ji qita dumuju* 一隻馬蜂及其他獨幕劇 [*A Wasp and Other One-Act Plays*] (Beijing: Xiandai pinglun she, 1925), 1.

²⁴ Here I quote from Bonnie S. McDougall and Flora Lam, trans., 'Dear Husband,' *Renditions* 69 (Spring 2008): 62-75.

She claims to be ‘an ideal woman’ (like Mei Lanfang?) not only because she could effortlessly fulfil the more traditional wifely duties, but also because she is able to act as a muse for her writer husband, who is notorious for his poetic disposition: ‘Your soul has never been more alert, your heart has never been more vibrant, and your senses have never been more sensitive. You’ve written well over a hundred thousand words in these two months. My hand’s gone numb with copying, it’s still sore.’ (71) In this sense, the best qualities of both the traditional woman and the New Woman converge on her.

It is perhaps because of her ideal qualities that despite his initial anger and resentment upon unveiling her true identity, he finds it hard to part with her. The curtain falls on Mr Ren taking a nap in Mrs Ren’s arms.

In each text, the male protagonist finds solace in a fake woman, and clings to the illusion even after the secret has been revealed. To make up for what men lack—what the real women in their lives have failed to provide—the female impersonator is summoned off the stage to perform the role of the ‘ideal woman’, ‘thus opening doors which usually remain closed.’

A Female, Diplomat and Tourist: The Representations of the Current Chinese Ambassador in Nepal

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Abstract

Many people believe that Nepal needs China as a friend, a brother, an aider, a comrade, a development model and a guide to an alternative modernisation. Such discourses that prevail at contemporary Nepal-China contact zones, while acknowledging the asymmetrical relations that maintain and represent relevant contact spaces, largely miss Nepal's initiative which seeks to encounter China's increasingly prominent presence in its land. Aiming to direct people's attention to this issue, my proposed abstract looks at various, even contrasting representations of current female Chinese Ambassador Hou Yanqi in Nepal. Ambassador Hou keeps self-promoting her as a female Chinese tourist admiring Nepali culture on Twitter. Her approachable gesture on social media has won her numerous welcomes from Nepali netizens and mainstream media, who regard her as breaking the stereotypes of communist cadres. However, some later incidents offered Ambassador Hou spaces to draw hard lines in Nepal. A serial of hard-core movements from her caused Nepali local discourses to portray her as a line-crosser and democracy intervener. Drawing on what happened to Ambassador Hou, my paper wants to investigate the mirroring nature of representations and how a small country like Nepal mobilises various representations of the Chinese female political representative to counter China's presence in its land.

A Female, Diplomat and Tourist: The Representations of the Current Chinese Ambassador in Nepal

This short article investigates two interlinked questions, what are the gendered representations of the current Chinese ambassador in Nepal, or broadly those of China in

the Nepali context, and how these representations are embraced and rejected by various actors whose instances and practices are conditioned by various cultural, geopolitical, social and economic interests?

The investigation of these two questions is contextualised in the Nepal-China contact zone. The contact zone is “the space in which peoples geographically and historically separated come into contact with each other and establish ongoing relations, usually involving conditions of coercion, radical inequality, and intractable conflict” (Pratt, 2008: 8). Moreover, it offers the “social spaces where cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in contexts of highly asymmetrical relations of power... or their aftermaths as they are lived out in many parts of the world today” (Pratt 1991:34). The contact zone is a space of complexity. People, objects, information, ideas, capital, and power move and suspend through it where they compromise, compete, challenge, imagine, talk and re-shape each other. What is discussed below is a temporal and conditioned snapshot of these various forms of interaction. It centres on the representation of Chinese identities in the contact zone. More concretely, it draws on what happened and is happening to a specific woman, the current Chinese ambassador in Nepal, Hou Yanqi. Ambassador Hou took over her current position in 2018. Since the establishment of the official diplomatic relationship between Nepal and China in 1955, 21 people have been assigned to the ambassadorial positions in the Chinese embassy in Nepal, and only two of them are female. One is Ambassador Hou, and the other is her predecessor Ambassador Yu Hong (2016-2018).

The topic of how diplomacy and the figure of diplomats around the world are gendered, mainly attached to masculine traits, have been widely discussed by many scholars. A “gender turn” (Aggestam & Towns, 2019: 1) is gradually emerging out for the studies of diplomacy. For instance, women’s participation in the history of diplomacy, mainly in the western context, have been examined (McCarthy & Southern, 2017; Rosenberg, 1990). These researchers argue that while diplomacy is traditionally regarded as the site of elite males, women have always been crucial participants. Although, most of their roles are confined to those behind-the-curtain positions, such as typist, unofficial envoy, secretary,

and wife managing domestic issues. Some scholars check the practical structural challenges and dilemmas women encounter in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in different countries, pointing out that these male-oriented and constructed systems and relevant practices have alienated female practitioners, making the diplomat scripted male (Neumann, 2008). Taking a slightly different approach, Anna Towns (2020) tries to theorise the gendered figuration of diplomacy through various US representations of diplomacy under the Trump administration. While agreeing to arguments of scholars like Neumann, Towns develops it to a more dialectical framework, indicating that the relation between the figure of diplomat and gendered characteristics are not stable, but shifting and fluid, attached to various and sometimes contradictory representations in different forms of languages. By comparing the gendered and cultured aspects of diplomatic negotiation patterns between US and China, Ruane, to some extent, agrees with Towns by proposing that “ (diplomatic) negotiator strategy is based in cultural and gendered social identity models of dominant masculinity and subordinate femininity, but that diplomats can creatively code-switch and use mixed strategies in order to meet goals defined in terms of different institutionalised cultural and gendered structures” (Ruane, 2006: 357). In general, these prior researches have educated this paper on two things. One is that the gendered figuration of diplomacy through representations is constructed, articulated, and unstable and shifting. The other is that the representations of diplomats, as “the production of meaning of (the concept of diplomat) through language” (Hall, 1997: 16), not only demonstrates the power relations which generate meaning but also serve as active players mediating relevant power dynamics.

Upon the time she arrived in Nepal, Ambassador Hou Yanqi had been working on promoting her image, deviating from the media-shy stereotype of the political face of a communist diplomat as a friendly and easy-to-go female envoy. Rather than prefer to convey her images and voices through traditional media (it is sure she still does that), such as TV news and newspaper, Ambassador Hou, unlike her male predecessors, explores appropriate new media as a new frontline of publicity promotion. She opened her Twitter account in 2019. She keeps posting content on Twitter very frequently. The contents she has posted on social media are not limited to official news and notices. A

significant portion of her posts seems to reveal her other identities to the public, in addition to the one as the Chinese ambassador. For instance, during the Dashain festival in 2020, she posted a music video on her Twitter account in which, along with her other female colleagues, she presented a popular Nepali folk song Resham Firiri.



Picture 1 Ambassador singing Resham Firiri (Twitter of Ambassador Hou Yanqi, accessed on 20 October, 2021)

This music video leaves us with many interconnected representations to unpack. The first and the most eye or ear-catching representation demonstrated in the video is the song Resham Firiri. The origin of the popular Nepali folk song is fuzzy. Like many other popular cultural products, the biography of this song starts with unexpected events. It is claimed that one day in the 1960s, Buddhi Pariyar, the song's writer composed it when he walked to attend a wedding in the village in Pokhara (Sharma, 2019), now an internationally renowned tourist city in Nepal. However, this song did not gain popularity until 1969, when it was recorded and broadcasted to the whole nation by the state-run radio, Radio Nepal. For the following decades, Resham Firiri, along with many other folk songs, have been through the process during which they were converted from “folk” to “Nepali” under the state patronage (see Henderson, 2002; Stirr, 2012, 2018).

More recently, another powerful force has entered the field and lifted the song's popularity to a global level (though limited). These people are international tourists who mainly come from western countries and a few developed Asian countries like Japan and South Korea. With its catchy and hummable tune and funny romantic lyrics, the song

quickly becomes an effective communication tool between foreign tourists and local tourism practitioners, especially guides and drivers (Dong, 2020). It has become a very convenient channel through which tourists can quickly taste the Nepali culture and people they imagine. To some extent, it has become more than a culture marker, but further develops to a culture maker of a type of fast and light tourism culture in Nepal, along with some other symbolic tools like the greeting word, *Namaste*.

In other words, it is Nepali tourism that adds new meaning to this song as a representation. Resham Firiri can represent Nepal; it is a close link between the country and the corresponding concept in many people's minds and memories. However, as the old question will occur, whose and which Nepal this song can represent? Whoever suggested Ambassador Hou sing the song and make this music video very likely also understood Resham Firiri from the tourist gaze (Urry, 1991). Besides scenes Ambassador Hou sings in front of the standing microphone, many scenes of this video seem to be captured by the tourist's eyes. These scenes are about snowy mountains, temples and omnipresent smiling faces, as commonly found in many tourist brochures.

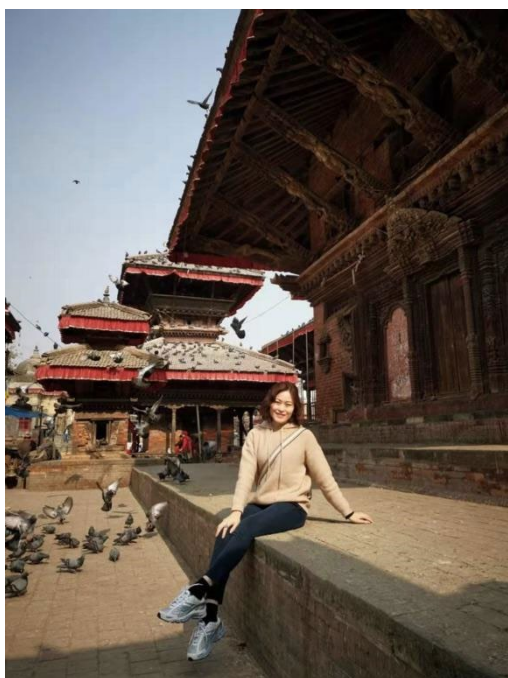
If these tourist scenes imply how ideally Ambassador Hou and her colleagues perceive Nepal, then what ideal figure of the presenter is encoded and intended to be conveyed to the Nepali public? First, this figure is well-educated, with good knowledge and rich information about Nepal, while the roots of such knowledge production in the colonial and imperial expansion are ignored. Second, this figure is passionate about Nepal's culture and nature, and such passion is fully revealed in the music video. Connecting such a figure with the figure of a female ambassador seems natural. It is partially because of people's general binary division of gender in mind, linking females with peaceful culture lovers. On the other hand, it is also due to Ambassador Hou's ongoing work of enhancing such feminised traits on social media by frequently posting videos and pictures of dancing, singing, cooking and attending cultural events.



Picture 2 Ambassador's posts of making mooncakes (Twitter of Ambassador Hou Yanqi, accessed on 20 October, 2021)

What was mentioned above is not the first time Ambassador Hou tried to portray her as a Nepali culture lover. She always employs the tactic of constructing her identity as an ordinary female Chinese tourist. In July 2019, she posted four tourist pictures of her on Twitter. Around one month later, she posted another four tourist pictures. In these pictures, she resembles any ordinary Chinese female tourists found in Nepal. Her publicity work on social media has won her a tremendously positive reputation among Nepali netizens. However, her most tremendous applause from the Nepali society probably was her Twitter posts on New Year's Eve of 2020. On 31st December 2019, Ambassador Hou posted pictures of herself on Twitter as her approach to promote Nepal's short-lived national campaign Visit Nepal 2020 (VN2020). She posts that "True beauty always deeply touches the deep heart. Beautiful Nepal with history, diversity and nature deserves a visit. Wish #VisitNepal2020 successful!". It is ended with her wish for VN2020's success in the Nepali language "2020 Nepal bhramana varsa saphalatako subhakamana!" She also tagged Nepal's Tourism Minister Yogesh Bhattarai, who immediately retweeted Hou's

post and expressed appreciation. One day later, she tweeted another post to convey her new-year congratulations to Nepali people, again with her tourist pictures. Considering Twitter is officially not accessed in China, Ambassador Hou's action more likely targeted the Nepali population as a goodwill gesture but not as a direct promotion of VN2020 for the Chinese. Anyway, Ambassador Hou's friendly gesture was proved to be effective. In no long time, she has received hundreds of positive comments from Nepali netizens.



Picture 3 Ambassador Hou's tourist picture (Twitter of Ambassador Hou Yanqi, accessed on 20 October, 2021)



Picture 4 Ambassador Hou’s widely circulated tourist pictures (Twitter of Ambassador Hou Yanqi, accessed on 20 October, 2021)

However, Ambassador Hou’s Twitter diplomacy did not receive warm appreciation for Nepali mainstream media from its netizens. For instance, on 3rd January 2020, the Kathmandu Post published an article that, while appreciating Ambassador Hou’s promotion work, critically warns that the Nepali government should be cautious about foreign diplomats’ activities on social media (Rai, 2020).

The breakout of the Covid-19 pandemic globally soon later forced Ambassador Hou to transform from her tourist identity. On 18th February 2020, The Kathmandu Post republished an article titled “China’s secrecy has made the coronavirus crisis much worse”. This article dramatically stirred the nerves of the Nepal-based Chinese population, who were especially angered by the article’s accompanying picture in which PRC’s founding father Mao Zedong wears a mask. Many Chinese based in Nepal regarded the article and the accompanying politically sarcastic picture as insults to China’s anti-epidemic efforts and humiliation to the state’s great leader. Moreover, many Chinese felt that Nepal, which relied on China’s aid, betrayed them. Soon, protests were organised

with the help of local pro-China NGOs. A typical portrait of Mao Zedong was hung up at the site along with Chinese and Nepal national flags.



Picture 5 The assembly site (Yang, 2020)

On the same day the article was published, the Chinese Embassy in Nepal quickly published a statement, condemning The Kathmandu Post that it “deliberately smeared the efforts of the Chinese government and people fighting against the new coronavirus pneumonia and even viciously attacked the political system of China”. At the end of this statement, it also specifies that the Editor-in-Chief, Anup Kaphle, “has always been biased on China-related issues”, “becoming a parrot of some anti-China forces” whose “ulterior purpose is destined to failure” (Chineseembassy, 2020).

The Chinese Embassy’s statement quickly received more critical reaction not only from The Kathmandu Post but also from various actors of Nepal, who condemned that the Embassy and Ambassador Hou had breached diplomatic rules and damaged the right of

free speech and free press guaranteed by Nepal's constitution (TKP, 2020a; TKP, 2020b). One article (TKP, 2020a) warns that China's aid does not come without cost and the Chinese embassy's statement is "a rebuke to not bite the hand that feeds" from "an ostensibly friendly neighbour".

Since the statement crisis, Ambassador Hou has been no longer the welcomed female Chinese tourist for many Nepal people. For several months, Ambassador Hou has been criticised repeatedly for intervening in Nepal's domestic political affairs for her multiple meetings with Nepal's government officials and political party leaders during the period when Nepal's government was experiencing an internal crisis (see Giri, 2020; Pradhan, 2020). In addition to criticism from mainstream media, Nepali student-organised protests targeting Ambassador Hou took place. At the site, pictures of Ambassador Hou, designed to convey her professionalism and elegance, were held by students who put black crosses on the pictures.



Picture 6 students' protesting against Ambassador Hou (Gautam, 2020, accessed on 20 October, 2021)

The commonplace of these instances is that out of the domain of tourism, for the Nepali public, China is becoming a challenge that Nepal should find ways to manage (Koirala, 2020). Even the tourist contact zone is gradually getting rid of its harmless and win-win disguise. For example, while Chinese tourism is re-shaping Kathmandu's traditional epicentres of international tourists, Thamel, into a forming new Chinatown in Kathmandu, local people working, living, and hanging out there started to feel the threaten of Chinese culture (Sharma, 2018; Sharma, 2019; Linder, 2019). Moreover, Nepal's flexible visa policies towards Chinese nationals attract ordinary tourists and people who viciously take advantage of the identity of tourists. Covered by the tourist identity, some Chinese

nationals conduct money-laundry and cyber-fraud activities in Nepal. They entered and stayed in Nepal invalidly with tourists' visas. On 23rd December 2019, several days before Ambassador Hou became Nepal's cyber celebrity, the headline of almost every Nepali newspaper was Nepali police arresting 122 Chinese nationals in one single day who was charged with conducting cyber-crime and overstay in Nepal.

I want to conclude this paper by asking this question, who is Ms Hou Yanqi? She is the current Chinese ambassador in Nepal, yes. However, on top of that, she is also a woman, wife, mother, dancer, singer, food lover and a good cook. Moreover, she is a tourist who admires Nepal's natural and cultural scenes. During the recent pandemic, she has a new identity, the vaccine provider. In many pictures and videos widely circulated online, on TV and in the newspaper, she stands in front of the big jet and piles of boxes, handing over a certificate or box of vaccine to a senior officer from the Nepal government.

These various figures of Ambassador Hou always remind me of other two rather famous and widely circulated female figures in the history of the Nepal-China contact zone. One is Princess Bhrikuti from Nepal, and the other is Princess Wencheng from China. The prevailing discourses in the Nepal-China contact zone illustrate them as compassionate cultural envoys who bridged Nepal, Tibet and China proper. These two princesses are not the only envoys that are attributed to bridge trans-Himalayan communications. During the same period, the contact zone also had two Chinese male envoys, Wang Xuance and Li Yibiao. However, unlike their female counterparts who bridged the trans-regional communication by arts, religions and compassion, these male envoys paved the way by war and more direct political games. Interestingly, the contemporary narratives of history arrange Wang Xuance into the category of political envoys while categorising Princesses Bhrikuti and Wencheng as cultural exchangers whose contribution to the geopolitical games are located in the alternative areas to serious diplomacy. Rosenberg (1990) has criticised such an approach that women are believed only to influence international relations from the outside of the male-dominated serious areas.

Adding these various representations of Chinese envoys in history to interpret those of

Ambassador Hou, nevertheless, further makes it a nexus of complexity. However, it also informs us about the historically binary gendered figuration of diplomacy in the Nepal-China contact zone. As a contemporary Chinese female diplomat, how Ambassador Hou chooses to represent herself and what ideal representations she wants to encode are haunted by these historical representations. As a female, she is regarded suitable and more convenient to extend her diplomatic obligations to “soft” areas like music, dance and tourism. Moreover, as the contents of her Twitter posts demonstrate, she works very hard to make sure such figures are conveyed as expected. However, these representations also confine her to specific areas, and when she feels necessary to jump out of them, receivers who have been familiar with her as “soft” and “unaggressive” are shocked and outraged. Ambassador Hou’s efforts to delink herself and China from those masculine symbols which make the Nepali public feel threatened are quickly dispersed. In general, the local societies’ attitude to these representations are hesitant and sceptical. Some (e.g cultural envoy, tourist) are embraced with caution while others (e.g responsible regional superpower) are rejected. Through mobilising and manipulating Chinese Ambassador’s and China’s figures in various media, the Nepali public’s intention to confine China’s power and influence in several certain areas are conveyed. Therefore, representations are more than linear paths. They are prisms of endless self-identification, perceptions of others, others’ self-evaluation and counter perceptions.

All the ups and downs about the stories of Ambassador Hou’s representations are conditional and not permanent. It moves in an infinite circle of watching and being watched. By unpacking the powerful representation of the tiger of snow, Vincanne Adams (1995) has insightfully warned us about the mirroring nature of the representation as the so-called tiger of snow is merely a product out of looking back from each side. By unpacking the representations of Ambassador Hou and China directly, and those of Nepal reflected indirectly, this short paper reveals the complicated and fluid power dynamics in the contact zone. The work alone is not enough to map out the contact zone’s complicated and shifting power structures. However, it tries to offer an anchor point from which further articulation of representations, identities, practices and regulations can be articulated. Moreover, this paper attempts to add some gender perspective to the study of

Nepal-China relations, which has long been absent from the field. Who is the male gazer? Furthermore, how do they gaze? Who is the feminised gazed object? Can the gazed object cast their counter gaze? If so, how? Through the research of the representations of the female diplomat sent by the big brother country, it is hoped that the attentions of these questions can be lifted.

Contesting Diversity in Women's Political Inclusion in Rwanda:

Surplus Labour and Elected Leaders

Xianan Jin,

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Introduction

Rwanda is an illuminating yet complex case for understanding women's political inclusion in the Global South. In 1994, Rwanda was the site of a genocide, in response to which a great number of women's organizations emerged with the aim of helping women survivors. After almost a decade-long transition led by the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), Rwanda achieved the highest women's legislative representation (64%) in the world in 2003 and remains at the top of the ranking till the present day. However, the statistics of women in local government are quite discouraging: at the level of *imidugudu* (Kinyarwanda: village, the lowest level of government administration), there were only 13% of female *imidugudu* leaders in Rulindo District and 6% in Nyagatare District according to Haguruka (2019, 28), a Rwandan women NGO. Thus, while women's political participation is celebrated as an achievement on the national level, it persists to be a primary challenge in gender and family in local governments.

It is this disparity between national and local governments that this paper is set to contest the diversity in women's political inclusion in Rwanda. I argue that as *imidugudu* leaders are voluntary-based and unsalaried, low rate of women's participation in *imidugudu* leadership is caused by three main factors: women's employment, financial support, and emotional permission from their partners in a heterosexual relationship. To further discuss this argument, this paper is drawn from the data in my fieldwork in Rwanda between 2018 to 2019. Among all the research interlocutors for my PhD project, I will focus on two socio-economic classes of women both in the same urban setting: female informal workers who failed to become *imidugudu* leaders and were regarded as surplus labour, and female *imidugudu* leaders who were directly elected by the villagers.

By doing so, this paper brings class perspective to women's political inclusion discussion, then propels us to think beyond liberal feminist theorisation of gender pluralism based on elite women's political empowerment, and finally centres the experiences of low-class women's political life as the focal point of gender equality and justice for all.

The paper is structured in three parts: first, the paper starts with the background of *imidugudu* and its political ideology of Decentralisation. Then, the paper discusses two stories from Nise, a female street vendor and Shemusa, a female *imidugudu* leader and unpack how women's labour precarity and heteronormative expectation impact on their political participation. Lastly, I will summarise the keynotes from the paper and put forward some methodological implications regarding women's political representation.

1. Historical Backgrounds: *Imidugudu* and Decentralization

The transition government (1994 – 2003) established the *imidugudu* programme as a political-economic response to the housing emergency in the aftermath of the Genocide, when an estimated 2.5 million refugees came back to Rwanda from 1990-1997 (Hilhorst and Leeuwen 2000). *Imidugudu* also served as the foundation for rural development since its inception in December 1996. Meanwhile, this policy was also expected to improve reconciliation and cohesion among different ethnicities in the aftermath of the genocide.

In the post-genocide context, *imidugudu* is understood as planned rural resettlement. Inhabitants of rural areas were encouraged to move into government-built houses, which were allocated following a specific housing plan; these houses were built near the main roads to provide better accessibility to infrastructure services such as water and electricity. As shown in Figure 1, John, as one the street vendor research participants, drew his hometown before and after *imidugudu* policy. On the left, in 2010, rural residents lived dispersed near their farms, and now in 2019, new houses are built near markets and roads. In short, *imidugudu* was first established as an urgent policy in response to the housing crisis when an overwhelming number of refugees coming back to Rwanda after the genocide, but also it is a good result of state provision of infrastructure services, including water, electricity, market business, schools, clinics and so on.



Figure 1. *John's hometown before and after the Imidugudu Policy.* Photograph from John (2019).

Whilst the rural *imidugudu* land consolidation was developing across the country, the Government of Rwanda adopted the National Decentralisation Policy in 2000 and implemented it in 2001. Since 2000, the decentralisation in Rwanda has been aiming to restructure bureaucratic institutions and reallocating resources and responsibilities to the local level of government to an unprecedented degree. Later, during the second phase of Decentralisation in 2005, *imidugudu* became the grassroots level administration of the government as a participatory democratisation experiment. The primary purpose of the Rwandan government in implementing such a democratic decentralisation was to tackle poverty by mobilising the population to make decisions concerning their livelihood (Ministry of Local Government and Social Affairs 2001). To achieve this purpose, it required increasing local people's participation, enhancing local leaders' accountability, and strengthening effectiveness of service delivery. While at the same time, the decentralisation also fostered democratic elections for local leaders, where local leaders held direct responsibility to their constituencies. In essence, the new political elites had

more commitment to improving the economic development of the population, whereas a participatory democracy is used as a tool to reduce poverty rather than the goal.

Among all means of mass participation in poverty reduction, the Government emphasised on a shifting from farm employment to non-farm economic activities. Ultimately, it expected 70% of the rural population to move into planned *imidugudu* by 2017 (Republic of Rwanda n.d.)¹.

However, there are two aspects regarding material conditions that are overlooked during this urbanisation process: first, there is a very distinct unequal distribution of wealth between urban and rural. The population identified as poor in Kigali significantly fell from 2.2 in 2000 to 1.7 in 2006 whilst the poor in other urban environments increased from 6.0% to 6.7%. Beyond these urban areas, nearly 92% of Rwandan people living under the poverty line reside in rural in 2006 (National Institute of Statistics Rwanda, 2006, 4).

Apart from the unequal distribution of wealth between urban and rural, poverty is also feminised. Regarding poverty gender disparities, 62% of female-headed households live below the poverty line compared to 54% of male-headed households (Ministry of Local Government 2011, 20). Arguably, one of the legacies of the Genocide is that women head 32.1% of Rwandan households: that said, despite the national wealth being accumulated quite fast, social inequality has been an obstinate challenge, especially for women.

Bringing Job Back in Women's Political Participation

Following the thread to think about informal work, now I want to bring job back in the discussion of women's political participation. This section starts with the story of Nise, who is an informal worker during my fieldwork.

Like many other precarious workers, Nise migrated to Kigali out of rural poverty in 2007. She came to Kigali and the only job she could find was domestic work. "You work because you lost your way." Nise was telling me how she moved to Kigali in 2007, "You see, I used to do housework when I was a girl, and then I faced the violence of getting pregnant and giving birth, then getting into this life. You know that being a single woman is hard without a job." (Nise 2019a) In 2007, it was the son of the family she worked for

¹ According to the latest national census in 2012, 55.6% of rural population lived in *imidugudu* compared to 38% in 2006 (National Institute of Statistics Rwanda 2014).

that forced her to sex. After three months when her belly started to show, the parents in that family kicked her out of the house without any payment. Because she had no other relatives nor family in the city, in the beginning, she was hosted by a friend of hers at the outskirts of Kigali for three months. Then, as she did not want to trouble her friend anymore, she found herself a room for RWF3000 (GBP2.16) per month, in the middle of a six-month pregnancy. “God help me, I had nothing.” Nise (2019a) told me that she had to sleep on a mat made of straws, and only owned two cups, two plates and a saucepan.

Shortly after delivery of her baby, Nise started street vending with the money she earned by doing construction janitor, a job worth approximately for RWF1000 (GPB 0.72) per day. Getting up at 4am every day except Sunday for church, Nise started her day preparing meals for her two children and then headed to Nyabugogo with the sunrise at 6am. Nyabugogo was the biggest wholesale market of fruits and vegetable in Kigali from the rural areas.

With her hard work, Nise started to have couple of restaurants for retailing eventually, but life's plans were not as Nise hoped for, as police oppression started to intensify due to the ban in street vending implemented from 2015. Life became a fractioned struggle again.

“You worked by hiding. You had to run all the time. Sometimes they [the police] robbed you. You worked for nothing.” Nise (2019b) was in despair when she described to us how she was imprisoned twice by the street security due to her street vending business. “When I was doing that job of selling on the street, the security took me to a place called Kwa Kabuga . People stay there for a week or two because new people had to come in very soon. They caught me twice and took all my fruits.” Arriving at Kwa Kabuga, everything on her will be taken, including her phone, money, and fruits. Then she was given a bag of sanitary pads, a soap bar, and some body lotion for a compulsory shower every morning. She was forced to shave her head upon her arrival at the prison. At 3 pm every afternoon, everybody would have a bowl of boiled maize as the only meal for the day. In the evening, she had to slept on the floor with about 300 women in one room. Nise (2019b) said: “if you say you have a baby, they won't let you go. You know there was a woman who found the children dead in the house after she was released from Kwa Kabuga. It even got on the radio.” For her, as her children were both teenagers, she

taught them that if she was not back in the evening, she must have been taken to Kwa Kabuga. For twice, her elder daughter turned to one of their neighbours, who eventually went to Kwa Kabuga and got Nise out.

There is an aggressive regulation on women's informal labour which contradicts to the government's policy on improving and promoting and enhancing women's political participation. Beyond criminalisation and confiscation, local governments also organised meetings to mobilise street vendors to sell in formally regulated markets. As Figure 2 drawn by Asafiwe, another female street vendor, shows, in these locally organised meetings there is a massive number of street vendors requesting local government's financial support. The biggest problem for most street vendors to move into formalized markets is their lack of financial means to pay for rents.

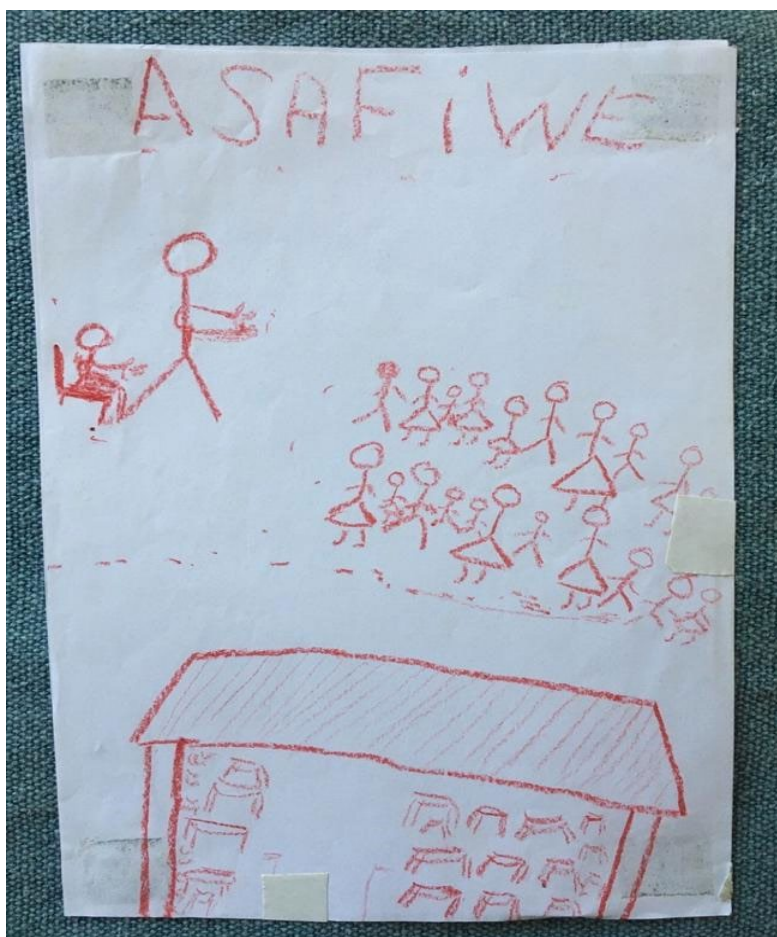


Figure 2. *Asafiwe's answer to the question: describe the local meeting you attended regarding street vending.* Photography from Asafiwe (2019).

In this section, I argue that street vendors, such as Nise, are surplus labour in the urbanisation process. In other words, street vendors are not wanted in the urban spaces as they are constantly being chased off by the security forces. Street vending is a result of the increasing number of unskilled labours migrating to the city, both attracted by urbanisation in Kigali and facilitated by the Rwandan Vision 2020.

The precarity of street vending is gendered as a feminised poverty phenomenon. According to research conducted by Rwanda Association for Protection of Human Rights (ARDHO 2017), in their 4018 respondents, 68.2% of street vendors were female. This number of women resonates with another analysis by few Rwandan scholars: during their study at Nyarugenge District with street vendors, 66% of them were women while some of them became street vendors because of being widowed (Ndikubwimana et al. 2020, 90). Though women are the majority in street vending in Kigali, female population is slightly lower in urban areas (46.0%) than rural areas (48.3%) (National Institute of Statistics Rwanda 2015). The imbalance between feminisation of street vending and male demographic dominance in urban areas is attributed to the fact that it's more likely for men to move from agriculture to skilled-service jobs than women (National Institute of Statistics Rwanda 2006, 26).

In my fieldwork, most of the female street vendors are also single mothers. They chose to do street vending mostly because this was a flexible job, which allowed them to take care of their young children by themselves. Part of the reasons they could not join the formalised markets is also that there is an absence of state provision of care for young children. As single mothers, street vending, as one of the few job alternatives, offered these lower-class women the opportunity to care for their children.

In short, street vendors are unwanted surplus labour in the urban space, in contrast to the national inclusion of women in politics. Compared with female political elites who are recruited in political institutions, female street vendors are targeted as surplus labour to be erased from the modern streets in Kigali and forced to be absorbed into markets in the formal economy. In next section, I argue that beyond women's own work precarity and financial situation, heteronormative expectations also played a crucial role in women's accessibility to public activities.

A Good Wife and Mother: Leadership Limited to Heteronormativity

To bring a comparative lens, this section shifts its focus from female street vendors to *imidugudu* leaders to examine the ways in which heteronormativity disciplines women's respectability and their accessibility to political positions. During the period of my fieldwork (September 2018 - August 2019), I interviewed eighteen villages. In these eighteen urban villages, there are only three female village leaders, which accounts for 16.7%. Shemusa was one of the three female *imidugudu* leaders.

Shemusa ran a local grocery shop in central Kigali. She was married with three children. Compared with other boutiques in this neighbourhood, Shemusa's shop was the largest to my knowledge. On the wall shelf in the shop, bottled beer, soft drinks, biscuits, and stationery were sold. She also bought staples such as beans, rice, sorghum, cassava powder, and sweet potatoes for resale. She sold quite a considerable amount of goods such as sugar, soap, toilet paper, tea, detergent, diapers... Among all these well-organised commodities, Shemusa was sitting right in front of the counter inside the shop.

Shemusa was elected in 2006 among the first group of *umudugudu* leaders in the country. She was then 26 years old. This was her second mandate while we were talking in 2019. "Villagers elected me because they trusted me," Shemusa was explaining how she became the leader, "Before they vote you, they check on your personality and how you behave on your daily basis. Your home should reflect how you become a leader. How you behave at home will give people an idea of how you will be as a leader. This is more than anything else. You cannot become a leader if your husband doesn't support you." (Shemusa 2019) It is intriguing to know that women's leadership is established upon their relations with their partners in a heteronormative way.

Considering that family gender relations mattered for leadership, I asked Shemusa if her husband supported her work in the village or not. "Being a leader is not easy." Shemusa said, "you sacrifice a lot from your time, from the time you are supposed to spend with your business or with your husband. You cannot be a good leader unless if you live in harmony with your husband because we do many trainings, go out for urgent issues in the mid of night... My husband allows me to go for meetings every time." "Why is your husband supportive?" I asked. "My husband is also passionate about leadership. But he is too busy with his business. He doesn't have time for village meetings. So, we

decided that I will take up this umudugudu leadership. On top of that, every time if there is something urgent to be solved, three security guards will come to my house and pick me up. My husband has to wake up from bed and see who he is handing his wife to.”

Shemusa’s husband owned a truck and was involved in transporting goods business. He also helped with stocking at Shemusa’s shop. Admittedly, there is a contradiction between Shemusa’s political position and this limitation and somehow de-legitimation of her political power in the public, all originated in her very own household. In other words, though she obtained the highest decision-making power in the village, this power is still partly controlled by her husband at home due to the persisting gender norms in the society. Further, this entrenched gendered inequality at home is attributed to men’s social-economic advantage in the society at large.

To summarise, Shemusa’s success in local political elections are embedded in her husband’s financial and emotional support, and her stable employment by owning a shop. Unlike Shemusa, female street vendors in the previous section were first and foremost not welcomed in the city and forced to become wage labour in formal council markets. Due to their struggles with material conditions and lack of support from their partners, female street vendors, of whom mostly are single mothers, remain on the margins of political participation.

Conclusion

Intrigued by the disparity of women’s representation between national and local governments, this paper is set to contest the diversity in women’s political inclusion in Rwanda. First, I historicised the initiation and development of *Imidugudu* policy and its Decentralisation ideology in the aftermath of the genocide. The project of *imidugudu* policy mobilised the population to migrate to the urban area for non-farming activities with the aim of poverty reduction. Yet, because of drastic urbanisation, there is a spike in the number of unskilled labours migrating to the city, which consequently pushes overwhelming majority of people to street vending. Women, especially single mothers, found their subsistence from street vending. Unlike the female political elites, female street vendors are not the desired subjects in the national scheme of women’s political inclusion. In comparison, due to the *imidugudu* leaders’ work is voluntary and thus

unsalaried, only women with a stable income and their husbands' support can be elected directly by the villagers.

Drawn from a class perspectives comparing female street vendors and female *imidugudu* leaders, I argue that as imidugudu leaders are voluntary-based and unsalaried, low rate of women's participation in imidugudu leadership is caused by three main factors: women's employment, financial support, and emotional permission from their partners in a heterosexual relationship. Particularly, this paper contributes to the missed recognition of women's informal labour and diverse sexuality beyond heteronormative expectation in women's political participation.

Finally, this paper hopes to make a methodological implication towards Marxist feminism. By contesting gender quotas for which women, I argue that in essence, liberal feminist agenda on 'adding women' in politics without consideration of class ultimately fails to address the material conditions for women's political participation. Thus, I advocate for a shift from numeric inclusion of women in politics to political economy of participation.

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Panel 2-6: Literary Representations of Diversity

Dystopian Representations of Diversity in Post-Arab Spring Novels – *The Queue and Dog War II* as examples

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Abstract

This study aims at analyzing the multilayered connections between diversity representation and Arabic dystopian novels.

The past decade saw in the wake of the Arab Spring uprisings the proliferation of a typical theme in the field of the Arabic novel. Derived from western dystopian fiction, this series of novels attempt to forecast a pessimistic future of Arab people as well as a tenebrous destiny for humankind. Although this Arab dystopia dates back to the 1980s when Ṣabrī Mūsā and Yūsuf al-Dīn 'Īsā published respectively *al-Sayyid min ḥaql al-sabāniḥ* and *al-Wāḡiha*, this genre springs up after the publication of Aḥmad Ḥālīd Tawfīq's *Yūtūbyā* in 2008 with other Egyptians writers taking the leading position, like Basma 'Abd al-'Azīz and Muḥammad Rabī', meanwhile finding echoes in the works of Ibrāhīm Naṣrallāh, Sa'ūd al-San'ūsī, etc.

Inscribed in the perpetual pursuit of the nation-state, these dystopian works focalize the representation of identity, both individual and collective, picturing a gloomy future where personal diversity is only to be annulled for the sake of a unified utopian/dystopian identity forged by the power and/or the state. This study attempts to present the aforementioned process which is principally institutionalized by state's symbolic violence and to demonstrate the dialectics of annulling diversity and representing it by analyzing Basma 'Abd al-'Azīz's *al-Ṭābūr* and Ibrāhīm Naṣrallāh's *Ḥarb al-Kalb al-Ṭāniya*. Other Arabic dystopian novels may be mentioned as well.

This study envisions following the discussion on Arabic novels and the nation-state by

Wen-chin Ouyang as well as relocating it in the current Post-Arab Spring context. It is also sought to realize a transdisciplinary study that takes on a sociological theoretical framework, symbolic violence of Pierre Bourdieu, and cultural identity from Stuart Hall.

In order to proceed to the main topic which is the dystopian representations of diversity in several novels that appeared during recent years in the Arabic literary field, it seems practical and reasonable to bring up some premises of the study. First of all, the whole paper spins around the theme of “diversity”.

Avtar Brah, who believes that diversity is probably the only reliable persistent theme across the variety of postmodernisms that currently proliferate (Brah, 1991, p. 53), raises in her article entitled “Difference, Diversity and Differentiation”: “the function of diversity/difference in the processes of identity construction” which is also cited by Stuart Hall in his article “Who Needs ‘identity’?” alongside his discussion on difference and identity as well as *différance* (difference and deferral of the meaning) and identity, questioning “how can we understand its[identity’s] meaning and how can we theorize its emergence” if “identities only be read as which is constructed in or through *différance* and is constantly destabilized by what it leaves out...” (Hall, p. 5). The study will treat this point deployed in the national/unified identity through the two novels. The problem of identity does not only preoccupy the research of Hall but also obsesses the modern Arabic literature and Arabic novel above all.

As Wen-chin Ouyang pinpoints in *Poetics of Love in the Arabic Novel*, “The discourses on the Arabic novel are haunted by ...the ... problematic of an ‘authentic’ Arab identity.” (Ouyang, p. 4) Meanwhile, Arabic novelist often assumes the position of “people’s guide” [*muršid al-umma*] in the Arab nation-state building process, provided that “Profane folk literature...can be the voice of the new nationalist culture” (Ouyang, p. 18).

Staring from the above-mentioned points, this study would like to focus on the construction and deconstruction of identity diversity in a specific and nascent genre of Arabic novels that proliferates during the post-Arab Spring period. The results of the past uprisings, revolutions, and quests for democracy are to be discussed. This deceiving

reality resonates with Ouyang's analyze on the context of Badr Šākīr Al-Sayyāb's *Unšudat al-maṭar/Rain Song*:

“In the absence of the perfect nation-state and its perfect instrument of power, the individual is left powerless but full of dreams for a ‘utopian’ world. Any imagining of nation-state is understandably pulsating with desire; desire for all the components that will make the nation-state the Utopia imagined.” (Ouyang, p. 46)

The Iraqi poet was fortunate enough to be able to restore or rebuild his utopian nation-state. However, the novelists nowadays choose another path that is to turn to the Arabic dystopian genre, taking up the reminiscent pieces from the 80's Egypt and joining in the architextuality of western dystopian fiction.

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Before diving into the details of the two selected novels, it seems necessary to shed light on the first two Arabic dystopian novels in order to better understand the genesis of this genre in the Arab world. Youssef Ezeddin Eassa's *al-Wāḡiha*(1981)(*The*

Façade, 2014) could be the first dystopian novel to modern Arabic literature. His novel depicts a city situated in a nowhere land exhibiting both the front side as translated into the façade and the dark side which reveals the domination of an unknown master on the city and every individual to whom the master can arbitrarily put an end no matter when and where.

In the context of Hosni Mubarak becoming the president of Egypt and his attempts to make alliances with local intellectuals, Sabri Musa, who affirms (cited by Ouyang, p. 21) that he deals in his novels “with many social institutions he expects to disappear, such as marriage and the relationship between father and son,” published *al-Sayyid min Ḥaql al-Sabāniḥ* (1987) [The Man from the Spinach Field]. This novel predicts a future where average life expectancy is more than 150 years and everyone’s trajectory is closely structured. The story unfolds as al-Sayyid/the Man awakes and becomes more and more conscious of the absurdity of the system that he lives in and works for. Together with some other awakened characters, the Man finally managed to escape the system but only to find out that the outer world is nothing but an irremediable disaster.

While these two novels have sporadically come into sight in the 80s of last century, a new wave of Arabic dystopian novels made its appearance since 2008 when Ahmed Khaled Tawfik published a novel entitled *Utopia* imagining a wealthy and secluded community on the board of Mediterranean Sea that finds itself in opposition to the outside which is miserable. In addition to *Utopia*, a dozen Arabic dystopian novels are published during the post-Arab Spring decade included the two selected as objects of the study. Basma ‘Abd al-‘Azīz’s *al-Ṭābūr* [The Queue] and Ibrāhīm Naṣrallāh’s *Ḥarb al-Kalb al-Ṭāniya* [Dog War II].

Basma Abdelaziz’s novel *The Queue* tells a story about Egyptian people dying of the perpetual waiting of the impossible. The main character is named Yehya, which is ironic for this word means to stay alive in Arabic while the destiny of Yehya is to wait until the day he dies without being able to save himself though he and his friends make multiple attempts. The reason why Yehya approaches his last breath is that he got injured by a bullet when he was passing by an uprising in Cairo. The injury was not immediately lethal and he was likely to survive if he could get the bullet removed from his abdomen.

Unfortunately, right before his surgeon, Doctor Tarek could operate on him, the Gate pronounced an order to interdict all the removal of bullets without its special permission.

The Gate that came out of nowhere is the symbol of the system in power which exercise what Pierre Bourdieu names *violence symbolique*, as well as the incarnation of the impotent bureaucracy because of which all demanders no matter what their needs are, have to stay in the Queue in front of the Gate, waiting for it to finally open up. It can be found in the waiting line alongside Yehya representations of diverse identities. Whereas they all need to be evaluated by the system that may accept or refuse their applications for a so-called *Šahādat Šalāhiyyat Muwāṭina* [Certificate of True Citizenship].

Facing the Gate, Yehya, a 38-year-old sales representative, his girlfriend Amani a 37-year-old telephone operator, and his friend Nagi a philosophy lecturer, struggled to get the operation done in time in order to postpone Yehya's doomed day. Yet, Amani got caught and was tortured till she broke down psychologically. Nagi fought to the end and convinced doctor Tarek to do the surgery outside the hospital so that he could save Yehya without breaking the rule. However, it was too late. Yehya died after having waited in the Queue for 140 days.

The representation of identity diversity can be observed as the author depicts multiple portraits of citizens besides the three main characters mentioned earlier, for example, Ehab, an opportunist journalist who once helped the course of saving Yehya but finally chose to interview for a Gate-provided post; the elementary school teacher Ines, a westernized woman in her thirties who ended up marrying a religious man Shalaby; Umm Mabrouk, a hard-working woman who manages to own a coffee house in the Queue and lives with a daughter died due to the lack of treatment and a son who requires constant medical attention, etc. So different these individuals may be, they are bound to face the Gate --- the symbolic violence of the nation-state.

According to Bourdieu, “the State... is defined by the possession of the monopoly of legitimate physical and symbolic violence”, and the symbolic violence is defined as “every power that succeeds in imposing meanings and in imposing them by concealing the relations of conflict of power which is at the basis of its force”. He also affirms that “In modern societies, state's symbolic violence effectively involves the production of legitimate identities” which brings the study back to Basma Abdelaziz's choice of

fictionalizing this legitimate identity by creating the Gate-forged national identity --- the *Ṣalāhiyyat Muwāṭīnaa* [True Citizenship] and illustrating the state's symbolic violence by the demanding bureaucratic system. For example, Abdelaziz announces the state of Yehya's final state at the beginning of the novel: "*mawqūf li-hīn al-ḥuṣūl 'alā taṣrīh min al-bawwāba* [suspended pending approval by the Gate]". As the narrative proceeds, Yehya stands in the Queue despite the injury,

لم يكن يعرف في الحقيقة متى سوف يتم ذلك الأمر؛ لا يزال يخرج من البيت كل صباح، يجزّ قدميه وبطنه وحوضه الثقيل، ليقف في الطابور، دون أن يبلغ البوابة. (ص ١٧)

He had no idea when it would finally happen. But he still left his house each morning, dragging his feet and his stomach and his pelvis, all of it heavy, to stand in the queue without ever reaching the Gate.

However, regardless of his perseverance and his deteriorating health condition, the Gate announces:

لا يتم منح التصريح باستخراج ونزع رصاصة، إلا إلى كل من ثبت بحقه دون ريب، وبالأدلة القاطعة، الالتزام التام بالأخلاق والسلوكيات القويمة، وصدرت له شهادة رسمية بصفته مواطنا صالحا، أو كحد أدنى مواطنا حقيقيا، ولا يعترف مطلقا بالشهادات التي لا تحمل توقيع المنفذ وختم البوابة. (ص ١٣٣)

Permits authorizing the removal of bullets shall not be granted, except to those who prove beyond doubt, and with irrefutable evidence, their full commitment to sound morals and comportment, and to those who are issued an official certificate confirming that they are a righteous citizen, or, at least, a true citizen. Certificates of True Citizenship that do not bear a signature from the Booth and the seal of the Gate shall not be recognized under any circumstances.

Becoming a true citizen is the common terminus of the characters standing in the Queue, Yehya has to die in order to prove that the government forces did not fire any bullet nor harm any citizen during the manifestation, because after all no matter how diverse the people are, they are to the Gate, as it addresses them in the announcement, the "*al-muwāṭīnūn al-`ahibbā*' [beloved fellow citizens]." (p. 129) In the Bourdieusian symbolic violence, there are three components in its functioning: 1) ignorance of the arbitrariness of domination; 2) recognition of this domination as legitimate;

3)internalization of domination by the dominated. The second novel of the current discussion demonstrates this functioning.

The Palestinian rooted Jordanian writer Ibrahim Nasrallah won the 2018 International Prize for Arabic Fiction also known as Arabic Booker with his novel *Dog War II*. This piece of work tells the story of the main character Rashid and his entourage, his family as well as his colleagues. To sum up the plot: the story is situated right before the outbreak of the Dog War II. As it is numerated, it is easy to realize that there has been a Dog War I which provides the context for the whole story. While the reader has been insinuated at the beginning that the first war broke out due to differences and divergences that the power nor the people could not tolerate, the second war which is going to break out as the novel moves forward is due to an arbitrary phenomenon of massive clone engendering resemblance that annuls human being's diversity. As the situation degenerates, our main character Rashid falls from a decent doctor to a war criminal. His metamorphose is illustrated through the process of becoming more and more similar to his superior, the General in the system, and the general director at his workplace.

Meanwhile, his surroundings resemble more and more to himself, including his neighbor the Weatherman and his driver. Though these "look-alikes" resemblances are out of unknown reasons, there are artificial "clones" in the novel as well, for example, Rashid's secretary has plastic surgery to look alike Salaam, Rashid's wife. It seems that people are willing to give up diversity and that personhood means nothing when confronting the system controlled and institutionalized yet voluntary seek of the resemblance to every and each's ideal model, the perfect identity. Nevertheless, this path leads to a tragic end for Rashid. His climb in the hierarchy of the system is forced to end when he gets captured and identified as the imposter of Rashid who is in reality the driver. He ends his life, beaten to death.

Taking the three components in the functioning of symbolic violence into account, this study observes the ignored arbitrariness of domination deployed in two similar measures taken by the system/*al-Qal'a* which are hospitalization and imprisonment. The system proposes to citizens a free ambulance service which is in fact a scheme to make profits by creating arbitrarily patients who are not truly ill. The second is a kind of

prolongation of the first plan. After the economic success brought by the first plan, the system director wants to build more hospitals, however, Rashid comes up with another proposal --- building prisons instead of medical facilities for all people who are sick from hope. While hope is a dangerous thing for people under the control of the system to have, because by hoping to be more like their ideal models, they transform themselves into captives of hope.

Rashid hereby reinforces the arbitrariness in the diagnosis of sickness and offers the system more access to dominate the people. At the same time, he brings the study to the second component in the functioning of symbolic violence, the recognition of this domination as legitimate, for the imprisonment provokes a legal procedure during which the system as judiciary authority can have its domination legitimized. Rashid's proposal "mašrū' asra l-amal 2[hope's captive project 2]" brings the study even further to the third component in the functioning of symbolic violence, internalization of the dominance by the dominated. Rashid, an experienced doctor and related by marriage to the system General, is situated in an intermediate place of the social hierarchy. He is willing to look alike people in the system, such as his brother-in-law, in the same way in which people below his ranking, such as the driver, want to look like him, Rashid. Both of the dominated are internalizing the domination as each of them wants to reach a social class recognized by the system as higher than his original one. Diversity in this novel ends up being the casualty during the realization and the consolidation of the system's domination.

أن ليس هناك من أنسان إلا مصاب بمرض ما, أو أمل ما, وأن كل واحد منهم يريد أن يكون مثل فلان, والواحدة مثل فلانة, ودائما يحددون الذي يريدون أن يكونوا مثله بدقة, كما لو أنهم أمضوا عمرهم كله في البحث عنه! (ص ٤٨)

There is no one who isn't sick from some kind of illness or some hope. And every one of them wants to look alike someone, they always define minutely the type they want to look alike as if they have spent their whole life looking for him.

Although Ibrahim Nasrallah is not creating a national identity as Basma Abdelaziz, his *Dog War II* does echo *The Queue* in the pursuit of a collective identity, however, in his case the identity transcends national sphere and reaches the common destiny of the human being as a whole. As dystopic as the story is, the collective identity acquired during a

short time by a sudden appearance of a large quantity of look-alikes, leads to the outbreak of Dog War II (p. 205) “*al-bašar lā yurīdūn al-muḥtalif wa-lā yurīdūn al-šabīh*. [Human being doesn’t want difference nor resemblance]” As suggested in the novel, the previous war Dog War I broke out due to difference, then the second due to resemblance. It seems that for Nasrallah, neither diversity nor unification is the answer to human destiny. Compared to *The Queue* where it is depicted the confront between individual diversity and national identity, *Dog War II* may need further discussion to explore the deeper meaning beneath its dystopian look.

To sum up, both of the novels demonstrate dystopian representations of diversity by creating a dystopia in which identity plays the leading role and symbolic violence the supporting one. Despite the Gate/the system’s (or whoever is in control of the arbitrary domination) annulling diverse individual identity and imposing a unified /national identity, the two authors still manage to represent diversity, disillusioned and dystopian.

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The Origins of Modern Chinese Sexuality: An Analysis of Sexual Discourse in the Scientific Context of the May Fourth Movement

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Abstract

The May Fourth Movement not only ushered a new age in Chinese history and culture, but also marked the emergence of modern Chinese sexuality. The media and academia during this period discussed "sex" and "sexual desire" from a scientific point of view, focusing on "human liberation" and "women's liberation". This study collates and examines the discourses on sexuality that were translated from Europe and the United States to Japan and then to China during the May Fourth period of the 1910s and 1920s. The discourses around female sexuality showed that local translators exercised their subjectivity in this process of cultural transmission, taking, transforming, and absorbing Western knowledge. The May Fourth scholars criticized the traditional Confucian repression of sexual culture, affirmed the innate "sexuality" of human beings from a scientific perspective, and emphasized the equal rights of women and men in the sexual dimension. The formation of sexuality, sexual knowledge and sexual discourse during the May Fourth period shaped the perception and understanding of sexuality among the modern Chinese. The fact that the understanding of sex and sexuality was discussed on the scientific level also illustrated the great appeal of "Mr. Science" in the May Fourth era. As such, the origin of the scientific discourses on human sexuality supplied yet another example about the cultural and historical significance of the May Fourth Movement in twentieth-century Chinese history.

The May Fourth Movement opened a new page in Chinese culture and history, and was one of the most important political, social, and cultural milestones in 20th century China. Indeed, it is now almost impossible to avoid the May Fourth Movement in historical narratives of modern China, for the changes that occurred during the May Fourth period were a starting point for a discussion of Chinese modernity.

Like other cultural concepts, the modern concept of sexuality in China also originated in the May Fourth period, which spanned from the mid-1910s to the late 1920s. The "liberation of human" and "liberation of women" were hotly debated in many newspapers, magazines, and other modern media during that period.

In line with the criticism of Confucianism at that time, the term "sexual desire," or *xingyu* 性慾, received a great deal of attention as an important part of human nature. It is worth mentioning that the Chinese word *xingyu* is a new word coined in the period. It came from the Japanese word *sei yoku* 性慾 (sexual desire), corresponding to the introduction of the knowledge of sexual science in Europe and America in modern times.

By examining the scientific discourse on sexuality during the May Fourth period and focusing on the relevant discussions in which intellectuals participated at the time, this paper hopes to explore how scientific conceptions of sexuality were generated and developed in China. It will concentrate on the construction of female erotic discourse in heterosexuality, highlighting the gender perspective of the discussion of sexuality at the time. The author argues that the May Fourth period's promotion of "Mr. Sai 赛先生," or "Mr. Science," clearly contributed to the exploration of human sexual knowledge on a scientific level. This exploration, in turn, fully highlighted the authority of science, and became a particularly noteworthy phenomenon in the new cultural movement at that time. In other words, without the prevailing culture of science, a subject such as the sexuality of men and women would not have entered the realm of public discussion. Thus, the formation of sexuality, sexual knowledge, and sexual discourse during the May Fourth period not only shaped modern Chinese sexuality, but also demonstrated the enormous influence of scientific discourse in modern China.

1. Introducing the Concept of Sexuality in a Scientific Context

As mentioned earlier, *xingyu* (sexual desire) was a new word introduced from Japan. In 1902-1903, Mori Ōgai 森鷗外, a Japanese writer and physician, publicly used the term "sexual desire" in an article serialized in the magazine *Kōshū iji* 公眾醫事 (Public Medical Affairs), in which he openly used the term *sei yoku* (sexual desire). At the same time that medical doctors were using the concept of *sei yoku* and popularizing the

knowledge of sex, there was an increase in the number of literary works that depicted human sexual desire along with the rise of naturalistic literature in Japan, and the meaning of sexual desire was being discussed in the fields of science, literature and ideas.

The term "sexual desire" spread from Japan to China during the early 20th century. According to my research, the early appearance of the modern meaning of the word "sexual desire" in Chinese literature was in the Japanese dictionary *Xin'erya* 新爾雅, which was compiled and published by Chinese students studying in Japan in 1904.

After the mid-1910s, with the introduction of modern scientific knowledge from Europe and the United States, the term *xing* 性 began to be more widely used in newspapers and magazines to discuss the concept of sex and sexual activity. People no longer kept a taboo on male and female love and sexual affairs, but gradually regarded it as a part of life and objectively observed and analysed it from a scientific perspective. Through the promotion of modern science during the May Fourth period, the discussions about sexual desire entered the social space of Chinese public discourse and gained some legitimacy and rationality.

2. "Sexuality" in the Battle between Confucian Rituals and Modern Science

The use of the terms "sex" and "sexual desire" and the public discussion of sexual knowledge marked the beginning of the acceptance and circulation of a scientific concept of sexuality in Chinese society. However, it took some time to establish the authority of scientific sexual discourse. Actually, its realization was closely related to the criticism of Confucian tradition. The "breaking" of the traditional culture and the "establishment" of the new culture went hand in hand, which became an important part of the "May Fourth" New Culture Movement.

In the discussion of sexual knowledge, "modern science" and "Confucian ritual" always formed a binary relationship. This was a noteworthy feature of the cultural change in the time. In traditional Chinese culture, the resources of sexual knowledge can be said to be rich in connotations, but in the "May Fourth" period, traditional sexual culture was reduced to be a part of the Confucian ritual. It can be said that this is a rhetorical strategy that aims to highlight the confinement and repressiveness of traditional sexual culture and thus present the advancement of the scientific concept of sexuality. Here we offer an

example for illustration. In Chai Fuyuan's monograph on sexology, *The ABCs of Sexology* (1927), he criticized the traditional Chinese society's attitude of mystifying sex and emphasized the need to popularize scientific knowledge of sexuality :

Especially we Chinese, in ancient times, always thought that sex is mysterious, and later with the Confucian rituals, but also added a tight bondage, no one dares to mention it, and even less to study it.People should recognize that sexual life is not obscene, but noble and pure. We should stand on the scientific position, according to the physiological and hygienic reasoning, to speak of healthy sexual life, to achieve the most noble purpose.¹

Hu Ding'an, a medical doctor, pointed out that because Chinese people were "bound by Confucian rituals", they "often despise sexual desire as an obscene act and are not allowed to discuss it openly", thus leading to an extreme lack of sexual knowledge among the nation. Because of this situation, Hu believes that it is necessary to introduce and popularize the scientific knowledge of "Sexual Biology, Sexual Psychology, Sexual Anthropology, Sexual Ethics, and Sexual Pedagogy" from Europe and America to the Chinese people.² Through the cultural strategy of breaking Confucian ritual and establishing modern science, the intellectuals of the May Fourth Movement succeeded in promoting the popularization of scientific knowledge of human sexuality. Several pioneers of modern sexology, such as Pan Guangdan and Zhang Jingsheng, also engaged in a debate about what constituted "scientific" standards, and whose doctrine is more "scientific."³

In short, the core characteristic of the discussion on "sex" and "sexual desire" initiated during the May Fourth period is simultaneously "breaking the old" and "establishing the new" in parallel. In the May Fourth discursive space, modern science and traditional rituals were opposed to each other, and the promotion of modern sexual science was

¹ 柴福沅《性学ABC》，出版者：ABC丛书社，发行者：世界书局，1928年。

² 胡定安《性欲的研究》、《学生杂志》第10卷第5号，1926年。

³ Cf. Howard Chiang, "Epistemic Modernity and the Emergence of Homosexuality in China", *Gender & History*, Vol. 22 No.3 November 2010, pp. 629-657.

realized on the basis of criticism of traditional Chinese sexual culture. By translating European and American scientific knowledge, the intellectuals of the May Fourth Movement seriously explored and studied sexuality in the public discourse space, and even fought over who was closer to "science" and who could be the spokesperson of "science". However, although they were eager to replace Confucian culture with modern science, they paid less attention to the "scientific" knowledge surrounding sexuality and to the question of whether the knowledge of modern sexual science was really completely separated from the Chinese tradition.

3, Sexuality in the Nation-State Perspective

During the "May Fourth" period, the theme of the times was the wealth and strength of the nation state. When the scientific concept of sexuality was gradually accepted in China, how to make it better serve reproduction and thus produce a strong and healthy nation became the central topic of discussion.

It is true that the discussion of sex as a means of human reproduction, and the emphasis on its service to the idea of the nation-state, was mostly found in the newspapers and magazines of the May Fourth period. The *New Woman magazine*, for example, emphasizes that the strongest of all human desires is sexual desire, and that this desire is "the desire to reproduce the race". In addition, there are also articles on sexuality from the perspective of eugenics, hoping that the importance of sexuality for the "future of the nation" will be properly understood. It could be said that the scientific discourse of the May Fourth period closely linked sexuality and reproduction and advocated a correct understanding of the importance of sexuality in building a nation state. This discourse linked the private sexual life of the individual to the survival of the nation, highlighting the subordinate relationship between the individual body and the nation.

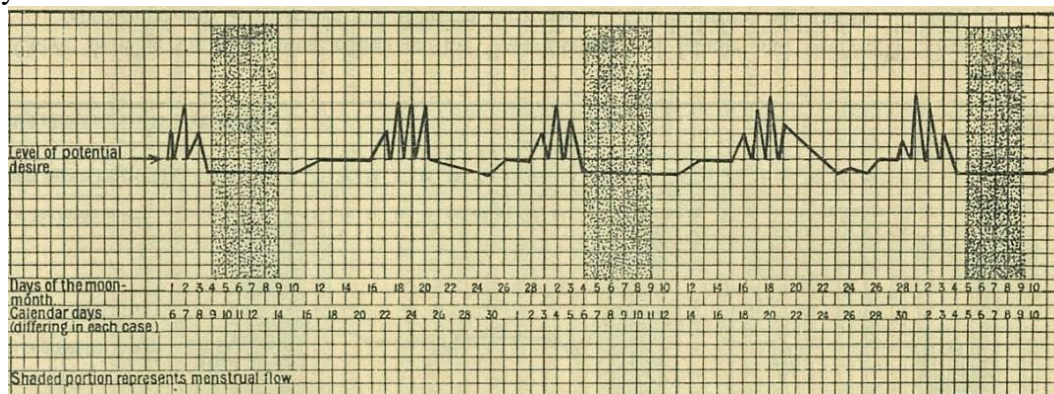
4、 Sexuality in Gender Perspective

I believe that the most valuable aspect of the scientific discussion of human sexuality during the May Fourth period is that it noted the difference between male and female sexuality and discussed men and women different gender traits. Of course, the discourse around women's emancipation had already appeared in the late Qing Dynasty, but the

trend of explaining women's emancipation from the perspectives of chastity, women's orgasm, sexual pleasure, and sex education began during the May Fourth period, which was closely related to the massive introduction of Western culture at that time.

A large number of books and articles on western sexology in Chinese translation were popular during this period, and a representative work with a wide circulation and far-reaching influence was the Chinese translation of *Married Love* in 1918, which was written by Marie Carmichael Stopes (1880–1958), who had opened the first British birth control clinic in 1921. In the 1920s, as the book was translated into Chinese, and not only did several translations appear, but various newspapers also popularized it in many advertisements. In *Married Love*, Stopes empirically examines and charts the characteristics of women's sexuality through scientific methods. According to Stopes, the female sexual impulse is not the same as that of the male, but produces periodic orgasms and lows. This was called the most advanced theory in recent years in the study of female psychology and physiology by sexologist H·Ellis.

cycles of women's sexual desire.



A sample of women who had been separated from their husbands for several months was selected for the study, and after a sophisticated observational study, it was found that women's sexual desire was high during the days before and a week after menstruation. While this might seem like common sense today, sexology guides prior to the 1920s had generally agreed that the most fertile time for a woman to have an orgasm was in the days immediately following her menstruation. This understanding changed in the West in the 1920s, and simultaneously also in China in the same decade.

At the same time, Stopes also noted the impact of social and cultural factors on female sexuality, emphasizing the individual differences among women. She used a sample of

women's biological cycles to create Figure 2, showing that even physically fit women can experience a decline in sexual vigor due to factors such as fatigue.

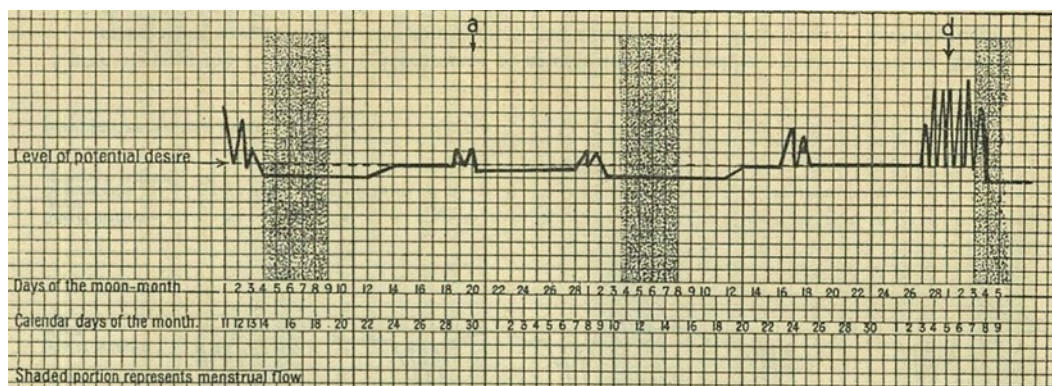


Figure 2 The effect of fatigue and other factors on female sexual desire

This empirical investigation based on observation and questionnaires is clearly different from the traditional Chinese way of thinking about sex, which makes Stopes' research more scientific and convincing. After objectively describing the cyclical nature of female sexual desire, Stopes also points out the differences between men and women in sexual desire and constructs a male active/female passive dichotomous configuration. She believes that women's sexuality is passive and must be aroused and mobilized by men in order to participate in sex.⁴

Stopes's binary perception of male initiative/female passivity in sexual behaviour was the dominant concept among the middle class in European and American society from the 19th to early 20th centuries. In the medical and scientific discourse surrounding sex at the time, men's sexuality was active, while women's was passive, requiring male arousal to initiate. This gender binary construct, however, has been criticized in the 1960s and 1970s, claiming that it denied women subjectivity in sexuality and was always seen as the object of male sexuality.

The male active/female passive composition of sexual desire was also widely disseminated in China during the May Fourth period. As Havelock Ellis points out, the most salient characteristics of the female sex drive are passivity and the need for stimulation. And Margaret Sanger also wright in her book that asked husbands to cooperate with women, to restrain himself, and to regulate sexual desire according to the

⁴ Marie Carmichael Stopes. *Married Love*. New York: The Critic & Guide Co., 1918, passim.

cycle of female sexual desire.⁵ A Study of Sexual Desire, published in the *Student Journal*, also asserts that in matters of sexual desire, "women are probably passive, men are usually active, and have a desire to attack women."⁶

The May Fourth scholars actively translated and assimilated these Western scientific treatises in order to highlight the dichotomy between tradition and modernity, but at the same time, they did not accept the Western ideas wholesale, but critically. In his short essay also entitled "Married Love", Zhou Zuoren, a famous writer and promoter of new culture, mentions the need to "let women be active" in sexual activities.⁷ This view informs Zhou Zuoren's whole idea of female emancipation, and the concept of "active" can be understood as the subjective initiative and autonomy of women in erotic activities. In addition, Zhang Jingsheng, in his *History of Sexuality*, the first comprehensive study of the subject in Chinese, argues that "women should take the initiative" and should not be ashamed in engaging in sexual activities, nor should they be "moralistic" or "polite"; "they should take the initiative to ask for intimacy with men during the period when their sexual desire is high. The femininity he advocates is "usually as quiet as a heavenly fairy, but during coitus, it should be as unrestrained as a 'lascivious woman', full of activities like dancing"⁸.

To sum up, the May Fourth scholars, while discussing the concept of sexuality on a scientific level, also distinguished between masculinity and femininity in terms of gender, and introduced the male active/female passive binary cognition from Europe and America into China. However, although the discourse emphasizing women's passivity in sex was widely circulated, local intellectuals represented by Zhang Jingsheng and Zhou Zuoren did not accept it in its entirety, but purposely appropriated it, in order to highlight women's subjectivity and subjective initiative in erotic activities. This attitude of theirs may have reflected the influence of the Chinese traditional concept of the two sexes, because although the social status of women in ancient China was low, in the realm of eroticism, men and women were regarded as equal, constituting yin and yang, *qian* and *kun*, and

⁵ 山格尔夫人着、蔡咏裳女士译《结婚的幸福》、上海：开明书店、1929年6月。

⁶ 胡定安、《性欲的研究》、《学生杂志》第十卷第五号。

⁷ 周作人《结婚的爱》初出1923年4月18日刊《晨报副镌》，后收入《自己的园地》、《周作人散文全集》第三卷，广西师范大学出版社钟叔河编57-59页。

⁸ 张竞生《性史》。

complementing each other. That is, the relationship between men and women in traditional Chinese sexual culture was often described as either a cooperative relationship of mutual collaboration and mutual sexual pleasure, or an adversarial relationship of rivalry, in which the first person who reached orgasm by taking the essence of the other's body will win.⁹ The above-mentioned perceptions of gender sexuality based on traditional Chinese sexological resources can be cross-referenced and compared with the Western feminist reflections on the "myth of objecthood" of women in erotic activities since the 1960s, and therefore deserve more scholarly attention in both China and abroad.

⁹ Cf. 吴存存《明清社会性爱风气》，北京：人民文学出版社，2000年。黄克武《言不褒不笑：近代中国男性世界中的谐谑、情欲与身体》。〔美〕费侠莉著，甄橙，吴朝霞译《繁盛之阴：中国医学史中的性（960-1665）》，南京：江苏人民出版社，2006年7月。Hsiung Ping-chen. "More Or Less: Marital Fertility and Physical Management in Late Imperial China." Ruan Fang Fu. *Sex in China: Studies In Sexology in Chinese Culture*. 土屋英明『中国艶本大全』、東京：文艺春秋、2005年6月。邱海涛著、納村公子訳『中国五千年 性の文化史』、東京：徳間書店、2005年12月。丹波康頼撰、槇佐知子全訳精解『医心方』卷28、房内篇、2004年2月、東京：筑摩書房。

Neither 'Host' nor 'Guest': Towards a Praxis of Disorientation
in Andrew X. Pham's *Catfish and Mandala*

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Abstract

Against the grain of today's academic discourses celebrating diversity, hybridity, *métissage*, exile, and other encounters of cultures, languages and ethnicities, Vietnamese-American author Andrew X. Pham keeps interrogating, in his book *Catfish and Mandala*, the position and status of the exiles and the hyphenated identities of binational authors. In this work, halfway between memoir and travelogue, *Bildungsroman* and identity quest, at the intersection of American and Vietnamese discourses and representations, Pham problematizes the legitimacy of representation and, conversely, raises the question of the right to opacity.

Throughout his narrative, Pham operates a twofold comeback, both in space — by revisiting what the subtitle calls the "landscape and memory" of his native Vietnam— and in time —through the exploration of his childhood memories— as the book itself is structured in the interweaving of two narrative threads, each one echoed by the other: his "two-wheeled journey" to Vietnam on the one hand, and, on the other hand, his childhood memories in these same places, before the fall of Saigon in 1975.

By choosing to re-experience an exile, paradoxical in its very inversion, Pham, far from offering distant and abstract reflections, deliberately plunges back into a position that is both emotionally challenging and physically draining. Through his narrative, he highlights that his status as a "cultural go-between" is not a given, but rather the outcome of a quest since, through his gaze —constantly reflected back to him as that of a *Viet Kieu*— Vietnam remains ultimately unreachable to him and constitutes a space that escapes him and resists its "consumption" by the Western eye.

I argue that *Catfish and Mandala* can be read as the construction of the liberating mourning of a legitimacy quest and of both the expectation and the pretension to represent oneself as well as the Other. The author-narrator-character, through the recounting of this year-long humbling experience, shows that diversity, in this context, is actually unwelcome, for the wound resulting from the collective trauma of the two-decade long Vietnam War is still too sharp on both sides.

Can the Subaltern Eat?

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Abstract

رَبِّهِمْ إِلَىٰ تَمَّ شَيْءٍ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ فِي فَرَطْنَا مَا أَمْثَالُكُمْ أُمَّمَ إِلَّا بِجَنَاحِيهِ يُطِيرُ طَائِرٍ وَلَا الْأَرْضِ فِي دَابَّةٍ مِنْ وَمَا
يُحْشَرُونَ

Quran 6:38 ¹

De droit divin, l'homme est le roi de la nature, et tout ce que la terre produit a été créé pour lui. C'est pour lui que la caille s'engraisse, pour lui que le moka a un si doux parfum, pour lui que le sucre est favorable à la santé.

Jean Anthelme Brillat-Savarin, *La Physiologie du goût* ²

*

This paper proposes to consider avenues within African and Asian epistemologies for non-anthropocentric possibilities of diversity and representation. It begins by exploring both why and at what cost the subject of diversity and representation is the human par excellence. Exploring this anthropocentrism's ramifications for SWANA in the context of unprecedented climate collapse and ecocide, this paper suggests that the non-human's historical exclusion from diversity and representation's various discourses can be partially attributed to the legacy of enduring colonial epistemologies in the region. These

¹ "All creatures that crawl on the earth and those that fly with their wings are communities like yourselves. We have missed nothing out of the Record and in the end, they will be gathered to their Lord." Translation by M.A.S. Abdel Haleem

² Jean-Anthelme Brillat-Savarin, *La Physiologie du goût*, 109. "By divine right man is the king of nature, it is argued, and everything that the earth produces has been created for his use. It is for him that the quail fattens, for him that mocha has so sweet a perfume, for him that sugar is beneficial to the health," in M.F.K. Fisher translation of *The Physiology of Taste*.

epistemologies, which privilege the human as the rational, thinking subject, represent a historical rupture in the non-human's place in SWANA. To illustrate this rupture and the possibilities it provides for a project of diversity and representation that places human-driven climate collapse as the central rather than peripheral concern, this paper asks what happens if we shift our attention from our feature as thinking subjects to our feature as eating subjects. I pose and explore these questions in the works of two unlikely interlocutors: Jean-Antheleme Brillat-Savarin (1755-1826) and Imam Abu Hamid Al-Ghazali (1058-1111) whose works represent distinct modern and pre-modern, European and non-European epistemologies of eating which merit productive comparison. This paper thus proposes to use their respective texts *The Physiology of Taste* and *Revitalization of the Religious Sciences* (with special emphasis on *the Ādāb of Eating*) as a productive case study exploration of how different (if not antagonistic) epistemologies of eating do or do not represent non-human eaters. Succinctly, if the subaltern cannot speak, can it eat?

I. The Question

In "Can the Subaltern Speak," Spivak argues that our forms of modern knowledge, socio-political institutions, and economic structures render the Subaltern unable to speak (and in later revised argument, inaudible). Spivak speculates that the critic as investigating subject or, "the intellectual, is complicit in the persistent constitution of the Other as the Self's shadow." If deconstruction, by concerning itself with how truths are produced, is meant to protect against the exclusion of alterities (things, beings, individuals, and ideas, etc.) that are radically other, then I suspect its concern must overlap in some essential ways with our theme today.

Later, in "Can the Mosquito Speak?" Mitchell suggests that our methods of historical, political, and literary analysis are thoroughly anthropocentric. If Marx has argued that "Men make their own history, but not as they please," so Mitchell has shown how in twentieth-century Egypt, despite its tremendous and calamitous agency, a certain actor escaped the attention of historians: the *Anopheles gambiae*. Indigenous to sub-Saharan Africa and common in the Sudan, this mosquito's stomach contained "a

malignant form of the malaria parasite, *Plasmodium falciparum*.”³ The local population’s immune systems had not a degree of defence. Mitchell estimates that from 1942-45, this hungry species of mosquito infected three-quarters of a million people, killing somewhere between one and two hundred thousand. But Mitchell learned of this calamitous mosquito invasion not from history books or archives, but from a man named ‘Amm Ibrahim in 1989, who was the most informed narrator of the village’s history.

In this paper, I combine these two critiques to ask a different question: Can the Mosquito Eat? I ask this question for two reasons: first, to ask why and at what cost questions of eating, nutritive desire, and nutriment remain peripheral concerns for modern intellectual formations; and two, to draw attention to how this peripheralization necessarily renders intellectual inquiry anthropocentric, and in this way, limits how we think of diversity and representation. I would like to argue that by shifting our attention away from thinking and speaking to eating, we are better positioned to safeguard without reproducing structures and systems of epistemic violence, the other’s infinite heterogeneity. In other words, in interlocution with Spivak and Mitchell, I wonder, if the subaltern (mosquito) cannot speak, can it eat?

To answer this question, I draw on some key components of my doctoral dissertation which thinks about the problem of eating well in the worded worlds of two unlikely interlocutors: Jean-Antheleme Brillat-Savarin from the nineteenth century and Abu Hamid Al-Ghazālī from the eleventh. While my dissertation focuses on how social, political, and economic transformations produce new ways of thinking eating in the nineteenth century, in this talk I focus on a specific aspect of my doctoral research: namely, the status of non-human eaters. Building on Spivak’s and Mitchell’s theories of subalternity and in order to speak directly to the conference theme today, I argue that theories, cultures, and practices indigenous to the Global South may offer non-anthropocentric avenues for rethinking diversity and representation.

When we talk about problems related to eating and to food, I would like to argue, we are always talking about issues that eating and food encapsulate but also go beyond. To speak of agricultural output, for example, is to speak of constellations of the law,

³ Timothy Mitchell, *Rule of Experts: Egypt, Techno-Politics, Modernity* (University of California Press, 2002), 19.

private property, and labor. Mitchell and Davis for their part have shown how colonial arrangements in the 19th and 20th centuries aimed at increasing agricultural output through the privatization of land, implementation of wage-labor, and corporatization of agriculture had the two-fold effect of ecological degradation and lower agricultural output.⁴ Egypt and Algeria today are respectively the first and seventh largest net-importers of grain.

The point is that questions of food and eating both allow and require us to ask questions about wider and larger social, political, economic, and legal arrangements. Eating in this sense functions metonymically. By comparing and contrasting questions about non-human eaters in the works of two chronologically and epistemically diverse if not diametrically opposed thinkers of eating and food, I am doing much the same. It means contextualizing if not provincializing concepts which are too often approached and received in universalist terms. It is there that the issue of diversity and representation can be most productively problematized.

II. Brillat-Savarin

I want to begin by thinking about the status of non-human eaters in the work of Brillat-Savarin. A few words about the author and his text are first in order because he is less known than my other interlocutor, Al-Ghazālī.

Despite being the core gastronomic text and despite having stayed in print for an uninterrupted two centuries, Brillat-Savarin's *Physiologie du goût* lacks a definitive edition and analysis in either French or English. Unlike with other texts of his time, it is difficult to determine what kind of text *The Physiology* is based solely on the author's profession. Because B.-S. regarded *The Physiology* as ushering in his new science of gastronomy, declaring him as writing in his capacity as a *gastronome* presents even more questions. And thus, even 150 years after initial publication, it is not uncommon for even so-called experts to ask, in perfect earnestness, "The book is – what? Does anyone know?"⁵

⁴ See Timothy Mitchell, *Rule of Experts: Egypt, Techno-Politics, Modernity* (University of California Press, 2002) and Diana Davis, *Resurrecting the Granary of Rome* (Athens, Ohio University Press, 2007).

⁵ Bufford, "Introduction," in tr. M.F.K. Fisher, Jean-Anthelme Brillat-Savarin, *The Physiology of Taste: Meditations on Transcendental Gastronomy* (New York, Vintage Books, 2011), vii.

Born in the late 18th century, Brillat-Savarin was a lawyer by education, politician through brief experiment, and ultimately judge of the *Cour de Cassation* by appointment. It was during this latter and final role that he would publish at his own expense and on the brink of posthumousness *La Physiologie du goût: méditations de gastronomie transcendante* (1825). Brillat-Savarin “Belongs to category of writers that escapes traditional classifications of literary genres. He is not a novelist, nor a memorialist, he is not a scientist, he is not a philosopher,” yet nonetheless, “when one considers his *Physiology of Taste: Meditations on Transcendental Gastronomy* (1825) it could be said that he could claim each of these titles.”⁶ *Physiologie*, scholars have noted, was in the nineteenth century a term used to talk about mores or *moeurs* more formally.⁷

For some, the work is an autobiography told through dinner anecdotes. Others have argued that it is rather an eclectic compilation of unsystematic reports, observations, theoretical sketches, peppered with some meditations, anecdotes, pleasant memories, and some adventure of an active life. There are three main positions about what exactly the text is.

The first claims that this is a text about food. The second view maintains that the work is more specifically devoted to the pleasures associated with sharing meals. The third view, and the one maintained by this paper with some modifications, is that this is a text whose subject matter is eating.

Why with modifications? Modifications because what all three views overlook is that Brillat-Savarin puts forth a theory of eating which is thoroughly anthropocentric. Food for him designates substances that nourish human eaters. And the second law or aphorism of his science of gastronomy as listed in the preface is “Les animaux se repaissent; l'homme mange; l'homme d'esprit seul sait manger”⁸ that is, “Animals fill themselves; men eat. Men *d'esprit* alone know how to eat.” This aphorism which makes the distinction between animal and human eaters, and more specifically between animals and men *d'esprit*, follows the first aphorism, a meditation on the universe itself:

⁶ Fabrice Teulon “Gastronomy, Gourmandise and Political Economy in Brillat-Savarin’s *Physiology of Taste*,” *The European Studies Journal*, Vol. XV, No.1/1998, 41.

⁷ Nathalie Preiss, *Les Physiologies en France au XIX siècle: Étude historique littéraire et stylistique* (Dissertation, University of Paris-Sorbonne, Paris IV ; 1986)

⁸ *Physiologie*, 14.

“L'univers n'est rien que par la vie, et tout ce qui vit se nourrit,” or “The universe is nothing but for life, and all that lives nourishes itself.” Thus while so-called non-human life forms all nourish themselves, the former are fillers of themselves while men are eaters, and where men d’esprit alone know how to eat. The three French words here that count are *se nourrir*, *se repaître*, and *manger*.

Food and eating, for Brillat-Savarin, are human’s business. By business we should understand two things: first, business as commerce focused on profitability (for gastronomy encompasses political economy as Brillat so often reminds us) and second, business as personal concern.

While Derrida’s *L’animal que donc je suis* forcefully demonstrated the porousness and instability of distinctions between animals and humans in canonical European texts, declaring that this distinction both depended on and resulted in a war against the animal, Derrida does not grant the problem of eating so much attention, and worse still, overlooks how this problem may be thought of differently in Islamic literatures as we shall see in due course. Still, it should be noted that for Brillat-Savarin, the distinction and therefore hierarchization between humans and animals, as well as European and non-Europeans is produced through this specialized gastronomical theory of eating, he puts forth. For reasons of space, I will mention these in bullet point form. A more detailed analysis will have to come at a later point:

Concerning and constituting civilized, Euro-Western identity

- In the state of society which we have now reached, it is difficult to imagine a people that would live uniquely on bread and vegetables. This nation, if it existed, would be infallibly subjugated by carnivorous armies; [such is the case of] the Hindus, who were the successive prey of all those who wished to attack them (§11).⁹

At the level of separating Man from animal, several distinctions are required of Brillat-Savarin:

⁹ Physiologie, “Dans l’état de société ou nous sommes maintenant parvenus, il est difficile de se figurer un peuple qui vivrait uniquement de pain et de légumes. Cette nation, si elle existait, serait infailliblement subjuguée par les armées carnivores, comme les Indous, qui ont été successivement la proie de tous ceux qui ont voulu les attaquer...”, 98.

- Animals are limited in their tastes: some live only on plants, while others subsist only on flesh. Others still nourish themselves exclusively on grains. None of them knows the combination of flavors [as humans do] (§2).¹⁰
- The pleasure of eating is common to us and animals which simply presupposes hunger and that which is required to satisfy it. The pleasure of the table is peculiar to the human species; it presupposes antecedent concerns for the preparations of the meal, the choice of setting, and the gathering of invitees (§14).¹¹
- ...One of the privileges of the human species is to drink without thirst; and in the current state of art, chefs know well how to make us eat without being hungry (§16).¹²

Finally, human eaters possess over animals another specific advantage:

- Once he becomes armed, he makes prey and food of all the animals which surrounded him (§27).¹³

For Brillat-Savarin, this armed eater is expressed best in the figure of the male hunter, who, along with his weapon,

- ...is not alone. He is accompanied by the faithful animal that heaven created for him: his crouching dog who looks at his master with love; cooperation bridges distances, for these are two friends, and the servant is at once happy and proud to be the guest of his master (§15).¹⁴

The irony that Brillat-Savarin can attribute the emotions of love and even pride to the dog

¹⁰ Physiologie, “Les animaux sont bornés dans leurs goûts : les uns ne vivent que de végétaux, d’autres ne mangent que de la chair ; d’autres se nourrissent exclusivement de graines : aucun d’eux ne connaît les saveurs composées...”, 38.

¹¹ Physiologie, “Le plaisir de manger nous est commun avec les animaux, il ne suppose que la faim et ce qu’il faut pour le satisfaire. Le plaisir de la table est particulier à l’espèce humaine ; il suppose des soins antécédents pour les apprêts du repas, pour le choix du lieu et le rassemblement des convives,” 117.

¹² Physiologie, “un des privilèges de l’espèce humaine est de boire sans avoir soif ; et dans l’état actuel de l’art, les cuisiniers savent bien nous faire manger sans avoir faim,” 127.

¹³ Physiologie, “...dès qu’il fut armé, il fit sa proie et sa nourriture de tous les animaux dont il était environné,” 172.

¹⁴ Physiologie, “le chasseur n’est pas seul ; il est accompagné de l’animal fidèle que le ciel a créé pour lui : le chien accroupi regarde son maître avec amour ; la coopération a comblé les distances, ce sont deux amis, et le serviteur est à la fois heureux et fier d’être le convive de son maître,” 124.

but not the capacity to eat is lost on him. Or, this is by design, by “the Creator,” or a God unbothered by aporia, who as noted in Aphorism 5 “in obliging men to eat in order to live, invites him to so through appetite, and rewards him with pleasure.”¹⁵

Can the mosquito eat? In Brillat-Savarin’s worded world, it cannot.

III. Al-Ghazālī

I am now proposing to take us back to a different time and different intellectual period to perhaps the surprise of some. Here, I argue that in the works of Al-Ghazālī, the famous Islamic jurist, theologian, and mystic, we find a different paradigm of eating than the one that Brillat-Savarin puts forth. While my dissertation research argues that each of these thinkers puts forth a distinct theory of eating and attendant practices of subjectivation, I limit my concern for reasons of space to one feature of Ghazālī’s epistemology, namely the status of non-human eaters. Brillat-Savarin’s *Physiology of Taste* suggests that both materially and immaterially taste functions as a repository for manners. Ghazālī’s *kitab ādāb al-akl* or *The Manners Related to Eating*, positions animals as eaters in a different way from Brillat-Savarin’s. I will limit myself to two or three points taken from his wider text *Ihyā’ ‘ulūm al-dīn* for reasons of space.

First, and most productively to be compared with our last example from Brillat-Savarin regarding hunting, from his text *Kitāb al-halāl wa-l harām* (Book on the Lawful and Unlawful) concerning lawful consumption. The following excerpt comes from a *hadīth* regarding how to determine if something is *halāl* to eat:

It was for this reason that the Messenger of God (may God bless him and grant him peace) said to 'Adī b. Hātim, concerning his hunting dog, 'If it eats from the carcass, then do not eat the game; for I fear that the dog will have killed it for himself.'¹⁶

Here, the consumption would not be permissible because by eating the game, it must be

¹⁵ Physiologie, “Le Créateur, en obligeant l'homme à manger pour vivre, l'y invite par l'appétit, et l'en récompense par le plaisir,” 14.

¹⁶ In Lajna, “وكذلك قال صلى الله عليه وسلم لعدي بن حاتم في كلبه المعلم وإن أكل فلا تأكل فإني أخاف أن يكون إنما أمسك،” 822.

assumed that the dog seized it for himself. It is instructive to note that the word for eating in the case of the human and for the dog is the same: “وإن أكل فلا تأكل”; if it eats then do not eat.¹⁷ The concern here is to demonstrate hospitality to this other eater.

Let us consider some other points from his wider epistemology. His first rule in *Kitāb ādāb al-akl*, for example, is that the food must be both legal in of itself and in the means by which it was acquired. This means, for instance, the food, animal or vegetal, must have had zakāt paid on it: this applies to grains and vegetation watered through public sources (including rain), and livestock that ate from lands held in *waqf*. Just as *zākāt* is required of all free Muslims, so it is required of the custodians of non-human eaters (including both animal and plant life).¹⁸ The point is that the eater, human, animal, or vegetal, in this logic of zakāt is heterogenous.

In terms of animality, there is an emphasis on respecting as described in the Qur’ānic chapter “النعم” or livestock, verse 38, that “all creatures that crawl on the earth and those that fly with their wings are communities like yourselves. We have missed nothing out of the Record and in the end, they will be gathered to their Lord.”¹⁹ Hospitality here requires consideration and respect for the relationships non-humans have with each other. The non-human here is indeterminable. And again, in in another Chapter,

Let man consider the food he eats: We [God] pour down abundant water and cause the soil to split open. We grain grow, and vines, fresh vegetation, olive trees, date palms, luscious gardens, fruits and fodder, all for you and your livestock to enjoy.²⁰

Nourishment, in other words, if the two verses are combined, are not reducible to human nutritive desire.

Perhaps the most convincing example comes to us from the preface of Al-Ghazālī’s *ādāb*

¹⁷ Note that for Kant, the only reason one would abstain from eating an animal is if it were the property of another human being who would thereby be affected. See Immanuel Kant, *Lectures on Ethics* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1996). This duty to the animal is actually a duty to a fellow human, and is thus a kind of hospitality only to the extent that “they have reference to ourselves,” 177. Quoted in Thomas E. Randall, “Kant and Food,” in *Springer’s Encyclopedia of Food and Agricultural Ethics*, 4.

¹⁸ See *Kitab Asrār al-zakāt*

¹⁹ Qur’ān 6:38. Translation by M.A.S. Abdel Haleem. “أَمْ إِلَّا بِجَنَاحَيْهِ يُطِيرُ طَائِرٌ وَلَا الْأَرْضُ فِي دَابَّةٍ مِنْ وَمَا، يُحْسِرُونَ رَبِّهِمْ إِلَىٰ تَمَّ شَيْءٍ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ فِي قَرَطْنَا مَا أَمْثَلَكُمْ

²⁰ Qur’ān 80:24-32. Translation by M.A.S. Abdel Haleem. “فَلْيَنْظُرِ الْإِنْسَانُ إِلَىٰ طَعَامِهِ أَنَا صَبَبْنَا الْمَاءَ صَبًّا ثُمَّ، سَقَيْنَا الْأَرْضَ سَقًّا فَأَنْبَتْنَا فِيهَا حَبًّا وَعَبْثًا وَقَضْبًا وَرَبِثْنَا وَنَحْلًا وَخَدَائِقَ غُلْبًا وَفَاكِهِةً وَأَبًا مَتَاعًا لَكُمْ وَلَا نَعْمًا لَكُمْ

al-akl's preface:

In the Name of God, Most Compassionate and Merciful, thanks be to God who has best devised creatures, who created the Earth and heavens and sent down sweet water from the clouds, and thereby brought about grain and vegetation. He determined the necessary provisions and sustenance required and preserved the strength of animals with foodstuffs. He has supported obedience to Allah and good deeds through the eating of pure things.²¹

The *ādāb* which Ghazālī proceeds in the remainder in the text to offer his readers is therefore based on a worldview which demands consideration of and respect for non-human eaters who, like humans, form their own communities and whose status as eaters is incontestable.

The mosquito eats.

IV. Diversity and Representation

I have attempted in this brief talk to think about how two worldviews offer different ways of thinking eating, specifically in relation to non-human eaters. I have attempted to show that the problem and example of eating offers much food for thought when it comes to thinking diversity and representation, because eating necessarily decentres anthropocentric inquiry—necessarily because we are not the Earth's only eaters. This decentring can contribute to safeguarding the subaltern's heterogeneity, and, as scholars inhabiting and writing from a planet facing climate collapse and unprecedented ecocide, help us find ways to forge better, more hospitable relationships with our environment and its diverse inhabitants.

²¹ Translation is my own. “الحمد لله الذي أحسن تدبير الكائنات فخلق الأرض والسموات وأنزل الماء الفرات من المعصرات فأخرج به الحب والنبات وقدر الأرزاق والأفوات وحفظ بالمأكولات قوى الحيوانات وأعان على الطاعات والأعمال الصالحات بأكل الطبيات” in Lajna, 648.

Panel 3-1: Visualising Global Screen Worlds: Bringing Asia and Africa into Conversation (SOAS)

3. “China—Africa Documentary Filmmaking: History and Experiences” with Dr Yong Zhang (Zhejiang University)

Overview:

This panel proposes to present work currently being developed through the Global Screen Worlds strand of the ERC-funded project “Screen Worlds: Decolonising Film and Screen Studies” (2019-2024), based at SOAS University of London. The broader Screen Worlds project explores diverse global screen texts and contexts, with a particular focus on Africa; the Global Screen Worlds strand specifically puts African, Asian and other global film scholars in conversation with one another. The work we are producing includes an edited volume, of co-authored chapters, but also embraces curatorial practices (such as free film screenings and discussions with filmmakers), cutting-edge creative research methodologies (such as audio-visual criticism and filmmaking), and the production of ‘toolkits’ to help make curricula, syllabi, and teaching more globally representative and inclusive.

‘How to tell stories about Africans in China During the Covid-19 pandemic’

Dr Yong Zhang,

Zhejiang University

China-Africa Film and Television Cooperation began in 1950s when China started to build diplomatic relations with African countries. The cooperation has four modes such as location shooting, film screening, language translation, technical assistance, and gradually developed by diplomacy exchange to industrial cooperation. With regard to collaboration in filmmaking, the Chinese government sent filmmakers to Africa to document China-Africa Relations at the height of the Cold War so as to break the political isolation imposed by USA and the Soviet Union and enhance its understanding of Africa. This model has continued till today and has resulted in a large number of political themed documentary films. In contrast, there are few documentaries telling stories of cultural exchanges between the ordinary Chinese and African peoples. It is in this context that I have directed two documentary films *Africans in Yiwu* and *China-Africa Factory*, aiming to present the true situation of the Africans’ life and work in China. In this presentation, I will focus on my experience in making *China-Africa Factory*, a documentary that tells the survival story of Africans in China against the background of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Panel 3-2: The Right to Food as Examined through the Cases of African Countries: From the Perspective of Diversity of Ideas on the Concept of Extraterritorial Obligations

Jun Matsukuma

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Abstract

In this paper, contemporary challenges on the right to food as a fundamental human right are examined through the cases of African countries. As a concrete example, this paper introduces some right to food cases in Africa, especially from the perspective of diversity of ideas on the concept of extraterritorial obligations.

The case of Kenya concerns the Economic Partnership Agreement with the EU. The government of Kenya signed an interim trade agreement with the EU and the local NGOs claimed that the government failed to engage all those who were at a disadvantage during the EPA negotiations. In this case, the plaintiff sought a court order preventing the government from signing the EPA while the Parliament and the affected parties discussed the negative impact of the agreement on human rights.

After reviewing the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the Food Assistance Convention as treaties, this paper analyses the UN General Assembly resolutions and the Human Rights Council resolutions. The current development of international law makes it difficult to pursue state responsibility as a rule for extraterritorial obligations. Therefore, it is necessary to develop a new international law that embraces these obligations in the future.

1 Introduction

Since the right to food was clearly stipulated in Article 11 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights adopted in 1966, its implication has been widely discussed at the United Nations and other fora. In the 1980s, natural disasters such as droughts in African countries attracted the attention of the international community, and research on the right to food became active. The work of Asbjørn Eide and others is representative of such academic work¹. Today, it is generally accepted in international human rights law to discuss obligations of States concerning human rights provisions from three perspectives. They are obligation to respect, obligation to protect and obligation to fulfil, which Eide proposed in his research on the right to food².

At the World Food Summit held at the headquarters of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in Rome in 1996, representatives from 185 countries attended and adopted the Rome Declaration on World Food Security and the World Food Summit Plan of Action, which included the goal of halving the number of undernourished people by 2015. As its objective 7.4, the Plan of Action states that it should clarify the content of the right to adequate food and the fundamental right to everyone to be free from hunger stated in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) and other relevant international and regional instruments, and invites the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights to give particular attention to this Plan of Action, and invites the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights to better define the rights related to food in Article 11 of the Covenant and to propose ways to implement and realize these rights³. In response, work was carried out to clarify the content of the right to food. General Comment 12 of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) on the right to food was adopted in 1999⁴. Since 2000, a Special Rapporteur on the right to food was appointed by the UN Human Rights Commission, followed by the UN Human Rights Council.

In this paper, contemporary challenges on the right to food as a fundamental human right are examined through the cases of African countries.

After reviewing the concept of extraterritorial obligations, this paper introduces the right to food case concerning Kenya. In the case of Kenya, the government of Kenya signed an interim

¹ Eide, Asbjørn, Eide, Wenche Barth, Goonatilake, Susantha, Gussow, Joan and Omawale, eds. *Food as a Human Right*, United Nations University Press, 1984.

² U.N. Doc. E/CN.4/Sub.2/1987/23, 7 July 1987.

³ World Food Summit Plan of Action, Rome, 13 November 1996, para.61.

⁴ U. N. Doc. E/C.12/1999/5, 12 May 1999.

trade agreement with the EU and the local NGOs claimed that the government failed to engage all those who were at a disadvantage during the EPA negotiations.

This paper also analyses the UN General Assembly resolutions and the Human Rights Council resolutions on the right to food from the perspective of diversity of ideas on the concept of extraterritorial obligations on the right to food.

The current development of international law makes it difficult to pursue state responsibility for extraterritorial obligations on the right to food. Therefore, it is necessary to develop a new international law that embraces these obligations in the future.

2 What is “Extraterritorial Obligations”?

2.1 Maastricht Principles on the Extraterritorial Obligations of States in the Areas of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

According to the concept of extraterritorial obligations, there is no treaty definition but non-binding definition by the group of experts exists. The Maastricht Principles on the Extraterritorial Obligations of States in the Area of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights was an outcome of a meeting of researchers on international human rights law and practitioners from relevant organizations, held at the University of Maastricht in 2011⁵. This document is an academic achievement and, while not legally binding by itself, is considered as a compilation of existing international law.

Principle 8 defines extraterritorial obligations as follows. For the purposes of these Principles, extraterritorial obligations encompass a) obligations relating to the acts and omissions of a State, within or beyond its territory, that have effects on the enjoyment of human rights outside of that State’s territory; and b) obligations of a global character that are set out in the Charter of the United Nations and human rights instruments to take action, separately, and jointly through international cooperation, to realize human rights universally⁶.

Principles 19 to 22 correspond to the obligation to respect. Principle 20 stipulates that all States have the obligation to refrain from conduct which nullifies or impairs the enjoyment and exercise of economic, social and cultural rights of persons outside their territories⁷. Principles 23 through 27 correspond to the obligation to protect. Principle 23 stipulates that all States must take action separately, and jointly through international cooperation, to protect economic, social and cultural

⁵ The Maastricht Principles on Extraterritorial Obligations of States in the Area of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, 28 September 2011.

⁶ *Ibid.*, Principle 8.

⁷ *Ibid.*, Principle 20.

rights of persons within their territories and extraterritorially, as set out in Principles 24 to 27⁸. Principles 28 to 35 correspond to the obligation to fulfil. Principle 28 stipulates that all States must take action separately, and jointly through international cooperation, to fulfil economic, social and cultural rights of persons within their territories and extraterritorially, as set out in Principles 29 to 35⁹.

2.2 Special Rapporteurs on the Right to Food

To date, four U.N. Special Rapporteurs on the Right to Food have been appointed and have published reports and academic papers.

The first Special Rapporteur was Jean Ziegler, who was appointed to the UN Commission on Human Rights as a Special Rapporteur on the right to food in 2000. His reports to the Commission elaborated on extraterritorial obligations.¹⁰ He referred to Articles 55 and 56 of the UN Charter, Articles 22 and 28 of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights (UDHR), Articles 2(1) and 11 of the ICESCR, and Articles 4 and 24(4) of the Convention on the Rights of the Child as the legal basis for extraterritorial obligations. By making a reference to General Comment 12 of the CESCR, Ziegler pointed out that States should take steps to respect the enjoyment of the right to food in other countries, to protect that right, to promote access to food and, where necessary, to provide assistance confirming extraterritorial obligations.¹¹

Ziegler insisted that States should hold back on decisions made by international organizations such as the World Trade Organization (WTO), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the World Bank that have the potential to infringe the right to food of people living in other States. States should also refrain from imposing potentially dangerous food embargoes on people living in other States. Food and water should not be used as a means of exerting political and economic pressure. States should avoid adopting policies that can adversely affect the right to food¹².

Ziegler also required States to ensure that those under their jurisdiction, including their nationals and companies, and multinational enterprises, do not infringe on the right to food in other States. To protect people living in other States, the government is obliged to regulate its own companies and non-state entities under its jurisdiction. He assumed that multinational enterprises have exclusive control over the food chain from production to trade, processing, and retail, and

⁸ *Ibid.*, Principle 23.

⁹ *Ibid.*, Principle 28.

¹⁰ U.N. Doc. E/CN.4/2005/47, 24 January 2005.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, paras. 44-46.

¹² *Ibid.*, para. 52.

over most of the world's water rights. As a result, it has become difficult for the governments of developing countries to regulate multinational enterprises in their territories, and therefore, it is essential for the home countries of multinational enterprises to regulate them appropriately¹³.

Third, the obligation to support the fulfilment of the right includes the obligations to promote and provide. Ziegler called on developed countries to promote the realization of the right to food in other countries and to provide assistance where necessary. On the other hand, developing countries that do not have sufficient resources to fulfil the right to food are obliged to seek international assistance. The obligation to promote requires that all States should cooperate to provide an environment that enables all States to fulfil their right to food. Ziegler referred to Article 28 of the UDHR which guarantees the right to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set out in this declaration are fully realized. The obligation to provide refers to the obligation of the State to provide assistance with all resources available to it in situations such as large-scale famines. Ziegler argued that in such cases, the vulnerable must be given priority and that principles under human rights law such as non-discrimination must be observed while distributing food.

3 Case Studies in Africa

3.1 *The Right to Food in Africa*

Concerning the right to food in Africa, the South African constitution in 1996 and the Kenyan constitution in 2010 stipulate the right to food. The African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights did not have clear provisions on the right to food. However, in 2001, the African Commission on Human Rights stated that in the case of the individual communication against Nigeria, the right to life in Article 4 of the Charter, the right to enjoy health in Article 16, and the right to development in Article 22 were interpreted to imply the right to food, and Nigeria violated the right to food¹⁴. There is also the related Judgement of the Court of Justice of the ECOWAS¹⁵. Furthermore, Article 14.2 (c) of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child provides that State Parties to the present Charter shall undertake to pursue the full implementation of this right and in particular shall take measures to ensure the provision of adequate nutrition and safe drinking water. And the Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa adopted in 2003 provides

¹³ *Ibid.*, paras. 53-55.

¹⁴ Social and Economic Rights Action Center (SERAC) and Center for Economic and Social Rights (CESR)/Nigeria, Communication No.155/96, (2001), AHRLR 60, para.64.

¹⁵ SERAP v. The Federal Republic of Nigeria, Court of Justice of the Economic Community of West African States, No ECW/CCJ/JUD/18/12 (14.12.2012).

for the right to food security in Article 15.

On the other hand, when focusing on the issue of extraterritorial obligations, African regional human rights instruments do not have clear provisions on extraterritorial obligations, and there are no regional court precedents focusing on this point. Therefore, it should be pointed out that the case of Kenya described below is introduced as an example in the context of clarifying the issues in the prior research on extraterritorial obligations.

3.2. Case of Kenya

The situation in Kenya was analysed in a study on extraterritorial obligations that was published in 2012¹⁶. In this section, I would like to introduce this case and also consider developments after 2013.

The case of Kenya concerns the Economic Partnership Agreement with the EU. The government of Kenya signed an interim trade agreement with the EU and the local NGOs claimed that the government failed to engage all those who were at a disadvantage during the EPA negotiations. Two NGOs, the Kenya Human Rights Commission and the Kenya Small-Scale Farmers Forum claimed that the government had failed to engage all those who were at a disadvantage during the EPA negotiations. It also contended that the government had not given the Parliament enough access to information on this issue. The plaintiff sought a court order preventing the government from signing the EPA while the Parliament and the affected parties discussed the negative impact of the agreement on people's rights. The EPA required the opening of markets for all imports from the EU and called for opening up vulnerable local communities in Kenya to subsidized European products. There were concerns that the ratification of the EPA would have a serious impact on Kenyan farmers and small businesses. It was argued that many industries were at risk of collapse, which would eventually lead to unemployment and hunger, thus undermining the right to food¹⁷.

In 2013, the High Court of Kenya directed the government of Kenya to establish a mechanism to involve stakeholders including the petitioners in the ongoing EPA negotiations and to publish information on the negotiations to stimulate public debate¹⁸. However, the High Court concluded that though most of the reliefs sought in the petition centered around the expected impact of the

¹⁶ Coomans, Fons and Künnemann, Rolf, eds. *Cases and Concepts on Extraterritorial Obligations in the Area of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*, Intersentia, 2012.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 26.

¹⁸ Republic of Kenya, in the high court of Kenya at Nairobi, constitutional and human rights division, Petition No. 1174 of 2007, 31 October 2013, para 73.

EPAs and the infringement of fundamental rights and noted that these are moot and cannot issue as the Court adopted a narrower issue to wit, the State's obligation to facilitate public participation in governance¹⁹. The EPA was subsequently signed and ratified by Kenya and other East African Community countries in 2014, and by the EU in 2016²⁰.

Coomans and Künnemann examined extraterritorial obligations in 2012.²¹ Although limited to theory, the study raised an important issue. First, according to the obligation to respect, the EU did not assess the human rights situation and did not introduce a monitoring process. To avoid human rights violations, the assessment of the human rights situation is a prerequisite for major policy decisions and the promotion of negotiations on treaties²². The obligation to respect also requires that human rights be considered when an EPA is concluded and that the minimum human rights obligations be guaranteed. Measures that undermine the capacity of the territorial State to fulfill its human rights obligations must thus not be taken. Coomans and Künnemann found that the EU had violated its extraterritorial obligation to respect the right to information and the right to participation of the affected people in the process of negotiating its EPAs. They also found that the EU should have adopted policies and guidelines, including those dealing with human rights, while concluding its EPAs. That is, as the Maastricht Principles point out, each member should refrain from directly or indirectly interfering in ways that nullify or impair the enjoyment and exercise of economic, social and cultural rights or from acts that impede the ability of another member State to comply with its human rights obligations²³. Second, while the conclusion of an EPA would open Kenya's markets up to EU investors, businesses, and others, the obligation to protect requires the EU to ensure that its citizens, businesses, and others under its jurisdiction do not infringe on the right to food in Kenya. Third, the EU is obliged to provide assistance as part of its obligations²⁴.

4 Resolutions on Extraterritorial Obligations on the Right to Food

4.1 General Assembly Resolution on the Right to Food

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, para 72.

²⁰ Economic Partnership Agreement between the East African Community Partner States, of the One Part, and the European Union and its Member States of the Other Part, 16 October 2014.

²¹ Coomans and Künnemann, *supra* note 16.

²² The Maastricht Principles, *supra* note 5, Principle 13.

²³ *Ibid.*, Principles 20 and 21.

²⁴ Coomans and Künnemann, *supra* note 16.

The General Assembly of the United Nations has adopted several resolutions on this area since 2001²⁵. The resolution adopted in 2020 stresses in operational paragraph 30 that all countries should make all effort to ensure that their international policies of a political and economic character, including international trade agreements, do not have a negative impact on the right to food in other countries²⁶. In operational paragraph 11, it stresses that the international community should provide, through a coordinated response and upon request, international cooperation in support of national and regional efforts by providing the assistance necessary to increase food production and access to food²⁷. Operational paragraph 28 stresses the need to make efforts to mobilize and optimize the allocation and utilization of technical and financial resources from all sources, including external debt relief for developing countries, and to reinforce national actions to implement sustainable food security policies²⁸. Operational paragraph 35 stresses the importance of international cooperation and development assistance as an effective contribution to the sustainable expansion and improvement of agriculture and, in particular, its environmental sustainability, food production, breeding projects on diversity of crops and livestock and institutional innovations such as community seed banks, farmer field schools and seed fairs, and to the provision of humanitarian food assistance in activities related to emergency situations for the realization of the right to food and the achievement of sustainable food security²⁹. And operational paragraph 37 stresses that States parties to the WTO Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights should consider implementing that agreement in a manner that is supportive of food security³⁰.

These paragraphs clearly refer to extraterritorial obligations. It is possible to argue that such General Assembly resolutions would play a certain role in the formation of customary international law as an expression of *opinio juris* by a number of States, but at the same time, it has to be supported by State practice, and it is uncertain whether it can be deemed as heading toward being crystallized as customary international law.

4.2 Human Rights Council Resolution on the Right to Food

²⁵ Since the UN General Assembly Resolution on the Right to Food was adopted in 2001 (U.N.Doc. A/RES/56/155, 15 February 2002), the UN General Assembly has adopted resolutions on the right to food every year.

²⁶ U.N. Doc, A/RES /75/179, 28 December 2020, O.P. 30.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, O.P.11.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, O.P.28.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, O.P.35.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, O.P.37.

Since its inception, the Human Rights Council of the United Nations has emphasized the right to food. Every year since 2008, it has adopted a resolution on the right to food. Comparing the resolution adopted by the Human Rights Council in 2021³¹ with that of the General Assembly in 2020³², there are many similar paragraphs between the two.

In 2018, when the Human Rights Council adopted a resolution on the right to food, the US called for a vote and only one country voted against it. Similar voting actions by the US have often been seen at the General Assembly. It is important to note that the US Explanation of Reasons for Voting clearly states that the US cannot accept the idea that certain extraterritorial obligations derive from the concept of the right to food, in addition to criticisms that the draft resolution on the right to food addresses trade-related issues, climate change, and other issues inappropriately³³.

5. Conclusion

At present, the discussion on extraterritorial obligations is largely limited to theoretical studies in academic societies and advocacy activities by international human rights NGOs. It is thus necessary to develop a new international law that embraces these obligations in the future. If we look at recent researchers who are researching on the right to food, we may be able to point out those who have had a long history of studying the right to food from the perspective of international human rights law and those who have achieved significant research achievements in recent years in relation to international economic law.

In the 18 century, Christian Wolff elaborated the concept ‘*officia humanitatis*’ as a concrete example of ‘*obligatio imperfecta*’. Wolff argued that it is possible, under national law, to make this incomplete obligation a complete obligation³⁴. The issues raised by the extraterritorial obligation seems to be related to this concept.

³¹ U.N.Doc. A/HRC/RSE/46/19, 1 April 2021.

³² U.N.Doc. *supra* note 26.

³³ US Mission to International Organizations in Geneva, U.S. Explanation of Vote on the Right to Food, A/HRC.34/L.21, Human Rights Council 34th session, Geneva, March 23, 2017.

³⁴ Wolff, Christian. *Jus Naturare Method Scientifica Pertractatum, VIII*, Leipzig, 1748, p.978.

The Benefits of Sustainable Agriculture in Enhancing Diversity and the Economic Viability of Cash Crops to Guarantee Household Quality of Life in Senegal

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Abstract

Agricultural sustainability arises amidst the question on the structure of the Senegalese barter economy which gives peanut the preponderant place in production and priority in marketing. To preserve agricultural productivity and sustain its value, the approach would be resource conservation, commercial, social, and environmental consciousness. The barter economy, inherited from colonization was not reassessed after independence. It was set in motion to defend the interests of the imperialists. Since then, capital has taken the monopoly of production. Peasants became dependent on peanut as the cash crop and enacted, in the process, their own exploitation at labour power level. Value is placed on commodities but not on the peasant's labour power. As argued by Amartya Sen, this original sin of the colonial system is the main source of Senegal's development "unfreedom". There's a need to balance the relationship between "wage and labour power" for it's not only about economics; it's also a question of humanity.

However, following FAO recommendations to increase world cereal production by 50% by 2050, Senegalese faces the challenge of rethinking its agricultural system by introducing diversity, which has become a prerequisite for food security. That is a much-needed approach in the face of population growth and climate change. It's urgent to support farmers to turn on crop diversification.

This article aims at adapting the idea of sustainable agriculture as the way forward for a restructuring of the Senegalese agricultural system to accommodate the economic and social needs of its present peasant class while preserving the resources that will enable future generations to prosper. To reach this goal, it will be necessary to go through the structural diversity of the Senegalese household based on the role assigned to each member of the patriarchy and on the human aspect that gives it meaning.

1. Introduction

Sustainable agriculture is said to deal with all aspects of agricultural production systems that preserve agricultural productivity and sustain its value. According to John Ikerd (1993, p.151), any approach to this concept “*must be resource-conserving, socially supportive, commercially competitive, and environmentally sound*”. Following the Senegalese government’s virtual elimination of subsidies in the agricultural sector, the decline in the national seed stock became increasingly worrying for farmers (Gaye 2010). Confronted with a lack of protection and socioeconomic insecurity, they were now entangled in a harsh domination of monopolies (Dieng, 2003). Most of them would later be tempted by exodus in urban centres in search of wellbeing.

Due to limited means, the small Senegalese peasantry had to embrace the monoculture of peanuts to satisfy its desires for expansion and capitalist integration. This barter economy, based on the domination of monopolies and inherited from colonization, has not been reassessed after independence. Peasants became dependent on peanuts as the cash crop while capital took the monopoly of production. Value was placed on commodities but not on the peasant's labour power. This original sin of the colonial system, as argued by Sen (1999), is the main source of Africa’s development “*unfreedom*”. There is an insolent domination of capital over agricultural production units, thus pinning labor power to a depreciated and fixed value at the world level. The relationship between “wage and labor power” has to be balanced. It’s not only about economics; it’s also a question of humanity. According to Founou-Tchuigoua (1981), the imperialist exploitation plaguing African agriculture bears the hallmark of compromises that have facilitated their independence to West African states. This agriculture was designed to deal only with peasants’ productivity in order to cede the crude to processing multinationals.

However, with FAO’s (2017) recommendations to increase world cereal production by 50% by 2050, the biggest challenge for the Senegalese agricultural system remains diversity, which has become a prerequisite for sustainable agriculture and food security. It is important to work on the development of a well-thought agricultural system aimed at improving farmers’ living conditions. Peasant agriculture cannot be modernized without processing industries. Otherwise, it will be the atoning victim in the capitalist struggle for the monopoly of the food industry.

The objective of this study is to suggest the use of sustainable agriculture in Senegal with the aim of adapting the concept to the local agricultural situation, by focusing on peasants’ economic and social needs. To reach this goal, it is necessary to go through the structural diversity of the Senegalese household based on the role assigned to each member of the patriarchy and on the

human aspect that gives it meaning.

2. The bottleneck of the colonial system

Settlers had introduced the Senegalese peasant production into the world market for commodities with the sole aim of institutionalizing their "interference" in the functioning of the agricultural production. Capital had to fit into the entire production chain so that peasants would focus on crops for which the necessary inputs for production were available. From this point, peasants lost the freedom of choice over crops, production and marketing of agricultural products and became invisible in the local production chain. The elaboration of this system of exploitation wouldn't allow Senegalese peasants to be able to estimate the value of their production.

Today, the Senegalese agriculture is plunged into such a deep crisis that is affecting the country's economic development. The reforms which were meant to free the country from the colonial grip are incapable of bringing the peasant back to the centre of the production process. Capital monopoly on production, decried by Max (1894) settles in with new technical terms such as *Green Revolution* to strengthen the production force for the benefit of foreign companies. African states always welcome with open arms these exploitative branches of neoliberalism instead of supporting the already existing agricultural development programs. Even if the initial objective of the Green Revolution was to enable workers in urban centres to benefit from employability and products generated by agricultural output, it appears unfair that, in the reproduction of labour power, the peasant becomes the stooge, the one who works the most but perceives the least.

3. Rethinking the Senegalese agricultural system

The majority of agricultural reforms were undertaken in the middle of the structural adjustment programs which had brought the country to its knees. Back then, Senegal's economic stability rested on the shoulders of peanut producers who struggled to lay hands on inputs. Established in 1984, the New Agricultural Policy (NAP) attempted to restructure the sector by liberalizing the markets for products and inputs, announcing the end of state direct aid to producers. The government thought it would help reposition cereal production which should have led to food self-sufficiency. But, with rice imports proving to be a means of accumulating tax revenues (Kelly et al., 1996), the state no longer developed the desire to intervene in the grain market.

The food self- sufficiency so desired by the NAP has ended in resounding failure.

Today, the difficulties resulting from the liberalization of the agricultural market are much more felt by the Chinese monopoly on the local peanuts market. Senegalese industrialists are imposed high taxes on the processed oil, hardly sold in China, while the unprocessed peanut sold to Chinese is not taxed. In 2018, peanut exports to China amounted to 97.2% of total exports outside roasted shelled peanuts, which represented 109,800 tons. But on the other hand, Senegalese peanut oil exports to China during the same period accounted for only 35% of total exports (Ndiaye et al., 2018). The more diversified an agriculture, the more it can withstand endogenous and exogenous shocks, particularly linked to foreign monopoly and to the vagaries of rainfall and climate.

4. Objective of study: importance of family farms in the production system

This study aims at improving certain aspects of the agricultural sector by suggesting a system that will help improve farmers' living conditions and increase Senegal's attractiveness at market level. But it is not just a question of focusing on the interests of large local companies specializing in the export of agricultural products labelled "Senegal Origin". This study mainly focuses on family farms and suggests their full involvement in the distribution chain. Value chain approach and not just the sector approach, is what is needed to guarantee competitiveness of Senegal's agri-food industry in the local and international market. Hence, sustainable agriculture appears to be the last resort for Senegal to adopt a system capable of initiating the transition to crop diversity in order to ensure food security, protect the environment and meet the needs of rural populations; a system capable of bringing development from local resources. The United Nations SDGs, through its Target 2.5, had given recommendations in this direction, asking to secure crop diversity globally by the year 2020. It's now time to accelerate our intervention in order to achieve the other goals by placing family farms at the centre of production systems.

5. Theories on sustainable agriculture

Ikerd' s definition of sustainable agriculture enjoys a consensus because of its clarity and conciseness. But despite its popularity, there are many interpretations on sustainable agriculture. The 1990 USA Farm Billin also attempted to clarify the concept it equates to an integrated system consisting of plant and animal practices which may satisfy human food and fiber needs,

etc. [Lehrer, 2020, (*FACTA, Public Law 101-624*)]

However, sustainable agriculture presents a number of objectives that Pretty (2008) sets out as a very conscientious incorporation of natural processes, a reduction in the use of non-renewable resources, a more equitable access to resources and with more independence for peasants and rural populations. Yet, the documented indicators for agricultural sustainability are said to be location- specific and are meant to be placed within the context of the contemporary socioeconomic and ecological situation (Hayati et al., 2010, p.78)

An important question to ask is whether the world is interested in an agriculture guided by ideologies and trend practices or if people prefer making an interpretation of sustainability as a well-crafted “property of agriculture” to address threats to the sector (Hansen, 1996, p.123). Sustainability should not be seen as an “approach” but as a guiding principle that will not disrupt the achievements noted in traditional practices. From a general point of view, Schaller (1993) ascertains that productivity and profitability of farming systems do not underlie fundamental changes such as major transformation of societal values.

Nonetheless, outputs and inputs do not determine the importance of family farming which cover around 80% of farms in sub-Saharan Africa and provide employment for about 75% of the agricultural workforce. What matters most is to help farmers cope with the current structural and economic problems they are facing (Sall, 2015). The guiding principles of sustainable agriculture are expected to identify the risks that threaten these family farms and help find a way to improve practices corresponding to the local context.

Farm-size in agricultural production and biodiversity protection

Small farms represent most of the world’s farms and have become an important aspect of sustainable agriculture. Production, profitability and biodiversity are said to be related to farm size. It is even proven that, on average, smaller farms are more efficient in giving out higher yields and “harbour greater crop and non-crop biodiversity” than could larger farms procure (Ricciardi et al., 2021). Sustainability in agriculture is a process that involves a well-structured transition initiated at the institutional level. To maintain the viability of farming systems, institutional accountability must come in play, because apprehensions have now gone beyond the basic institutional framework (Ruttan, 1999).

Developing countries should lead the march towards sustainability. Farmers in rural Senegal are generally satisfied with the size of the cultivated areas which has become an advantage in the

context of sustainable agriculture (MAER, 2019). Productivity and profitability are imminently at farmers' reach. Farm size is now considered a basis to determine environmental stability and social outcomes. With sustainable agriculture, smallholders can integrate the agri-food industry even if demands in quality-related processing, consistency and volume do not seem to be accessible to many (Reardon et al., 2009).

Hypothesis: The anthropological structure of the household

Household forms are a key indicator to how African societies function. They help understand the most important factor in agricultural production for a particular community. Yet, the African rural economy has often been subjected to agricultural ideologies following either the communist or liberal Anglo-Saxon model (Le Play, 1871). But, because there have been so much publicity surrounding these two ideologies, any other approach that does not fit the European political measurement criteria for agricultural practices cannot be considered important.

Frederick Le Play (1871) broke away from that “universalist observation” of family structures after producing the “ideal household forms typology”. Interestingly, the “Type 4” in his typology, is very common in the Senegalese society. It is an authoritarian and egalitarian family form where all sons can equally pretend to their father's succession as long as they live, with spouses and children, within the undivided family structure that Le Play calls “patriarchal”. At the death of the patriarch, the bond is not to be broken even though each son can rightfully form his own patriarchy. This household form is very different from the “type 2”, called “*unstable family*”, with its liberal and egalitarian structure and requiring a rapid separation of father and sons (Le Play, 1871).

Data collected within households, although not often considered in development programs, are a solid basis that allows political authorities to respond, with clarity, to the demands of the populations. The United Nations, in their document *Household Surveys in Developing Countries and Countries in Transition* (2007), consider these surveys as a mechanism for collecting information on the populations in developing countries and countries in transition.

It is society that should shape politics and not the opposite. African societies need more of an anthropological approach in the way agricultural practices are established. Children express a certain pride in reproducing their father's way of life, and no apprenticeship is needed for that. When it's only women on the practice, it is considered a social reunion activity. But when men

follow up, it becomes a norm because they are the sex that dominates the community (Todd, 1985). Therefore, the concept of sustainable agriculture should not be limited to crops, soil, yield. It should also encompass the norms that “*govern relations between individuals*” who belong to the same family, to the same community (Todd, 1985).

7.1 Kolda Region

The Kolda region (South-East of Senegal) has one of the highest poverty rates in Senegal (70% of households). However, it has a strong market gardening potential that is still largely under-exploited. Traditionally, market gardening was more for self-consumption and a social reunion activity at village and inter-village levels. The acceleration of the urbanization process has amplified the urban demand for fresh vegetables, especially during the dry season. Eating habits are changing, the nutritional quality of vegetables is better recognized. With the decline of cash crops (peanuts and cotton), market gardening is becoming a very important source of regular income, especially for women, who are very active in this sector.

The concept of sustainable agriculture is all about such ideas where populations carry out activities based on their lifestyle and available resources. The market gardening conducted in Kolda, a region largely populated by herders, is based on a quality approach centered on the promotion of agroecological production methods valuing livestock and agriculture complementarities. There, soils are degraded due to intensive exploitation of peanuts and cotton. Organic manure is used with a low dose of chemical fertilizer. Mulching techniques are gaining ground and the practice of burning is declining. Livestock are a source of organic matter: manure dust and composting improve soil fertility. They have adopted an agricultural system that is very practical and efficient in growing returns, sales and income. There's a strong urban demand in addition to the proximity to two large markets of the Republic of Guinea Bissau (Tognataba and Kambadiou). Efforts are just to be made to provide consumers with healthier products. There may also be some threats related to the lack of professionalism of the actors. With limited access to financing, these smallholders have to compete with large importers who benefit from government's support.

Small farm-holders & the food industry

The small peasantry is not directly involved in the processing of fruits and vegetables at national level. Yet, there are plenty of opportunities. Senegal's processing industry is caught in the grip of capital monopoly. The players in this sector prefer dealing with multinationals or large local

producers, to the detriment of small farmers. Because of a lack of regulation, the fruits market clearly shows the functions of allotment and splitting-up due to the dispersion of producers' offers and the segmentation of the demand.

The local market reveals a chain of operators going from the field of the producer to the stall of the small retailer. Most of the harvests remain under the control of collector traders, known locally as "*bana-bana*", who supply markets through commission agents, from whom resellers come to get their supplies. These are specific transactions that govern the fruit market in Senegal where sales are made in cash or in the future, depending on the market situation. Self-service stores compete with the myriad of neighbourhood shops and other sidewalk stalls helping to liven up these shopping circuits by playing a significant role in customer satisfaction. The informality of the agri-food sector is even perceptible at the level of export products where tacit contracts are established between producers and exporters. Unfortunately, the presence of small farm-holders in the value chain is imperceptible because, after the conditioning and packaging operations, the product is shipped by plane or boat to the European partner importer for sale with commission. In the sub- region, exchanges are even more informal in spite of their high level: exports to the Islamic Republic of Mauritania, transactions at the Diaobé market where at least four countries are present in addition to Senegal. The simplistic aspect of the distribution channels for processed artisanal products should normally allow the small peasantry to capture a good part of the market. Local and artisanal products are generally made either to order (family ceremonies) or for local sales, in front of the home, around markets, in stadiums and other public places by members of the family or more rarely, by paid sellers. This form of selling traditional drinks is widespread across the country. The products can be found buried in coolers and packaged in ordinary thin knotted sachets and bottles, in the "*loumas*" (weekly rural markets) of the most remote communities. Women restaurateurs make their own products.

However, this artisanal processing is exclusively reserved for very distinct and limited circuits. Price level and ease of access are the main penetration force in this market. The manufacturing conditions and the lack of conservation means are limits for any extension of these sales channels. For the same reasons, these products cannot integrate the circuits of major products and general trade with its various links. There is much to think about on the "value chain" approach. Regarding locally manufactured products, their marketing is ensured by wholesalers who resell to grocery stores and neighbourhood shops; and they are not very interested in products from family farms.

Conclusion

As said earlier, the aim of sustainable agriculture is to improve, among other things, farmers' quality of life. To achieve such an important goal, our understanding of quality of life should be holistically emphasized on the social, emotional and economic state of mind of farmers and the description of their household structure or their ability to survive within their communities. The successful spread of production in space and time makes the market gardening sub-sector one of the most promising and dynamic components of the horticultural sector. However, the sector is concentrated mainly in the coastal strip of the "Niayes" area (Dakar region) and in the valley of the river Senegal. Production should be more geographically diversified, by expanding its exploitation basin to regions of the "peanuts basin" where there should be a continuous decline in the area devoted to peanuts cultivation. A policy of diversifying arable lands towards horticulture is necessary, particularly in terms of export vegetables which are generally produced in the Dakar- Saint Louis axis due to the mild climate and the proximity of airport infrastructure.

Most of the vegetable production comes from family farms, like those in the Kolda region, where irrigation is the main occupation of the workforce. Unfortunately, the producer is often faced with difficulties related to production financing and the quality of inputs. It is necessary to help these peasants who have fully understood the importance of sustainable agriculture.

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Panel 3-3: 12:00 to 13:00: Pluriversal Africa Chair: Ida Hadjivayanis

Dreams of Diversity: An Exploration of the Life of Kenyan Immigrants in America as Reflected in the Novel *Kunani Marekani*

Ma Jun, Ning Yi

Abstract

As globalisation continues to accelerate and the gap between countries grows bigger and bigger, migration trends show that the flow of talent from developing countries to developed countries is accelerating as well, and the proportion is rising. The population movements brought about by globalisation have made 'd_i_v_e_r_s_i_t_y' one of the leading social issues facing contemporary countries. In the novel *K_u_n_a_n_i_M_a_r_e_k_a_n_i*, Kenyan author Iribemwangi uses the lives of Kenyan immigrants in the United States as an example to discuss whether the developed world is as inclusive as expected, especially towards immigrants from developing countries. How much space does the United States, the so-called 'm_e_l_t_i_n_g_p_o_t_o_f_r_a_c_e_s', provide for the immigrant population to survive while enjoying their labor services? The good intentions of 'd_i_v_e_r_s_i_t_y' are shattered in the novel by one realistic story after another. The life of immigrants of Kenyan descents in the US is far from glamorous, and the injustices suffered by the characters in this book are not only the author's response to the unrealistic 'American Dream' in the minds of some of his countrymen but also questioning and interrogation of the slogan of 'd_i_v_e_r_s_i_t_y' in American society. This study will interpret the stories in *K_u_n_a_n_i_M_a_r_e_k_a_n_i* through content analysis and discuss Kenyan immigrants' life situation and social interactions in the United States through structuralist analysis, focusing on the similarity and synchronicity beneath common issues. In combination with interviews with the novel's author, Iribemwangi, this study explores the conflicts in *K_u_n_a_n_i_M_a_r_e_k_a_n_i*, both within and outside the text. It also explores the dilemmas and solutions to the issue of 'd_i_v_e_r_s_i_t_y' in contemporary international society.

Key words: Kiswahili Literature, Diversity, Globalisation Crisis

Thomas Mofolo: The Representation of Linguistic and Cultural Diversity in *Pitseng*

Limakatso PEPENENE (INALCO)

Abstract

Mofolo's protagonist in his novel *Pitseng* leaves Lesotho for better education in South Africa from where he travels to other localities in Southern Africa. Mobility beyond the national territory not only contextualises the protagonist's encounter with diversity and the interconnectedness of cultures, but it also opens up possibilities for the protagonist to interrogate and engage in alternative perceptions of the self and the multicultural others. Through a selected study of texts from Mofolo's travel narrative, this paper explores the author's representation and portrayal of the early 20th century linguistic and cultural diversity in Southern Africa, with Lesotho's national identity as the lens through which the novel reconfigures the diversity and multiculturalism of the region. Through the framework of the concept of "othering", the paper interrogates the challenges posed by territorial identity, religion, cultural values and the local political history of colonial nation-state building. We argue that in Mofolo's portrayal, emphasis on ethnic consciousness and religion contribute to the prejudice and bias prevalent in *Pitseng's* expression of sociopolitical and sociocultural relations in the region. Such bias reinforces exclusiveness and the construction of the ethnic, un-religious "other". The portrayal is a contradiction from the emancipatory paradigm espoused by the author in his quest for collective self-determination and resistance to the hegemony of the colonial framework of the time. The paper offers a critical interpretation of Mofolo's contribution in engaging with multiculturalism, thus offering prospects for Southern African literature to address the challenges of promoting diversity while accommodating distinctive ethnic, religious and cultural identities.

Key words: linguistic and cultural diversity, travel narrative, othering, colonial framework

Morrison and the Africanist Presence: Post-Modern Approaches to the Representations of Difference, Invented Blackness and Diversity in American Literature

Carlos Stranges

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Abstract

Throughout its modern history, the United States of America have thrived on immigration from all over the world. They have thus become worldly renowned as a melting pot of different cultures, and the country itself takes pride in its diversity.

But what does diversity mean? The term implies the coexistence of different cultures inside the same society. It therefore understands those cultures to be differentiated and pre-existing in relation to the society in which they coexist. I would like to try and question the assumptions about what we intend diversity to be, and I would like to do it through the analysis of Toni Morrison's studies in the field of representations of African Americans in American society, and in particular in American literature.

One of the most numerous minorities in the United States are African Americans (around 13.4% of the population), a very broad term used to include all people with some sort of African descent. But as, Baldwin already noticed in his essay *The Fire Next Time*, Africa as a common denominator in the categorization of black Americans is an inaccurate and inefficient tool, and the past of African Americans has to be looked for no further than in America itself.

Toni Morrison takes the cue offered by Baldwin in his 1963 essay, and, in her own essays *Playing in the Dark* and *The Origin of Others*, she explains how a scapegoating, stereotyped African American presence was used in the creation of the dominant discourses of white supremacy. The conclusions to which Morrison arrives at are the invention of blackness, which could be further backed up by the distinction between European and African descents. In Toni Morrison's views, Africanism, or the Africanist presence, becomes an all-purposes useful otherness, to which white America could compare itself. The consequence of the discovery of the invention of blackness,

is the inevitable realization that whiteness as well as blackness are invented constructs. African Americans are therefore a part of American society, which can only be interpreted and understood in the American context and that do not in any way precede it. In my paper, I would therefore like to discuss what Morrison's approach to otherness in the representation of African Americans implies for the assumptions on diversity. I would like to investigate what we can interpret diversity to be in the context of a dominant discourse which is based on othering.

Introduction

Throughout their history, the United States of America have thrived on immigration from around the world. They have thus become worldly renowned as a melting pot of different cultures, and they take pride in their diversity.

But what does diversity mean?

According to the Merriam Webster dictionary, diversity is “the condition of having or being composed of differing elements [...] *especially* the inclusion of people of different races, cultures, etc. in a group or organization.” (Merriam-Webster)

The interpretation of the term presented by the dictionary implies the coexistence of different cultures inside a society. It therefore understands those cultures to be differentiated and pre-existing the society they coexist in. Through the analysis of Toni Morrison's essays about the representations of African Americans in American literature, I would like to question the assumptions about what we intend diversity to be.

African Americans are among the most numerous minorities in the United States. The term is broadly used to include all people of African descent. But, as James Baldwin already noticed in his 1963 essay *The Fire Next Time*, Africa is a troublesome and inefficient common denominator for the categorization of black Americans, whose identities have to be sought no further than in America itself.

“in order to change a situation one has first to see it for what it is: in the present case, to accept the fact, whatever one does with it thereafter, that the Negro has been formed by this nation, for better or for worse, and does not belong to any other.” (Baldwin, 1998, p. 333)

Toni Morrison, in her essays *Playing in the Dark* and *The Origin of Others*, explains how a stereotyped African American presence was used to create the dominant discourses of white supremacy in many western countries, and specifically in North America. Her analysis is based on what she calls American Africanism, reminiscent of Edward Said's *Orientalism*. She states that blackness was created in order to define whiteness, and that the definition of whiteness has been central to the discourse of nation-building at the time when the United States were still trying to create a national identity. In Morrison's views, the invented "Africanist presence" becomes an all-purposes-useful other. The conclusion the author arrives to is that African Americans are therefore a part of American society that can only be interpreted and understood in the American context and that does not in any way precede it. In the following pages I would like to discuss how Morrison's approach to the representations of African Americans could be used to understand diversity, and to investigate what we can interpret diversity to mean in the context of dominant discourses based on othering.

Morrison's Invented Blackness and Whiteness

In her essay "Playing in the Dark", Toni Morrison states that, despite the many important studies in the field of the effects of racism on the oppressed, not enough is written about its effects on the racist subject. In the first pages of her essay, some of the main topics she focuses on are two contradictive assumptions: the presence of a quality of universality in the works that are considered to be part of the "American Canon", and the assumption that the distinctive "Americanness" that imbues American Literature is in no way influenced by the presence of African Americans in the United States. She writes:

"This knowledge holds that traditional, canonical American literature is free of, uninformed, and unshaped by the four-hundred-year-old presence of, first, Africans and then African-Americans in the United States. It assumes that this presence – which shaped the body politic, the Constitution, and the entire history of the culture – has had no significant place or consequence in the origin and development of that culture's literature. Moreover, such knowledge assumes that the characteristics of our national literature emanate from a particular "Americanness" that is separate from and

unaccountable to this presence. ” (Morrison, 1993, pp. 4-5)

Morrison then states that the “Africanist” presence is central to understanding the development of American literature, which derives its “Americanness” more or less directly from the othering of the stereotyped Africanist presence. The essay then becomes an analysis of the ways in which the Africanist stereotypes have been put to use, and of what purposes they served.

“Africanism has become, in the Eurocentric tradition that American education favors, both a way of talking about and a way of policing matters of class, sexual license, and repression, formations and exercises of power, and meditations on ethics and accountability.” (Morrison, 1993, p. 6)

The author goes on to state that not only the stereotyping of Africans and African Americans helped in the policing of the new nation, but also helped in defining the newly born American people and national culture, which in Morrison’s views are both formed in hierarchical terms, through the othering of the stereotyped Africanist presence.

“For excellent reasons of state – because European sources of cultural hegemony were dispersed but not yet valorized in the new country – the process of organizing American coherence through a distancing Africanism became the operative mode of a new cultural hegemony.” (Morrison, 1993, p. 8)

Morrison shows the workings of the theories about othering that literary theory borrowed from Hegelian and existential philosophy and explores how they were applied to the context of American literature.

The author’s post-modern and deconstructive approaches question not only the othering mechanism, but the entire process of identity formation, and her novels challenge our understanding of what we take identities to be. According to post-modern theory, the othering process has the inherent flaw of necessarily establishing hierarchical categories. In the first pages of the essay, Morrison notes the tendency to work in excluding categories in Western countries:

“[...] None has been able to persuade itself for long that criteria and knowledge could emerge outside the categories of domination. Among Europeans and the Europeanized, this shared process of exclusion – of assigning designation and value – has led to the popular and academic notion that racism is a “natural,” if irritating, phenomenon. [...]” (Morrison, 1993, p. 7)

A portion of the critics that over the years argued against the marginalization of the other, and of African Americans in particular, advocates for new approaches which would put the marginalized other in a central position and reverse the traditional hierarchy. Morrison instead distances herself from what she calls “totalizing approaches,” to focus on the analysis and exposure of the forces at work in American literature, rather than on providing alternative hierarchies. By doing so, she tries to escape the binary oppositions that othering is based on.

“I do not want to encourage those totalizing approaches to African-American scholarship which have no drive other than the exchange of domination – dominant Eurocentric scholarship replaced by dominant Afrocentric scholarship. More interesting is what makes intellectual domination possible; [...] and what forces help establish the parameters of criticism.” (Morrison, 1993, pp. 8-9)

Morrison utilizes throughout the essays approaches that are similar to those that various exponents of gender studies have used since the nineteen-eighties, and of whom Judith Butler is among the most famous representers. The aim of the approaches shared by Morrison and Butler, is to avoid the binary opposition. In her most famous essay, *Gender Trouble*, Butler states that the experiments carried out in the second half of the twentieth century to replace Phallogocentrism with Lesbianism or other feminist theories such as *écriture féminine* are working inside the binary system that they are trying to defeat or overcome and are therefore bound to reiterate the structures they are trying to escape from (Butler, *Gender Trouble*, 2011, p. 187).

In Morrison’s case, in the same way, to replace Eurocentrism with Afrocentrism or, more broadly, to shift the focus from the center to the marginalized would mean to work inside the racial binary that has characterized American society throughout its history

and that African American studies are trying to overcome.

In line with other postmodern approaches, Morrison suggests the centrality of language and discourse. The starting point of the analyses of the various novels she carries out in *Playing in the Dark* is the need to considerate the fact that language (in Morrison's case, specifically the English language) is heavily racialized. In a heavily racialized society and utilizing an inevitably racialized language, Morrison tries to pinpoint the connections and the reciprocal influences that the parts of society that have been kept historically and philologically formally separated had on each other.

To understand how the use of the fabricated Africanist persona shaped American literature does not mean, in Morrison's views, to claim the moral superiority of African Americans, or to reclaim central stage for African American culture in the developing of American culture. The focal point in Morrison's essays, as well as in her works of fiction, is on questioning what is assumed to be natural. What seems to interest Morrison, more than the hierarchical structure of the relationship between blackness and whiteness, is how the arbitrary construction of blackness and whiteness interplays and shapes both constructs.

Butler's Approach to Identities in the Study of Gender

As I mentioned before, Judith Butler provides some of the most important accounts on the study of gender theories. In her seminal essay, *Gender Trouble*, Butler works on existing theories of sexualities and feminist writings to try and redefine what we consider gender to be. What Butler suggests is the impossibility of escaping the binary oppositions between male and female, men and women, heterosexuality, and homosexuality by presenting an alternative to their definitions.

She analyses the approaches of various important feminist writers and 20th century philosophers to the study of gender. As happens with Toni Morrison, her main focus is on subjectivities and ontological understandings of the categories of gender. Butler states that the repeated failures of subsequent attempts at categorizing gender, either as an essential feature of the self or as a set of acts or desires, can be taken as a starting point for a rethinking of what we consider gender to be, or better still, what we consider the term gender to represent.

In Butler's views, the failures at categorizing gender are proof of the nonviability of the categorization in itself. She proposes that an analysis of the various iterations of

gender roles and sexual orientations ordered through the scope of hegemonic heterosexuality, and more specifically an analysis of those enactments of gender that are said to mimic or parody the heterosexual framework, such as *Drag* or *Butch & Femme*, shows what is thought to be the original to be as constructed as the supposed copy, and therefore expose the arbitrariness of its dominance.

“And yet this failure to become “real” and to embody “the natural” is, I would argue, a constitutive failure of all gender enactments for the very reason that these ontological locales are fundamentally uninhabitable.” (Butler, *Gender Trouble*, 2011, p. 186)

In another essay, contained in the collection *The Second Wave*, Butler’s focus is once more on identities.

“It is precisely the pleasure produced by the instability of those [identity] categories which sustains the various erotic practices that make me a candidate for the category to begin with.” (Butler, *Imitation and Gender Insubordination*, 1997, p. 301)

Her starting point is the fundamental instability of identity categories caused by the “illimitable process of signification itself” (Butler, *Gender Trouble*, 2011). If any identity category is inherently unstable, any attempt at defining those categories is futile. Nevertheless, Butler states that proposing an alternative outside of constructed identities should not be the main task of Feminist theory. She suggests instead that “The critical task is, rather, to locate strategies of subversive repetition enabled by those constructions” (Butler, *Gender Trouble*, 2011, p. 188).

Therefore, not an escape, but a redefining of the framework of reference, through what she calls “subversive repetitions.”

A postmodern approach to the representation of diversity

As I stated earlier, the general understanding of the meaning of diversity is the inclusion of different races, religions, ethnicities, genders, etc. in a group or organization, or more in general in a society. Applying Morrison’s approach in the field of literature to diversity, it could be said that the very definition of diversity derives

from the binary oppositions that see white, heterosexual, males at the centre, and the infinite others as marginalized and in need of inclusion in the cultural circle which is historically sole possession of the white upper class. The underlying risk in starting from the assumption of a cultural centre that needs to be shared with those who have been excluded from its fruition is the perpetuation of the cycle of exclusion and hierarchical understanding of society through categories of domination.

A clear example is offered by the citation by James Baldwin with which I started. The citation continues as follows.

“in order to change a situation one has first to see it for what it is: in the present case, to accept the fact, whatever one does with it thereafter, that the Negro has been formed by this nation, for better or for worse, and does not belong to any other – not to Africa, and certainly not to Islam.” (Baldwin, 1998, p. 333)

Baldwin’s attempt at describing where African Americans belong, which is to say what African Americans are, is spelled out in oppositional, binary terms. The definition of African Americans proposed by Baldwin’s assertion works by the same principle of exclusion that constructed whiteness as non-blackness.

In the same way, the understanding of a diversity which is established through the differentiation of a multitude of others from a white male centre will inevitably reiterate the hierarchical understanding of difference, which the use of the term is trying to overcome.

Drawing a comparison with Butler’s approach to feminist theories, the category of diversity and all the categories that are interrelated and implied in the term are part of the limit to its efficacy. With regards to feminism Butler writes:

“I have tried to suggest that the identity categories often presumed to be foundational to feminist politics, that is, deemed necessary in order to mobilize feminism as an identity politics, simultaneously work to limit and constrain in advance the very cultural possibilities that feminism is supposed to open up.” (Butler, *Gender Trouble*, 2011, p. 187)

I do not intend to suggest, of course, the abandonment of the term diversity for a

new one. As shown both by Butler and Morrison, there is no escaping the current framework. Postmodern approaches seem to suggest the futility to try and provide alternatives that are presented as outside or prior to the frame of reference. Instead, they seem to propose the acceptance and use of the existing framework in order to redefine it. I would argue that the category of diversity can be viable, as long as we understand it to be not based on ontological features, but on constructed differences. Moreover, the identity categories implied in the term diversity, such as gender and race, have to be thought to be if not completely empty, at least as everchanging, and with blurred, ambiguous overlapping edges.

Applying this disclaimer might result in a spelling of diversity not set in a binary scheme that presumes a majority to which minorities are to be included or assimilated.

Conclusion

The meanings of diversity are usually represented in instances of inclusivity of different genders, races and other categories, but the ontology of those categories is rarely questioned.

It is very difficult, and often counterintuitive, not to work through the process of othering, it is therefore crucial to understand diversity not in terms of inclusivity, but of interrelated, constructed, multiplicities, thus possibly avoiding binary oppositions and the reiteration of hierarchical understandings of the categories through which society is described and constructed.

The writings of Toni Morrison and Judith Butler offer us superb examples of the use of existing categories, respectively racial and gender categories, to deconstruct our understanding of those same categories and redefine the framework of dominant discourses in the field of literary theory and literary representation.

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Panel 3-4: Texts and Sounds in African Literatures (SOAS) Chair:

Wen-chin Ouyang

Ghómálá' Literature, Cultural Rooting, and the Post-colonial Encounter;

A sociohistorical Analysis of two Literary Texts: *Fa' Cá' ntum Glafi* and

Guŋ Gwyə

Dr Seraphin Kamdem,

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SOAS, University of London

Abstract

My contribution focuses on Ghómálá language and culture, analysing two short written texts that are a part of the Ghómálá' literature. The paper provides a critical discussion of how these literary pieces reflect some of the cultural values of the community, as well as how they can shed light on the Ghómálá' people's encounter with the colonial and post-colonial enterprise.

The two literary pieces are locally well-known written Ghómálá' short stories entitled *Fa' cá' ntum Glafi* and *Guŋ Gwyə*. The paper explores them from two complementary angles: aspects of cultural rooting that the texts may demonstrate, and elements of the Ghómálá' community's reaction to the colonial and post-colonial experience.

Regarding the connection to the theme of diversity and representation, this paper looks at not only the diversity of experiences emerging from post-colonial Africa but also at the often-forgotten experiences from the marginal grassroots and the rural areas of Africa. And building on the analysis of diversity in the cultural realm as mediated or expressed through local languages, the issue of representation is also approached. This is done from the angle of how the encounters with the colonial experience and the post-colonial nation-building agenda in Africa have unfolded and impacted the local languages and cultures. In this vein, the Ghómálá' language, culture and community are at the crossroads of a journey where they interact with the sociocultural consequences

of the building of Cameroon as an independent nation since the 1960s. In this cultural, artistic and literary journey, the Ghómálá' language and literature, through these fragments of their almost forgotten written literature, demonstrate a form of sociohistorical resilience and cultural maintenance of a Grassfields-Bantu ethnolinguistic identity.

No Nation No Borders: Sesotho language literature in Lesotho and South Africa

Ret'sepile Makamane, PhD Candidate,
SOAS University of London

Abstract

My paper analyses novels in Sesotho written by Lesotho and South African writers. Sesotho is spoken in both countries. While the orthography differs, the language is the same.

This paper uses the metaphor of the *horse* to discuss two texts by James J. Machobane and Shadrack Lesoro, one a Mosotho and one a South African. The two novels, *Mphatlalatsane/Morning Star* (1947) and *Pere e ntsho/Blackmore* (1969) are each about a horse. A horse, although not indigenous to the Southern African region, has great cultural significance not only as transportation but also as a symbol of pride and sport. My approach looks at these two narratives as resistance to the idea of nation-state in regard to Lesotho and South Africa. Literature in Sesotho, and the themes of the narratives symbolically connect these Sotho groups, dissolves the borders and the assumed difference between these people, who are the same except for the fact that they occupy different designated lands. Travel and access to the land of the region is also articulated strongly through the fiction and shows how the idea of the nation-state is a political bureaucratic construction. Through these narratives, the authors imagine societies without borders

