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The Legal, the Ethical, and the Aesthetic: The Case of Gustav Klimt's *Woman in Gold*

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Abstract   *Restitution—"the act of restoring something to its original state,"* as in "the return of something to its rightful owner"—is a complex issue, given that "the original state" of the thing in question no longer exists and cannot in fact be "restored." A return to the "rightful owner" may be legally straightforward, but, I argue here, the *legal* is not *identical* to the *ethical* and certainly not to the *aesthetic*. My example is the famous portrait by the Viennese painter Gustav Klimt of Adele Bloch-Bauer—a painting known as *The Woman in Gold* and the subject of an acclaimed film made in 2015. In a prolonged courtroom case that went all the way to the Supreme Court, Maria Altmann, the heir to the Bloch-Bauer fortune, won *The Woman in Gold,* which had been in the Austrian National Museum in Vienna for more than sixty years since World War II. Altmann quickly sold the painting to Ronald Lauder, the founder and director of the Neue Galerie in New York for $153 million—the highest price in history to date in 2007. What is the ethical import of such a "victory"? And how do we relate the aesthetic value of the painting to that of the film that made it so famous?

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She has also written a memoir, *The Vienna Paradox* (2004) and a cultural-literary study of Austrian literature, *Edge of Irony* (2016), soon to appear in Chinese. Her collected book reviews, dating from 1969 to 2019 have just been published in two volumes by the University of New Mexico Press under the title *Circling the Canon*.

The noun *restitution* literally means "the act of restoring something to its original state, as in "the return of something to its rightful owner." In the aftermath of World War II, a period when the Nazis had stolen and appropriated so much money, property, and artwork from its rightful Jewish owners, whom they had exiled or imprisoned in concentration camps or murdered, we have witnessed large-scale restitution on the part of the Austrian and German governments. As a refugee from Hitler in 1938, whose family lost all its property, valuables, and personal mementos when we fled Vienna, I myself was to receive, some sixty years after the fact and with my immediate relatives all dead, some payment to compensate for money evidently stolen by the Nazis from my grandfather's Swiss bank account. Thus did the postwar Austrian government hope to atone for its earlier sins.

But restitution is never a simple matter. One cannot, after all, restore matters to their "original state," for that state no longer exists. Even when the law is clear, the *legal* is not always the same thing as the *ethical*. A case in point—and it is a fascinating case—is that of the return to its owners' heirs of the famous Gustav Klimt *Portrait of Adele Bloch-Bauer* [figure 1], also known as *The Woman in Gold* (1903-07). How Adele's niece Maria Altmann, with the help of lawyer E. Randol Schoenberg, recovered this and four other valuable Klimt paintings in a lawsuit that was resolved, after years of struggle, in 2006 is the subject, first of a bestselling journalistic account called *The Lady in* Gold by Anne Marie O'Connor (Knopf, 2012), and of an acclaimed film made in 2015, directed by Simon Curtis and starring Helen Mirren as Maria Altmann and Ryan Reynolds as Randy Schoenberg. The message of this box office success was simple: in this long drawn battle over the Klimt *Woman in Gold*, which Maria Altmann won and then sold for $153 million in 2007—at that time the highest price in history ever paid for a single painting— Good prevailed over Evil: the artwork, stolen by the murderous Nazi government during World War II, was returned to its rightful owner. It is regarded as a major victory and punishment for the Hitler regime.

But the case—like most cases of restitution—is hardly so simple. Let me lay out for you the astonishing Klimt story, noting where the film deviates from the facts—facts that are themselves often difficult to interpret.

In the 1990s, the eighty-year old Maria Altmann, who had fled Austria with her husband at the time of the Anschluss (1938) and settled in Los Angeles where she brought up her four children and then ran a little clothing boutique, was advised that she, the niece and last living heir of the fabulously wealthy Jewish sugar magnate Ferdinand Bloch-Bauer and his equally wealthy wife Adele [figure 2], the heir to one of the great Austrian Jewish banking and railroad fortunes, might have a case for recovering the Klimt paintings—especially the "gold" portrait of Adele commissioned by Ferdinand in 1903, which was then occupying a place of honor at the Austrian State Gallery in the Belvedere Palace [figures 3-4]. In the film, Maria comes to the idea of recovering the Klimts at the funeral of her sister Luise, whose letters, referring to the lost Klimt paintings she has been reading, but in fact Maria had been advised to make the effort by the Austrian investigative journalist Hubertus Czernin (a member of the aristocratic Czernin family), who longed to atone for his own father's membership in the Nazi party. A new Austrian law had been passed in 1998, which facilitated the restitution rights of refugee claimants. At any rate, Maria sought the help of Randol ("Randy") Schoenberg, the son of her friend Barbara Schoenberg and grandson of the great composer [figure 5] Arnold, a legend in Los Angeles where he had lived for decades after fleeing the Nazis in the late 1930s.

Randy—and the film does make this clear—was a young lawyer who was struggling to make a living: his own law firm in Pasadena had failed and he had just joined a big LA firm called Bergen, Brown & Sherman. Married with a small child, Randy, who had never known his famous Viennese grandfather, originally had no interest at all in the Altmann case. By his own account, he knew nothing of restitution law. In the film he asks Maria, "You'd like to be reunited with the paintings? You'd be a rich woman." To which Maria responds, "Do you think that's what this is all about?" Heaven forbid! The film implies throughout that Maria didn't sue the Austrian government for financial gain but only to be reunited with "my Auntie Adele," as if somehow the artwork were a real person.

In 1999, in any case, Maria Altmann and Randy Schoenberg, with Hubertus Czernin advising them, take a trip to Vienna to see whether the Austrian government would grant their appeal. Maria is very reluctant to go back to a country that had treated her so cruelly—she and her husband Fritz Altmann had barely escaped with their life—but Randy persuades her that she should return. The Austrian officials with whom they meet are intransigent, arguing that in her will, drafted shortly before her premature death from meningitis in 1925, when she was a mere 44, the childless Adele had deeded the paintings in question to the Belvedere. The will

states explicitly "As for my two portraits and the four landscapes by Gustav Klimt, I request that after my husband's death, they be given to the Austrian State Gallery in Vienna." The government had earlier returned to the family sixteen Klimt drawings and nineteen pieces of porcelain, which fell outside the request of the will, but, as for the paintings, their provenance seemed clear.

The Altmann counterargument, as made by Schoenberg, is that Adele's will stipulates that the paintings should go to the Belvedere *after Ferdinand's death*. In 1925, the plaintiffs argue, Adele could have had no idea what was to come, that the Anschluss would destroy Ferdinand's life, stealing his entire estate, including the paintings, and sending him into exile in Switzerland. The paintings fell into the hands of a lawyer ironically named Erich Führer. Ferdinand, ill and suffering in Zurich, had lost everything—his factories, his palaces, and of course his art work. When he was found dead in his hotel room in November 1945, he evidently thought the paintings were irretrievably lost. His will left his entire state (yet to be recovered in any form or shape) to his nieces and nephew. Meanwhile, the paintings had come into the hands of a repatriation lawyer, who argued that, given Adele's original will, the Klimt portraits belonged in the Belvedere, and a whole new room was opened where they could be shown to advantage.

Maria Altmann, Ferdinand's last surviving niece, now sought to sue the Austrian government, on the grounds that Ferdinand's later will voided that of his wife. But under Austrian law, the filing fee for such a lawsuit is determined as a percentage of the recoverable amount and since, at the time, the five paintings were estimated to be worth over $100 million, the filing fee would have been beyond Maria's means. Accordingly, she decides to drop the law suit, and she and Randy go home, stopping off en route to the airport to "pay their respects" to the Holocaust Memorial on the former Albertina Platz, renamed the Judenplatz.

But Randy, now that he knows the painting's worth, cannot give up so readily. Within a few years he has quit his job at the law firm and devotes himself to researching the Altmann case. And before long, he has found a legal loophole: Maria, as a U.S. citizen, could sue the Austrian government as an entity, claiming that *The Woman in Gold*, by now a frequent art catalogue and exhibition item, now has a commercial value in the U.S. The case goes all the way to the Supreme Court—Republic of Austria v. Altmann—which rules in 2004 that Austria is not immune to such a lawsuit. The two parties agree to binding arbitration by a panel of three Austrian judges, and on January 16, 2006, the arbitration panel rules that Austria is legally required to return the art to Altmann. At the time, the Austrian government begs Maria to take the second portrait of Adele [figure 6] as well as

the three landscapes [figures 7-9] but to leave the iconic *Woman in Gold*, which, as a kind of Viennese counterpart to the *Mona Lisa*, holds pride of place in the Belvedere, where it is. The painting is, after all, a national treasure.

Maria refuses: in the film, she says, "NO, I must have my Auntie Adele back! I miss her so much!" and there are flashbacks of Adele hugging little Maria and giving her chocolates. Maria also remembers that Adele had promised her the beautiful choker necklace [see figure 13] that she wore while posing for *Woman in Gold* and which, during the war had been worn by Emy Goering, the wife of Hitler's notorious Minister of Culture. "My Auntie Adele," the film Maria tells the Director of the Belvedere, "will now make the same journey I made so many years ago and be with me."

Within two months of her return to LA, Maria had sold the gold portrait of the beloved Auntie Adele she couldn't live without to the cosmetics heir Ronald Lauder for his Neue Galerie in New York. The price is, as I noted earlier, $135 million. The other four paintings were quickly sold at auction at Christie's in New York, fetching $192.7 million. The total intake was thus approximately $325 million; the proceeds were divided up by Maria Altmann's heirs—her four children and grandchildren. Randy received 40% of the proceeds, which is to say more than $100 million. Thus, the young lawyer who, seven years earlier, had been out of a job, is now a multimillionaire. Evidently, he gave some of the money to support the Los Angeles Museum of the Holocaust, but how much? He now practices restitution law in Los Angeles and teaches the subject in occasional courses at USC. As for Maria Altmann, she died four years later in 2011, satisfied that she had triumphed over the evil regime that had deprived her of her rights. The second portrait of Adele (1912; see figure 6), incidentally, was bought by Oprah Winfrey for $88 million; she recently sold it for $150 million! This is how the art market works in the twenty-first century.

In the film, all this is presented as the triumph of good over evil, the triumph of the innocent Jewish victims over their wicked Nazi oppressors. There are countless flashbacks in which Maria's family is depicted leading an idyllic life: dancing, for example, at Auntie Adele's birthday party (a painfully inaccurate scene where the family dances the Jewish dance, the Hora and people say "Mazeltov," contrary to how the assimilated High Society Jews of Vienna actually lived!) Maria's father Gustav (Ferdinand's brother and business partner) is depicted as playing the cello—his true love—no matter what is going on outside in the streets. This is, of course, a common stereotype about Jews—they are so "musical"—so given to playing the violin or piano! In one scene Gustav tells Maria, "You know, Maria, when we first

came to Vienna we were not rich people; we worked hard and we *contributed*; we were proud of what we did." The reference is to the fact that many Viennese Jews originally came from elsewhere, from somewhere in the East—whether Russia or Romania or what is now the Ukraine—and "made good" in their adopted country. The actual business practices of these moguls, frequently satirized in their day by Karl Kraus, are never considered. And in an entirely fictional flashback, Maria bids her parents goodbye (why are they staying behind?) and she and husband Fritz escape from Vienna in a Hollywood-style cops-and-robbers chase that never occurred in real life.

Again—and this makes the film a very specious work of art—the Viennese Jews are uniformly depicted as brave and virtuous. In the maudlin scene in which Maria's parents are bidding their daughter goodbye, her father announces that since Maria will be making her home in America, from now on, he too would speak English. As for the residents of Los Angeles, none of them ever mention money. Randy's wife Pam, who goes into labor with their second child the very morning her husband is to leave for Washington to plead his case in front of the Supreme Court, tells Randy, "Go! Don't worry about me! You're doing the right thing!" implying that Right must be done, whereas what the real Pam no doubt had in mind is that it was imperative to go because the financial stakes were so high.

The whole case is thus sentimentalized, made one-dimensional, and turned into Kitsch. After all, Justice is being served! Surely Adele Bloch-Bauer would never have left the portraits to the Nazis! How could she have known in 1925 what would happen to her beloved Austria? And how great that a painting commissioned by a Jewish patron should end up, not in the Viennese Belvedere (there are still so many Nazis around!), but in New York's Neue Galerie, co-founded by the Jewish Ronald Lauder. In the film's final scene, Maria, rather than gloating over her victory, goes back to the beautiful old Palais on the Elisabeth Straße [figure 10], inhabited, before the war, by her Uncle Ferdinand and Aunt Adele. The four-story palace is now an office building. Having gotten permission from an amiable man behind the reception desk who tells her to make herself at home, Maria wanders through the old rooms, full of memories, weeping. Finally she remembers her father playing the cello and smiling, and on the note of this happy memory, the film ends. Only the fine print statement after the conclusion informs us about the sale and auction of the paintings.

The real story of *The Woman in Gold* is of course rather different and much more complex. To begin with: who was Gustav Klimt? Born in 1862 near Vienna to a large, lower-class family, he attended the Vienna Kunstgewerbe-Schule (School

of Arts and Crafts) and began by painting murals and ceilings in large public buildings, including the Burgtheater, the Kunsthistorisches Museum, and the ceiling of the Great Hall at the University of Vienna. The latter, however, was declared pornographic and the panels were never placed on the ceiling: here is one of the murals—*Pain* [figure 11]designed for the Medicine section of the ceiling (the others were Jurisprudence and Philosophy). The writhing bodies meant to depict the river of life, were too overtly erotic for turn-of-the-century public standards and the murals were rejected.

Klimt was soon one of the founding members and then president of the Vienna Secession, a group of artists who wanted to break out of the conservatism of the Vienna Künstlerhaus. The Secession Building [figure 12] is one of the great tourist attractions in Vienna, housing among other things Klimt's famous Beethoven frieze in its main gallery. By 1900, at any rate, Klimt was considered an important provocateur, the enfant terrible of the Viennese art scene. His work was widely criticized but he began to get lucrative commissions from the wealthy industrialists, largely Jewish, of Vienna.

Adele Bloch had met Klimt socially in the late '90s, before her arranged marriage in 1899 at age 18 to the 35-year old Ferdinand Bauer. The artist soon became part of her important salon, where the leading writers, artists, and intellectuals regularly met. In 1903 Ferdinand commissioned Klimt to paint her portrait, and Adele began going to sittings at his studio, where Klimt made hundreds of sketches over the course of the next five years. She seems, for starters, to have been the model for Klimt's painting *Judith and the Head of Holofernes,* in which the semi-nude heroine, closely resembling Adele, is wearing a heavily-jewelled gold choker given to her by Ferdinand [figure 13]. Rumors were rife that Adele and Klimt, known as a great womanizer, were having an affair, and, given various letters and diaries, it is hard to think otherwise although there has never been absolute proof.

Ferdinand, in any case, became one of Klimt's great patrons. In 1903 he purchased his first Klimt, the landscape *Buchenwald* [see figure 9], and in mid-1903 he commissioned Klimt to paint a portrait of his wife. The style of the portrait is characteristic of what is known as Klimt's Gold Period: he had recently visited Ravenna, with its gorgeous gold mosaics and created a technique of gold and silver leaf and then adding decorative motifs in bas-relief using gesso. In the painting [see figure 1], Adele sits on a golden throne or chair silhouetted against a golden starry background: she wears a triangular golden dress made of rectilinear forms with erotic import—triangles, eggs, shapes of eyes, and almonds, as well as variants of

the letters A and B—Adele's initials. The scheme is geometric in sharp contrast to Adele's hair, face, exposed neck, and hands, painted rather realistically in oil.

The contrast of the portrait's realistic face and hands to their abstract golden setting is jarring, and indeed the painting was not well received. One critic, Eduard Pötzl described it as "mehr Blech als Bloch" (more brass than Bloch). Others, including Karl Kraus, dismissed it as decadent and kitschy. Klimt himself, for that matter, was known in Vienna for his questionable behavior: he boasted that forty-three illegitimate children in Vienna were his and in later life, he declared that he never wore anything underneath his work smock [figure 14]. Indeed, I can remember that my own Viennese family had little use for Klimt, who was considered a decadent, semi-pornographic provocateur—nothing like such true modernists as Picasso or Matisse. And art historians have largely ignored Klimt: such famous critics as Leo Steinberg, Rosalind Krauss, Thierry de Duve, or T. J. Clark—critics who have dissected the Modernism of Picasso or Malevich or Duchamp--have, to my knowledge, never written on him.

We do not know what Ferdinand Block-Bauer paid Klimt to paint his wife, a project that took five years to complete. But given Klimt's controversial standing in the early decades of the century, we can surmise that in 1925, when Adele willed the portraits (the second one is less daring than the first) to the Belvedere, they would not have been worth a great deal of money. Nor would the situation have been vastly different by 1945, when the Belvedere acquired the paintings. The public taste for Klimt developed slowly and no doubt the restitution brouhaha helped to inflate the price.

What does all this have to do with the ethics of the case? If *restitution* is "the restoration of something to its *original* state," the "return" of the paintings to Maria Altmann, sixty years after her uncle's death and almost a hundred years after they were commissioned, is problematic. For of course, *The Woman in Gold's* original state no longer exists. The fortunes of the Bloch-Bauers, beginning with their many palaces, their sumptuous furnishings, their huge staff of servants, no longer exist and their milieu cannot be recreated in the early twenty-first century. True, the Bloch-Bauer family lost everything to the Nazis but so did poor Jews from all over Europe-- Jews who were never able to recover their loved possessions such as photo albums, documents, pieces of furniture and mementos. These Other Jews had to begin a new life in a new world with no compensation. Then, too, the Second World War changed life forever: the countless deaths, the great post-war migrations, the end of empire and colonialism: in view of these transformative movements, what does it mean to return private property to its "rightful" owner? Who "deserves"

what?

But, it is argued, isn't the return of these art works—works like the Klimt paintings that had been cruelly looted by the Nazis—a necessary act of retribution for the Holocaust, a necessary form of purgation? The Nazis, after all, had to be punished for what they had done to the Jews; they could not be allowed to "get away with it." In "returning" the Klimt paintings to the Bloch-Bauer family that owned them—in this case, to the rightful heir Maria Altmann—the balance is thus righted.

Or is it? When the Altmann case came before the Supreme Court, one of the initial objections to Randy's case was that the lawsuit of an individual against a sovereign state is usually a detriment to international relations. In this case, the plaintiff prevailed but there is no doubt that resentment on the part of the Austrians was wide-spread. As Anne-Marie O'Connor report in her book, Viennese curators and museum personel declared themselves aghast, the press wrote angry editorials, and soon the trams and busses were bearing posters inscribed *Ciao Adele* [figure 15]. In the film, there is no doubt that the Austrian officials are the "bad guys," even though these officials were born decades after the war and the Holocaust. At the same time, no doubt there are Austrians who are now saying in private, "You see, the greedy Jews are once again robbing our people of what should belong to them!"

How, then, should the case be understood? The ethical crux has to do with the interpretation of the word *original*. Schoenberg, following what is today the going wisdom, argued that, *had* Adele known in 1925 what was in store for Austria, she would never have left her paintings to the Belvedere, and that Ferdinand's suffering and deprivation at the hands of the Nazis makes it only fair and just to return the paintings to the family. An eye for an eye, with the ironic result that the man who ultimately got the painting, Ronald Lauder, the heir of the Estee Lauder fortune, never suffered during the war at all and neither did the young Randy Schoenberg. Still, if we assume, as Maria Altmann herself evidently did, that Austria has not really changed, that it is still essentially dominated by anti-Semitic neo-Nazis, then the transfer of wealth from national museum to private American ownership is surely justified.

But suppose Austria really HAS changed? Suppose the Vienna of 2020 is closer in spirit to that of 1920 than to that of 1945? Given that at least three generations have gone by since 1945, can we assume that Austria is still the same evil place it was on the eve of the Anschluss? Which is the *original* that we want to restore? And if we assume that once a Nazi nation, always a Nazi nation, what can the future hold? What, moreover, about the artist and where he might have liked his

paintings to live? Does Klimt himself count for nothing?

Meanwhile the global capitalist art market churns on, producing such distortions that it is difficult to know what "worth" really means. It is all a game, and no one can explain why *The Woman in Gold* should be the most expensive painting in the world. Fifty years from now its current value may have greatly diminished. The only conclusion to be reached is that the legal and the ethical are by no means identical, and neither are the legal and the aesthetic. Ferdinand, a hard-headed business man who came to connoisseurship largely through his wife, admired Klimt's portraiture largely as a tribute to his beloved Adele. In real life, for that matter, she was hardly a beauty: it was Klimt who had made her so special. Then, too, it is not necessarily true that had Adele lived to witness the Nazi period, she would have changed her mind. Many of the super-rich assimilated Jews—for example Wittgenstein's sisters—were willing to make large fortunes over to the Nazis in exchange for the right to stay in Vienna.

The Klimt paintings, in any case, have moved from their home in the Austrian National Gallery to their new home in a privately funded gallery in New York— the Neue Galerie. From one art museum to another, the "compensation," as if there could be one, for the evils of the Nazi era, with two sets of heirs of refugee families—the Altmanns and the Schoenbergs—becoming as wealthy as their Jewish forebears in Vienna once were.

Is it an *ethical* solution? My own personal preference would have been for the following: Maria, having won back the paintings, might have taken the second portrait of Adele along with the three landscapes and sold them, as she did, at auction, receiving a great amount of money. Then she might have done the gracious thing that would have endeared her and her Bloch-Bauer relatives to the Austrian people. She would have let *The Woman in Gold* remain at the Belvedere where the painting had so long been "at home," with the proviso that the museum didactic panels would have explained what had happened to the painting during the war years and their aftermath.

And the painting should then be captioned "Gift of Maria Altmann." I like to think that such generosity would be rewarded by better relations between the U.S. and Austria and between Jews and Gentiles. *The Woman in Gold* would thus be, in a curious way, a real Holocaust memorial.

Figures Referred

Figure 1: Gustav Klimt, *The Woman in Gold* (Portrait of Adele Bloch-Bauer, 1903-1907)

Figure 2: Photograph of Adele Bloch-Bauer, 1907

Figure 3: Belvedere Palace, Vienna

Figure 4: Klimt Gallery, Belvedere Palace, c. 2,000

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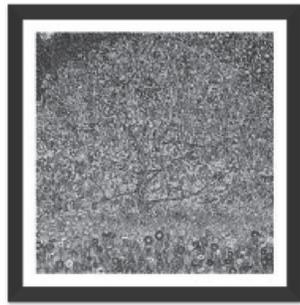
Figure 8: Klimt, Apple Tree, 1912

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Figure 10: Palais Bloch Bauer,
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Figure 14: Gustav Klimt in his
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in street car, Vienna, 2006

The Controversy between Levinas and Derrida and the Methodology of Literary Studies or Why Seems Ethical Criticism to be Unavoidable?[1]

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Abstract   Why does literature have a basic affinity with ethical criticism? It looked as if ethical criticism had definitely disappeared form literary studies during the 20th century. However, by the end of this century, its scholarly legitimacy was reestablished. The debate between Levinas and Derrida played an important part in this revaluation of ethical criticism. This is why this paper starts off from their controversy in order to demonstrate that the ethical dimension of literature cannot be derived from any theory of ethics or whatsoever theoretical approach. The base of ethical criticism, instead, is constituted by the specific communicative conditions of literature itself as I will argue at the end of this paper.

Key words   methodology of literary studies; ethical criticism; phenomenology; Emmanuel Levinas; Jacques Derrida

Author   **Andreas Kablitz**, born in 1957, professor of Romance Philology and Comparative literature, started to lecture in Tübingen in 1989. In the following year, he received a call to the University of Munich as a full professor and head of the department of Italian Literature, which he accepted. In 1994, he went to Cologne, where he is now the director of the Petrarca-Institute, head of the editorial board of the *POETICA* and member of the editorial board of the *Dante Society of America* as well as a member of the academic committee of the *Fritz-Thyssen-Stiftung*. In 1997, he was awarded the Leibniz-Preis of the *Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft*. In 2006, he became a member of the *Bavarian Academy of Scie*nces and of the *North Rhine-Westphalian Academy of Sciences*. In the following year, he became a member of the *German National Academy of Sciences (Leopoldina)*, where he was nominated senator and president of the section for cultural sciences ten years later

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1   This article constitutes the elaborate version of my keynote lecture at the *The Ninth Convention of the International Association for Ethical Literary Criticism*, Zhejiang University, Hangzhou, November 8-10, 2019.

in 2016. In 2010 he was appointed *Commendatore* of the *Ordine della Stella della Solidarietà Italiana* by the President of the Italian Republic.

The disappearance of ethical criticism is widely considered to be one of the salient traits in the evolution of literary studies during the 20th century. Especially postmodern criticism seems to have been fiercely opposed to any moral statement about literary texts.[1] Such renunciation of ethical criticism obviously belongs to a general tendency to be observed in this academic discipline, a strategy aiming at an enhancement of its scholarly prestige by guaranteeing its strictly descriptive nature.[2]

Yet, the very term of description suggests an important distinction. If ethical criticism was largely discriminated in modern literary studies, this is true only insofar as normative ethical assessments of literary texts are no longer at stake. However, in a descriptive sense ethical statements never finished to constitute an integral part of the academic interest in literature. Reconstructing the premises of Giovanni Boccaccio's ethics in his *Decameron* by showing its dependence on late scholasticism (Küpper 47-93), the demonstration of Machiavelli's influence on Pierre Corneille's tragedies (Kablitz 491-552) or of the impact of Friedrich Nietzsche's ethics on André Gide's novels[3], these and similar topics always were and continue to be regular subjects of literary studies.

However, even the normative aspect of ethical criticism could not be permanently banned from the academic discourse about literature. Especially, as a new philosophical approach to it was developed, an approach that made ethics and theory interdependent factors of the same intellectual attitude towards literature, ethical criticism — somehow justified by theory — seemed again to be back in the realm of legitimate academic methods of considering literary texts. As the *Call for papers* of our conference precisely outlines, the debate between Levinas and

1 Cf. Marshall W. Gregory, "Redefining Ethical Criticism. The Old vs. the New," i*Journal of Literary Theory* 4 (2010): 272-301.

2 Gregory (cf. the preceding footnote) ascribes the decline of ethical criticism by the end of the 19th century predominantly to its "fatuity", as it had become "fat, lazy, repetitive, shallow, doctrinaire, self-indulgent, platitudinous, and sometimes mean spirited" (ibid., 273) by this time. However, it seems to me that the inner evolution of ethical criticism does not suffice to explain its eclipse in modern literary studies. The causes of its decline cannot be reduced to an almost biological effect, to a kind of natural deterioration of an age-old discursive practice. There are external conditions, as well, to motivate this phenomenon among which the struggle for scholarly prestige of literary studies constitutes undoubtedly a major factor.

3 Jacques Le Rider, *Nietzsche en France. De la fin du XIXe siècle au temps présent*, Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1999.

Derrida, that opened the possibility to discuss ethical question as theoretical issues, has had a remarkable impact on the evolution of literary theory in this sense.[1] One could even go so far to say that the ethical turn within phenomenology triggered a similar turn in literary theory. This is why I would like to have a closer look to their controversy in my paper.

Despite the undeniable influence of this debate, I will raise the question of the conceptual suitability of this debate for the methodology of literary studies. The crucial question is if phenomenological ethics, as well as any other theoretically based ethics, is as such able to found ethical criticism. And, in order to anticipate from the very beginning the result of my reflections on Levinas' and Derrida's controversy, I harbor serious doubts about the compatibility of the phenomenological definition of ethics and the methodological needs of literary theory (as I am skeptical that there is any *theoretical* approach that might adequately lay a ground for ethical criticism). As I will try to demonstrate, the ethical dimension of literature relies on quite different conditions than those who allow for the establishment of ethics within the framework of phenomenology. On a somewhat more critical note, I would even say that phenomenological ethics rather misses than meets the ethical claims of literature. If literature has a certain propensity to ethical criticism, if normative ethical statements on literature seem to be not just unavoidable, but at least tempting, such affinity stems, as I will argue at the end of this paper, from the elementary conditions of literary communication itself.

However, before having a closer look to the controversy between Levinas and Derrida, I would like to make some general remarks about the phenomenology and its premises in the thought of modernity as it was established mainly by Edmund Husserl. For, the historical plausibility of the questions raised by phenomenology as well as its basic assumptions are hardly understandable without referring to the philosopher who, for good reason, is considered by many to be one of the founders, if not the founder, of modern thought: Immanuel Kant. Phenomenology somehow might be even described as a criticism and, simultaneously, as a consequence of Kant's thought.

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1   Call for Papers. "The Ninth Convention of the International Association for Ethical Literary Criticism": *The Ethico-Political Turn in Literary Studies: Cross-Cultural and Cross-Disciplinary Perspectives* (Zhejiang University, Hangzhou, China November 8-10, 2019): "Without Derrida's confrontations with Levinas' ethics, such transdisciplinary developments would be hardly imaginable. Derrida opposed Levinas' tendency to save the ethically divine "face of the Other" from any contamination by human political investments, insisting instead on the political indebtedness of all ethical agendas, with the (possible) exception of literature." Cf. also Simon Critchley, *The Ethics of Deconstruction. Derrida and Levinas*, Edinburgh UP, 2014.

Kant's revolutionary epistemology, that he himself called a *Copernican Revolution*[1] in the *Preface* of the second edition of his *Critique of Pure Reason*, published in 1787, is mainly based on the distinction between two entities: between the *thing in itself (Ding an sich)* and its *appearance (Erscheinung)*. The so-called *thing in itself* lies beyond the reach of human Reason, only its *appearance* is accessible to Man's understanding.

By means of this distinction, Kant's philosophy operates a momentous separation of thinking and being, thus disrupting, to considerable extent, the age-old tradition of Western Philosophy that, from its very beginning in Greek Antiquity, aimed at a definition of being by intellectual self-reflection. As Kant's conceptual innovations affected the very foundations of philosophy, it was, therefore, presumably inevitable that his successors focused on just that aspect of his philosophy, aspiring in several ways at a revision of his separation between being and thinking.

The decisive change that happens between Kant and phenomenology concerns the status of the *appearance*, in Greek language: the *phainómenon*. This change is tantamount to a complete inversion of the conceptual perspective in which the *phainómenon* is placed. Whereas in Kant's epistemology the *appearance* is predominantly regarded as the appearance *of* something, in phenomenology the *appearance* is chiefly looked at as an appearance *to* someone, namely to the subject of understanding.

1   "Es ist hiermit eben so, als mit den ersten Gedanken des Kopernikus bewandt, der, nachdem es mit der Erklärung der Himmelbewegungen nicht gut fort wollte, wenn er annahm, das ganze Sternheer drehe sich um den Zuschauer, versuchte, ob es nicht besser gelingen möchte, wenn er den Zuschauer sich drehen, und dagegen die Sterne in Ruhe ließ. In der Metaphysik kann man nun, was die Anschauung der Gegenstände betrifft, es auf ähnliche Weise versuchen. Wenn die Anschauung sich nach der Beschaffenheit der Gegenstände richten müßte, so sähe ich nicht ein, wie man a priori von ihr etwas wissen könne; richtet sich aber der Gegenstand (als Objekt der Sinne) nach der Beschaffenheit unseres Anschauungsvermögens, so kann ich mir diese Möglichkeit ganz wohl vorstellen" (Immanuel Kant, *Werke in zehn Bänden*, ed. by Wilhelm Weischedel, 3, *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*. Erster Teil, Darmstadt 1983, *Vorwort zur zweiten Auflage* 25). ['We here propose to do just what COPERNICUS did in attempting to explain the celestial movements. When he found that he could make no progress by assuming that all the heavenly bodies revolved around the spectator, he reversed the process, and tried the experiment of assuming that the spectator revolved, while the stars remained at rest. We may make the same experiment with regard to the intuition of objects. If the intuition must conform to the nature of the objects, I do not see how we can know anything of them *a priori*. If, on the other hand, the object conforms to the nature of our faculty of intuition, I can then easily conceive the possibility of such an *a priori* knowledge' {Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, translated by John Miller Dow Meiklejohn, London: Henry G. Bohn, 1855, *Preface to the Second Edition* (1787) XXIX}.]

This distinction between both positions necessitates, however, some clarification. If in Kant's thought the *phainómenon* is the appearance *of* something, in the wording of his text it remains, nonetheless, somehow unclear the appearance of *what* it precisely constitutes. The logic of Kant's epistemology would suggest that the *appearance* is the appearance of the *thing in itself*. Yet, Kant's very definition of the *thing in itself* implies that no statement about the nature of that *thing in itself* might be legitimately asserted as this entity is not accessible to human knowledge. Therefore, it is, as well, impossible to claim that the appearance constitutes the appearance of the *thing in itself*. This uncertainty, however, nowhere seems to be resolved in Kant's thinking. There is some plausibility that the conceptual revision of the notion of appearance in phenomenological thought, the transformation of an appearance *of something* into an appearance *to someone*, follows from that very uncertainty in Kant's philosophy. If the entity represented by the *appearance* remains structurally undeterminable, it is nothing but logical to replace the consideration of the relation between the appearance and the entity it represents by an interest in the relation between the *phainómenon* and the one *to* whom it appears as such. The evolution of modern philosophy between Kant and Husserl and the rise of phenomenology seems to be based on a quite plausible logic of its change.

If the basic assumptions of phenomenological epistemology thus follow somehow logically from a basic ambiguity in Kant's thought, the farewell to the concept of a *thing in itself* in phenomenology, nonetheless, brings about some essential consequences for the subject of understanding itself. Under these conditions, understanding is now fully and exclusively integrated into the cognitive process initiated by the subject of understanding himself. This is why *intentionality* becomes one of the key terms in phenomenology in order to define the relation between the subject and the *phainómenon*, as the latter doesn't have any other status than being an *appearance* to the subject of understanding. Such redefinition of the *appearance*, considerably, strengthens the role of the I, that is to say, of the *individual* subject of understanding for the very existence of the *phainómenon*.

However, with regard to the central subject of this paper, with regard to ethics, one decisive question intrudes: If the basic assumptions of phenomenology are based on *epistemological* premises, how, then, does any *ethical* dimension come in to play? And precisely this is a fundamental question with regard to Emmanuel Levinas' work who is widely – and for good reason – considered the originator of an ethical turn in phenomenology. An answer to this question seems possible to me if we take into account the specific theoretical features that triggered such ethical turn. For, it looks as if the ethical turn in Levinas' thought constitutes the result of a

connection of two different theoretical concerns: It combines the interest to open a predominantly epistemological theory to the issues of practical philosophy with the wish to redefine the very status of metaphysics.

Undoubtedly, any definition of a relation between human beings proves a compelling challenge to a system of thinking that focuses on the individual conditions of understanding external objects. How, then, does it become possible to define, on the ground of these quite solipsistic theoretical premises, a relation *between* an I and another person, a relation that doesn't reduce this other person also to a mere object of knowledge? The answer given by Levinas to that question is based upon the notion of *transcendence*, a notion that in his view follows from the phenomenological idea of intentionality.[1] It is this connection of both entities that lays the ground for an integration of ethics and theory:

> L'aspiration à l'extériorité radicale, appelée pour cette raison métaphysique, le respect de cette extériorité métaphysique qu'il faut, avant tout, « laisser être »—constitue la vérité. Elle anime ce travail et atteste sa fidélité à l'intel-lectualisme de la raison. Mais la pensée théorique, guidée par l'idéal de l'ob-jectivité, n'épuise pas cette aspiration. Elle reste en deçà de ses ambitions. Si des relations éthiques doivent mener,—comme ce livre le montrera—la trans-cendance à son terme, c'est que l'essentiel de l'éthique est dans son *intention transcendante*, et que toute intention transcendante n'a pas la structure noèse-noème. (Levinas, *Totalité et infini* 14s)

> The aspiration to radical exteriority, thus called metaphysical, the respect for this metaphysical exteriority which, above all, we must "let be," constitutes truth. It animates this work and evinces its allegiance to the intellectualism of reason. But theoretical thought, guided by the ideal of objectivity, does not exhaust this aspiration; it remains the side of its ambitions. If, as this book will show, ethical relations are to lead transcendence to its term, this is because the essential of ethics is in its *transcendent intention*, and because not every

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1   "L'intentionnalité, où la pensée reste *adéquation* à l'objet, ne définit donc pas la conscience à son niveau fondamental. Tout savoir en tant qu'intentionnalité suppose déjà l'idée de l'infini, *l'inadéquation* par excellence" (Emmanuel Levinas, *Totalité et infini. Essai sur l'extériorité*, Pa-ris: Le livre de poche, 1990, 12). ['Hence intentionality, where thought remains an *adequation* with the object, does not define consciousness at its fundamental level. All knowing qua intention-ality already presupposes the idea of infinity, which is preeminently *non-adequation*' {Emmanuel Levinas, *Totality and Infinity. An Essay on Exteriority*, translated by Alphonso Lingis, Pittsburgh: Duquesne UP, 1969, 27}.]

transcendent intention has the noesis-noema structure. (Levinas, *Totality and infinity* 29)

To Levinas, any ethical relation between myself and any other person can be established if and only if the realm of theory is left, if knowledge is abandoned in favor of the experience of the *tout autre*, of the 'absolutlely other':

> L'Autre métaphysiquement désiré n'est pas «autre» comme le pain que je mange […] Le désir métaphysique tend vers *tout autre chose*, vers *l'absolument autre*. (Levinas, *Totalité et infini* 21)

> The other metaphysically desired is not "other" like the bread I eat […] The metaphysical desire tends forward *something else entirely*, toward the *absolutely other*. (Levinas, *Totality and infinity* 33)

And, as Levinas claims, the 'absolutlely other' has to be identified as "the Other" (i. e. the other person): "L'absolument Autre, c'est Autrui".[1] But the encounter with him demands the renouncement of theoretical certainty of the Same:

> La métaphysique, la transcendance, l'accueil de l'Autre par le Même, d'Autrui par Moi se produit concrètement comme la mise en question du Même par l'Autre, c'est-à-dire comme l'éthique qui accomplit l'essence critique du savoir. (Levinas, *Totalité et infini* 33)

> Metaphysics, transcendence, the welcoming of the other by the same, of the Other by me, is concretely produced as the calling into question of the same by the other, that is, as the ethics that accomplishes the critical essence of knowledge. (Levinas, *Totality and infinity* 43)

Such conclusion sounds quite plausible within the framework of phenomenology, if, on the other hand, all knowledge and all understanding depends exclusively on the relation between an *individual* subject and the objects of *its* understanding. The *transcendence* towards the (absolutely) *Other*, this way, unavoidably entails a loss of certainty, a renouncement of any logical or epistemological concept. Ethics, therefore, implies the acknowledgment of the total difference of the other. It implies

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1 Levinas, *Totalité et infini* 28. ['The absolutely other is the Other' {Levinas, *Totality and infinity* 39.}]

the transcendence of the very realm of understanding and constitutes, at the same time, the means by which such transcendence can be reached, as any encounter with the (absolutely) other requires the respect of its *irreducible* otherness. Yet, in Levinas' view, the renunciation of all intellectual certainty, the willingness to abandon all certitude in the encounter with the totally other offers a remarkable chance: The transgression of all theory and of all knowledge allows for a fundamental experience of being, a promise of truth, as we already saw. Levinas, to this purpose, conceives of thinking no longer in terms of that *what* can be thought, but in terms of the act of *thinking* itself:

> L'acte de la pensée — la pensée comme acte — précéderait la pensée pensant un acte ou en prenant conscience. […] Ce qui dans l'acte éclate comme essentielle violence, c'est le surplus de l'être sur la pensée qui prétend le contenir, la merveille de l'idée de l'infini. (Levinas, *Totalité et infini* 12f)

> The act of thought — thought as an act — would precede the thought thinking or becoming conscious of an act. […] What, in action, breaks forth as essential violence is the surplus of being over the thought that claims to contain it, the marvel of the idea of infinity. (Levinas, *Totality and infinity* 27)

As conclusive as this argument might look, it seems to me, however, more than doubtful, that the idea of infinity is able to bring together both interests that Levinas here evokes: the preservation of rationality in the *act of thinking* and its simultaneous liberation of all limits. Levinas' attempt to reconcile both notions in the "marvel of the idea of infinity" is, in my view, largely based on a confusion of concept with meaning. If the semantic of 'infinity' refers, indeed, to an end of all constraints, this meaning itself, on the other hand, is undoubtedly based upon a concept — a concept that, as such, presupposes, a relation of opposition (to the 'finite'). In other words: As all semantic concepts 'infinity' presupposes other terms, and that is to say: borders. Determination, as the word itself reveals, needs limits. The idea of infinity, thus, appears to have a bit less 'marvelous' power than Levinas pretends. It does not allow for the *transgression* of all conceptual limits, Levinas claims for it. It rather transforms the notion of transgression *into* a concept. Levinas' metaphysical promise, the breakthrough into being by means of the *idea* of infinity, is, strictly speaking, based on weak grounds.

It is a strong distrust of reason, a deep skepticism towards any connection between rationality and the substance of the world that comes to light in this

celebration of the encounter with absolute otherness as the discovery of being. The origin of this skepticism might be also traced back to Kant's epistemology. Yet, there is a fundamental difference between Kant's philosophy and phenomenological thought. If Kant remained *agnostic* about any ontological relationship between the human intellect and the essence of the world, this attitude leads within phenomenology to a radical *antagonism* between both entities. Kant's agnosticism, here, is replaced by the certainty that being and truth might be reached only and exclusively beyond rational knowledge. However, this radical ontological skepticism towards Reason constitutes an intellectual attitude that is by no means more plausible than any traditional belief in the rational nature of being. Platonic ontology and its denial are equally likely or unlikely.

Levinas' conception of ethics, focusing on the idea of transcendence, evidently, exploits the traditional notions (and connotations) of metaphysics, as this term always referred to a sphere of being beyond everyday life and physical materiality. (In this regard even transcendence and transcendentality—which so often are confused—share the same properties.[1]) Yet, at the same time, his ethics confers to metaphysics a new function. Metaphysics, commonly, is linked to epistemology. Platonic *ideas* or Aristotelian *formae* are concepts of being that determine conditions of knowledge. However, at latest with Kant's philosophy, this

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1   The adjective 'transcendent' traditionally refers to a sphere of being beyond the material world the entities of which (intellectual entities as [Platonic] ideas or [Aristotelian] *formae* or personal entities as Gods) are considered to exist independently from the thinking of Man. The Kantian adjective 'transcendental', on the other hand, refers to the rational categories of human thinking; they allow for the knowledge of external objects, though it is not certain that in terms of ontology anything corresponds to them in the physical world. Levinas' concept somehow merges them together by an inversion of the Kantian notion of the transcendental. Whereas in Kant's thought transcendentality is linked with the rational means of understanding the world, Levinas' transcendence is just based on a renunciation of all intellectual instruments that might convey knowledge about it. Yet, just such surrender of rationality promises a transgression that allows for the discovery of being. In this sense, Levinas clearly distinguishes between ontology and metaphysics: "À la théorie, comme intelligence des êtres, convient le titre général d'ontologie. L'ontologie qui ramène l'Autre au Même, promeut la liberté qui est l'identification du Même, qui ne se laisse pas aliéner par l'Autre. Ici, la théorie s'engage dans une voie qui renonce au Désir métaphysique, à la merveille de l'extériorité, dont vit ce Désir.—Mais la théorie comme respect de l'extériorité, dessine une autre structure essentielle de la métaphysique" (Levinas, *Totalité et infini* 33.) ['To theory as comprehension of beings the general title ontology is appropriate. Ontology, which reduces the other to the same, promotes freedom — the freedom that is the identification of the same, not allowing itself to be alienated by the other. Here theory enters upon a course that renounces metaphysical Desire, renounces the marvel of exteriority from which that Desire lives. But theory understood as a respect for exteriority delineates another structure essential for metaphysics {Levinas, *Totality and infinity* 42s.}.]

traditional task of metaphysics, the foundation of epistemology, becomes obsolete. If the *thing in itself* beyond the *appearance* is by no means accessible to human Reason, how could it still allow for any metaphysical determination? In Kant's thought metaphysics, therefore, is somehow absorbed by epistemology. Seen from this perspective, Levinas' attempt to make ethics the realm of metaphysics, his endeavor to transform ethics into metaphysics (and, vice versa, metaphysics into ethics), in order to identify them with one another, confers not only a new function, but, at the same time, a new base to metaphysics (as well as to ethics).[1] This way, metaphysics becomes possible again *as* ethics (and ethics gains a foothold in epistemology). Levinas' definition of ethics, thus, grants to ontology, to this age-old branch of philosophy, a new ground and a justification of its persistence. Levinas' phenomenological ethics strives for providing an argument in favor of the survival of metaphysics beyond its presumed worthlessness in modern thinking.

But—such question is hardly avoidable—what are the, so to say, moral consequences for an ethics conceived of as metaphysics, for an ethics modeled on traditionally metaphysical notions? What does it mean that such ethics predominantly consists in the acknowledgment of radical, of absolute otherness of the Other?

The first and quite obvious consequence that follows from these conditions is that ethics no longer consists in a definition of rules for the interaction of people living together, a traditionally undoubtedly primordial task of ethics. But Levinas, nonetheless, can't avoid assuming a common base for human interaction, as even an encounter on the base of respect — the moral name for absolute otherness — presupposes a relation between the Same and the Other. What, in his view, creates the possibility of establishing such relation, a mediation between them is *language*:

> Nous tâcherons de montrer que le *rapport* du Même à l'Autre — auquel nous semblons imposer des conditions si extraordinaires — est le langage. (Levinas, *Totalité et infini* 28)

> We shall try to show that the *relation* between the same and the other — on which we seem to impose such extraordinary conditions — is language. (Levinas, *Totality and Infinity* 39)

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1   From an historical point of view, Levinas' foundation of metaphysics by a recourse to ethics is but one of the many attempts to reestablish metaphysics in post-Kantian philosophy. Hegel's transformation of history in the story of a self-discovery of the spirit, Schopenhauer's *will* and Nietzsche's will to power—to quote only the most prominent among them—aim at the same purpose.

But the semantics of such language, a language beyond all logic, beyond all knowledge and understanding—and this will be one of the crucial arguments of Derrida's objections in his reaction to Levinas' *Totalité et infini*, 'Totality and Infinity'—remains void. From a semantic point of view, there is no way of defining any positive form of interaction that might be derived from the idea of complete, of total otherness.[1] As we shall discuss still more in detail later on, the dissolution of form constitutes neither a necessary, nor a sufficient condition of signification. It even undermines its possibility.

Moreover, the definition of any ethical *rule*, of any principle of interaction, unavoidibly, would put into doubt the radicality of otherness, as moral rules imply reciprocity: My own duty towards the other is equal to his duty towards myself. Yet, such reciprocity, obviously, undermines the idea of irreducible otherness, as reciprocity makes persons, to a certain extent, necessarily similar. Consequently, any definable principle of interaction appears unavoidably contingent with regard to total otherness, it, therefore, irrevocably conflicts with the very base of Levinas' ethics.

If Levinas himself does not take into account any of the difficulties raised by

1   Levinas seems to avoid these difficulties by defining meaning itself in ontological, strictly speaking in religious terms: "Cette façon de défaire la forme adéquate au Même pour se présenter comme Autre, c'est signifier ou avoir un sens. Se présenter en signifiant, c'est parler" (Levinas, *Totalité et infini* 61). ['This way of undoing the form adequate to the Same so as to present oneself as other is to signify or to have a meaning. To present oneself by signifying is to speak'{Levinas, *Totality and Infinity* 66}.] However, such identification of communication and self-presentation not only disregards entirely any pragmatic motivation of linguistic exchange, at the same time, it leaves open some very basic questions about language, especially that of its understandability. The capacity of recognizing and grasping meaning necessarily presupposes an entity that preexists in relation to the act of communication. No doubt, meaning is created within the very act of communication, but such creation would not happen if the elements that make it possible were not prior to this act – to every single act of communication. But such constraints are covered up by Levinas' recourse to the deeply religious notion of revelation: "*L'expérience absolue n'est pas dévoilement mais révélation:* coïncidence de l'exprimé et de celui qui exprime, manifestation, par là même privilégiée d'Autrui, manifestation d'un visage pardelà la forme" (Levinas, *Totalité et infini* 61). ['*The absolute experience is not disclosure but revelation:* a coinciding of the expressed with him who expresses, which is the privileged manifestation of the Other, the manifestation of a face over and beyond form'{Levinas, *Totality and Infinity* 65s.}]. Yet, precisely this coincidence of the subject of enunciation and its content, the *énoncé*, is pure claim. And the notion of revelation hardly allows to identify them with one another: Revelation presupposes transcendence, it is necessarily based on the idea of the existence of a transcendent being acting *in* and *by* the act of revelation. Levinas somehow plays on the notion of 'disclosure'. Disclosure presupposes insight. In this respect, an insight, therefore, might be, indeed, called a disclosure. But such insight is not necessarily caused by revelation. To repeat this argument again: Revelation presupposes transcendent acting. There is no theoretical concept that might be able to elude this condition of any revelation.

his own theoretical premises, this lack of interest is, presumably, due to his specific concept of ethics. Though its goal is just to transcend theory and to free Man from his captivity in unavoidably selfish theoretical issues, Levinas conceives of ethics as a highly theoretical phenomenon: Its major task consists in preserving the integrity of otherness. Any pragmatics of ethics, together with the theoretical implications that any pragmatic includes, do not come into play, as they lay far beyond Levinas' predominantly metaphysical perspective on ethics.

What is more, Levinas' ethics of radical otherness is a highly individualized ethics. The totally other is and must be an individual, a completely unique person. If he belonged to whatsoever group or category, absolute otherness would come to an end. Also for this reason, it is difficult to identify any perspective for a social dimension in Levinas' ethics. And this, again, proves a consequence of the epistemological premises of phenomenology: The solipsistic cognitive process that takes place between the subject of understanding and the *phainómenon* corresponds to and is mirrored by an ethics based on a still solipsistic experience of transgression as transcendence.

Traditionally, however, ethics is considered to be the ethics of a community, and this is true for several reasons. Ethics not only defines the rule of interaction *for* a community, but it defines them, as well, *in* and even *by* a community. This second aspect is of considerable importance as it guarantees the liability and, at the same time, the validity of ethical principles. The community is the addressee of these principles, but it constitutes, at the same time, the institution that ensures their

persistent validity. Ethics seems to be, by nature, the ethics of a community.[1]

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1   There is, interestingly, one remarkable exception to this rule, namely, the ethics of the *New Testament*: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Mark 12:31). Unlike in the *Old Testament*, the neighbor in the Gospel is defined by no social relationship preceding this commandment of love. The neighbor is no longer your neighbor, as you belong both to the same community, or to the same family or people. He is your neighbor because and only because the other has been created, as yourself has been, to the image and likeness of your Creator. Such ethics is, therefore, not based on a community, but its foundation is to be found solely in God himself. The relation to him lays the ground for all ethics, as the Gospel explicitly states: "whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me" (Matthew 25.40). The love for God and the love for the neighbor are interdependent. Compared with the conception of the neighbor in the *Old Testament*, his role is obviously universalized in the *New Testament*. Everybody, and no longer only the members of the same social community, becomes your neighbor as all men are creatures of the same God. At the same time, however, the very notion of community loses any importance for the constitution of ethics, the only ground of which is from now on a triangular relationship between the Creator and two individual persons. Seen from this perspective, the ethics of Levinas presents itself, to some extent, as the counterpart of the Christian ethics. Both are not based on the fundament of a social community, but on a relationship between individual human beings. However, both ethical conceptions point, so to say, in opposite directions. Whereas in the *New Testament* the relation to oneself constitutes the model of the relation to the other ("You shall love your neighbor *as yourself*"), Levinas' ethics, on the contrary, demands the transgression of the self in order to make ethics possible. However, some of the characteristics Levinas ascribes to the figure of the Other remind of traditional divine attributes, especially the idea of "total otherness". It is, in this regard, revealing, that Levinas tries to shape the very act of creation in terms of radical otherness: "La grande force de l'idée de la création, telle que l'apporta le monothéisme, consiste en ce que cette création est *ex nihilo* – non par parce que cela représente une œuvre plus miraculeuse que l'information démiurgique de la matière, mais parce que, par là, l'être séparé et créé n'est pas simplement issu du père, mais lui est absolument autre" (Levinas, *Totalité et infini* 58). ['The great force of the idea of creation such as it was contributed by monotheism is that this creation is ex nihilo—not because this represents a work more miraculous than the demiurgic informing of matter, but because the separated and created being is thereby not simply issued from the father, but is absolutely other that the father'{Levinas, *Totality and Infinity* 63}.] This argument is all the more remarkable as the historical circumstances that motivated Augustine to introduce the idea of a *creation out of nothing* were quite different from those here evoked by Levinas. The Church Father's main interest was to preserve the integrity of Christian belief by a rejection of all gnostic-manichean interpretation of Creation that might have affected the concept of God's omnipotence. Indeed, not in order to enhance the marvelous nature of the act of Creation, but as a guarantee of the divine origin of the *entire* Creation the concept of a *creatio ex nihilo* was invented by Augustine. What is more, the idea of total otherness does not really apply to the relation between God and his Creation, as the work of the Creator, especially, by its beauty, reflects its divine origin. This is, by the way, is the basic assumption on which the notion of the *Book of Nature* is based. The idea of Man as *imago Dei* therefore only accentuates in the case of human beings a general similarity that exists between God and his Creation. Levinas' reinterpretation of the theological concept of a *creation out of nothing*, on closer consideration, proves a strategy for providing a theological base to his own ethical notion of absolute otherness the conceptual grounds of which remain weak. (But, as might be mentioned only in passing, does it really support Levinas' argument if the figure of the Other is related to the product of an act of creation? Of a *creation* of that Other *by* the Same and made by him out of nothing? It seems more than doubtful that under such conditions nothingness guarantees—radical—otherness.)

However, all these characteristic and indispensable traits of traditional ethics are abandoned in Levinas' thought. And they have necessarily to be neglected in a concept of ethics that originates from a fundamentally solipsistic, not to say—though Levinas himself frequently uses this term—egoist epistemology. Hence, even the ethical way out of such solitude, that he proposes, works only partly, as the encounter with the irreducibly other produces again solipsistic experiences of otherness. And precisely absolute otherness inevitably, not to say by definition, produces highly individual experiences.

The first part of Jacques Derrida's reply to Levinas' *Totality and Infinity* in his long article *Violence et métaphysisque, (Violence and Metaphysics)*, gives the impression of broad agreement to Levinas' argument. Yet, in the second part of this essay, a rather harsh criticism, though partially hidden under Derrida's polite rhetoric, can't escape the reader's notice. Strictly speaking, Derrida fundamentally puts into question the central issue of Levinas' theoretical system, namely the base of his combination of metaphysics and ethics.

Derrida's objections frequently refer to the work of Edmund Husserl and Martin Heidegger, in order to demonstrate Levinas' misunderstanding of the thought of these originators and proponents of phenomenology.[1] As the so to say orthodoxy of Levinas' reading of their work is of minor importance for Derrida's discussion of Levinas' main argument, I will not go into the details of that aspect of Derrida's essay. I will instead focus rather on the systematic dimension of their debate, considering their controversy within the logic of phenomenology itself. For, as I will detail in what follows, from this point of view, both positions appear, to a certain degree, equally plausible. They both have their internal conclusiveness, depending on which perspective one takes.

One of the major objections raised by Derrida against Levinas' concept of ethics consists in the assertion that, from the very beginning of phenomenological

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1   To quote just one example: "On pourrait sans doute montrer que Levinas, inconfortablement installé—et déjà par l'histoire de sa pensée—dans la différence entre Husserl et Heidegger, critique toujours l'un dans un style et un schéma empruntés à l'autre, finissant par les renvoyer ensemble dans les coulisses comme compères dans le «jeu du Même» et complices dans le même coup de force historico-philosophique" (Jacques Derrida, "Violence et métaphysique. Essai sur la pensée d'Emmanuel Levinas", in: J. D., *L'écriture et la différence*, Paris. Éditions du Seuil, 1967, 117-228, cf. 145). ['It could no doubt be demonstrated that Levinas, uncomfortably situated in the difference between Husserl and Heidegger—and, indeed, by virtue of the history of his thought—always criticizes the one in a style and according to a scheme borrowed from the other, and finishes by sending them off into the wings together as partners in the "play of the same" and as accomplices in the same historico-political coup' {Jacques Derrida, "Violence and Metaphysics", in: J. D., *Writing and Difference*, The U Chicago P, 1978, 79-152, cf. 97s.}.]

thought, the *phainómenon* itself was regarded as something radically exterior:

> Les corps, les choses transcendantes et naturelles sont des autres en général pour ma conscience. Ils sont dehors et leur transcendance est le signe d'une altérité déjà irréductible. […] L'altérité de la chose transcendante, bien qu'elle soit déjà irréductible, ne l'est que par l'inachèvement indéfini de mes perceptions originaires. Elle est donc sans commune mesure avec l'altérité aussi irréductible d'autrui qui ajoute à la dimension de l'inachèvement (le corps d'autrui dans l'espace, l'histoire de nos rapports, etc.) une dimension de non-originarité plus profonde, l'impossibilité radicale de faire le tour pour voir les choses de l'autre côté. Mais sans la première altérité, celle des corps (et autrui est aussi d'entrée de jeu un corps), la deuxième ne pourrait surgir. (Derrida, "Violence et métaphysique" 182s)

> Bodies, transcendent and natural things, are others in general for my consciousness. They are outside, and their transcendence is the sign of an already irreducible alterity. […] The alterity of the transcendent thing, although already irreducible, is such only by means of the indefinite incompleteness of my original perceptions. Thus it is incomparable to the alterity of Others, which is also irreducible, and adds to the dimension of incompleteness (the body of the Other in space, the history of our relations, etc.) a more profound dimension of nonoriginality — the radical impossibility of going around to see things from the other side. But without the first alterity, the alterity of bodies (and the Other is also a body, from the beginning), the second alterity could never emerge. (Derrida, "Violence and Metaphysics" 124)

Unlike Levinas, Derrida claims that the very notion of *phainómenon* already implies irreducible otherness. As the *phainómenon* is the object that appears *to* me, it is indeed correct to say that there is a basic *difference* which separates the self from this object. From a logical point of view, subject and object are, in fact, opposite. Yet, on closer examination, it looks as if the difference between Derrida and Levinas leads to a debate not about words, but about one word, or better, one notion: the idea of the *totality* or *irreducibility* of otherness.

If it is undeniable that the relation between subject and object constitutes an opposition, the question is to what extent this opposition becomes radical or absolute. Levinas claims that the *phainómenon* as such, as something that appears *to* me, is always already integrated into the perspective of the same. And

as the *phainómenon* comes into my view only as already viewed by me, there is, indeed, no room left for any relevant otherness, for any meaningful outside of my perspective of understanding. This is why Levinas speaks of the *closure* of the cognitive process. There is nothing, within this process itself, that is able to transcend the realm of understanding. Derrida, on the other hand, focuses on the idea of the *phainómenon* as an *object*. The very need of cognition presupposes to him the existence of a fundamental difference that as such will never and by no means disappear.

Levinas' and Derrida's position both seem, as I said, depending on the perspective one takes, equally convincing. Derrida argues from a logical point of view, and under these conditions, the conceptual opposition between subject and object, actually, remains irrevocable. On the other hand, Levinas takes into consideration the cognitive process between the *phainómenon* and the same. Considering *its* logic, there is indeed no outside of this process, as the *phainómenon* always already appears to *me* and only to *me* as an individual being. Regardless of the question of an appropriate interpretation of Husserl and Heidegger, from a systematic point of view, Derrida's and Levinas' positions indeed, somehow, can claim equal plausibility.

But what are the consequences of this equivalence of Levinas' and Derrida's respective positions for the constitution of ethics within phenomenology? As we saw, in Levinas' thought the irrevocable and indispensable closure of understanding constitutes a necessary condition of ethics, as this closure makes ethics possible and at the same time necessary—necessary as the desire of transcendence is, following Levinas, inherent to the very concept of intentionality. Such transgression of the cognitive features of any understanding, which deeply characterizes the encounter with the absolutely other, enables an attitude of respect. But beyond this respect, as we discussed already, no other moral value or principle seems to be definable. The promise of a breakthrough to being thus remains void.

On the other hand, it is very disputable if there is at all any base for ethics as a specific human attitude or behavior in Derrida's thought. The encounter with the other, in his view, is nothing else than a specific consequence of the irreducibility that characterizes already the *phainómenon* itself. And the specificity of the encounter with the Other seems all the more precarious as it relies on the, to use again Derrida's own words: *impossibilité radicale de faire le tour pour voir les choses de l'autre côté* (on 'the radical impossibility of going around to see things from the other side'). But, what does this, at first sight quite enigmatic, formulation precisely mean?

Implicitly, this sentence refers to Levinas' notion of *visage*, 'face', which constitutes an important aspect of his concept of the Other. The face allows for the approach *to* the Other.[1] This role given to the face by Levinas explains why Derrida makes the impossibility to go around things and to see them from the other side an important issue. However, he is, quite revealingly, still talking about *things*, and the very use of this term demonstrates the status which ethics has in his reaction

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1   "Le visage est une présence vivante, il est expression. La vie de l'expression consiste à dé-faire la forme où l'étant, s'exposant comme thème, se dissimule par là même. Le visage parle. La manifestation du visage est déjà discours. Celui qui se manifeste porte, selon le mot de Platon, secours à lui-même. Il défait à tout instant la forme qu'il offre" (Lévinas, *Totalité et infini*, p. 61). ['The face is a living presence; it is expression. The life of expression consists in undoing the form in which the existent, exposed as a theme, is thereby dissimulated. The face speaks. The manifestation of the face is already discourse' {Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, p. 66}.] If language allows for Levinas the establishment of a relation between the Same and the Other, the face plays an important, not to say the crucial part for the creation of such relationship as it seems to provide the very origin of language. Especially his use of the adverb *déjà* reveals the fundamental role that he describes to the face for the emergence of language: "La manifestation du visage est *déjà* dis-cours" ('The manifestation of the face is *already* discourse'). I will not discuss here in detail the highly questionable equivalence between face and discourse claimed by Levinas. We only should take into account that language again is conceived of as pure self-presentation. And, indeed, only by means of such a concept of language it seems be possible to transform the elementary phe-nomenological situation, the confrontation to the same with the other, into an origin of language. Crucial, in this regard, is Levinas' assertion of the interdependency of expression and dissolution: "La vie de l'expression consiste à défaire la forme où l'étant, s'exposant comme thème, se dis-simule par là même" ('The life of expression consists in undoing the form in which the existent, exposed as a theme, is thereby dissimulated.') By means of a destruction of form via expression Levinas seems to make his basic condition for the origin of ethics, the transgression of the same by the discovery of (absolute)n otherness, concrete. But this definition of the function of the face not only substantiates the logical relationship between the same and the other, it, also, lays the ground for language as this self-destruction is based on a semiotic operation, on the transforma-tion of the self into a sign. However, there is no evidence that the notion of sign, even necessarily, implies the destruction of form. It looks much more, as if, on the contrary, form constitutes an unavoidable condition of the recognition of meaning. The semiotic quality of a thing, the fact that it refers to another thing than itself, can hardly be adequately described as a consequence of destruction and self-dissimulation. Signs, as for instance and especially linguistic ones, are things that from the very beginning have no other identity than that of referring to something else than themselves. In this case the notion of transgression would be totally misleading, as the meaning does not constitute any transcendence, it is part of the identity of the thing which is sign because its identity is founded on the relation between two entities. And, as this relation is characterized by interdependence, there is no possibility to distinguish ontologically between the same and the other. Interdependence makes the difference between both attributes a purely perspective one. In the case of indexical signs, these signs gain a semiotic quality by being *related* to something else by someone else. But it seems difficult, if not impossible to imagine how things might become signs by self-destruction. Levinas transformation of ontological relations into semiotic categories appears hardly convincing. However, this lack of evidence for his claims puts basically into ques-tion the operationality of his ethics.

to Levinas. Ethics brings about further conditions for dealing with a *phainómenon*, with the object of knowledge; and these conditions turn out to be restrictions, as there is no access to the other side. But this proves a *gradual* difference, not an *essential* or even *substantial* one as his words, on the other hand, seem, nonetheless, to suggest: *l'altérité de la chose transcendante [...] est donc sans commune mesure avec l'altérité aussi irréductible d'autrui*. Yet, Derrida's own discourse undermines the plausibility of that statement.

Levinas' as well as Derrida's argument, rather than offering convincing concepts of ethics, basically show the fundamental difficulties to establish any notion of ethics within the framework of phenomenology. And, especially, the controversy between them is apt to demonstrate the, so to say, systemic impediments that make it problematic or even impossible to formulate ethical principles on the basis of the elementary assumptions of phenomenological philosophy. Derrida is certainly right to say that Levinas' claim for an ethics of transcendence, for an ethics build upon a radical transgression of all rational capacities and categories, relying on pure experience of otherness, ultimately turns out to be a fundamentally void ethics.[1] On the other hand, Derrida's criticism of Levinas' argument hardly exposes an alternative foundation of phenomenological ethics. Ethics, in his view, shrinks to another, more complex form of epistemology. The encounter with the other, as designed by Derrida, brings about a cognitive process that makes knowledge more complicated, as it underlies some specific restrictions. But there is no essential difference between dealing with a *phainómenon* in general and dealing with that particular *phainómenon* which is constituted by the other. Strictly speaking, there is no specificity of any ethics in Derrida's reply to Levinas.

As we are mainly interested in the relevance of phenomenological ethics and its reception by deconstructionism for the issues of literature, there is still one more question to be discussed a little bit more in detail, namely the role of language.

We saw that Levinas defines its function very precisely: *Nous tâcherons de montrer que le* rapport *du Même et de l'Autre [...] est le langage*. Language, thus, has to bridge the gap between the Self and the Other. However, as we mentioned already, Derrida, with quite convincing arguments, puts into question the possibility

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1   "L'infiniment autre, l'infinité de l'Autre n'est l'autre *comme* infinité positive, Dieu ou ressem-blance avec Dieu. L'infiniment autre ne serait pas ce qu'il est, autre, s'il était infinité positive et s'il ne gardait en lui la négativité de l'in-défini, de l' ἄπειρον" (Derrida, "Violence et métaphysique" 168). ['The infinitely other, the infinity of the other, is not the other *as* a positive infinity, as God or as resemblance with God. The infinitely Other would not be what it is, other, if it was a positive infinity, and if it did not maintain within itself the negativity of the indefinite, of the *apeiron* {Der-rida, "Violence and Metaphysics" 114}.]

of such language under the condition of radical transcendence:

> Levinas parle *en fait* de l'infiniment autre, mais, en refusant d'y reconnaître une modification intentionnelle de l'ego — ce qui serait pour lui un acte totalitaire et violent — il se prive du fondement même et de la possibilité de son propre langage.[1]

> Levinas *in fact* speaks of the infinitely other, but by refusing to acknowledge an intentional modification of the ego — which would be a violent and totalitarian act for him — he deprives himself of the very foundation and possibility of his own language. (Levinas, *Totality and Infinity* 125)

But I will not discuss their disagreement here more in detail. I'm much more interested to see at which point of his argument Levinas brings language into play. And, in this respect, one has to admit that this happens quite late within the logic of his conception. Only, when the notion of absolute otherness as the very condition of all ethics is already established, only then language comes into play. Consequently, language is hardly more than a means of making possible what logically seems impossible. It is a strategy for a transgression of transgression, for a mediation of total otherness. Yet, it is hard to imagine how the exchange of words can take place without undermining the absolute otherness of the other. Linguistic communication, on which all language is based, irrevocably defines and, simultaneously, presupposes a common ground for both interlocutors in their encounter.

In sum, in Levinas' ethics of total otherness, language comes into play only as a means of *dealing with* such otherness. It appears to be a quite welcome instrument to make pragmatically possible what theoretically seems to be excluded. But language doesn't *constitute* the conditions of ethics. It proves a means of handling the logically insoluble problems raised by an ethics of transcendence.

It is, precisely, this last aspect that turns out to be of particular interest for a discussion of the ethical status of literature and its basic affinity with ethical criticism we were talking about at the beginning of this paper. The lesson we can draw form the debate between Levinas and Derrida can and even has to generalized.

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1   Levinas, *Totalité et infinité* 183. Cf. also: "Ainsi, dans sa plus haute exigence non-violente, dénonçant le passage par l'être et le moment du concept, la pensée de Levinas ne nous proposerait pas seulement, comme nous le disions plus haut, une éthique sans loi mais aussi un langage sans phrase" (ibid. 219).['Thus, in its most elevated nonviolent urgency, denouncing the passage through Being and the moment of the concept, Levinas' thought would not only propose an ethics without law, as we said above, but also a language without phrase' {Levinas, *Totality and Infinity* 147}.]

No ethical system, no theory of ethics is able to lay the ground of ethical criticism. As I will now briefly argue at the end of my paper, it is the specific structure of literary communication itself—and not the function of language in whatsoever ethical system—that establishes the ethical relevance of literature. If literature is open to discussions of its moral status, and if the debate about such questions seems to remain an unavoidable part of literary criticism, this is due to its basic communicative conditions.

The ethical nature of literature is based on mainly three factors: The first of them is a rather trivial, not to say banal one: Literature deals with human actions. This is quite obvious for the genres of drama and narration itself, but even lyric poetry is, in general, based on actions. Though, unlike ballads, poems don't unfold entire plots, the situation they present as well as their discourse, in general presupposes actions. Lyric discourse reacts to or draws consequences from action. This is why it probably seems to lend itself less than other poetic genres to moral issues, although, by no means, this dimension is totally lacking in lyric poetry.

Yet, to say it again, this first factor conditioning the ethical status of literature is a rather banal one. More important seems to be the second one, namely the very structure of literary communication.

As we saw in our discussion of Levinas' concept of ethics, his philosophy presents a highly individualized ethics. The Other, on which figure his ethics centers, is at all times an individual other. On the contrary, literary communication is basically asymmetrical. The individual authors of literary texts address a multiplicity of addressees. It constitutes the community of communication in which a book is received, in which it is discussed, criticized and praised.

This is one of the reasons why literary texts enact discussion not only with their authors but, predominantly, among readers. The multiplicity of addresses produces a network of communication that largely exceeds communication between sender and addressee. The relevance of these communicative conditions of literature for its ethical status consists in the fact that the community of literary communication is tendentially identical with the community that guarantees for the validity of ethical principles. Because, as we claimed, ethics is—to use an expression of the French philosopher Henri Bergson—*un fait social*, 'a social fact', ethics is always the ethics of a community.[1] It is defined *for* and guaranteed *by* this community. This way, literary texts address the *guarantor* of ethics. The subject of literary communication

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1   This, by the way, applies, also, to ethical systems the principles of which are not based on or defined for a community as the acceptance and, hence, the *validity* of these systems depends on the consensus of a community.

and the guarantor of ethics are tendentially identical.

To this argument one might convincingly object that this kind of communication structure is not specific to literary texts. It applies to all forms of publishing. Publishing texts, by definition, entails asymmetrical communication. Especially historiographical texts seem to be apt to put into question my analysis. They, as well, are dealing with human acting, and they address more or less the same community of communication as literary texts do. What, then, is the specific feature that confers to literature its special ethical status? Here, the third factor I mentioned comes into play, namely, the *reality status* of literature.

Literary texts are, to a large extent, characterized by fictionality. They have the freedom to report things that don't correspond to facts — although they are not at all obliged to do so. This specific relation between literary texts and reality brings about the logical status of their content. *Literary texts* deal with *possibilities*, they present *possible human actions*. And as these actions don't — or don't have to — correspond to historical facts, they have a mere textual status. They exist only in and by texts. In other words, they are exclusively destined to communication and therefore initiate communication. Consequently, literary texts are submitted to judgement.

The probably most common subject of communication about literature is their aesthetic value on which their success largely depends. But such judgement is by no means confined to aesthetic questions. As literary texts present possible human actions they, also, initiate a discourse about the moral value of such acting, as their possibility also makes them potentially real actions. The question, therefore, is, too, if they *should* become true. This is why it is so important that the subject of such discussions and the guarantor of ethical principles are tendentially identical.

Historical facts can, of course, be judged morally, but fictional actions are always already part of communication and, therefore, *lend* themselves to discussion. By their very communicative status, they are offered to discussion, as they are made *for* the audience.

The structural affinity between the logical status of human actions in fictional discourse and their propensity to moral assessment is, by the way, mirrored in literature itself. Literary texts frequently present morally controversial actions, such cases are probably even their favorite subjects. Somehow, literature is a medium for morally dubious cases. And, this is, by no means, true only for modernity.

To quote just some prominent examples from Western literature: The plot of Greek tragedies structurally unfolds morally complex questions. The figure of *Antigone*, for instance, reflects the conflict between the abuse of political power and the legitimacy of resistance against it. And *Oedipus Rex* deals with the question

of moral responsibility for non-deliberate actions. The songs of the Troubadours, as well, are dedicated to an ethical conflict. They implicitly discuss the morality of erotic desire under the conditions of a restrictive religious ethics. And classical French tragedies are centered on the controversial relationship between public power and private emotions. The basic literary propensity to discussions of ethical principles, due to its elementary communicative conditions, is mirrored in a tendency of literary texts to represent morally controversial human acting.

Pre-modern literary texts, and certainly not *only* pre-modern ones, frequently tend to control the propensity of literature to moral discussion by defining explicitly the moral value of the actions represented in them. Precisely this is the function of many comments of narrators or authors in literary texts. They intervene in order to fix ethical meaning. But this interest in control is nothing else than another symptom of the very nature of literary texts that, by the very structure of their communicative conditions, tend to put moral principles to discussion which always includes the potentially subversive power of putting these principles into question. This is why literary texts, presenting morally transgressive or controversial actions, unlike even historiographical texts that report on facts that constitute obvious moral atrocities, are considered to be much more subversive.

Notwithstanding the remarkable impact that the phenomenological debate about ethics undoubtedly had on literary theory, I'm skeptical about its conceptual relevance for literary methodology. However, at the same time, the discussion between Levinas and Derrida demonstrates that whatsoever theory cannot provide a sufficient or even suitable ground for ethical criticism. The base of the ethical dimension of literature and its affinity with ethical criticism are constituted by the specific communicative conditions of literary discourse itself. Ethical criticism, therefore, should perhaps focus much more on the structural conditions of the ethics of literature than it has done in the past.

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Homo Homini Lupus:
The Relationship between Man and Animal as a Topical Challenge to Ethical Literary Criticism

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Abstact   In Ibsen's dramatic works the fictional self is divided into two opposing representations. On the one hand there is the character, representing the idea of a semper idem, somebody who, independent of the changing situations, remains in the same mood, always sticking to the ideals of a constant idealistic personality. On the other side the person, who continually switches from one state of mind to another without linking the single moments of existential expression together to a chain of being. These two types of human representation, the ideal and the existential, have found their main configurations in Henrik Ibsen's dramas *Brand* and *Peer Gynt*. In these two plays Ibsen intends to show how this moral guideline leads into human catastrophes and decline. Life understood as an uninterrupted succession of ethical sameness is due to Ibsen the best guaranty of destroying what you want to take care of. Brand's wife and child become victim to his way of acting consequently and last not least he is punished by God, whose voice tells him that he is "the God of love." Finally I intend to show how the inherent beast in man turns out to be even more beastlike than that of wild animals then in opposite to the wild beast men has the ability to control and domesticate their animal instincts
Key words   man; wolf; cruelty; ethical evaluation; content; form
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In daily life it is quite common to use animal metaphors to describe human behavior: he looks like a beast, you dirty pig, monkey tricks, bird of ill omen etc. Such designations mostly don't do justice to the animals then most of them don't do harm to or attack other species of wild-life. Quite in opposite to human beings, who are able to attack and kill intentionally in order to defense and protect their privileges and their territories.

In the world of animals one has to make a distinction between beasts of prey, which chase, kill and eat other animals in order to survive, and domestic animals like dogs and cats, which enjoy a peaceful existence in family surroundings. My purpose to day is to draw attention to a special kind of wild animals, which differ from all other since they have an inherent killer instinct. Especially the wolfs are terrifying because they attack flocks of sheep and goats and kill them only for the sake of killing thus satisfying their natural urges. It is in this context remarkable that an old Latin proverb compares the human being with a wolf: Homo homini lupus, which means; the man is like a wolf to other men. I was reminded of this comparison as I once left the big monkey house in the zoological garden in Frankfurt am Main. After having left the last cage with the gorillas I was suddenly looking at myself in a big mirror with the following art description: "*Th*e human being, the most dangerous beast in the world." This perspective is interesting because man regains his status as animal among animals. It is striking that from this point of view the opposition man: animal don't function any more.

Regarding the split structure of the human mind it may prove to be a challenging task to show how it is possible to include the bestial nature of man in a theory of ethical literary criticism. In the following I want to take my point of departure in professor Nie's use of the sphinx figure as a symbolic representation of the human duplicity and figure out whether ethical literary criticism as a theoretical doorway to literary texts is capable of throwing light on the unethical potentials of fiction as well.

By the following considerations it is important to keep in mind that the human being is a changing unity of cultivated and bestial qualities and to be aware of the fact that men incorporate capacities which are far more dangerous than those of every beast on four legs. It is important to pay attention to this inversion of human and animalistic qualities and examine to which extent this anti-humanitarian derailment can possibly influence the theory of ethical literary criticism. In the Freudian theory of the human mind the animal part of the human psyche is named "id", which include all mental energies that have been suppressed and stored in the subconscious part of the mind. The cultivation of the libidinous and aggressive energies of the

"id" results in what Charles Brenner calls a "reduction" of impersonal powers. Experience shows however that the fight for bringing the "id"-powers under permanent self-control is a futile attempt Even though there are no exact and permanent borders between the different levels of the mental energies and the body is captured in a continual process of interacting powers. It looks like men on the long run are not able to escape the "id"-regulated energies and establish a mental stability, which keep the beast in man under constant intellectual control.

In the history of mankind the most significant symbol of this duplex unity is the sphinx figure that in the history of art has amounted to be the most prominent symbol of a split creature. No wonder that my late friend and colleague Asbjørn Aarseth called his study on Henrik Ibsen's *Peer Gynt The animal in the human being* (Dyret i mennesket), thus calling attention to the bestial components of the main person. At the end of the 4th act of Ibsen's play Peer Gynt on his way to the Egyptian capitol Kairo senses a voice, which he identifies as belonging to the sphinx of Gizeh. The sphinx is invisible, only recognizable on its voice. It seems like Peer looks upon the sphinx as an oriental adaptation of the Norwegian Mountain King. There is however a big difference then the sphinx is a two-sided creature, consisting of a human and an animal part, in opposite to the troll-figure, which has abandoned the human nature and threatens Peer that " han må i kur mot denne hersens menneskenatur." Or in English translation: "Well, well, my son, so there's treatment to do/ curing that damned human nature in you."

Only for analytical reasons it makes sense to separate the layers of the human psyche. Freud in his theory of the human mind distinguishes between three levels, which form an intertwined mental whole. What Ereud calls the "id"-level corresponds roughly to what professor Nie Zhenzhao summarizes under the designation "the sphinx-factor" that include all urges, which sleep at the depth of the unconsciousness. Consequently the human being is due to most theoretical studies a mixture of higher and lower stages, of man and animal.

By the following considerations it is important to keep in mind that man is a changing unity of human and bestial qualities. In the Freudian theory of the human mind the "id"-level contains the animal part of the psyche, which includes all mental energies that have been suppressed and stored in the subconsciousness. Considering this duplex construction of man it is obvious to draw the conclusion that the cultivating process depends on the reduction of the "id"-occupied powers of the mind. However successful this withdrawal of the bestial urges proves to be, the total extermination of the beast in man is impossible because the "id"-character of man consists of inherent bricks in an intertwined totality of biomorphic entities.

In professor Nie Zhenzhao's interesting theory of ethical literary criticism he introduces the concept of the sphinx factor as a duplex energy, which one ought to defeat on one´s way of acting ethically. The most significant symbol of a mixed up character is the sphinx-figure, in which beast and man exist in a fast changing interrelation. In order to abandon the evil one need to identify and make clear in which arenas the beast in man occur. As far as man is the most dangerous animal in the world it seems to be an almost impossible task to domesticate his urges and keep him within the limits of ethical regulations. In almost all fields of daily life one can observe the domination of man's evil activities. The aggression of mankind manifests itself in constant offense against ethical commitments, in warfare, social conflicts, pollution and what with reference to suicide has been called "ecoside," all of which contribute to make our world more and more uninhabitable.

In this context it is worthwhile to remind of Peter Sloterdijk's warning, due to which all of us have to change our life radically otherwise there will be no future for nobody. This warning from one of the most outstanding philosophers of our time requires from all of us an ethical turn according to the moral philosophy of Immanuel Kant, who claims that you should do to others what you want others to do to you. All human experience shows however that the modus operandi of this idealistic demand goes beyond human exertion. As far as man and beast, good and bad overlap each other there remain seemingly rather few possibilities to apply ethical methods on topics that deal with the bestial side of the human activities.

Before I go on to discuss this problem more completely I want to draw attention to a sociological study in four volumes, written by the German physicist Hans-Peter Dürr, who received the alternative Nobel-price for his excellent achievements in the field of nuclear physics. According to his theses the civilized behavior of men only forms a thin surface, behind which the uncontrolled instincts prevail In the preface to the fourth volume of his sociological study *Der Mythos vom Zivilisationsprozess* (The myth of the civilizing process). He declares that the idea that modern people have tamed their animalistic nature in a better way than have pre-modern man rest on a wrong idea. He rejects Norbert Elias´ theses that the growing labor market and the stronger cooperation on all levels of social activity and trade circulation have promoted a better regulation of working conditions and sexual behavior. Taking this statement for granted it seems impossible to sustain the comprehension of man as a civilized version of an animal, then the domestication of the bestial urges is successful within a very limited scale.

Such conclusion is however wrong and based on insufficient assumptions. The theoretical applicability of good and bad depends on the changing references. It is

necessary to make a difference between content and form. An evil and bad content can as such never be subject to ethical evaluation, with one exception. The evil can be described in an outstanding and perfect way, what means that the unethical through formal transformation can be changed into good art. In analogy to the theater of the cruel one find in the history of art and literature a lot of such inversions. Many of the world's leading authors in their works establish a narrative frame-work that in analogy to the theater of the bestiality let terrible scenes occur in the light of an excellent presentation. When successful such scenarios may be helpful. It is a well-known educational principle widely used by narrators to draw attention to the terrible in order to replace it with alternative solutions.

In the following I want to make some reflections on the narrow borders between bad and good with my point of departure in modern German history. For many people it is still mysterious how one of the most civilized nations in the world could fall victim to the barbarian ideology of the Nazi party of Adolf Hitler., and the "people of authors and thinkers" changed into "the people of judges and executors." Historians declare that the reason for the 2nd world war is to be found in the peace agreement in Versailles 1918, which made Germany the only guilty in the outbreak of the 1st world war and burdened the country with war repairs, which were highly unfair and made the inhabitants disposed for the anti-French emotions, which were further stimulated through the French occupation of German territory west of the river Rhine in the years after the war. The humiliation of the German people resulted in a radical atmosphere that furthered the rise of Adolf Hitler and the takeover of power through the Nazi movement. World famous German artists were driven away and their works declared "entartet" and burned in the public. The German word "entartet" means a work of art, which has lost its character of being art. Thus the Nazis paved the way for a de-cultivation of art and literature and a re-cultivation of the arian superman. Under these circumstances art and culture were subject to barbaric decay. Symptomatic for this devaluation of moral standards and ethical norms is the following confession from Hanns Johst's play *Schlageter* from 1933, in which the main figure expresses his cultural disgust with the words: "When I hear the word culture I draw my colt (revolver)."

The collapse of civil society and the foundation of a terror regime initiated the decline of one of the most outstanding cultures in western European history and proved once and for all that no nation seems to be immune against the threat from ideological seductions. The Nazi-regime in in Germany shows how narrow the border between man and beast is and how the lack of resistance against the powers of the evil turns ordinary people into uncritical followers

Confronted with such serious breakdown of civilized manners one may, like Iris Murdoch, ask whether morality is epi-phenomenal, superficial, just a matter of historically induced conventions or irrational emotions" (4) or if "morality is fundamental to human nature" (ibid). She underlines however that anti-moral attitudes "are probably not really held by any one" (ibid). Never the less, all catastrophes and disasters of our time are caused by human hybris and arrogance. The men-made catastrophes have brought nature and the civilized world on the verge of a total collapse. The transgression of moral standards has erased the borders between human and bestial behavior and paved the wat for human bestiality, by which man has been enabled to exterminate what has been called "invaluable men, such as jews, slavish people, gipsis etc. Such bestial topics can never be subject to ethical literary evaluation. But, and this is my central concern it is absolutely possible to work out the ethical qualities inherent in the work and evaluate the work as a sort of counterpart to Baudelaire's "the flower of evil." As an example of a successful esthetic transformation of the evil I want to mention Peter Weiss' documentation of the Auschwitz process 1965 in Frankfurt am Main, Leni Riefenstahl's documentary films from the Nazi-party's self-celebrations in Nùrnberg or the film version of the Nùrnberg tribunal with Spencer Tracy and Maximilian Schell in the main roles. These literary and cinematic applications of the evil confirm that even the most terrible incidents can turn out to be subject to ethical literary criticism as far as they are good in the sense of esthetical qualities

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Entanglement of Racism and Medical Ethics:
Cee's Illness and Healing in Toni Morrison's *Home*

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Abstract   Toni Morrison's *Home* is not only a hopeful story of racial and war
trauma as well as its healing but also a realistic mirror to the ethical problems of
modern medicine in America. This paper intends to revisit the scenes of Cee's
illness and healing in the light of interdisciplinary medical humanities by focusing
on the unethical routes and unexpected consequences of medical progress, on the
human exploitation and bio-politics inherent in medical knowledge production and
medical power so as to discover the hidden racial violence and ethical problems that
Morrison intends to reveal behind the veil of 1950s America. The contrast between
Cee's healing under biomedicine and folk medicine illustrates Morrison's implicit
criticism towards the dehumanized medical system and brutal medical racism in
America, as well as her hope for humane and genuine healing in African American
folk medicine. This paper will help readers understand African American's distrust
in hospitals and the implication of the choice of different healing methods. It will
also help readers become more aware of the link between medicine and literature
and inspire them to reflect on the predicament of modern medicine in a multi-
cultural world.

Key words   Cee's illness; medical humanities; medical ethics; folk medicine;
holistic healing
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Introduction

As the 1993 Nobel laureate of literature, Toni Morrison, "who in novels characterized by visionary force and poetic import, gives life to an essential aspect of American reality" (Grimes A1), has dedicated eleven novels to the world, covering African American experience from the period of burgeoning slavery to present society with themes involving or transcending racial barriers. *Home* (2012) is her 10th novel, a best book of the year 2012, which is a story of a black veteran Frank Money who has suffered from a psychiatric ailment after returning from the Korean War. He travels to the South to rescue his dying sister Cee from a white doctor in Atlanta and brings her back to their hometown Lotus, where they both recover from their traumas and rebuild their home with the community women's help. The "scarily quiet" story is said to "pack all the thundering themes Morrison has explored before" (Charles C1). However, the traumatic effect of war and brotherly responsibilities represented by the black male protagonist distinguishes *Home* from most of Morrison's other novels which mainly center on women and race issues. Thus, *Home* is read almost unanimously as a "trauma fiction" of Frank with an "evident sign of recovery" (Ibarrola 114; Ramírez, "Hurt" 127) for "the trauma of racism, war, and post-memory is at the heart" of the story (Visser 2), in which Morrison stresses again "love and duty can redeem a blighted past" (Kakutani, par.16).

Moreover, *Home* discloses some hidden ethical problems of medicine in the racial context, especially from Cee's unnamed but life threatening illness which is a result of a white doctor's medical abuse, and her healing process which embraces alternative forms of medicine. In Morrison's own words, she intends to reveal the covert racial violence by taking readers to revision the "affluent society" of America in the 1950s so as to take "the fluff and the veil and the flowers away from the '50s'" (qtd. in Bollen), which was a time of the Korean war as well as "a lot of medical apartheid, the license of preying on black women, the syphilis trials on black man" (qtd. in Shea). However, most critics rivet their attention on Frank's trauma and discuss the portrayal of his Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

(PTSD) without paying sufficient attention to the implication of medical problems in Cee's experience. These problems constitute an important aspect of American reality that cannot be addressed solely in terms of trauma or racism or medicine but can be morally dissected and critiqued in the approach of medical humanities, which is not just an interdisciplinary instrumental approach, but also an intellectual practice of the humanities, "which enables and encourages fearless questioning of representations of caregivers and patients in all their varieties, challenges abuses of power and authority, and steadfastly refuses to accept the boundaries that science sets between biology and culture" (Jones et al. 5).

When seen from the inclusive perspectives of medial humanities aiming to deal with "the problems that cannot be adequately addressed within the boundaries set by traditional disciplines and/or methods" (Cole et al. 4), *Home* offers readers new scenes and sites that are important to our understandings of health and illness, which shows "the inescapable imbrication of biomedicine in social, political and institutional structures" (Whitehead and Woods 6). Therefore, this paper intends to revisit the primal scenes of Cee's illness and healing in the light of medical humanities by referring to some key concepts such as doctor-patient relationship, illness narrative, medical ethics and empathy while considering its cultural, historical and institutional setting so as to discover hinted problems with respect to power and justice in the 1950s America. While seeking to address the dehumanization of medicine, this paper focuses on the unethical routes and unexpected consequences of medical progress, on the human exploitation, biopolitics and problems inherent in medical knowledge production and medical power in order to contribute to the goals of medical humanities, which includes the "respect for individuals", "protection of the vulnerable" and "the pursuit of justice and health in the broadest sense" (Cole et al.12). It will also inspire readers to study *Home* from a new perspective and become more aware of the link between racial oppression and medical practice, as well as the significance of the doctor-patient relationship and the implication of the choice of different healing methods.

Cee's Illness

The subject of illness is important to everyone for being ill is every human being's inescapable experience. As "the night-side of life, a more onerous citizenship" (Sontag 3), illness has become one of the core concerns of medical humanities, which is fundamentally and conceptually different from disease. "Disease" is a biophysical event; it refers to physical disorder or infirmity (Vellenga 326), or it is defined "in the narrow biological terms of the biomedical model" as "an alteration

in biological structure or functioning" (Kleinman 4). Whereas "illness" refers to "how the sick person and the members of the family or wider social network perceive, live with, and respond to symptoms and disability" (Kleinman 3). It is the lived experience of the patient and his family, and "it is always culturally shaped" (Kleinman 5). In order to re-humanize biomedicine, George Engel advocates a broader biopsychosocial model in which disease is construed as "the embodiment of the symbolic network linking body, self and society" (qtd. in Kleinman 6) and argues against the reductionist approach adopted by the western biomedical model, in which disease is explained solely in terms of molecular biology and genetics. Therefore, when re-envisaging the primal scenes of Cee's illness, we need to situate the symbolic network within her body, self and society from how she gets the disease in both external and internal aspects so as to embrace "new historical, cultural and historical perspective, as well as different questions and methodologies" (Whitehead and Woods 1).

When coming to Doctor Beau's house to apply for being his helper, Cee has no idea what she is going to do and what is waiting for her. Mistaking her job for being like a nurse, she could not imagine that her body would be operated on experimentally. She believes in Dr. Beau without any apprehension when her friend Thelma introduced him to her as a "white doctor," a "nice" man. At her first encounter with Dr. Beau, "a small man with lots of silver hair," he sits "stiffly behind a wide, neat desk" (Morrison 64). The first question he asks her is "whether she had children or had been with a man" (64). He seems pleased to know that Cee has been married for a short while without being pregnant. Cee does not sense anything strange or ominous, only finding him "formal but welcoming" (64). Her "admiration for the doctor grew even more" (64) when she notices that Dr. Beau not only helps many poor people but also donates money for funeral expenses when "one or two died in spite of his care" (65), though it is implied later that Dr. Beau may have used these poor females for his medical research. She knows little about what happens to her for Dr. Beau sticks her with a needle to put her to sleep every time he experiments on her body (121). She even feels pleasant upon awakening from the anesthesia and believes the blood and pain that follows the examinations is a menstrual problem (122). When the housekeeper Sarah notices Cee's loss of weight, her fatigue, and her lasting periods, Cee still does not consider herself ill nor refuse Dr. Beau's continuing experiment on her. Consequently, Cee is dying for bleeding and a continuous high fever under Dr. Beau's experiments and negligence, or even deliberation. Just like cancer, the disease that Cee has got is also life-threatening. Though Morrison's narrative in this aspect is rather vague from which few clues

can be found as for when Cee gets the disease and what it is, one thing can be sure is that it is a result of "the value of the examination" (121). Cee's illness is her lived experience when suffering the disease which may be a certain kind of acute infection of the wounds in her womb resulting from Dr. Beau's experiment without being treated seriously by him.

Therefore, externally, Dr. Beau is the one who is responsible for Cee's illness for it is he who carries out intrusive gynecological experiments on her womb ruthlessly without paying attention to her physical condition when Cee knows nothing about what he is doing to her body. Without informed consent, the medical experiment the doctor carried out on Cee ruins her body. However, it is considered natural owing to the medical racialism in America, which has a dark history of medical experimentation on minority groups without their consent, such as the "experimentation with syphilis that was going on with black men at Tuskegee who thought they were receiving health care" (Bollen). The Tuskegee Syphilis Study was carried out by the U.S. Public Health Service in 1932, which "promised free medical care to about six hundred sick, desperately poor sharecroppers in Macon County, Alabama" (Washington 122). However, they withheld the treatment from these black patients in order to study the progression of symptoms and disorders in them and autopsied them when they died "in order to trace precisely the ravages of the disease in their bodies" (Washington 122). Similar to these black men in the syphilis study, Cee is taken as an experimental object or a guinea pig for the purpose of medical research without being told the truth. In the impersonal and increasingly technological medicine and research practices that exploit the least-empowered members of society, we see signs of ethical lapses.

However, despite his unethical behavior, Dr. Beau may be justified by the experiment's noble purpose of eugenics, which in America had been employed as a cover for white superiority "resulted in historical atrocities such as the involuntary sterilizations-'Mississippi appendectomies'-happening as late as 1961" (Washington 190), as Dr. Beau's wife claims that "[h]e is more than a doctor; he is a scientist and conducts very important experiments. His inventions help people. He's no Dr. Frankenstein" (60). Although the goal of eugenics was "to improve the natural, physical, mental, and temperamental qualities of the human family" (Norrgard 170), which sounded positive and was widely welcomed in the 1930s, it has a negative effect that "Eugenicists promulgated the weeding out of undesirable societal elements by discouraging or preventing the birth of children with 'bad' genetic profiles" (Washington 145). Eugenic scientists "constantly confused the concepts of biological hereditary fitness with those of class and race and African Americans

were roundly disparaged by eugenic theory" to be an inferior race (Washington 145). Therefore, Dr. Beau's eugenic beliefs are linked to the forced sterilizations that many black women have undergone since the onset of slavery, practices which have persisted in recent years. As Dr. Beau's eugenic intentions imply, Cee's loss of reproductive abilities resulted from her damaged womb may be the purpose and not just the outcome of Dr. Beau's medical experiments. His ethics reflects that medical racism and racist social structure are still prevailing in modern America.

On the other hand, Cee herself also accounts for her illness and the delayed treatment. Born alongside a road, she is considered by her step-grandmother Miss Lenore to be a "gutter child," "prelude to a sinful, worthless life" (44). She is not only neglected by her parents who "worked from before sunrise until dark" (43) but also abused by Miss Lenore both physically and verbally. Gradually she "had agreed with the label and believed herself worthless" (95). Although Frank tries his best to protect her, which weakens her instead because "having a smart, tough brother close at hand to take care of and protect you-you are slow to develop your own brain muscle" (48). As a result of the lack of family nourishment and maternal counsels, as well as her brother's overprotection, Cee is too naïve, ignorant and numbed to protect herself no matter physically or mentally. She believes that she is the doctor's assistant no matter what she is asked to do and what he does to her. Even though her body displays some symptoms of abnormality after Dr. Beau's experiments on her, she is never aware that something is wrong with her body. When she sees the paramount eugenic books of *Out of the Night*, *The Passing of the Great Race* and *Heredity, Race and Society* on the shelf of Dr. Beau's office, she does not get any hint from the book titles about Dr. Beau's eugenic research purpose. Instead, she mistakes *Out of the Night* written by a famous American geneticist and proponent of eugenics Hermann Muller for a book about mystery and feels shameful about her own small and useless schooling. Ironically, she promises to find time to "read about and understand 'eugenics'" and reassures herself that "this was a good, safe place" (65) without any doubt. Her low self-esteem, numbness and lack of medical and historical knowledge renders her an easy victim to the doctor's medical experiment. Just as what Manuela López Ramírez argues, Cee is the vulnerable, innocent maiden in the hands of the Gothic scientist-villain Dr. Beau, which "epitomizes the racial oppression of the U.S. Public Health System, as well as the self-loathing and low self-esteem the racist society instills in black individuals ("Gothic" 119).

Doctor-Patient Relationship

As one of the foundations of contemporary medical ethics, the doctor-patient

relationship is the core element of health care and the practice of medicine. It has received "philosophical, sociological, and literary attention since Hippocrates," and is the central subject in the modern medical literature (Good S26). Since both parties' beliefs, expectations, and values, including what a patient does, what a doctor says, and how each party interprets the other will certainly influence the process of medical care (Pescosolido 1096), a harmonious and effective relationship between the two parties is critical in the medical process for it will enhance the accuracy of the diagnosis, increase the patient's knowledge about the disease and appropriate treatment. However, with the advancement of modern biomedicine and medical technology, more and more patients and doctors complain about the estranged or even hostile relationship between them. Therefore, the relationship becomes an important research subject for medical humanities, which emphasizes that "the doctor-patient relationship is always evolving, and that learning about its various historical configurations can help us understand the responsibilities and needs of physicians and their patients" (Cole et al. 38) and aims to reconstruct an ideal kind of doctor-patient relationship to address challenges in the modern world.

In the case of Cee, Dr. Beau seems to be a kind doctor who "helped many poor people" and "was extremely careful with his patients" (Morrison 64), but he does not care Cee's body condition at all. Without caring for Cee, he is not a qualified doctor who obeys the medical ethics for "[o]ne of the essential qualities of the clinician is interest in humanity, for the secret of care of the patient is in caring for the patient" (Peabody 882). The doctor-patient relationship is usually developed when a doctor tends to a patient's medical needs via check-up, diagnosis, and treatment in an agreeable manner. However, without tending to her medical needs, Dr. Beau just takes Cee as an object of his experimentation instead of a person or patient. As a doctor, he has special authority over matters of health, life, and death, which gives him a particular status. However, he misuses his authority which is not based on supposed charismatic qualities but on medical expertise to manipulate his patient at will. Every time when he experiments with his own medical inventions on Cee's body for his gynecological research, he gives her a shot to make her sleep. He was like a slaveholder who rules Cee's body and life, taking advantage of her benightedness and lack of self-regard. He violates the code of medical ethics, according to which the trust-based relationship between a patient and a doctor gives rise to the doctor's ethical responsibility to place the patient's welfare above the doctor's own self-interest. Instead, he just cares about his own medical research based on the deprivation of Cee's healthiness. He only cares about himself and his experiments, and he does not mind sacrificing the black girl to his scientific

endeavours.

There is also of a small amount of possibility that Dr. Beau is a doctor of low quality in this case in which he cannot diagnose Cee's disease and does not know how to cure it as "the knowledge of diseases is the doctor's compass; the success of the cure depends on an exact knowledge of the disease" (Foucault 8). Or Dr. Beau does not offer any promises or act of help for he considers Cee's case incurable and just gives up any hope, which, according to Edmund D Pellegrino, also violates medical morality for "[t]he promise of help shapes the nature of every healing act and defines the requirements for successful healing, even when cure is not possible (Pellegrino 74).

No matter Dr. Beau intentionally mistreats Cee's disease or not, without his diagnosis and labeling, Cee's disease is not named, rendering it out of the domain of biomedicine. The white doctor's neglect, incompetence or deliberate non-treatment of the black patient may be one of the reasons for African Americans' distrust of biomedicine and their preference for some other alternative medicine. Or it is because of the systemic racism in American healthcare systems that African Americans mistrust allopathy and shift to alternative healing (Tkacikova 7). Some African Americans even consider the hospital a hell-like place where bodies of the poor patients are sold to the medical school. That is why Reverend Locke tells Frank when he has just escaped from the mental hospital: "`You lucky, Mr. Money. They sell a lot of bodies out of there. ´ […] `To the medical school. ´ [...] `Doctors need to work on the dead poor so they can help the live rich´" (12).

On the side of the patient, Cee is too gullible, obedient and simple to be aware of the peril she is in. She never refuses to be narcotized to sleep every time when she is experimented on. She always considers herself a helper of the doctor instead of a patient for she does not know her womb is damaged during the experiments owing to her blind faith in the doctor and her own numbness and carelessness, though she is losing weight, feeling fatigue and her periods are lasting long. She must have sufficient confidence in the competence of Dr. Beau for she admires him and would do anything as he requires. Owing to her race, gender, self-debasement and her insufficient medical knowledge, she is a particularly vulnerable patient having a heightened reliance on the physician's competence, skills, and good will. But Dr. Beau is not worthy of her complete trust. He neither cares for her illness by asking her for her symptoms and feelings nor gives her any promises of help. As a result, she does not have the chance to describe her symptoms to him and she does not consider herself a patient even when she is on the verge of death. Meanwhile, she neither feels the need nor expresses her expectations to be cured, owing to

which she fails to "provide the source of the professional morality of those who profess to heal" (Pellegrino 74). The absence of narratives of illness invalidates the doctor-patient ethical relationship between them.

In the view of medial humanities, narratives of illness are important for they are the sources of "narrative medicine" as Rita Charon advocates (3). Usually, during consults doctors will ask about the patient's symptoms and give diagnosis and recommend what would be the best treatment from their point of view according to the patients' narratives of illness. The patient's telling of illness and suffering as well as the doctor's attentive listening to the narrative is not only essential in treating trauma survivors but also in ordinary general medicine. Health professionals should be able to listen to patients' narratives of illness, "to understand what they mean, to attain rich and accurate interpretations of these stories, and to grasp the plights of patients in all their complexity" (Charon 3). The absence of narratives of illness between Dr. Beau and Cee indicates the impossibility of cure when Cee is in the hands of the delinquent Dr. Beau for "the healing process begins when patients tell of symptoms or even fears of illness—first to themselves, then to loved ones, and finally to health professionals" (Charon 65).

Although the doctor-patient relationship is a two-way relationship, and both sides are responsible for the absence of narratives of illness in the case of Cee, the doctor owes a much greater responsibility for he is the one who dominates the relationship. Cee does not know what is wrong with her body or what to do, and she feels incapable of helping herself in this situation. Thus, it is the doctor's responsibility to take initiative steps toward the consults or treatment. Moreover, according to Engle's biopsychosocial model,

> [t]he psychobiological unity of man requires that the physician accept the responsibility to evaluate whatever problems the patient presents and recommend a course of action, including referral to other helping professions. Hence the physician's basic professional knowledge and skills must span the social, psychological, and biological, for his decisions and actions on the patient's behalf involve all three. (33)

However, Dr. Beau just chooses to ignore Cee's problems, though her symptoms are so obvious that even frightens the house-keeper Sarah, who feels the hazard and writes to Cee's only relative Frank, asking him to come to save her. When Frank arrives at Dr. Beau's house, he sees Cee "lay still and small in her white uniform" (111) in her small room just opposite the doctor's office. When Frank carries

motionless Cee away, Dr. Beau only casts him a look of anger-shaded relief for Cee in his eyes is only an employee that could be easily replaced or a patient easily abandoned.

Thus, it is apprehensible that Dr. Beau is criticized as a "maniacal doctor" (Montgomery 320) or a "scientist-villain", "autocratic Gothic villain" (Ramirez, "Gothic" 119; 127) or a "[f]austian scientist" (Ramirez, "Hansel" 152). When criticizing medical racism in *Home*, Ramírez compared Dr. Beau to Dr. James Marion Sims by asserting that both doctors share the racialized context of their research. She argues that "they systematically used 'violent' control over black women's sexual or reproductive activity in the medical field. Both doctors 'acquired' black females, who became silent medical subjects on whom to experiment at will" ("Gothic" 123). Tkacikova even says that "[t]he scientific advancements of the modern age are built upon a foundation of medical abuse and experimentation on African-Americans" (1) based on her reading of Harriet Washington's *Medical Apartheid* (2006), and implied the similarities between Dr. Beau and Dr. Sims whose "inconceivably horrific abuse of female slaves" was left out by historians (5).

Dr. Sims was the father of modern gynecology and a pioneering medical doctor in the field of women's medicine. He is said to have gynecologically experimented and operated on powerless and unconsenting sick black female slaves without administering any anesthesia just because their masters permitted him (Cooper 108). In this sense, Dr. Sims and Dr. Beau should be condemned for their similar unethical behavior, as Tkacikova and Remirez point out in their articles. Dr. Sims seems even worse for he did not narcotize his patients when operating them. However, according to Lewis Wall's research, Sims's modern critics have ignored "the controversies that surrounded the introduction of anesthesia into surgical practice in the middle of the 19th century, and have consistently misrepresented the historical record in their attacks on Sims" (346). He has found the evidence that suggests that "Sims's original patients were willing participants in his surgical attempts to cure their affliction- a condition for which no other viable therapy existed at that time" (Wall 346).

Therefore, it is not easy for us to "make fair assessments of the medical ethics of past practitioners from a distant vantage point in a society that has moved in a different direction, developed different values, and has wrestled-often unsuccessfully-with ethical issues of sex, race, gender, and class that were not perceived as problematic by those who lived during an earlier period of history" (Wall 349). Taking the historical factors into consideration, Dr. Sims may be cleared but Dr. Beau still should be blamed for his experiment is not aimed at curing Cee

but ruining her womb and depriving her of the chance of having babies, which even makes her dying for the good of the white's eugenics without her informed consent.

Empathy

Another important and conflicting issue in doctor-patient relationship is the significance of empathy, which is defined in Oxford English Dictionary as "the ability to understand and appreciate another person's feelings, experience, etc.". It is generally considered vital to ensure the quality of an intimate relationship. It will enable the doctor to understand the symptomatic experiences and needs of the patient. However, patients often complain about doctors' lack of empathy and their detached objectivity in modern medicine as a result of the instrumental stance of biomedicine which entails a loss of consideration for the person of the patient (Davis 33). According to Joseph E. Davis, the deep-rooted image of a biomedical physician is "a kind of applied scientist, guided by objective diagnostic criteria and deploying an armament of specific technical interventions against nature's 'real' diseases" (1). Owing to such an image involving depersonalization as what Foucault emphasized when he coined the term "medical gaze" to denote the objective reduction of the patient's body when the doctor observes him in order to diagnose the disease (14), and a technological focus, patient's dissatisfaction and alienation is generated. That is why Charon stresses the importance of narrative medicine when she notices that "doctors often lack the human capacities to recognize the plights of their patients, to extend empathy toward those who suffer, and to join honestly and courageously with patients in their struggles toward recovery, with chronic illness, or in facing death" (3).

However, some hold that the appropriateness of empathy in one's dealings with others is highly dependent on the circumstances. For instance, for Tania Singer, empathy is "a precursor to compassion, but too much of it can lead to antisocial behaviour" (qtd. in Solon). She insists that clinicians or caregivers must be objective to the emotions of others and avoid over-investing their own emotions for the patient. Otherwise, they will feel overwhelmed and burn out. In order to avoid the negative effects, she suggests us to transform empathy into compassion, a feeling of pity or a warm, caring emotion that does not involve feeling.

Some other oppositional views also exist. For example, Paul Bloom is strongly against empathy, particularly misapplication of empathy by holding that empathy is a motivator of inequality and immorality in society in his book *Against Empathy*. He worries that empathy will be biased and used for cruelty and exploitation. In his view, "empathy is not everything" and "empathy is like cholesterol, with a good

type and a bad type" (Bloom 12). Thus, he advocates the combination of empathy plus reason.

So, when facing a suffering patient, whether doctors should be full of empathy or not is still a controversial issue in medical humanities. To this tricky question, Morrison's standpoint will be found when the scenes of Cee's healing are revisited. It seems that Morrison opposes the distanced objectivity of biomedicine by way of Dr. Beau's aloofness and nonfeasance while embracing the community women's love of mean with the contrast between the maltreatment that Cee receives at Dr. Beau's clinic and her holistic healing under the community women's mutual efforts at her hometown.

At Dr. Beau's clinic, Cee's healing is impossible or does not even begin when she knows nothing and tells nothing while the doctor cares nothing about her health. When Cee is having a fever, bleeding and dying, lying on the floor of her small room, Dr. Beau still sits in his office busy with his own business without showing any empathy towards her suffering. He may hold a medical gaze at Cee when experimenting, but his gaze is not for finding the truth of the disease but for his own research purpose, as what Deirdre Cooper Owens has pointed out in her book *Medical Bondage* that "[t]he white medical gaze on black women's lives and bodies…and white men's continued use of black women in gynecology were all grounded in ideas about black subjugation and white control" (Owens 121). He must falsely believe in the myth of black females' "medical superbodies" that Owens coined to describe the myriad ways in which white society and medical men thought of, wrote about, and treated black women in the medical experiment:

> The hypocrisy of medical and scientific racism allowed doctors to write about black women's supposed bravery and silence in the face of life-threatening and painful operations while also describing how they were restrained physically. The reality is that medical men, based on their experiences with black patients, did not believe that black people did not experience any pain. Instead, they believed black people experienced pain that was not as severe as white people's pain. In their writings, nonetheless, they nullified black people's sufferings as a part of the human experience. (112)

Therefore, he chooses to ignore Cee's suffering instead of showing any empathy. He even feels troublesome because of Cee's vulnerability and her illness. That explains why he seems to be relieved instead of be angry when Frank takes her away and why he does not try to stop him.

However, in Cee's hometown, when she is carried back by Frank, she does not need to tell the community women what she feels before her healing begins immediately after Miss Ethel examines her. Similar to her former experience in Dr. Beau's clinic, narrative of illness is also missing, but these country women just know how to treat her in the way of their folk medicine for they have had enough experience and know what herbs might help. They "handled sickness as though it were an affront, an illegal, invading braggart who needed whipping" (Morrison 121), and their attitude towards Cee seems quite different from the dehumanized medical Gaze, which is also different from the empathy that Charon advocates. They "didn't waste their time or the patient's with sympathy and they met the tears of the suffering with resigned contempt" (Morrison 121). When Cee tells them that she has worked for a doctor, they show their scorn toward the medical industry directly with their "eye rolling and tooth sucking" (121).They even deride Cee for her innocence in believing a white doctor and her self-abasement for accepting any treatment:

> "Men know a slop jar when they see one."
> "You ain't a mule to be pulling some evil doctor's wagon."
> "You a privy or a woman?"
> "Who told you you was trash?" (122)

Does the bitterly sarcastic berating from the community women who practice folk medicine mean that they do not hold empathy towards Cee's suffering either? This question should be dealt with in the context of African American culture. According to Tkacikova ,"[t]o 'love mean' suggests a kind of compassion that is followed by a lesson, and the women who loved Cee mean teach her the lesson that heals her both physically and mentally, even though the methods employed may be questionable" (10). Therefore, the community women's verbal violence is a result of their love towards Cee, whose allowing herself to be trampled infuriates them. Their rebuke is to stir Cee's feelings out of her numbness so as to revive her to a state capable of assisting in her own healing. Instead of humiliating her, they intend to awaken Cee's self-esteem and self-love out of her self-depreciation. On the other hand, the seemingly unsympathetic and impersonal delivery of care is a self-protect device of African American women for they do not want to be immersed in the same tragic feeling. It does not mean that they do not have the ability to share Cee's feelings or experiences by imagining what it would be like to be in Cee's situation. Instead, they just know too much and they choose to scorn Cee's suffering in order to

resolve it. When Cee tries to defend herself by asking how she is supposed to know that Dr. Beau would exploit her, she gets the women's replies: "[M]isery don't call ahead. That's why you have to stay awake-otherwise it just walks on in your door" (122). They do not express overdoses of empathy toward Cee because they have known what Singer admonishes caregivers not to give too much empathy or it will overwhelm and burnout the caregivers who are frequently faced with trauma victims (Solon, par.5). At the same time, they may want to present a strong and determined image in front of Cee for her to learn from. These women's tactics of healing are utterly communal and interpersonal though devoid of effusive sympathy. They hold a special kind of empathy which is reserved but works well in Cee's case. Owing to these women's demanding love, Cee recovers from her illness both physically and spiritually. By highlighting the contrasting effect between dehumanized biomedical treatment and communal folk treatment with demanding love, Morrison appears to strongly advocate the latter while criticizing the former.

Genuine Healing with Folk Medicine

African Americans' preference for folk medicine does not exist exclusively in Morrison's fictional world. It is a trend of African Americans as a result of their distrust towards the western biomedical industry and their different perceptions of health. Their distrust of biomedicine does not originate from a cultural barrier but from the long term medical racism in America since the slavery era, which is set in a context of unbalanced power and tends to systematically disadvantage the African American. As mentioned in Paula Ross et al.'s article "Using Illness Narratives to Explore African American Perspectives of Racial Discrimination on Healthcare", racial and ethnic minorities are more likely to "perceive physician bias and a lack of cultural sensitivity when seeking treatment" and "have less trust in the health care system" (521), which may affect doctor-patient interactions and result in disparities in clinical care. J. Wasserman et al. also point out the serious ethical implications of distrust of medicine, "such as clinical research and organ donation, as well as effects on individual health behaviour, such as avoiding treatment or seeking ineffectual or even dangerous alternative treatment" (177). Consequently, owing to the distrust of biomedicine and the dehumanized doctor who uses Cee as a guinea pig in his barbaric eugenic experiments, Morrison provides dying Cee with a communal and close to nature treatment in order to save her. The alternative folk treatment is not ineffectual or dangerous but effective and miraculous, which heals Cee's body and soul together.

When the community women begin to treat Cee, the techniques they choose

are specific to Cee's condition. Though similar to western medicine in which illness, infection, and germs are considered as an invading army, these women who also "handled sickness as though it were an affront, an illegal, invading braggart who needed whipping" (121) are more active, flexible and open-minded. They first resort to blood-letting therapy to clear up any harmful substances in Cee's body. Then they ask Cee to drink herbal soup made by themselves to stop the infection and pack into her vagina some herbal medicine which will cause a burning sensation to repair her womb and vagina. Though bleeding and repairing is painful and the herbal soup is bitter, they succeed in persuading Cee to cooperate with them well. When the calamus root Miss Ethel used to depend on is not working, they take turns nursing Cee and "each has a different recipe for her cure" (Morrison 119). They even employ sunshine's recuperative power in the final stage of Cee's healing in which she has to be "spending at least one hour a day with her legs spread open to the blazing sun" for they believe that sunshine will "rid her of any remaining womb sickness" (124). Though Cee refuses at first for she feels embarrassed, Ethel encourages her "I'll be out there with you. The important thing is to get a permanent cure. The kind beyond human power" (124) and accompanies her until a genuine and complete healing is achieved.

Although folk medicine is "widely perceived as a repository of rejected knowledge, sustained by the ignorance and poverty of the lower classes and with little or no meaning in a world dominated by the principles of Western society" (Voeks 76), these women's treatment works magically well on Cee with their diverse food and medical preference. Different from biomedicine's concepts and methods that are "not altered significantly by time and place of treatment or by [the] personality of [the] physician" (Manning and Fabrega 291), the folk medicine system these women employ is an open system, "especially capable of adapting to novel environments or threats and of affording continuity of old functions while offering new ones to meet the needs of populations experiencing new pressures and opportunities"(Press 72). It may be more functional than Western biomedicine for the latter is a largely closed system, "based on precisely defined knowledge, technique, and procedures, all of which are discontinuous from ordinary social process" (Manning and Fabrega 290). These illiterate women's efficacy of healing does not come from school learning but from the legacy of African American folk medicine based on aggregate observation and experience. Their beliefs and practices are organized into a complex and coherent system of thought, action, and content. In this system, "any natural substances, in any of their multitudinous modes of use, may be used to achieve physical, mental, emotional, or spiritual healing objectives"

(O'Connor and Hufford 29). The herbs and other natural medicinal materials they used on Cee are not just for their physical actions and effects, but also "for metaphysical properties such as hot and cold or yin and yang qualities and effects; for spiritual qualities with which they are associated, such as purity, patience, inner strength, or calm; for effects they will have on the quality and function of the body's vital energy; or for their capacity to absorb and carry away negative influences" (O'Connor and Hufford 29).

Then, why is Frank's absence during Cee's healing process what all these women agree upon? Does it mean that her brother's coming near or taking care of her will impede Cee's healing? Only when we understand the concept of transference of energies in folk medicine can we find the answer. According to O'Connor and Hufford, folk medicine often involves the employment of positive energies and the avoidance of negative, life-destroying energies in promoting healing. "Disease may result from imbalances in or the loss or theft of vital energy, but it may also be caused by the presence or intrusion of negative energies" (22). In the case of Cee whose womb is badly injured, the male must be considered a kind of negative energy. Thus, Cee needs to be healed as a woman in a space apart from any man, including her brother. While the community women are the healers possessing positive energy, who can transfer positive energy to Cee when their hands or bodies are used therapeutically on or near Cee's body or their "positive energies and innate qualities" such as courage and vigor may be "imbibed with specific therapeutic substances and contribute in this nonpharmacologic way to the restoration or maintenance of health" (O'Connor and Hufford 23).

When Cee's fever abates and her bodily injury is healing, the community women begin to attend to her emotional and psychological trauma. As mentioned before, they first scold her to stimulate her out of her numbness. Then "the women changed tactics and stop their berating" (Morrison 122). Instead, they bring their needlework such as embroidery and crocheting or even begin quilting. "Surrounded by their comings and goings, listening to their talk, their songs, following their instructions, Cee had nothing to do but pay them attention she had never given them before" (Morrison 122). These women try to boost Cee's low self-esteem and encourage her to be self-reliant:

Look to yourself. You free. Nothing and nobody is obliged to save you but you. See your own land. You young and a woman and there's serious limitation in both, but you a person too. Don't let Lenore or some trifling boyfriend and certainly no devil doctor decide who you are. That's slavery. Somewhere inside

you is that free person I'm talking about. Locate her and let her do some good in the world. (126)

Owing to these women's communal support, Cee is no longer the "stupid" girl "who trembled at the slightest touch of the real and vicious world" and who believes "whatever happened to her while drugged was a good idea, good because a white coat said so" (127). She becomes an independent, mature and self-reliant woman who "would never again need his [her brother's] hand over her eyes or his arms to stop her murmuring bones" (128). She also learns how to lead a meaningful and responsible life. Though she feels a little sad when she knows that she will never have babies owing to her injured womb, she can "know the truth, accept it, and keep on quilting" without being defeated (132). These women with "seen-it-all eyes" (128) cure her both physically and spiritually. Ethel's "demanding love" "soothed and strengthened her the most" (125). As Ramírez claims, "Morrison emphasizes the collective quality of the characters' healing process, which would not be possible without the specially supportive social network that the black community provides, giving African Americans the human connection and love that they need to rebuild their traumatized selves" ("Hurt" 131). Visser also highlights the "therapeutic, communal environment" of these women provided for Cee's healing when she suggests a rational reading of trauma in *Home* (9).

From such a community healing which "emphasizes the social context as a key component," and in which "people's solidarity and group sessions may support mental and physical health, acting as a health protection system" (Walker), another feature of African American folk medicine can be seen. Though Morrison does not describe the community women's healing procedure with sufficient details so that we cannot be certain whether they use homeopathy as what Tkacikova or Maxine L. Montgomery argues for in their articles or more loosely a kind of naturopathy, it can be certain that, like most folk medical systems, they define health in terms of some form of harmony or balance, using their folk medicine based on ancestral experience to emphasize the holistic healing with a harmony and balance between one's body and mind, and incorporate it a strong moral element underscoring "the interconnectedness of personal health with the community, the physical environment, and the cosmos, and integrate the experience of sickness and health within a comprehensive and meaningful view of the world" (O'Connor and Hufford 25). It is contrasting with the concept of cure in biomedicine which is based on a distinctive body of scientific knowledge and tries to tackle health problems or cure diseases by medical and pharmaceutical intervention. Fortunately, some

practitioners of biomedicine have been aware of the limits of the concept of cure in biomedicine, such as Edmund Daniel Pellegrino, who plays an important role in establishing bioethics in the 1980s and proposes that "genuine healing must be based on an authentic perception of the experience of illness in this person. It must aim at a repair of the particular assaults which illness makes on the humanity of the one who is ill" (74), intending to extend the treatment of one's body into one's humanity as well.

Nevertheless, according to Stephanie Mitchem, the gulf between western biomedicine and black folk medicine "cannot be simply addressed as allopathic vs. holistic or scientific vs. superstitious" (285). These community women's resistance to western medicine and retention of folkways indicates "a clash of root metaphors" (285). In biomedicine, the disease is a physical problem, a perspective that notably excludes consideration of social or spiritual well-being, and its healing is controlled by trained doctors. Therefore, "Seeing healing power as property, subject to all the dynamics of a capitalist system, is one of the most significant root metaphors of Western medicine and one of the most damaging to women" (Brown 123). As a result, black women "were and often still are the first dispensers of extant folk cures". They are "trusted parts of the communities of black people" when contrasted with the unreliable white medical establishment (Mitchem 284). The history of being excluded from western medicine blended with the cultural beliefs of black people provides an important context for understanding these black women's folk medicine.

Conclusion

When Toni Morrison began to write *Home*, her younger son Slade was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. When the book was half-completed, Slade died because of the cancer and his "recklessness" (Kachka, par. 1), for which Morrison could barely speak or write for a long time until she suddenly realized that Slade would not want to see her destructed by his death. In Morrison's memory, Slade was crazy for Chinese medicine, a true example illustrating African American's preference for alternative medicine. Morrison did not explain a lot to the public about Slade's illness and his death, including why he was fascinated with Chinese medicine and whether it helped him, but her regrets and helplessness for not being able to save him can be strongly felt in *Home*. In the book dedicated to her son, she criticizes implicitly the dehumanized medical system as well as brutal medical racism in America, and rests her hope for a humane and genuine healing on African American folk medicine with the representation of Cee's medical experience, holding a mirror

up to the present world.

By re-envisaging the primal scenes of Cee's illness and healing with a critical moral inquiry about medicine concerning power and justice, we can discover that Morrison dramatizes the abuses of American medical racism by means of Dr. Beau, and advocates African American folk medicine by means of her black ancestors' healing powers. She contrasts the racist doctor's hideous medical procedures without therapeutic objectives with the healing and boosting of Cee's body and self in which the community women engage. The doctor-patient relationship between Dr. Beau and Cee is undermined by racism in which the unethical white doctor has neither empathy nor responsibility and the submissive black patient does not know how to protect herself. Although both the doctor's effective treatment and the patient's cooperation are important, neither is a full picture of good health care. What we need is a richer and more humane balance between the two sides, as well as a holistic healing, just like what the country women and Cee have achieved. Cee's suffering also provides us insight into the history of medicine's development and the value of black women to gynecology.

Although the effectiveness of the community women's folk medicine may have been romanticized a little, its advantages are obvious when compared with Doctor Beau's devastating treatment for Cee. As an adaptable and holistic system, folk medicine is more humane and more effective sometimes, and more broadly accessible, which helps to explain why it remains vigorously active in the United States, especially among minority groups. A comparison of the two kinds of medicine in a cultural and racial context serves to highlight the cultural and racial aspects of both systems. Morrison's explicit inclination for folk medicine, implicit criticism towards biomedicine challenges the absolute primacy of the scientific and industrialized western medicine, which may encourage the re-humanization and justice of biomedicine and open the door for complementary approaches.

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The Problems of the Absence of an Inner Self and of Moral Education in Contemporary Japan Echoed in *Convenience Store Human*

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Abstract   The limitations of humanism have emerged, and the absence of an inner self in contemporary human beings has also become a genuine concern these days. Will the role of literature, which has mirrored human life and the inner self, be terminated? How can a human being make ethical judgments in literature, an expression of ethics, if a human being has no inner self? To answer these questions, in this article, I focused on Sayaka Murata's *Convenience Store Human*, especially on Keiko Furukura, the protagonist, who lacks an inner self and figures out that this absence has an effect on ethical matters. I also considered the one part of development of humanism into post-humanism in literature, during the analysis of the novel, examining the symptom of the "internal empty cave," a phrase used to describe the "minds" of young people, which is seen as a pathology of modern Japanese society and a problem of the moral education proscribed by the Japanese government. Furthermore, I reviewed the role and ethics of literature through an analysis of the *Convenience Store Human*, concluding that it warns and implicates contemporary society as it is aiming to move from a humanist to a post-humanist worldview.

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Introduction

The humanistic revolution that took place in the fifteenth century led to the pursuit of all meanings and values previously located in God to be located in human beings, moving away from medieval theocentrism. Humanism, which believes in human reason rather than God's grace, has gradually placed value on the inner self, opposing the limited authority of humanity and calling for the liberation of the mind. It is the inner self that makes us unique and independent, and it is the source of all meanings and values. Modern humanism has helped achieve the development of modern science by seeking for objective and universal knowledge based on human reason, and this has led to the development of today's technology, which has reached a remarkable state.

However, the highly advanced technological development has led people to treat science and technology as absolutes, even to the point of threatening humanism itself. The threat of technology has been treated as a subject of discussion regarding the absence of an inner self in human beings, which is at the root of humanism. Yuval Noah Harari, claims in *Homo Deus* that "over the last century, as scientists opened up the Sapiens black box, they discovered there neither soul, nor free will, nor 'self'—but only genes, hormones and neurons that obey the same physical and

chemical laws governing the rest of reality" (Harari 284). Yuval predicts that as the development of technology has failed to prove the originality of human beings' inner self, it will force us to recognize ourselves as nothing more than "organic algorithms" (Harari 323) that process large amounts of data accumulated in humans and that can nevertheless be replaced with other inorganic algorithms. That is to say, the act of judging or valuing something or someone is not based in one's own inner self, free will, or mind, but rather on data algorithms and behavioral patterns.

For instance, writing based on imagination and thinking can no longer be considered only a human ability. A long time has passed since we first heard the news of the development of a text-generating or writing artificial intelligence (AI) system. Notably, it was reported that a novel written by AI passed the first round in the Japanese Science Fiction literary competition for the Hoshi Shinichi Award (Nield). As AI expands its abilities to the creation of novels, Japanese cultural critic Eiji Otsuka diagnoses the situation, "Although AI's writing is still just a bunch of acquired sentences, it seems not only to operate simple changes in the predictions of sentences and words, but also to create its own meanings" (172). He continues, "This led us to predict that AI's literature could break away from the limitations of the academic field of narrative theory and create stories on its own in the near future" (277). Writing for CNN Business, Rachel Metz has also reported that OpenAI, created by a nonprofit AI research company, is so good at writing that its creators have decided to keep it from public use, worried that without limits being set on how it can be deployed, it will lead to abuse (Rachel, "This AI is So Good at Writing").

Given the limitations of humanism that have emerged and the previously mentioned absence of an inner self in human beings, would the role of literature that has been mirroring human life and the inner self in the modern era be terminated so that AI literature will receive recognition? According to Nie Zhenzhao, ethical literature criticism differs from other strands of literary criticism in its view of the origin of literature, by claiming that literature is a product of ethics or a unique expression of morality in a given historical period. In other words, literature is fundamentally an "expression of ethics" (85). However, how can a human being make ethical judgments if there is no inner self or at least a presumption of the absence of an inner self these days?

To answer the above questions, in this article, I focus on Sayaka Murata's *Convenience Store Human,* the 2016 winner of the Akutagawa Prize, a prestigious Japanese literary award. The novel portrays a protagonist with no inner self, and, to examine the effects of the absence of an inner self as a matter of ethics, I will

discuss this protagonist, Keiko Furukura, the heroine of *Convenience Store Human,* and will consider the symptoms of the "empty cave of the inner self" of young people, which is seen as a pathology of modern Japanese society and a problem with the moral education instigated by the Japanese government. Furthermore, my aim in this article is to identify the characteristics used to understand human beings that have undergone a change as humanism has transformed into post-humanism and assess how ethics is mirrored in literature through the lens of *Convenience Store Human.*

The Problems of the Absence of an Inner Self and Education of the "Mind[1]"

Before analyzing the story, let us examine the development of humanism into post-humanism in Japanese society.

The Kobe child murders, the so-called "Sakakibara Incident," which involved a series of deaths and injuries to five children, occurred in Kobe from February to May 1997. The killer placed the severed head of a twelve-year-old boy in front of a school gate, cut the victim's mouth to the ears, and stuffed the torn mouth with a note, written in red pen, identifying himself as "Sakakibara." The fact that the horrible killer was an ordinary, fourteen-year-old junior high school student terrorized Japanese society. After this case, Japanese citizens began to look at juvenile crimes from a different point of view. Consequently, many areas of Japanese society began to wake up and assume more responsibility for the incident. First of all, the bicameral legislature of Japan introduced the Juvenile Law Revision (2000), lowering the age of criminal responsibility from sixteen to fourteen. In addition, the fact that the perpetrator was not a delinquent or bully, but an ordinary boy living in a typical family, earning good grades and having a good reputation at school, made many Japanese citizens, including those in educational circles, to focus on the inner side of individuals' "mind" rather than on the outside situations such as social, family, or school problems. These thoughts led to the agenda[2] that society needs to educate juveniles' "minds."

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1   In Japanese, there is a word "Kokoro", conceptually, uniting the notions of heart, mind, and spirit: concepts of mind, heart, spirit, will, consciousness, soul … or a broader and more inclusive concept useful for understanding how humans think and feel. (Ephrat, "This Japanese word") In this article, "Kokoro" can be understand as a "mind" with inherent in meanings of moral behavior and thinking, or more.

2   The Central Council for Education produced the report "To Raise the Mind to Develop a New Era: The Crisis of Losing the Mind Which Could Raise the Next Generation" in 1998. Pointing out that the moral consciousness of juveniles in Japan had deteriorated, the report emphasized the need for education to be concerned with the "power of living" and the faithful imposition of "mind education" (Yoshida 3).

The increase in juvenile crime and brutality that started with the Kobe child murders led to the social recognition that "**mind education = moral education[1]**" and that it was urgently needed for juveniles. Therefore, the Japanese government made the agenda concrete by producing and distributing "Mind Notebook,"[2] developed by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology (MEXT). MEXT tried to improve students' "minds" and educate for public order, norms, and even nationalism through the Mind Notebooks. However, even though they were an important element of the Japanese government's educational program, the Mind Notebooks also constantly provoked criticism. In the words of Takeo Yoshida, an educationalist in Japan, "The Mind Notebook uses and emphasizes the first-person pronoun 'I' more than 'us' to focus the problems on personal matters, especially on an individual's mind. And an obsession with 'I' makes young people's thoughts head for their inner self and confine themselves in the mind; consequently, the young people's minds never look out on real life" (82). Yoshida is not the only the one who worries about the Mind Notebooks: Naoki Iwakawa, another educationalist, also offers criticism of them. According to Iwakawa, the Mind Notebooks tried to solve the problems of a decline in moral development and issues with self-discipline by having children write only compliments about themselves; however, students thereby lost relationships with others and were seized with anxiety and loneliness because their self-awareness was meant to be focused only internally(84).

That is to say, the "mind education" that was unilaterally imposed on young

1   After having an experience of the rapid growth period in 1970's, the Japanese became to focus on "richness of mind" beyond the wealth and the social trends oriented toward psychology. In educational circles, the Provisional Council on Education Reform; Ad Hoc Council on Education(1984-1987) consolidated principle to emphasis on individuality...considering highly regarding one's individuality as same as one's "mind"...(Japan)became a hotbed of psychological moral education. In addition, in the big intent of moral education including "individuality" and "mind," the textbook titled "Mind Notebook" distributed free of charge to elementary and middle schools across the country. (Yoshida 78-79)

2   "Mind Notebook (Kokorono noto)," complimentary text books, were initially distributed to elementary and middle school students in April 2002 and adopted in moral curriculum. Mind Notebooks came in four versions: for first- and second-grade students; for third- and fourth-grade students; for fifth- and sixth-grade students; and for seventh- to ninth-grade students. Each version has the overall aim of treating the students' minds according to the following themes: "let's raise a beautiful mind" (first/second); "let's cultivate and improve our mind and enhance it significantly" (third/fourth); "let's raise the mind to suit me and enhance it" (fifth/sixth); and "the recording of mind tracks" (seventh-ninth). In the notebooks, we can find the following four topics: my own life, my relationships with others, my love for life and nature, and relationships between groups and society.

people by the Japanese government for educating the morals made them obsess about their inner self, which had the reverse effect of what had been expected. This could be explained by the fact that first, juveniles simplified their relationships rather than agonizing over various relationships and about others, and second, they broke off their relations with others and thereby destabilized their self-existence.

Following the disclosure of the limitations of "mind education" upon society, novels describing the absence of "mind" as an empty cave appeared, claiming that individuals no longer had an inner self. Boys in these stories[1] were educated to have a real "self"; however, they were described as either not being able to find it or as losing it. Boys who could not form norm-consciousness committed crimes in the end. *Zekkyo Jo Satsujin Jiken* (*The Murder Case in a Scream Castle*), written by Alice Arisugawa in 2001 and published at the time when the "mind" problems had been acknowledged and actively broadcast in the media, especially criticized the issues of "mind" problems by explaining how useless the discussion was (Nam 276). The murderer, who kills four women, indiscriminately copying a horror game, confesses at the end of the story, saying that the motive for his crime was not because of "mind problems," as the media reported, but because there was nothing in his "mind," so he committed crime to fill his "mind" which can also be understandable as a "soul":

> Who is the one who prattled on about "this case being committed by a youth who could not distinguish between a virtual world and the real world"? A psychiatrist? An educationalist, a sociologist or a novelist? … He [the murderer] said, "the story 'you made' created this hell boy. *It is possible that in an empty mind anything could step in*." (Arisugawa 401, emphasis mine)

With increased reports about brutal juvenile crimes after 2000, Japanese citizens, including the media, easily assumed that juvenile crimes stem from "mind problems." In her novel, Arisugawa demonstrates that when the cause is determined simply to be "mind problems," the problems become uncertain things to be solved. "Mind education," developed to treat the crisis of the inner self experienced by juveniles in Japan, failed to fulfil its role and instead spread the thought that an individual's "mind" is "empty" so that they have to fill it through training, for instance, by using

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1   E.g., Alice Arisugawa's *Zekkyo Jo Satsujin Jiken* (2001); Fuminori Nakamura's *Nanimokamo Yūutsuna Yoru ni* (*In the Night, Everything Feels Melancholy* (2007); Kanae Minato's *Confessions* (2008); Mizuki Tsujimura, *Odameido satsujin kurabu* (*Order-made Murder Club*) (2011); Gaku Yakumaru, *A dewanai kimito* (*With You who are not A*) (2015).

a Mind Notebook. *Zekkyo Jo Satsujin Jiken* portrays a boy with an empty inner self as an indiscriminate serial killer, showing that an absence of an inner self leads to the absence of an ethical moral consciousness.

Following the Kobe child murders, the "mind problems" of juveniles in Japanese society were raised as social matters, and the government developed "mind education" to solve it. However, "mind" education failed to explain what an individual's real inner self is and made young people assume that it is something that has to be fulfilled by performing certain actions. This, in turn, led to the result of revealing the absence of an inner self. Suffice it to say that the perception of an inner self is no longer obvious and demonstrates the limitations of humanism.

Convenience Store Human and "Mind" Education

On what evidence should people judge and act if their "inner self" is absent? By describing the life of Keiko Furukura, Sayaka Murata's *Convenience Store Human* can possibly answer this question.

From early childhood, Keiko, the protagonist in *Convenience Store Human,* was a weird girl, with both emotional and mental problems. Unlike other children, when young Keiko found a little bird dead at the park, she did not express sorrow, but asked to take it home, grill it, and have it for dinner (Murata 6). Similarly, once, when trying to arbitrate a fight between boys, Keiko took out a spade, ran over to the unruly boys, and bashed one of them over the head (Murata 8). In order to make her teacher calm down when the teacher had become hysterical and everyone in class had started crying, Keiko ran over and yanked her teacher's skirt and knickers down (Murata 9). Instead of displaying normal emotions, she thinks and acts which makes the most sense to her in every given situation Watching her behavior, her parents and teachers and others, unfortunately, treat her problems by simply focusing on her "mind." They worry about her and want to cure her (Murata 11) so that she will be a "normal" person. When Keiko figures out that she is different from others, she no longer speaks her own thoughts or acts by her own free will so that she will not disappoint her parents. In other words, she mimics others and pretends to be living like a "normal" person as the following passage demonstrates:

> "I wonder why you can't understand, Keiko…"
> She muttered helplessly on the way home, hugging me to her. It seemed I'd done something wrong again, *but I couldn't for the life of me understand what was the problem*.
> My parents were at a loss what to do about me, but they were as

affectionate to me as ever. I'd never meant to make them sad or face having to keep apologizing for things I did, so I decided to keep my mouth shut as best I could outside home. I would no longer do anything of my own accord, and would either just mimic what everyone else was doing, or simply follow instructions. … *And so, believing that I had to be cured, I grew into adulthood.* (Murata 10, 12, emphasis mine)

What is the reason that Keiko thinks she needs to be cured? Why do her parents feel so sad when she acts differently from others? It is because Japanese society does not accept people like Keiko, who act and feel differently from "normal" people. For example, when friends realize that Keiko works at a convenience store and is not married even in her mid-30s, they all turn their backs on her and start edging away, staring curiously at her over their shoulders as though contemplating some ghastly life form (Murata 80). Additionally, when Keiko's younger sister finds out about Keiko and Shiraha's weird life as housemates, for example, she treats him as an animal giving him food and place to live saying feels like feeding an animal, her sister becomes shocked and screams at Keiko to see a counselor and to be cured (Murata 131). It is clear that Keiko is totally different from a "normal" person. Because of this, others try to force her to transform herself into someone who could be acceptable in society.

About the force and the cold-hearted treatments that others show Keiko, Totsuka has pointed out that *Convenience Store Human* speaks more about the cruelty and violence of "normal" people than about Keiko's strange behavior (Totsuka 22-23). Likewise, "normal" people violently treat Keiko as an "impurity" and exclude her from their groups or try to force her to be "normal." Obviously, the actions of Keiko's family, Shiraha—and even Keiko herself—aimed at forcing Keiko to be "cured" are similar to the movement of the Japanese government to deal with the "mind" problems of juveniles with the Mind Notebooks. The students, educated through Mind Notebooks, learned to follow orders correctly and keep the rules, without question. They learned that problematic behavior could be fixed by controlling an individual's mind, which led them to believe that the reasons for problems have to do with personal matters, not with society's problems or relations. This way of treating problems, not by understanding or having relationships with people who are different, but by regarding them as a personal matter and ignoring them, can be found in the other people around Keiko in the story. They, too, do not try to understand her thoughts, but seek rather to "cure" and "fix" her or exclude her when this does not work.

The assumption of the Japanese government that "mind problems" could be fixed through "mind education" produced a negative effect, presenting solutions that dealt with the improvement of the inner self rather than mending relationships. As suggested above, Keiko also could not be fixed as desired. Rather than have relationships with them, all she could do was copy the behavior of others so that she could avoid being ostracized from society as an impurity. The reason Keiko gave for why she acted differently was that she did not have an inner self to be cured. As she had no inner self to cure, or, in other words, as she had no "mind" to fix, she just followed the rules passively without comment, as her speech in the following passage demonstrates:

> Unlike you, there are many things I don't really care about either way. It's just that since I don't have any particular purpose of my own, if the village wants things to be a certain way then I don't mind going along with that. You eliminate the parts of your life that others find strange—maybe that's what everyone means when they say they want to "cure" me. (Murata 93-94)

Convenience Store Human is a novel depicting the violence of "normal" and the youth in contemporary Japan who have lost their inner self. It does so by describing normal people's cruelty and Keiko's lack of common sense and "self".

The Absence of an Inner Self and "Manuals"

At the end of the story, the thought and "mind" of Keiko finally vanish, and she is reborn as a "convenience store human." Keiko only becomes a real human when she thinks and acts as per the manuals of the convenience store. Using the phrase found in "mind education," the "right" mind can be built through learning the manual of the Mind Notebooks. However, due to her failure at controlling her mind or building relationships, Keiko is excluded by others. She is unable to become a real human, but only gains a real life by living as "convenient" human. In short, Keiko chooses to be a component of society without an inner self rather than be a human with free will and independent thinking. This raises the following question: What constitutes the "normal" person that should be pursued in society?

To highlight that Keiko is not simply a social misfit, there is another character who is—Shiraha, Keiko's housemate. Shiraha is a person who has escaped from society, struggling against the violence of "normal" people, choosing to live an idle life by using Keiko's house as a refuge. Shiraha refuses to understand Keiko's behavior; he neither belongs to the "normal" people nor criticizes their violence,

and blames her, claiming that she needs to be aware that she has been exiled from community, as the following passage describes:

> "You need to wake up, Furukura. To put it bluntly, you're the lowest of the low. Your womb is probably too old to be of any use, and you don't even have the looks to serve as a means to satisfy carnal desire. But then neither are you earning money like a man. Far from it, you're only working part-time without even a proper job. Frankly speaking, you're just a burden on the village, the dregs of society."
>
> "I see. But I'm not capable of working anywhere else except the convenience store. I did give it a go, but it turns out the convenience store worker mask is the only one I'm fit to wear. So if people don't accept that, I have no idea what I can do about it." … Shiraha wasn't just picking on me; he was openly expressing his fury against society. I wasn't sure which of us he was angrier with. He seemed to be just throwing out words randomly at whatever happened to be in his sights. (Murata 105-106)

Of special interest is that Keiko is never sad by being treated as "the dregs of society," to use Shiraha's words. According to Fuminori Nakamura, a Japanese author, the words of Shiraha could be read as ignorance of Keiko (Nakamura and Murata 17); however, Keiko understand his contempt in terms of information rather than accepting it emotionally. This is because she is a person with no feelings and has no standards by which to judge his words good or bad. According to Jae Jin Yu, Keiko is a person who is lacking all sorts of emotions, motivation, ambition, or selfish narcissism, which even Shiraha has. She does not know what to do if she does not have a manual. That is to say, it is hard to find the "modern self" in Keiko (Yu 252-253). In *The End of Modern Literature*, Kōjin Karatani mentions that the "modern self" is that which follows its own free will beyond the tradition or others that can be found in literature. However, he also points out that modern literature and modern ideas no longer try to establish the free will of subjecthood (77-78). The modern self, previously focused on the inner life, has now collapsed completely because it has followed the people's desire defined by social globalism (Tuboi 82) and has changed its focus outward and for others. In other words, it is understandable that literature has stopped locating the subject of an individual in its inner world, but is trying to follow other's desires, which are given from the outside.

Nevertheless, because Keiko is a person who lacks an inner self that desires anything, she never wants anything or resists other's desires. Rather than follow her

own voice from her inner self, Keiko chooses to be a "convenience store human," who can follow and behave according to the convenience store's manuals without thinking, as shown in the following passages:

> "The voice of the convenience store won't stop flowing through me. I was born to hear this voice" (Murata 161).
>
> "No. It's not a matter of whether they permit it or not. It's what I am. For the human me, it probably is convenient to have you around, Shiraha, to keep my family and friends off my back. But the animal me, the convenience store worker, has absolutely no use for you whatsoever" (Murata 162).
>
> I caught sight of myself reflected in the window of the convenience store I'd just come out of. My hands, my feet—they existed only for the store! For the first time, I could think of me in the window as a being with meaning" (Murata 163).

As a space symbolizing the systemization of modern Japanese society, with its highest priorities being efficiency and service, the convenience store is a place where the behavior and attitudes of the employees are thoroughly documented and monitored based on the large amount of data absorbed through employees and computers in convenience stores. Keiko's choice to give up being a human and become an "animal" or a "convenience store human," living according to the "voice" of convenience stores operated by data and manuals, is tantamount to a statement that she would be an "organic algorithm" driven by data in the most modern location.

So, I have arrived at the answer to my earlier question: What are the grounds for human judgment when one's inner self is absent? Just as Keiko has become an "animal" that moves according to manuals, the human being who loses her inner self will find that the most efficient "manuals" made by the data will replace it. Humanism holds that experiences occur inside us, and that we ought to find within ourselves the meaning of all that happens, thereby infusing the universe with meaning. Dataists[1] believe that experiences are valueless if they are not shared, and that we need not- indeed cannot-find meaning within ourselves. We need only record and connect our experiences to the great data flow, and the algorithms will discover their meaning and tell us what to do. (Yuval 391-392) For that reason, *Convenience Store Human* illustrates a new aspect of human beings living in the immediate

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1   Dataism declares that the universe consists of data flows, and the value of any phenomenon or entity is determined by its contribution to data processing (Yuval 372).

future at the advent of a post-humanist worldview. And it can be assumed that it is the "mind education" of Japan that noticed and operated the need for "manuals" in the general society. Namely, according to the perspective of "mind education," just as a convenience store clerk has to act, talk, and make the "right face" as suggested in the manual, students in Japan can become "normal" only when they think and move with the "right mind," as directed by the Mind Notebooks, so can be called as manuals or database.

Yet, what is the "right mind" that this society should pursue in the future? Will it be able to educate the "right mind" if humans have no inner self? Forcing people to have the "right mind" without reflecting on their inner self is the same as the violence inflicted on Keiko by the "normal" people, and they will simply replace their minds with "manuals" such as the Mind Notebooks.

Conclusion

"Mind education" was put into place by the Japanese government in the 2000s as a moral education, but it did not produce the proper results, due to forcing a unified identity through the Mind Notebooks. The students who were trained in "mind education" have transformed themselves into individuals who adapt themselves to standard thoughts rather than understanding others and building their inner self into something that is rich and strong. In *Convenience Store Human,* Keiko is an indication that the problems of education faced in contemporary Japanese society have been caused by a lack of an inner self and an absence of morality. Previously in literature, people who had a problem with their "mind," like the murderer in *Zekkyo Jo Satsujin Jiken* or Shiraha in *Convenience Store Human,* were excluded from society, and eventually, they became criminals or broke the rules of society. On the contrary, Keiko does not care about the ethics of individuals that made them become a kind of criminal, but rather refuses to even practice ethics that are accepted in general society. She just fills her absent inner self with "manuals" and chooses to live as a new creature—a convenience store human.

When *Convenience Store Human* was published, it caused a sensation. *Bungeishunju*, a monthly magazine specializing in novels, recorded the sales volume at 640,000 copies (Sankai News Team, "640,000 Copies"). Also, as soon as this book was introduced on the show AmeTalk on TV ASAHI, it moved to second place, according to sales volume (having sold 500,000 copies, with ten editions), among the Akutagawa Prize-winning novels in the past ten years, following the first place Naoki Matayoshi's *Hibana* (*Spark*) (Sankai News Team, "Convenience Store Human"). The reason for the sensational records of *Convenience Store Human* could

be an interest in the unique background of the author and some amusing anecdotes[1] or the fact that her book signing was held in a convenience store. But most of all, as was suggested above, it could be because it portrays the figures of Japan's contemporary society and people. To put it bluntly, Keiko represents the young people of Japan, forced to be "normal" by education, but who have no confidence in their inner self to resist the norms of a given community.

This article has looked at *Convenience Store Human* as a warning to and implications for contemporary Japanese society, including the modern society aiming to move from humanism to post-humanism. The answer to the question "how can we make ethical judgments if we do not have an inner self?", raised in the introduction, could certainly be answered as "if we do not have an inner self, we cannot make ethical judgments but just become a human following the manual, such as 'Mind notebook'," as I have discussed in the body of the paper. The warnings and implications of *Convenience Store Human* are not about the despair of a dystopian future society, but rather about realizing the sense of crisis that the inner self of a human being, which is at the core of humanism and the starting point for all ethical norms, is now in danger. Given that this novel reminds of the importance of the inner self, it shows the role of literature clearly but paradoxically.

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1   The author Sayaka Murata was introduced with unique episodes from her life, showing that she has actually been working part-time at a convenience store for 18 years (no short period!) and was working at a convenience store on the very day that she won the Akutagawa Prize.

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"Peripheral" Transgeniality of Creative Dissidence in K. J. Peterson, G. M. Hopkins and Juhan Liiv

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Abstract   Transgeniality is a shared mental-spiritual attitude or disposition supported by a high degree of image originality that sporadically appears in the work of world writers belonging to different epochs and cultural-linguistic spaces. It is often revealed in mutual transcendence and dynamics of (philosophic-spiritual) content and form of expression of a work. In contrast, transgeniality is seldom manifested and explained by direct influences or concrete intertextualities (in form, motifs, etc) between literary works. Thus, it seems to be absolutely sure that the British poet Gerard Manly Hopkins (1844-1889) did not have any knowledge of the existence of Kristian Jaak Peterson (1801-1822), today considered as the first great poet in the Estonian language. Juhan Liiv (1864-1913) did not and could not know the work of Hopkins either, and no proof can be found of his being acquainted with the work of Peterson. All of them belonged to the "belated writers" in the sense that their work started to be fully celebrated only after their death and was added to their respective national literary canons posthumously. All these poets worked in a "periphery," both in the sense of geophysical location (Ireland, Estonia) and intellectual-spiritual ambience (ignored or rejected by aesthetical-literary main (centric) currents of their time). Yet all these writers became appreciated later by the posterity and by today have gained, at least to some extent, wider international recognition, as literary creators who significantly renovated the aesthetics of expression in poetry, embodying in their work a keen and intense ethical-philosophical strive for transgressing traditional morality. In all three cases it meant seeking a fuller understanding of our existence and the "other."

Key words   Transgeniality; Kristian Jaak Peterson; Gerard Manley Hopkins; Juhan Liiv; aesthetic renovation in poetry; ethical-philosophic transcendence; synergy of

philosophy and image; heteropoetics

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My intention is to continue exemplifying and further explaining my concept of "transgeniality" in literature, first exposed in an article "Literary Creativity and Transgeniality"[1]

Estonian conscious literary tradition is very young, as compared with English literature to whose canon the work of Gerard Manley Hopkins belongs. After many centuries in the humiliating condition of serfdom under the Baltic-German landlords and knighthood, our Estonian peasant forefathers became free citizens of the Western periphery of the Russian Tsarist Empire only at the start of the 19th century. Then, for the first time, they obtained their family names, as signs of personal identity.

Estonian literature did not exist as yet. However, in that anguishing background the first great figure of Estonian literature emerged, the poet and philosopher Kristian Jaak Peterson—a linguist, thinker, poet, who died at the age of 21, being thus even younger than his coeval English romantic poets John Keats, P. B. Shelley and G. G. Byron, when they left this world.

As all our culture in its initial stage, the work of our first writers along the 19th century bore strong footprints of German literature. The German language overwhelmed in the educated circles. Peterson could publish in German a series of treatises on the Estonian language. His complete poems and diaries containing a small number of short philosophical prose fragments, written for the most part in Estonian—the language of his father who had escaped serfdom and lived in Riga —, were for the first time published in 1922, when Peterson's death centenary was celebrated in the early years of the young Estonian Republic (1918-1939).

Even in the year 1861, when Friedrich Reinhold Kreutzwald, another surprising literary genius, published his great epic *Kalevipoeg* (20 cantos in the traditional Finno-Ugric metric, by today translated in its full form into a dozen world languages), Estonian literary tradition did not exist as yet. It slowly but

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1   See Talvet, Jüri. "Literary Creativity and Transgeniality." *Interlitteraria* No.23/2 (2018): 215-232; later reprinted as Chapter IX in Talvet, Jüri. *Critical Essays on World Literature, Comparative Literature and the "Other."* Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2019.

steadily started to come into being during the so called "national awakening" (2nd half of the 19th century). German influences were direct and strong. It would be easy to trace all kinds of intertextualities reaching from German literature to the budding Estonian literary tradition.

The poet and thinker Juhan Liiv whose work for many critics marks a radical turn to modern Estonian poetry, was twenty years younger than G. M. Hopkins. His admiration for the German Heinrich Heine and the English George Gordon Byron is well known. He could not know the work of Hopkins, because Hopkins' work gained wider recognition only since 1930, when a second posthumous edition of his poetry was published.

Juhan Liiv nearly imitated the fate of Peterson and Hopkins. For various reasons, but mainly because of his poverty and then, since 1893, his mental illness, he never managed to publish a book of poetry of his own selection. In 1909/1910 a selection of his poetry did appear in print, but it was edited and selected by younger poets (of the movement "Young Estonia") who early noticed features that made Liiv's poetry different, in comparison with the work of earlier poets.

Yet, the afore said can merely explain external contours for transgeniality. It may differ in other poets. Far more important in all three poets, the English and both Estonians, is their radical strive to search meaning for human existence and its relation with totality (nature, God). In parallel with their deep impulse of rebellion against traditional aesthetic forms of poetry, they rejected easily traceable intertextualities as well as existing models (patterns) that most poets (sometimes, unconsciously) rely upon. As Juhan Liiv has said in one of his aphoristic-poetic "splinters" (philosophically accented short aphoristic poems):

> Famous men are good examples.
> But nothing more than examples!
>   (Trans. by J. Talvet and H. L. Hix; Liiv 2013, *Snow Drifts...*)

Following a chain of visible intertextualities, it would be perfectly possible to trace and determine an arch-text, on which all the posterior texts rely. In the case of transgeniality, on the contrary, the chain of visible intertextualities becomes abruptly broken. Individual geniuses in literary and artistic creation work as if by unpredictable "explosions" and "leaps" (here once again, I rely on the metaphors introduced by Yuri M. Lotman in his semiotic-philosophic treatment of creativity): they create forms and image patterns that have not existed before them. As if in imitation of God, they mold something from nothing. On the whole, transgeniality

seems to be more congenial with poetry than prose, just because the latter in its overwhelming corpus has had to rely on a more or less fixed external form. Deviations from the rule (in Rabelais, Joyce and some others) have still been relatively rare.

In poets and poetry, a conscious effort to introduce formal novelty is an old feature, with its long history and tradition. Once a new form has been created, it can be fruitfully imitated and employed by many. The degree of transgeniality, with its corresponding explosive quality, generally tends to diminish in the imitative pattern. More often than not it is turned into a number of clearly discernible intertextualities (such as in poetry strophe and rhyme patterns).

K. J. Peterson

In the case of Peterson, Hopkins and Liiv, transgeniality has given birth to something that cannot be easily "acquired," "owned," systematically learned or possessed, or submitted to a methodic application. During his unjustly short lifespan Peterson came to the understanding of nature's integrity, in which all its living beings and ingredients were equal and irreplaceable. In having soul, humans were not an exception. He defied the Western long mainstream current of philosophy, including Christian church prevailing position which viewed man (anthropos) as a superior being, in respect to all the rest of living nature. As having extraordinary linguistic talents (besides German and Estonian (his father's native language) he knew also Greek, Latin Hebrew, Russian and Swedish, Peterson extended his understanding of nature as a totality to natural languages. He claimed that all of them (of big and small nations, from "ruling" nationalities to insignificant tribes) were equally irreplaceable in nature's totality, capable of developing and sustaining cultural creativity. Peterson defied the Western mythological pattern deriving from the ancient Greece and Rome. He argued that any part of the world had its own individual climate as well as its own historical conditions, as the fundament of creating its own religion, mythology and culture.

Peterson's rhetorical question in his prophetic poem "Kuu" (The Moon), "cannot, then, the language of this country / rise in the wind of the song / to the heavens / and seek for it eternity?" had to stay in silence, without any audience, during a hundred years, till the first publication of the poem under the title "Maakeel" (The Country-folks Language), by Gustav Suits, in "Noor-Eesti album III" (Tartu, 1909).

Subsequently Peterson's question in his poem became one of the main symbolic signs under which Estonian language and culture have developed. Elsewhere I have

compared the grand introductory role K. J. Peterson had in Estonian culture with the rise of Italian and European (Western) literary culture following Dante Alighieri's philosophic treatise *Convivio*, in parallel with his poetically and philosophically explosive *Commedia*, written in his native Toscana language (at the start of the 14th century, in a major "leap" into the European Renaissance and the New Era). What follows below is a fragment of the poem "Kuu":

Kas lauluallikas	Doesn't the wellspring of the song
külmas põhjatuules	in the cold Nordic wind
minu rahva meelesse	soak the senses
oma kastet ei vala?	of my people with its mist?
Kui siin lumises põhjas	If here in the snowy North
ilusa lõhnaga mirdike	a pleasant-smelling myrtle
viluses kaljuorus	in a windy valley
ei või õitseda kaunisti:	can beautifully bloom;
kas siis meie maa keel,	cannot, then, the native tongue
mis kui tasane ojake,	that like a quiet creek,
oma ilu tundmata,	without knowing its beauty,
heinamaa läbi, sinise	is running peacefully
taeva kullases tules	across the meadow,
rahuga on jookslemas,	in the golden fire of the sky,
ega toreda häälega,	or with a sounding voice,
oma rammu tundmata,	without knowing its might,
taeva müristamisega	with the heaven's thunder,
kui meri on hüüdmas;	when the sea is loudly calling:
[……]	[……]
kas siis selle maa keel	cannot, then, the native tongue
laulu tuules ei või	rise in the wind of the song
taevani tõustes üles	to the heavens
igavikku omale otsida?	and seek for it eternity?
	(Trans. by J. Talvet and H. L. Hix)[1]

In the case of Dante, the novelty of metric, rhyme and rhythm pattern he introduced

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1   Full translation in English of Peterson's poem was published for the first time in *Forum for World Literature Studies* Vol .2, No. 3 (2010): 471-472; reprinted in *Forum for World Literature Studies* Vol .8, No. 2 (2016): 258-260.

in *Commedia*, by inventing *terza rima*, supported his philosophic search. It was part of *dolce stil nuovo* philosophy to seek perfection and supreme goals not only in aspiring to divine love, but also in the poetic forms and language that reflected it. Since then, Latin as the Western common language of the Christian church and humanism—of all learned people—started to shake and gradually gave way to an ever wider use of native autochthonous languages in literature and culture, above all, in poetry.

K. J. Peterson's poetic legacy comprises only 25 poems (22 in Estonian and 3 in German). 9 of them have been qualified as odes and 6 as pastorals. Jaan Undusk, a contemporary Estonian writer and literary researcher, has made an effort to find out the intertextual origin of Peterson's odes—of his "slender strophe," as Undusk called it. Peterson's unequal verse lines without end-rhyme oscillated between 5 and 9 syllables. Even though going back as deep as to ancient Greek odes, Undusk nonetheless could not find any sure pattern for Peterson's model.[1]

The origin of these poems might well be in Peterson's philosophy itself. The accentuated purpose of his poems is to reveal the sonority of the Estonian language, showing it as a "natural flow" (in the eternal divine flux of nature, in falls and rises, as inspired by god's will and spirit, in long uninterrupted syntactic cycles, comprising up to nineteen verse lines (as in the poems "Kuu" and "Jumalale" (To God). In his frequent use of enjambment technique, Peterson anticipated something that is part, here and there, of G. M. Hopkins's "sprung rhythm" poems.

What has puzzled researchers of Estonian poetry is above all Peterson's radical deviation from the posterior Estonian main current of poetry. In the latter, the attempts to make it follow the traditional Finno-Ugric folksong pattern (in which trochaic four-feet verse lines prevailed) has generally failed, with the great and happy exception of F. R. Kreutzwald's epic chef-d'oeuvre *Kalevipoeg*. Instead, Estonian poetry since the times of 'national awakening' adapted German poetic patterns, rhymes and rhythms. To a lesser extent, Russian poetry could influence. In all that tradition, end-rhymes were turned into an obligatory element.

Peterson defied both, the traditional folksong (of which some sporadic humorous verses can still be found among Peterson's poetic legacy) and the mainly German-modeled iambic verse. Only in three poems, including a sonnet—written by Peterson originally in German—he applied end-rhymes. Peterson thus made a long "leap" from the start of the 19th century to the second half of the 20th century, when after a significant delay free verse without end-rhymes gradually came to be

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1   Undusk, Jaan. "Eesti Pindaros. K. J. Petersoni oodide vaimuloolisest taustast." *Keel ja Kirjandus* No 1 (2012): 11-29; No. 2 (2012): 103-122.

domesticated in Estonian-language original poetry.

G. M. Hopkins

As for Gerard Manley Hopkins, Estonia's and my own contact with him have been belated for various reasons. Before WWII, in the budding independent Estonian state the main energy of our young literary elite, including such outstanding translators and critics as Ants Oras (1900-1982), was exhausted by the primary task of making Estonian culture aware of the work of Shakespeare, Byron, Shelley, Keats and other British writers belonging to the forefront of English and Western literary canon.

After WWII, when Estonian was annexed to the communist Soviet Russia, religious topics became a taboo. Ants Oras, who among other Estonian writers and intellectuals fled Estonia in the years of WWII, settled in the US, at the University of Florida. There he taught English literature, but also tried to spread knowledge of his native Estonian literature. One of his doctoral students was Vincent B. Leitch (born in 1944), who indeed, encouraged by Oras and other Estonian writers and scholars in emigration, learned some Estonian and published a remarkable article in English, in *Journal of Baltic Studies*[1], in an effort to find parallels between the poetic work of G. M. Hopkins and the Estonian poet, theologian, folklorist and polyglot Uku Masing (1909-1985). The latter stayed after WWII in Estonia, but lived in Tartu as if in "internal exile." because the communist authorities did not allow him to publish his original poetry and essays in which religious topics prevailed.

The revised version of Leitch's aforementioned article was translated into Estonian and published in the magazine *Vikerkaar*, with an interview, in which Leitch commented his memories of Ants Oras.[2] More recently, Märt Väljataga (born in 1965), mainly known as a translator and a literary critic, also the main editor of *Vikerkaar*, has translated into Estonian and published two poems by Hopkins, "Täpiline ilu" (Pied Beauty) ja "Jumala hiilgus" (God's Grandeur) — first in *Vikerkaar* (6, 2015) and then in his anthology of English poetry in translation *Väike inglise luule antoloogia* (Tallinn, EKSA, 2018).

In his "Afterword" in my own first book of poems in English translation the America poet H. L. Hix has said about "Estonian Elegy" — a long poem written under the immediate impact of the tragic shipwreck of the ferry-boat "Estonia" in

1   Leitch, Vincent B. "Religious Vision in Modern Poetry: Uku Masing compared with Hopkins and Eliot". *Journal of Baltic Studies*, No 5 (1974): 281-284.

2   Leitch, Vincent B. "Usuline nägemus moodsas luules: Uku Masing võrdluses Hopkinsi ja Eliotiga". Trans. M. Väljataga; *Vikerkaar* No. 10 (2002): 77-89; "Eesti luule ja poeetika tagasivaates", ibid. 90-102.

the Baltic Sea in autumn 1994, in which nearly nine hundred human lives perished in a few hours:

> "Estonian Elegy" rivals in ambition and beauty such monumental shipwreck poems in English as "Lycidas" and "The Wreck of the Deutschland." its refrain "No, it cannot be true," summarizing the profound grief of a nation whose bright hopes in its still nascent freedom are undercut by so incomprehensible a tragedy. (Hix 75)

And finally, as the latest contact between the work of G. M. Hopkins and Estonia, in the magazine *Akadeemia* (7, 2019) three poems (To Seem the Stranger ... — I Wake and Feel ... — No Worst ...) from the cycle of Hopkins' so called "Sonnets of Desolation" (or "Terrible Sonnets") in my own Estonian translation appeared. Let me quote myself from a brief comment to these translations:

> The main novelty of Hopkins' poetry, through which he influenced the modernist turn in the twentieth-century poetic creation, was his consciously applied "sprung rhythm." It meant especially compressed ellipticity, bold modification and destruction of habitual syntax sequences, numerous alliterations, word compounds and interior rhymes, rare word applications, sudden enjambments, accentuated verse meters in which the number and regularity of syllables had little importance. One of the principal aims of such expression was to convey by means of immanent verbal forms themselves life's existential chaos, in which God provided only temporary comfort to souls in need of love. (Hopkins 1217-1218)

For a truly creative "explosion" revealing transgeniality beyond intertextualities, there is an apparent need of a synergetic symbiosis of philosophy and image quality, their deepest possible mutual intertwinement. They both are "self" and "other" at the same time. G. M. Hopkins joins transgeniality in the first place by rebelling against traditional measured rhythms in poetry and by introducing his "sprung rhythm." capable of reflecting life's chaos and dissonances. Tensions are revealed in an extremely compressed poetic room, which corresponds to every individual's limited life-time. The poet himself is no exception. Hopkins' persistent self-scrutiny in his relation with God and life's totality and death has few parallels in all preceding Western poetry.

Some resemblance could be found, perhaps, in Francisco de Quevedo "death-

sonnets" (the start of the 17th century). Yet, differences remain between the two poets. Quevedo's radically existential cycle of poems (reflecting his own anguish and misery in "living that is dying" is relatively small; in the greater part of his huge poetic legacy he found comfort in lashing and ridiculing human vices and earthly passions in satirically inclined grotesque imagery, close to the transgeniality initiated by Dante Alighieri's "Inferno" and continued in François Villon's "Testaments." Quevedo went in his literary creation far beyond private-intimate poetic-existential anguish as well as commonly accepted aesthetic norms. He became involved in contemporary social, cultural and political issues by denouncing Spain's moral decadence, attacking human vices and passions around him, as well as magnifying social and moral fall in powerful grotesque images whose aesthetics was radically open to rough deformation and "lowest" naturalistic details.

On the contrary, Hopkins stayed in his own anguished room, his personal prison, without escape. Unlike our K. J. Peterson, Hopkins did not abandon end-rhymes in his poems. One of his greatest achievements, the long poem "The Wreck of Deutschland." written in verse lines varying from three to twenty-two syllables, is indeed thoroughly irregular. Yet, the strophes (stanzas) were arranged in octaves and quite a strict end-rhyme scheme was applied. End-rhymes remained an important means in Hopkins' poetics through his entire work.

The difficulty of transmitting philosophically inclined poetry and its images from one language to another is well known. It becomes above all visible when the source text applies full end-rhymes. A translator must make his/ her choices as what to sacrifice in the situation in which the loss of some values of the original poem proves to be inevitable. In my own Estonian translation of Hopkins's sonnets, a conscious choice has been to apply instead of full end-rhymes (extremely hard to find in my native Estonian) assonant rhymes in which the stressed end-syllables rely on vowel sameness.

I WAKE and feel the fell of dark, not day.
What hours, O what black hours we have spent
This night! what sights you, heart, saw; ways you went!
And more must, in yet longer light's delay.
With witness I speak this. But where I say
Hours I mean years, mean life. And my lament
Is cries countless, cries like dead letters sent
To dearest him that lives alas! away.
I am gall, I am heartburn. God's most deep decree

Bitter would have me taste: my taste was me;
Bones built in me, flesh filled, blood brimmed the curse.
Selfyeast of spirit a dull dough sours. I see
The lost are like this, and their scourge to be
As I am mine, their sweating selves; but worse.

Ärkan ja tunnen: öö on endiselt.
Kõik tunnid, mustad tunnid öösel sel
koos rännatud said, süda, oh mis teed!
Ja valges pikemas mis veel on ees.
Mul tunnistaja on, kuid tundidest
kui räägin, mõtlen aastaid, elu. Sest
mu kaebus kätkeb karjet tuhandet,
surnd kirja talle, kes on kaugenend.

Sapp olen, kõrvetis. Jääb kibe mekk
jumala ürg-käsulegi sest. Eks
mu mekk on liha-luud, needus täis verd.
Vaimu enda-pärm tainast hapuks teeb.
Roosk eksinutele on higine
ise — nii ma endale; hullem veel. (Hopkins 2019)

Juhan Liiv

Now about the transgeniality of Juhan Liiv. He was younger than Hopkins and was not a church-goer. Unlike Peterson or Hopkins, he never studied at university. Yet, in resemblance with the American Walt Whitman he managed relying on his awakened observations of life and self-teaching to form a coherent philosophy. Since 1893 Liiv suffered from mental illness, but the fact remains that the bulk of his poems widely acclaimed by the posterity were created in moments of clarity during the years of his illness.

It would be definitely wrong to link the extraordinary quality of Liiv's poetic maturity mainly with the "miracle" of his mad imagination. Though very unequal in its quality, Liiv's poetic work prior to 1893 reveals his early obsession with the individual limits of human life, that is, his existentially shaded scrutiny into the essential contradiction between nature, as source of life, love, all feelings and the measure of morals, on the one hand, and man's mental, reasoning faculty (learned

knowledge, science's aspirations to dominate, alienate, enslave and destroy nature, with the aim to profit from it), on the other. It is the fundamental contradiction focused on by the Spanish existential writer and philosopher Miguel de Unamuno, born in the same year as Juhan Liiv. Liiv's early poem "Kaks ilma" ("Two Worlds." 1890) is basically centered on this existential dilemma and tragedy:

> Kõigel, mis mõistus määrata jõuab,
> sihtisid seati, kupitsaid panti,
> igale nimi ja asegi anti,
> määrati: kuidas? miks? millal?
>
> Kõigil, mis tundena südames sõuab,
> valude varjud, ilude väed,
> igatsus, pisarad – palvel käed –
> küsi sa: kuidas? miks? millal?
> Sihtisid pole sel sillal.
> ……
> All the head could do it did,
> fixed landmarks, set purposes,
> gave everything its own nature and place,
> answered for each: how? why? when?
>
> All the heart can hold it held,
> pain in shadows, and in hordes
> beauty, longing, tears — clasped hands —
> all imploring: how? why? when?
> This limit has no end.
> (Trans. by J. Talvet and H.L. Hix; here and in the following English translations of Liiv's poems are quoted from Liiv 2013, *Snow Drifts...*)

Christian God seldom appears in the work of Peterson and Juhan Liiv. For both Estonian poets, God is inseparable from Nature (as the source of the noblest good, love). In his poem "Jumalale" ("To God") Peterson identifies God with "the supreme spirit of heaven." whereas Liiv had probably in mind God, when in one of his "splinters" (philosophic-aphoristic fragments) he alluded to the soul of the universe:

Hing on küll igal ühel,	Everyone has a soul,
ilma hinge ei ole kellelgi.	no one has the world's soul.
Ja on maailmal üks ühine hing ka:	And the world has a common soul, too,
inimene sest ju aru ei saa.	that no one person can know.
	(Trans. by J. Talvet and H.L. Hix)

What I wish to say is that Peterson and Liiv could not imagine communication with God (the spirit of heaven or the soul of the world) without Nature, as God's creation. They did not separate or alienate Nature from God, or vice versa. They entered directly, with all their trust, in the realm of Nature, with the only main difference between them being that Peterson spoke in cosmic terms, while Liiv was much more concrete and intimate, often departing in his poetic images from some fragile and tiny particle of Nature. Yet for both of them, every particle of living nature had individual soul and was thus irreplaceably important in Nature's total organism, the great orchestra of life.

This kind of world understanding would be close to holism and has to do with our contemporary ecologic world view—with terms representing ideologies and attitudes born since mid-20th century, long after Liiv's death.

In parallel with Hopkins, Liiv individualized existence. As every particular lifespan is limited by death, the existential limits produce anguish and sadness, on the one hand, but also, and especially in Liiv, conduct to moral responsibility, capacity to feel the "other" as "self." the need of dialogue and unity.[1]

As transgeniality, Liiv's individual poetics emerged above all in his lyrical poems, in which the aforementioned mental attitudes were implicit in sensuous imagery. Liiv was seldom explicit. In a different way than in his "splinters" ("killud"), Liiv in his lyrical poems did not tell "ideas." but made the reader grasp them vaguely from utterly concrete natural elements comprising the poetic image. Yet, Liiv could hardly by qualified as an impressionist, either. Perhaps, *avant la lettre*, he could have parallels with imagists. Such "unsaid ideas" as often appear in Liiv's poetry, were not understood by most of his contemporary critics.

Liiv's rebellion against strict end-rhymes were not understood either, yet it was an essential part of Liiv's philosophy—reflecting nature's immanent strive to liberty, its reluctance to admit rules and restricting norms invented by humans. It is true that Liiv could not ignore end-rhymes altogether, as these we part and parcel of "genuine" poetry's identity in Estonian culture not only for his contemporary critics, but also

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1 Talvet, Jüri. "The Universe of the Mind of a Poet: Juhan Liiv's Philosophy and Poetics." *Interlitteraria* No.16, Vol. 1. (2011): 103-122.

long time after, until at least the middle of the twentieth century.

Yet Liiv's constant use of lax assonant rhymes and rhyming secondary-stress-syllables, as well as leaving some poems without end-rhymes altogether, convincingly show that his claim in some of his "splinters." strongly critical of rhyme as a poetic means, was not a poet's caprice but departed from his understanding of limitations for rhymes in the Estonian language, as well as from his strive for natural, free rhythms having their main source in his own personal creative intuition.

The key element of Peterson's transgeniality could be seen in the "vertical fluidity" of his verse, liberated from "brakes" and "cramps" of rhymes. Hopkins did maintain rhymes, but purposefully excluded their regular, foreseeable application. His frequently unbridled verse lines, loaded with sudden breaks, stops, jumps and ellipses turned "intimate rebellion." with its tensions and doubts, into the epitome of his transgeniality.

Juhan Liiv poetics established a "paradigm of tenderness" in relation to nature and the totality of existence. His transgeniality was essentially lyrical and intimate. He became early fully conscious of the limits of existence established by the law of nature, death. He observed nature in all its phases, but above all his poetry was inspired by autumn - the "fall." infusing sadness and melancholy.

Quite surely, some intertextualities extended to Liiv's poetics from earlier German poetry and, especially, from the work of Heinrich Heine. In the latter's footsteps Liiv often applied accentual-tonic principle of verse lines deriving from German folk-poetry. As in folksongs quatrains, end-rhymes were omitted in odd verse lines. The frequent use of repetitions or refrains derived from folk poetry in the widest sense is symptomatic of Liiv's poetics. Liiv could have been encouraged by Heine's poetic cycle "Nordsee" to write in free verse without end-rhymes. Yet Liiv's characteristic feature is that he did not turn any determined poetics, either of rhymed or unrhymed verse, into his principle, but following his personal creative intuition and freedom of choice adapted a kind of **heteropoetics**, capable of reflecting movement and change at any instant of life, as well as of human existence, ever open to otherness and difference.

In one of Liiv's best-known early poems, "Lumehelbeke" ("A Small Flake of Snow." 1891) the poet's image is built on an intimate conversation with a "small flake of snow." a tiny and fragile particle of cosmic totality, yet capable of teaching humans the need for peace and reflection in the transitory instant of existence, which in the end becomes silence anyway. The poem's refrain consists of a single word, "tasa" (translated here as "silence"; literally meaning in Estonian "quietly").

The word is repeated twelve times in a poem of the total of twelve lines, of four to five syllables each.

Lumehelbeke	A small flake of snow,
tasa, tasa	silence, silence,
liugleb aknale,	drifts past the window,
tasa... tasa ...	silence… silence…
Nagu viibiks ta	As if it were waiting,
tasa, tasa,	silence, silence,
mõtleks tulles ka:	as if contemplating:
tasa, tasa!	silence, silence!
Miks nii tuksud, rind?	My heart, why beat so?
Tasa, tasa!	Silence, silence!
Rahu otsib sind –	Peace waits for you —
tasa, tasa...	silence, silence…
	(Trans. by J. Talvet and H.L. Hix)

One of the main characteristics of Liiv's poetry is its sensitive minimalism. Its resemblance with Japanese poetry, as in his haiku-like poem "Sügise" ("Autumn." first published 1926) has been noticed long time ago.

Sügisetuul	Autumn wind
raputab puul,	quivers on a limb,
küürutab kõveral kõrrel	huddles on the hay
kui sandike!	like a beggar.
	(Trans. by J. Talvet and H.L. Hix)

In the first two lines of the poem a full end-rhyme is applied, while the rest—as if by a sudden removal of the "rhyme handle"—, echoes existential chaos by its metaphor of the final unknown.

In another short poem, "Pääsuke" ("Swallow." first published in 1926) there is hardly any regularity in the length of the verse lines. This time the poet's partner in a brief conversation is a swallow. One and the same word occurs twice in the end of the verse lines. A casual assonance at the end of the third and fifth line (päikesest-heljudes) could hardly be taken for a consciously created rhyme, while the same

adverb (alt-from below) is used twice at the line end. The reader might expect a continuation of the "story." but Liiv seldom tells stories in his poems. A concise image is fully sufficient to convey the poet's basic attitude to the world, as the swallow's answer gathers all four elements of the universe, from the high sky to the humble peasant's cottage and the orphan girl's table—that more often than not is empty, or with scarce food.

> Pääsuke, kust sa need lidinad leidsid?
> Leidsin nad sinise taeva alt,
> leidsin nad kevadepäikesest,
> üle oru heljudes,
> talupoja räästa alt,
> vaeselapse laua päält.
>
> Swallow, where did you find your twittering?
> I found it under the blue sky
> I found it in spring sunshine,
> floating across the valley,
> under the eaves of a peasant's cottage,
> on the table of an orphaned child.
> (Trans. by J. Talvet and H.L. Hix)

In the same way, the poet Juhan Liiv who spent his life in elementary poverty, gathered elements of his poetry from all parts of nature and surrounding world, without rejecting or neglecting any.

Liiv is known as a "tragic poet." but a number of his poems reveal the poet's admiration for beauty and harmony of creation. The poem "Music" (first published in 1926) is written entirely in free verse, though irregularly inserted (mainly assonant secondary-stress) rhymes grant its rhythmic harmony.

> Kuskil peab alguskokkukõla olema,
> kuskil suures looduses, varjul.
> On tema vägevas laotuses,
> täheringide kauguses,
> on tema päikese sära sees
> lillekeses, metsakohinas,
> emakõne südamemuusikas

või silmavees —
kuskil peab suremine olema,
kuskil alguskokkukõla leitama:
kust oleks muidu inimese rinda
saanud ta —
muusika?

It must be somewhere, the original harmony,
somewhere in great nature, hidden.
Is it in the furious infinite,
in distant stars' orbits,
is it in the sun's scorn,
in a tiny flower, in treegossip,
in heartmusic's mothersong
or in tears?
It must be somewhere, immortality,
somewhere the original harmony must be found:
how else could it infuse
the human soul,
that music?
(Trans. by J. Talvet and H.L. Hix)

In another poem by Liiv, "Sinu käik" ("Your Passing By." written in 1896), beauty and human harmony with nature is extolled, as the poet describes the passing by of a young maid or woman. The poem's special feature is that Liiv instead applying end-rhymest just repeated one and the same word at the end verse lines throughout the poem.

The poem was published for the first time only in 2012, thus nearly a centenary after the poet's passing.

Iluvaimud juhivad su käiku,
kullake, su õhukerget käiku:
päike naeratab su päale alla,
vaatab meelehääga sinu käiku:
metsaäär jääb vaatma, õitel häämeel,
lilled imestavad sinu käiku
ja siis isekeskis kõnelema:

siit ta läks, me nägime ta käiku!

Sprits of beauty conduct your passing by,
dear one, your air-light passing by:
the sun watches you, smiling,
it watches with delight your passing by:
the forest's edge also watches you,
flowers rejoice, admiring your passing by
and then they speak among themselves:
here she went, we saw her passing by!
(Trans. by J. Talvet and H.L. Hix)

Following their publication in the US journal *Poetry*, two of Liiv's poems in English translation, "Music" and "Leaves Fell" (written in 1897, first full publication in 1954) have enjoyed an amazingly wide repercussion in internet blogs and web-pages worldwide. Liiv's special charm for many seems to reside ever in his unexpected use of refrains and repetitions, combined with light assonant rhymes, instead of full end-rhymes.

Finally, by way of conclusion, let me quote one more poem, in which Liiv demonstrates the efficiency of a similar heteropoetics at work in a broader social landscape. The poem "Järve kaldal, nõmme all" (On a Lakeshore, Through a

Tuulehoog lõi vetesse,   A gust roused the waves,
lehed lang'sid laintesse: leaves blew into the water,
lained olid tuhakarva,   the waves were ash-gray,
taevas üle tinakarva,   the sky tin-gray,
tuhakarva sügise.   ash-gray the autumn.

See oli hää mu südamel':   It was good for my heart:
sääl olid tunded tuhakarva,   there my feelings were ash-gray,
taevas üle tinakarva,   the sky tin-gray,
tinakarva sügise.   tin-gray the autumn.

Tuuleõhk tõi jahutuse,   The breath of wind brought cooler air,
leinalained lahutuse: the waves of mourning brought separation:
sügise ja sügise   autumn and autumn
sõbrad teineteisele.   befriend each other.
                                   (Trans. by J. Talvet and H.L. Hix)

Forest." first published in 1953) contrasts the innocence of childhood and simple working peoples' lives with the absurd of geopolitical power-ambitions, violence and wars against nature waged ever by the lords of this world.

Kalamehe lapsed jooksvad	A fisherman's children run
järve kaldal, nõmme all,	on a lakeshore, through a forest,
punapõsksed, paljasjalgsed ...	rosy-cheeked, barefoot …
Järve kaldal, nõmme all.	On a lakeshore, through a forest.
Kalamehe lapsed jooksvad	A fisherman's children run
järve kaldal, nõmme all,	on a lakeshore, through a forest,
kalakesed võrku jooksvad	small fish swim into the net
järve kaldal, nõmme all.	at a lakeshore, near a forest.
Vaesus, hädad, kalamehed	Poverty, calamities, fishermen
järve kaldal, nõmme all.	by the lakeshore, near the forest.
Kindral ajab, mõõgad läikvad	A general commands, swords shine
järve kaldal, nõmme all.	on a lakeshore, in a forest.
Mitmed riigid kokku langvad	Several nations fall together, to clash
järve kaldal, nõmme all:	at a lakeshore, in a forest:
kalamehe lapsed jooksvad	a fisherman's children run
järve kaldal, nõmme all.	on a lakeshore, through a forest.
	(Trans. by J. Talvet and H.L. Hix)

The absurd is magnified, as the rare repetitive naming of the unity of locus occupies exactly a half of every quatrain, as well as of the entire poem. The symbol-locus refers to the only possible habitat of humankind, the earth, in the past as well as today.

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The Historicized Elegy in Natasha Trethewey's *Native Guard*

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Abstract In her Pulitzer winning poetic work *Native Guard*, Natasha Trethewey devotes her elegies to her mother, Native Guards in the Civil War as well as the Katrina-beaten American South. She historicizes the elegy writing so that the private stories and experiences are endowed with historical features. Out of Trethewey's perceptions of histories to be alive, concrete and ever-changing, she doubts the traditional way of historicizing based on visual and textual documents. This article looks into the poetic techniques the poet deploys to realize her historicized elegy writing as well as its cultural influences on reserving and refreshing collective memories of African American people in the South.[1]

Key words historicizing; *Native Guard*; body writing; persona and ekphrastic writing; poetic forms

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Introduction

The contemporary African American female poet Natasha Trethewey suffered the death of her mother in her freshman year in college and after years' of reluctance to talk about this great loss, she finally finds a way out in her elegiac poetry book *Native Guard* (2006). Following her consistent concern on history expressed in her earlier publications — *Domestic Work* devoted to the stories of African American working class in pre-Civil Rights Era and *Bellocq's Ophelia* telling the omitted story of mixed race prostitutes in Antebellum Era New Orleans, etc., this book was

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awarded the 2007 Pulitzer Prize for poetry for reserving the racial legacy of the Civil War. Divided into three relatively separated yet thematically connected parts, namely, her elegy and recollection to her dead mother, elegy to Native Guards[1] in the Civil War and reflection on the American South haunted with racial segregation and natural disasters. As she stated in a conversation, "Throughout *Native Guard*, I was elegizing my home… I wrote an elegy for my hometown" (Bingham & Trethewey 74). With the perception that *Native Guards* is a historical narration of elegies to her mother, this article studies the poetic techniques Trethewey employs to historicize the elegy writing in this book.

The Living History

Finally finding a way to voice the blow her mother's death brought to her, Trethewey throws her personal mourning to a larger notion—the Native Guards in the Civil War and then to the racially separated South, which makes this elegiac writing by no means restrained to lamenting, but bear a historicizing function. The thread connecting people who are rememorized in this book is that they were all silenced and somehow forgotten by history, like her African American mother buried without a headstone, black regimes in the Civil War as well as racially disadvantaged people in the South. Their legends in the world have no monument of any form and their stories untold. And these are the stories and experiences that Trethewey decides to historicize. To historicize means to make something historical, namely to endow things and events with historical features.

As for historical features, Trethewey's works deliver a different message compared with the static sense of history. In *Native Guard*, Trethewey entitles her first poem as "Theories of Time and Space":

> You can get there from here, though
> there's no going home.
>
> Everywhere you go will be somewhere
> you've never been.
>
> […] Bring only

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1   Native Guards: Soldiers of the 1st Louisiana Native Guard or other colored regiments of the Union Army in the Civil War. They were largely composed by freed men of color or former African American slaves in the South.

> What you must carry — tome of memory,
> its random blank pages [...] (Trethewey, *Native* 1)

In this poem, Trethewey records her one-day trip to Ship Island near her hometown in Gulfport and meditates on the ever-changing time and space. One can never go back to the place or point of time where and when he once has been, which means the past can never be retained and what is left is only one's memory which stays with him forever. And the "random blank pages" are what one needs to fill in for this is where the omitted parts lie. This abstract poem anchors the whole book about history and memory.

Though all poems in this book are written in standard language and forms, they are still regarded as revolutionary. One of the reasons is that the impulse to rebel and to deconstruct the status-quo history writing approaches is shown through out the whole book. In her poem "What is evidence", she writes:

> [...] Not
> the teeth she wore in place of her own, or
> the official document — its seal
> and smeared signature — fading already,
> the edges wearing. Not the tiny marker
> with its dates, her name, abstract as history. (*Native* 11)

Official documents, signatures and markers of her mother's death are all regarded as "abstract as history" and she denies that they are enough evidences of what happened in the past. These lines deliver a message that history in the real sense doesn't exist in textual materials for they are too abstract and cannot tell a thing. In another poem "Photograph: Ice Storm, 1971," the speaker foregrounds two different versions of the event in the 1971 ice storm: the crystal snow scene caught by the photo; the cramped domestic life and her step father's "fist" on her mother (*Native* 10). Together with the note on the back the photo, it is concluded that the picture tells a great lie. This example uncovers a horrible fact that what is caught in the camera is not necessarily the truth, and words and visual demonstrations can sometimes conspire to knit the lie, not saying the biased and misleading history text book, the movie and the teacher's instructions (*Native* 38), or the monument raised by Confederates' Daughters memorizing the white soldiers omitting the Native Guards' sacrifice (*Native* 46).

Trethewey's story-telling is targeted at the fact that almost all the historicizing

media including textual, visual and architectural devices are unreliable. These are static. However, as she argues, "A statue is a living thing… It lives" (Lara & Trethewey 131), history is never dead or frozen but living within the natural circle of life and death. From her writing of history, it can be detected that history is by no means eternal or static. Instead, it's always changing in the way the world and all kinds of lives do; it is concrete and specific instead of being abstract, which makes history real; it is polyphonic and has multiple versions. Thus every effort to freeze and eternalize the past, like what people do with visual, textual and architectural bearings is no more than human obsessiveness. The way to historicize that Trethewey practices is to enrich the past with life — all statuses of life, alive or dead. On querying the authority of these approaches, in order to voice for the unvoiced, Trethewey employs her creative craftsmanship techniques to embody a different literary historicizing practice and waits to see the outcome.

Historicizing in Body Writing

Trethwey's *Native Guard* manifests her close attention to human bodies, the technique of which has already taken shape in her first book *Domestic Work* (2000). In the description of domestic workers, she throws light upon their body gestures and facial expressions. But in *Native Guard*, her writing of bodies demonstrates more overt features. There are scholars who take notice of Trethewey's arrangement of this subject. Pearl Amelia McHaney (2013) juxtaposes the bodies of a black mother, a biracial child and a white father, which are symbolically represented with her three books *Native Guard*, *Belloque's Ophelia* and *Thrall*, and analyzes the unstableness in this seemingly harmonious family structure. Jill Goad (2016) specially looks into the "deserted bodies" in Trethewey's works, including aging inflexible bodies, disabled bodies, deserted dead bodies of Native Guards in Civil War, etc. and then gives voices to these historically silenced bodies to tell the stories in American South. It is consented that different body states bear their indications, like racial relationship, social and economical condition, etc.

However, as declared by Trethewey in her poem "What is evidence," the evidence of one's ever existence in the world is not defined by any textual document or decoration like fake teeth and making up, but by his or her own body — human body in the natural sense which inevitably experiences a whole life process, from being alive to deceased. "Her thin bones settling a bit each day, the way all things do" (*Native* 11). It is perceived that the poet doesn't expect the body to be eternal and she doesn't deny the decaying of them, only that what the body has gone through needs to be noticed and better recorded. That's the history of the body and

also that of the body owner. Considering this, it's possible to look into the bodies in the book along a time line, namely the past, the present and the future.

Human bodies keep records of its experience intuitively and materially as the "site of history" (McVey 152), so in literary works, bodies are often depicted as symbols of history, possessing history inscribed in it (Mullins 6) and the traces left on body are the most convincing historical proofs. Bodies in Tretheywey's works are both historical evidences and narratives (Mchaney 162-167). In her elegiac poem to her dead mother, Trethewey centers on the broken parts in her mother's body—"splintered clavicle, pierced temporal" (*Native* 11). These are the most direct proof of the crime her step-father did to her mother—shooting her twice, one bullet through her fingers and temporal and the other through her clavicle. The scene inscribes in Trethewey's mind and takes root. The document of this event might wear, but not her memory. That's why people only need to bring "tome of memory" (*Native* 1): people see things and remember, and the memory stays with the person. The violence Trethewey's mother suffered and died for, namely the history of this African American woman, is witnessed and recorded by Trethewey. In the title poem in this book, "It was then a dark man/ removed his shirt, revealed the scars, crosshatched/ like the lines in this journal, on his back" (*Native*, 26). The former slave now becomes a Native Guard, but the scars left by the slave owner's whip stay, which tell his tormented past. The metaphor here linking the scars on his back to the crosshatching lines in the speaker's journal makes the implication more understandable, that is, the scars are the Native Guard's bitter history and they tell everything about the inhumane violence and racial oppression he went through without a single spoken or written word. This breaks the law in history writing that only those authorized with voices and with the pens could have the chances to tell their history. However, in Trethewey's poetry, bodies tell history, sometimes more convincing and straightforward than words.

Apart from traces on human bodies generated from past time, there are descriptions of human bodies of slowed-down moments in present tense, which prolongs the exposure time of the status quo body gesture or condition. In the poem "Southern Gothic," the speaker describes the body gestures of her parents together with herself in bed as "their bodies curved—parentheses/ framing the separate lives they'll wake to [...]" (*Native* 40). Searching the scene from her childhood memory, she turns back and finds meaning in their gesture—the isolated condition in her parents' marriage, part of her mother's history. And as she recalled her mother's gestures and facial impression on a day not long after her mother's death, "her face tilted up/ at me, her mouth falling open, wordless, just as/ we open out mouth in

church to take in the wafer, / meaning communion?" (*Native* 9). For the speaker, her mother's gesture that day is a secret for her to decode forever. Once she could interpret the gesture, the gap between the past and her life is filled. The dying moment of Native Guards is featured in the poem "Native Guard" as "[…] (I) then watched a man fall/ beside me, knees-first as in prayer, then/ another, his arms outstretched as if borne/ upon the cross" (*Native* 28). This one-second process is prolonged by the detailed description of the soldier's body gestures. Ironically, the keening and stretching-arm gestures imitate those of praying and Jesus constrained to the cross. Only that these people didn't die for a sacred course as they have wished for but for persecution by their own comrades.[1]

Other cases indicate that a trauma or violence to a body may haunt the future of this entity or of other people for quite a long time or even, forever. In the Native Guard's dairy, he writes, "The diseased, the maimed, / every lost limb, and what remains: phantom' ache, memory haunting and empty sleeve" (*Native* 29-30). The limb lost in the past makes its influence remain in the person's memory and this psychological trauma doesn't have a due. Here, the absence of a physical limb makes the hurt present forever in the person. And in a larger sense, the absence of the records of social injustice and oppression results in the everlasting appeal for recollecting and uncovering the buried history. Dead bodies of those Native Guards who lost their lives were "unclaimed" (*Native* 28), deserted in the wildness as "the hog-eaten at Gettysburg, unmarked/ in their graves" (*Native* 30) or "swelled/ and blackened beneath the sun—unburied/ until earth's green sheet pulled over them" (*Native* 46) at Port Hudson. They were meant to be exiled from history by the authority, but the improper arrangement opens the gate for arguing and correcting. Trethewey expresses this desire to record by the voice of the Native Guard, "I dreamt their eyes still open—dim, clouded/ as the eyes of fish washed ashore, yet fixed—/ staring back at me" (*Native* 28-29). As in the pilgrimage that the persona takes, she narrates, "In my dream, / the ghost of history lies down beside me, / rolls over, pins me beneath a heavy arm" (*Native* 20). The dead past never dies. It reaches the living and gets announced through their tongues. "What is monument to their (black phalanx's) legacy? / […] Now fish dart among their bones, / and we listen for what the waves intone" (Trethewey 44). There are no markers or headstones, but the waves and fish send messages.

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1   The battle referred to in the segment "April 1863" (Trethewey 28) in the poem "Native Guard" is the Union attack in East Pascagaoula on April 9, 1863. Trethewey's notes in *Native Guard* were, "Union troops on board the gunboat Jackson fired directly at them and not at oncoming Confederates" (*Native* 48).

Bodies are history. The scars and broken parts archive the past—glory or trauma; the gestures embody the life state in a specific moment; and the past and present of this body always lead to a future. Though bodies decay and perish, but they remain in the memory of following generations in the most concrete and so real form, which transcends stony monuments.

Historicizing in Persona and Ekphrastic Writing

Trethewey not only records history by writing realistically the human bodies, she also fictionizes historical documents to explore multiple versions of historical events. Two main approaches she employs are persona writing and ekphrastic writing.

Persona writing is a commonly used technique to tell a story from the perspective of a fictional character. The poem that is typical of this writing technique is the first-person diary written by one Native Guard. He is positioned at the Ship Island fort guarding the war prisoners of the Confederate Army. Before that, he was taught to read and write by Dumas[1], which makes it possible for him to write down the history of his version. From the very beginning of his diary narration, the poet creates a crucial metaphor—the notebook the Native Guard writes on is one deserted by a Confederate officer with his records in it. But then this black soldier starts his narration above the former one crosshatched and overlapped. Two versions juxtapose, one by the South and the other by the North. The diary provides a new perspective of witness, which cannot be ignored. Fortunately, the speaker's stand is not biased for he records sincerely the suffering of Native Guards but also that of Confederate prisoners with compassion. It is more possible that this narrator doesn't take a side in narration, but takes a larger stand of humanity and empathy. The situation of the Native Guards in the Civil War is described mainly from two aspects, their routine work and maltreatment or even massacre imposed by their Union comrades.

As told by the narrator in the diary, black soldiers are treated no better than what they used to be—slaves.

> For the slave, having a master sharpens
> the bend into work, the way the sergeant

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1   Francis E. Dumas (1837-1901) was an officer in the 2nd Regiment Louisiana Native Guards. He was the son of a white Creole father and a mulatto mother. The law didn't allow him to manumit the slaves he inherited from his father, so when he joined the Union Army, he freed them and encouraged them to join the Native Guards (Trethewey 47).

moves us now to perfect battalion drill,
dress parade. Still, we're called supply units —
not infantry — and so we dig trenches,
haul burdens for the army no less heavy
than before. I heard the colonel call it
nigger work. Half rations make our work
familiar still. (*Native* 25)

Native Guards, though as part of the Union Army in the Civil War, are never treated as the regular army. The work assigned to them is usually "dig(ging) trenches and haul(ing) burdens" (*Native* 25), and like the one in the poem, guarding captives. The supplies they receive are also no parallel to the white regular army, and that's why they need to "take those things we (they) need from the Confederates abandoned homes" (*Native* 25). If this unfair treatment is not harsh enough, others' ignorance to their lives explains the root of the former. It is normally believed that those who die for their country on battlefield be treated with glory and their bodies claimed and returned home. However, as witnessed by the guard,

Yesterday, word came of colored troops, dead
on the battlefield at Port Hudson; how
General Banks was heard to say *I have
no dead there*, and left them, unclaimed. (*Native* 28)

or "the hog-eaten at Gettysburg, unmarked in their graves" (*Native* 30). The lives they sacrifice were treated as nothing, not saying with respect. That explains from the bottom all the unjust treatment they receive.

Ignorance is not all. The worst is the massacre imposed on them by the Union Army. More than one such event are recorded in the diaries—Pascagoula[1], Port

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1   Pascagoula Foray: On April 9th, 1863, 180 men from the 2nd Regiment on *General Banks* committed a foray at Pascagoula on mainland Mississippi together with gunboat *Jackson*. When retreating, *Jackson* covered for the Native Guards on the bank. But a cannon fell on them to cause four of them dead and five wounded (Hollandsworth, 46).

Hudson[1], and Fort Pillow[2]. Racial hatred is long covered by the right course for freedom and democracy, and victims of it are silenced under this thematic melody.

Choosing the first-person point of view to tell the story is the overt technique that Trethewey renders. With her doubt on the so-called "big history" and her belief that real history can never be "documented," only safely reserved in people's memory, she uses this fictional personae writing not to overthrow something, but to remind the public that there might be a second version.

To facilitate this telling, Trethewey introduces ekphrastic writing as another technique for fictionizing historical documents. Ekphrasis, as a classical literary device flourished in Renaissance, was regarded as "a descriptive language, bringing what is shown clearly before the eyes" (Quoted from Kennedy & Meek 6). But since "the poem knows something or tells something that had been held back by the silent image" (Quoted from Kennedy & Meek 12), ekphrastic poetry does more than just representing visual arts. In the process of observing and retelling, multiple versions of interpretations can be practiced. So ekphrastic poetry breaks the incomplete truths or even lies knit by visual devices. In Trethewey's ekphrastic practice, she juxtaposes the history that the creator of this visual work meant to demonstrate and a different one the poet detects. The tension between the two versions attracts readers to explore the deeper layer of truth. Visual works depicted in *Native Guards* are mainly paintings and photographs. The shared notion illustrated is the Southern history of inhumanity in and from the Civil War to the era of Civil Rights Movement, examples including the trauma of war, racial segregation and class oppression. In doing this, she is expressing remorse and lamenting to her troubled hometown as well as exploring the vital reasons for the tragedy of Native Guards, her mother and all those forgotten by history.

The only ekphrastic poem dedicated to a painting is the poem "Again, the fields." This work of Winslow Homer depicts veterans farming the fields after returning from the Civil War. Three time points are connected in this poem—the farming life before the war, the war and the farming after the war. The metaphor of "the dead they lay long the lines" to "sheaves of wheat" shadows the land with images of "[…] muskets, the bone-drag weariness of marching, the trampled/ grass,

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1   Port Hudson: It is noted at the end of *Native Guard* that in the battle of Port Hudson in May 1863, General Nathanel P. Banks of the Union Army deserted the dead bodies of Native Guards, declaring that they had no dead in the area where Native Guards used to fight (*Native* 48).

2   Fort Pillow: The notes of *Native Guard* say that when Confederates troops attacked at the Fort Pillow, Colonel Nathan Bedford Forrest disregarded the surrender of black troops and ordered them "shot down like dogs" (*Native* 48-49).

soaked earth red as the wine […]" (*Native* 31), which makes the farming location and person never the same with those before the war. The memory of inhumane cruelty is silent, but is inscribed into the mind of all involved.

In the latter two parts in a suite poem "Scenes from a Documentary History of Mississippi," two photos taken in the Jim Crow South are illustrated in a detailed way. "Flood" originates from the picture taken in a Mississippi flood breaking out in 1927. In the picture, black refugees take barges to seek landing but are stopped by the then National Guards, compiling them to sing prayers so as to be permitted to disembark. As for the slavery history, asking black people to sing easily refreshes their humiliating past when white slavers asked their black slaves to sing and perform for fun. At this moment of life or death, the black refugees must admit to be humiliated for survival. This photo might have been designed to show the religious power people hold when facing the disaster, which, however, is penetrated by the detailed observation provided by this poem. The second poem "You Are Late" exposes a scene of a black child being refused by the notice in front of *Greenwood Public Library for Negroes* saying "you are late." The photo was taken in the 1930s or 1940s, the age when public library services in Jim Crow South was extremely limited and unbalanced.[1] Trethewey points out the irony in the photo,

> The first one, in pale letters, barely shows
> against the white background. Though she will read
> Greenwood Public background.,
> the other, bold letters on slate, will lead
>
> her away, out of the frame, a finger
> pointing left […]
> She'll read the sign that I read: *You are late*. (*Native* 24)

The sign telling her to leave is more distinctive than the one telling her citizens' rights. She is not late and what is really far late is the racial equality. These photos may reserve memories for those silenced by racial segregation in history, like the refugees and the black girl, but the memories were false, unreal or at least partially real. Re-paraphrasing them provides an upright reason for them being memorized—

1   In his article "Black Public Libraries in the South in the Era of De Jure Segregation" (2006), Michael Fult observes that public libraries for whites didn't come into being until 1890s. In the Jim Crow South, public libraries for African Americans were established at least a decade later and the scale and recourses were quite limited and unbalanced (339-340). Until 1953, only 34.2% of these states (Jim Crow States) had accessibility to public library services (342).

once being maltreated in history.

Suffering for those inferior not only comes from racial segregation and war, but also from class oppression in economical activities. The rural South has long relied on cotton economy, so even in the year 1907, the photo named "King Cotton" still shows the magnificent view of cotton plantation and harvest in the South. However, the poet also inserts the insect disaster two years after the harvest which paralyzed the economic life of the South with tenant farmers' and cotton pickers' lives totally destroyed. In the poem "Glyph, Aberdeen 1913," the picture was focused on the poverty of a cotton picker with his disabled son. By imaging the daily life and laboring process of this father and son, this poem creates a three-dimensional life picture of proletariats in rural South, especially in the era of segregation.

Persona and ekphrastic writing, one from a subject's perspective and the other from a viewer's perspective enable poetic depictions to dig hidden details in history and in Trethewey's case, provides new historicizing methods to recollect the experience of those long ignored in Southern history.

Historicizing in Poetic Forms

The past can be historicized and re-historicized by textual, visual and architectural devices, but poetry with its formal features has the advantage of embodying history both textually and formally, the former telling stories and the latter constructing history physically. In this sense, poetry can be called history itself texturally. Written in traditional poetic forms and standard language, *Native Guard* encompasses rich poetic forms and their variants, which bear denotative meanings and in a way participates in the process of historicizing.

One of the most distinctive formal features in this book is various repetition which can be divided into two types, namely the repetition of some words, phrases, images or notions and that of poetic lines. The former is to emphasize on the meaning delivered by the words with the strengthening sound effect. The latter usually creates visual and sound impact so as to bring enormous thematic denotations.

The repetition of notions is not as typical as that of poetic lines, but can still be detected in two examples. In the poem "King Cotton, 1907," two images "flags wave down" and "bales of cotton rise up" (with deviated expressions) each appears for four times in the poem. These two key images support the whole "King Cotton" magnificence, showing the blind optimism and pride of the South. The more magnificent the scene is, the more ridiculous the whole historical event seems. The two images repeated, like the echoing cheering of the people, would finally decease

and turn into endless sighs. In another poem "Miscegenation" written in ghazal, the word "Mississippi" appears for eight times. According to the poet, this word "begins with a sound like *sin*, the sound of wrong—*mis* […]" (*Native* 36), which means the notion of sin is repeated from the beginning to the end as a thread through the whole story of her parents' marriage and her birth. What's more, the literal meaning of Mississippi can not be ignored—the state in the Deep South where racial segregation was authorized in the Jim Crow age. The word bearing the sound of "sin" and historical implication serves both as the reason as well as the result of racial segregation. By repeating these images, the poet is highlighting the keywords of history so shaping or reshaping the core operation of seemingly complicated historical phenomena.

Comparing with the repetition of words and images, that of poetic lines has more variations and thus bears richer implications. However, though the repeating types might be different from one to another, one common regulation in these schemes is the "recycling pattern" which takes the shape of a closed circle.

In the poem palindrome poem "Myth," Trethewey describes her dreaming of her dead mother, but finds it impossible to bring herself back to waking time— "Again and again, this constant forsaking" (*Native* 14). This is an everlasting and recycling trial and failure. The first three stanzas follow the time from dreaming to waking with no repetition of lines; the left three stanzas following the time from awaking back to dreaming, strictly repeating the former three stanzas from the last to the first line. The last line is the same as the first line of the whole poem. The format of repetition in the suite poem "Native Guard" is different. "Native Guard" written in crown sonnet form consists of ten segments written in diary form. The last line of each poem serves as the first line of the next and in the same manner the last line of the last stanza is actually the first line of the first stanza, so a circle is accomplished. In the pantoum poem "Incident" consisting of five four-line stanzas, the second line of the first stanza serves as the first of the next stanza; the forth line in the first stanza serves as the third line of the next stanza. The scheme continues until the second line of the last stanza becoming the third of the first stanza and the last line of the last stanza, the first line of the first stanza, forming a closed circle.

Thematically, the three poems are all about memory, those of one's dead mother, of the former war experience and of the old African American stories. For Trethewey, history takes the stable form not in documents but in people's memory. So such history takes the features of memory, which is ironically illustrated by the recycling lines. Memory never disappears. It stays with the individual or the group, handed down from generation to generation or just evoked from now and

then. History is not linear but a circle, lasting together with the recycling of life itself. That's how the living history exists and operates. In this way, Trethewey stirs the past and refreshes the old stories told or untold in the impactful form of circle which never breaks, stops or deserts anything in it. This mode of historic time and writing keeps all the forgotten people and story alive and move along time, just like returning to the photo taken before one goes to Ship Island (*Native* 1).

The language of Trethewey's poetry is typical of standard syntax and grammar, but in more than one poems in *Native Guard*, she indents lines after the first line of each stanza to form a kind of unevenness in the composing, sometimes fragments. The unevenness and asymmetry in format shadows that in subject. The couplet poem "Pilgrimage" narrates the pilgrimage that every spring people take to Vicksburg, Mississippi to cherish the memory of Confederate soldiers and civilians in the forty-day siege. According to Trethewey, this is the spot where "the living come to mingle with the dead" (*Native* 19-20). But the efforts to refresh the history with the historical remains and texts can make people only "brush against their cold shoulders in the long hallways, listen all night to their silence and indifference" (*Native* 19-20). The reality and past are not united until they meet in the speaker's dream. The disunity and unity are both vividly illustrated by the intent couplets and the single line at last.

The poem "My Mother Dreams of Another Country" also demonstrates lines indent, but the whole poem is not divided into stanzas. This poem is about the annoyances her mother goes through in expectant period, including naming of the biracial girl and superstition on maternal impression. The divergence between her longing for another country outside Mississippi and boredom she bears towards this place where people call her colored, negro or black can be sensed in reading the unbalanced intent lines. The feature of indent lines is also shown in the poem "South" which recalls the historical burden of this land and its people—slavery, poverty, war, racial segregation and gentrification. All these disharmony takes the shape of indent poetic lines like sawteeth to cut and grind, to break the historical chains so that a bright new phrase can begin.

Fragmented lines are typically elaborated in the poem "Providence." Apart from intent lines, the stanzas go into irregular divisions with spaces in single lines. On one hand, these textual fragments parallel the broken state of the town hit by Camille in 1969; on the other, it is also the mental state of people in the place punished by God's "providence." These elegies to the Native Guards in the Civil War, the poet's mother as well as to the South with a troubled past bear the shape of history as it was, uneven, inharmonious and struggling, full with hidden stories and

silenced voices. The poetic forms also serve as an unavoidable speech to tell and remind, in a more direct and impactful way.

What's thought-invoking is also the employment of traditional poetic forms in the book. Trethewey takes traditional poetic forms as restraint, as she holds, "A plaintive tone can arise through the notion of restraint because a poem that is restrained by form, where something is being held back, suggests the absolute struggle to say what is being said" (Turner & Trethewey 159). The strong tension of the desire to say and the anxiety of looking for proper ways to say is demonstrated in her choice of traditional sometimes flexibly adjusted poetic forms, including crown sonnet, pantoum, blues poem, ghazal, villanelle, palindrome, rhyming and unrhymed tercet and quatrain and so on.

The most impressive is the poem "Native Guard" with the speaker being an educated Native Guard on Ship Island guarding the Confederate war prisoners during the Civil War. The sharp contrast is that a black Union solider who is usually a silenced entity in history is given the right to speak and record while some of white Confederate soldiers are described as illiterate. What's more, the Native Guard writes in the form of sonnet, a traditional Italian poetic form from the thirteenth century and the whole sequence takes the form of diary. These elements endow this speaker with a kind of "documentary power" (Turner & Trethewey 160). Such examples include "Incident" written in the early nineteenth century Malay form pantoum, with the second and fourth lines in the first stanza serve as the first and third lines of in the next stanza, "King cotton, 1907" in the French villanelle from the 17th century, "Miscegenation" in the Arabic ghazal originating from the 7th century, and "Graveyard Blues" in blues poem which stems from the African American oral and musical tradition. There is hardly work written in free verse in this book. The use of forms gives the speaking in the poem a sense of history and authority. The repetition of rhyming sounds, meters and lines display all kinds of circling and connecting, making the voicing continuous and paraphrased again and again, like the echoing from history.

Conclusion

Trethewey makes full use of her poetic techniques to introspect the nature of history, to explore all possible versions of history and to authorize the silenced entities in the past to make new documents. In the context of monuments by Confederates' Daughters, streets and architectures named with somebodies' names, headstones raised in the graveyard, as well as history textbooks hiding truth or even lying, this book tells people that history is not necessarily memorized by stony landmarks or

indifferent words, but exists as part of life itself in this world. It perishes and decays, but never disappears in the memories of people or groups, like "a statue (which) is a living thing." People existed and things happened. This elegy makes the past breathe and live on, in words and in people's minds.

It is hard to imagine that the huge project of refreshing collective memories and historicizing can be achieved by words and poetry. As it has been stated in the former parts, this is not the accomplishment of the project, only a stone thrown into the pond. With the book winning Pulitzer Prize, the waves this stone stirs have been spreading. With this "disturbance," more connections will be recognized, like what Trethewey does with the memorization of her mother, her hometown and the Native Guards. In this way, the web of Southern African Americans' or Americans' collective cultural memory will be collaged.

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Wordsworth and Traherne:
Metaphysical or Romantic?

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Abstract   The present paper offers a comparative study of the poetry of the seventeenth century Metaphysical poet Thomas Traherne and the prominent Romantic poet William Wordsworth. Reflecting on the controversy over determining the scope of comparative studies, Susan Bassnett argues that comparative studies in literature do encompass as well those studies conducted on the works of authors writing in the same language. Furthermore, comparative studies need not focus on incongruent and dissimilar elements in the works of the compared authors. Accordingly, the present article attempts to conduct a comparative study of the works of two English poets belonging to two different literary traditions and separated from each other by a span of more than a hundred years. Reading the poetry of the two in the light of the cultural, historical, and literary contexts of their production and the intellectual and philosophical presumptions of their authors, we found out that there are a number of characteristic features common in the poetry of the two which connect their literary productions through invisible thematic and structural threads through the years. These resemblances include the two poets' inclination towards an experience of the sublime that reverberates in their poetry, the celebration of childhood visionary innocence, glorification of nature and natural beauty, pantheism, mysticism, and the philosophical and spiritual concept of felicity or joy.
Key words   Sublime; Pantheism; Metaphysical poetry; Mysticism; Childhood visionary Innocence

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A Note on the Life and Works of Thomas Traherne

The Metaphysical poet Thomas Traherne was born in either 1636 or 1637 in Hereford, England. He was educated at Hereford Cathedral School and received his Bachelor's degree from Oxford University in 1656 and his Master's in 1661. He received as well a Bachelor of Divinity in 1669. In 1656 after receiving his Bachelor's from Oxford, Traherne took holy orders and in 1657 he was admitted to the rectory at Credenhill, Herefordshire. He was ordained priesthood after the restoration of the monarchy and the return of King Charles II. Traherne died of smallpox circa 1674 at the age of 37 or 38.

Traherne was a prolific writer and during his life produced a miscellaneous body of writings. He was, however, an unrecognized figure during his lifetime and his works were not known or appreciated until long after his death. *Roman Forgeries*, published in 1673, was the only work published during the poet's lifetime, and *Christian Ethiks* followed soon after his death in 1675. The majority of his writings, poetry and prose, remained unknown for almost two centuries until the accidental discovery of two of his manuscripts by William T. Brooke at a London bookstall in 1896. These two manuscripts, one poetry and one prose, were first mistakenly attributed to Henry Vaughan, Traherne's contemporary Metaphysical poet. Brooke, who came to know of the significance and worth of the manuscripts, informed Dr. Grosart of his important discovery. Dr. Grosart bought the manuscripts and decided to publish them in the new edition of Vaughan's collected poems. Ironically however, he died before accomplishing his plan. His personal library was sold and the manuscripts found their way to Bertram Dobell who examined the poems and decided that they were in fact written by Thomas Traherne. In the meanwhile, Brooke informed Dobell of another poem called "The Ways of Wisdom" that he found in a small booklet in the British Museum. This poem had a meaningful stylistic resemblance to the discovered manuscripts. Although the booklet had no author's name on it, its prologue offered a clue to the unknown author's identity.

Accordingly, after a meticulous study of these manuscripts and examining their stylistic features, Dobell decided that they were all Traherne's. He published the 1896-discovered poem manuscript in 1903 under the title of *Poetical works* and the prose as *Centuries of Meditation* in 1908. Another collection of poetry known as *Poems of Felicity* was published in 1910 based on the manuscript found in the British Museum. The Lambeth manuscripts (manuscripts in the library of Lambeth Palace) also include *Inducements to Retiredness*, *A Sober View of Dr Twisse*, *Seeds of Eternity*, *The Kingdom of God*, and the fragmentary *Love*. Traherne's famous *Commentaries of Heaven* was found accidentally when it was burning on a rubbish heap in Lancashire. It was not identified as Traherne's until 1981. "The Ceremonial Law," an unfinished epic poem of 1,800 lines, was discovered in 1997 by Smith and Laetitia.[1]

Introduction

T. S. Eliot's seminal essay "On Metaphysical Poets," published in 1921 altered the way Metaphysical poets were evaluated during the previous two centuries in the context of English literary history and English literary studies. In this essay, Eliot champions the style and poetic capabilities of this group of so-called Metaphysical poets –originally a pejorative term employed first by Dryden and after him adapted by Johnson to emphasize the supposed artificiality of their poetic practice– and enumerates as one of the key features of their poetry what he terms "association of sensibility." What is controversial about this article, however, is that there is not even a single reference to Traherne and his poetry in it. Although, at the beginning of the twentieth century some of the manuscripts of Traherne's poetry and prose had been recently discovered and a handful of collections of them, for instance the 1903, 1908 and 1910 collections, had been published, Eliot paid no heeding to Traherne's poetry and did not mention his name along with the rest of the Metaphysicals and expelled him, so to speak, from the pantheon of Metaphysical poets. Likewise, in his 1930 article, "Mystic and Politician as Poet," Eliot devaluates Traherne's literary talents as a poet and regards him more of a "mystic than a poet" (qtd. in Johnston 377). In this article, Eliot argues that Traherne magnifies the importance of religious and political discussions of his day at the cost of sacrificing language and poetic form.

In *The Mystical Poetry of Thomas Traherne* (1969), Clements endeavors to modify the prejudiced evaluations of Traherne's poetry under the influence of Eliot's

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1   The biographical information about the poet's life and works is mostly provided based on *Traherne: An Essay* (2016); a book written by Gladys Willett.

dismissing of him as a mystic rather than a poet. Clements maintains that such examinations of Traherne's poetry are "general, superficial, and disappointing" (500) in that they do not relate the poet's mysticism –that is, the content of the poems– to the form and style of his poetry and the congruity between the two.

In "Thomas Traherne's Songs of Innocence" (1970), Drake reviews Clements and Stewart's tenets about Traherne's poetry. He argues how these two critics' meticulous study of Trahene's poetry and prose gives a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of his works and links his literary practice to that of the rest of the Metaphysical poets and in this way provides a better critical stance from which to praise Traherne's literary practice as a poet. In "A Poet Comes Home: Thomas Traherne: Theologian in a New Century" (2004), Inge argues how Traherne can be regarded, besides being a poet, as a thinker and theologian in our time whose writings deal with the problems the modern man faces and whose mystical and spiritual tenets can be healing at a time when modern man encounters new ethical problems.

In his study of Wordsworth's *Prelude* (1999), Jonathan Wordsworth considers the "theme" of Wordsworth's poem to be "the human mind" which is "a subject truly modern" (179). He believes that the poet, unlike his predecessors, "has looked inward" and has composed his "new epic" based on "a godlike capacity that we are assumed to have in common" (179). He also considers "education through the sublime" as another key theme of the *Prelude* (184).

In his "Wordsworth and Coleridge, *Lyrical Ballads*" (1999), Scott McEathron argues that Wordsworth had "little interest in systematic philosophy" (146) and believes that unlike his friend and collaborator, i.e. Coleridge, Wordsworth found his psychic education not through "books and tales of the supernatural" but through "a full-scale immersion in the sometimes frightening infinitude of the natural world" (146). According to McEathron, in The *Tintern Abbey*, Wordsworth speaks with a "patiently confident and self-commanding" voice; a voice that originates from his unfailing faith in the power of nature; a faith which reveals his "abiding faith in the human mind" (154).

As it can be discerned, among the numerous studies conducted on the poetry of these two poets, no comprehensive study has comparatively scrutinized the poetic practice of the two poets so far. Among the reasons that have hindered such an undertaking, one can name the, considerably long, gap of time that exists between the two poets' eras; a time distance that resulted in the classification of the poetic practice of the two under two different literary movements; a classification which itself results from the inflexible cut-and-dried categorizations of the dominant

version of literary history. Yet, another reason might be sought elsewhere, in the dominant theories of comparative studies of literature which disvalued comparative studies of this sort in the first place due to the two poets' common national and linguistic origins.

Discussion

As late as the 1970s, it was held by critics working in the realm of comparative literature that one could not engage in comparative studies if the writers who were to be compared to each other were writing in the same language. As Susan Bassnett argues, "attempts to define comparative literature tended to concentrate on questions of national or linguistic boundaries" (5). For a comparative study to be "authentic," it was believed that the act of comparison "had to be based on an idea of difference: texts or writers or movements should ideally be compared across linguistic boundaries" and, accordingly, it was deemed pointless to compare two or more writers in terms of the resemblances and common aspects shared among their works (5). What is more, the activity of comparing authors writing in the same language was regarded futile and was not included in the realm of comparative literature. Against this circumscribing approach to comparative studies, however, Bassnett argues that any act of comparison is valuable and acceptable as long as it takes into account the "historical context" of the composition and the reception of the texts in question (8-10).

Traherne's style has been compared to that of poets like William Blake, Gerard Manley Hopkins and the American poets Walt Whitman and Ralph Waldo Emerson. It has also been discussed that there are Romantic elements in Traherne's poetry. But no detailed study has been conducted to painstakingly scrutinize such elements.

Stylistically and thematically, there are noteworthy resemblances between the poetry of these two poets. Since the great bulk of Traherne's poetry remained literally unknown until the twentieth century, it is largely improbable that his work had influenced Wordsworth. Traherne, however, can be regarded a Metaphysical poet who anticipated Romanticism prior to its due historical time. His Romanticism resembles that of Wordsworth's and the common elements in the poetry of the two can be summarized as follows.

The concept of sublime, having its origins in Longinus's treatise "On Sublime," found a detailed exploration in Edmund Burke's 1757 *A Philosophical Inquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* and Immanuel Kant's 1790 *The Critique of Judgment*. In his article "The Picturesque, the Beautiful and the sublime," Nicola Trott enumerates different kinds of sublime in Romantic

poetry. According to his definitions, Wordsworth's sublime can be included under natural sublime (78) or what Keats terms "Wordsworthian or Egotistical Sublime" in his 1818 letter to Richard Woodhouse (27 October 1818, *Selected Letters*, 147-8) due to the poet's sublime descriptions of nature and his sensibility towards the natural landscape. It can also be labeled as transcendental sublime because of the transcendental experience of the infinite achieved through the subject's encounter with nature.

In his article "Infinity is Thine: Proprietorship and the Transcendental Sublime in Traherne and Emerson," Jacob Blevins traces the same kind of transcendental sublime in Traherne's poetry. Traherne has "an interest in essentially the same kind of experiential movement from finite beauty to the infinite state of sublimity" (Blevins 186). Sublime experience through the encounter with and understanding of infinity has its ground in the two poets' sacramentalization of the external nature as well as human soul or psyche. In Wordsworth's version, the sublime encounter with nature and its vastness and beauty brings about a kind of transcendental experience of infinity. For instance, in his *Prelude*, he remembers a nocturnal scene wherein he observes the beauty of moonlight:

> There I beheld the emblem of a mind
> That feeds upon infinity, that broods
> Over the dark abyss, intent to hear
> Its voices issuing forth to silent light
> In one continuous stream; a mind sustained
> By recognitions of transcendent power,
> In sense conducting to ideal form [...] (*Prelude*: Book Fourteen: Conclusion
> [The Vision on Mount Snowdon], *Norton Anthology*, Vol. II, 386)

Or in his *Lines Written a Few Miles above Tintern Abbey*, nature brings about "a sense sublime / Of something far more deeply interfused" (ibid. 206).

For Traherne, the source of infinity is at times the soul itself and at other times the nature and natural beauty:

> Few will believ the Soul to be infinit: yet Infinit is the first Thing which is naturaly Known. … That things are finit therfore we learn by our Sences. but Infinity we know and feel by our Souls: and feel it so Naturaly, as if it were the very Essence and Being of the Soul. (Traherne, *Centuries of Meditations*, qtd.

in Blevins, 186)[1]

In *Commentaries of Heaven*, Traherne articulates his dissatisfaction with those "philosophers and moralists" who "did not understand 'the Excellency of Souls'" (qtd. in Ross, *The Works Vol. II*. xxvii)

The discourse of sublimity popularized in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in Europe was, according to Heiland, an "important aesthetic discourse" of the time which emerged to "efface" the hitherto dominant Cartesian dualisms and "bianrisms" (113). Among such binarisms were the binarisms of mind and body, here and there, now and then, which penetrated, in a way, into most of philosophical argumentations. Through their pantheistic beliefs, both Wordsworth and Traherne depart from this Cartesian legacy. In both poets, the sublime experience of infinity nullifies the dualisms of here and there, now and then, self and other, for this experience brings about a kind of pantheistic unification with the One, the Creator. In "Amendment" Traherne asks, "Are men made Gods? And may they see / So wonderful a thing / As God in me?" (Traherne, in Willett 81).

Transcending the boundaries of the finite world and the sublime experience of the infinite inaugurate, according to Blevins, "the journey to felicity, to the experience of divine joy that exists only in the realm of the infinite" (186). It can be argued that the kind of transcendental sublime that can be experienced through one's encounter with infinity has its root in the two poets' Platonic ideas concerning the boundlessness of the human soul and its exemption from all material limits and restrictions. The desire for the sublime experience can also be related to humanity's fundamental desire for emancipation from all boundaries and confines; a desire which also manifests itself in the two poets' rejection of the rules and standards established by the literary tradition as the authentic norms and obligations for producing literary texts. It can be noted, furthermore, that for both poets the natural or transcendental sublime is linked to a kind of religious sublime (Trott 84; Blevins 187) that has its roots in the pantheistic thoughts of the two poets.

One of the key concepts common in the poetry of Traherne and Wordsworth is their philosophy regarding child and childhood innocence. The idea of childhood and the glorification of childhood innocence is one of the key motifs in the poetry of both poets. Dodd calls this idea regarding childhood innocence "innocency by creation" which "means that one is created innocent by God; it is a relational status infused by grace and set in motion by love" (216). Both poets regard childhood as a pivotal stage in one's psychological and spiritual development. The concept of

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1   The spelling and punctuation idiosyncrasies are due to Traherne's special style of writing.

childhood innocence has its roots back in the philosophy of Plato. Plato believed that the soul is immortal and exists independently from the body both before birth and after death and that the soul of a person before birth dwells in the realm of *Ideas* where it has direct and unmediated access to eternal *Ideas* and to transcendental Truth. According to Plato, at the moment of birth and the child's entrance into the material world, the child's access to this Ideal world is ruptured and this rupture results in the total loss of the spiritual knowledge of the child; a process which cannot be undone after birth. This spiritual and intuitive knowledge can only be gradually recollected, so Plato argues in his *Phaedo*, by philosophical discipline in the course of life.

Wordsworth's and Traherne's notion of childhood, although originated from Plato, is somewhat different in that, unlike the philosopher, both poets believe that the spiritual insights of the child and her access to an ultimate Truth is not instantaneously interrupted at the moment of birth, but is immediately available to the child during her childhood. This immediate childhood vision is recoverable in adulthood if one trains oneself to look at the world the way a child does. For Wordsworth, "The child is the Father of man" ("My heart leaps up", in *Norton Anthology*, Vol. II, 306). In "Ode: Intimations of Immortality," he interprets birth as "but a sleep and a forgetting" (ibid. 309). However, he believes that the soul of man, which he interprets as "our life's Star" is not devoid of vision and understanding. Nor does it come in "entire forgetfulness" or "utter nakedness," for it comes from God (ibid. 309). In poems like "Shadows," Eden," "Innocence," "Wonder," and "Childish Thoughts," Traherne, likewise, celebrates childhood visionary innocence. "Innocence" is a song praising childhood innocence. It seems to be a remembrance of childhood, a remembrance through which the poet links childhood to innocence. He remembers childhood as a state where

No inward inclination did I feel
To avarice or pride: my soul did kneel
In admiration all the day. No lust, nor strife,
Polluted then my infant life.

No fraud nor anger in me mov'd,
    No malice, jealousy, or spite;
All that I saw I truly lov'd.
    Contentment only and delight

> Were in my soul […]
> […]
> Whether it be that nature is so pure,
> And custom only vicious; or that sure
> God did by miracle the guilt remove,
> And make my soul to feel his love So early […]. (25- 40)

In these lines, he becomes quite Platonic, for he maintains that as we human beings move away from our true divine nature and become polluted by culture, the gradual process of losing the purity of our souls inaugurates. This is a tenet which reverberates Rousseauian philosophy. However, Traherne believes that such a lost Edenic innocence can be regained and, like Wordsworth, he endeavors to regain that state: a state he calls felicity. In "The Apostasy," for instance, Traherne invites the reader to go back to the prelapsarian Edenic simplicity wherein humans did not know about "superficial joys" (Traherne, in Willett 40). Childhood is the state in which humans are still endowed with this Edenic simplicity. It is the unspoiled state of bliss where God "in our childhood with us walks" ("Childish Thoughts," ibid. 7). It is a state where

> The world resembled his eternity,
> In which my soul did walk;
> And everything that I did see
> Did with me talk. ("Wonder," ibid. 4)

It is in our childhood that we understand and feel God's love in its purest sense. The child intuits God's love and finds it "Rich, infinite, and free" ("Poverty," ibid. 44). That is why in "Innocence," the poet cries, "I must become a child again" (ibid. 14). The child is, as Newey maintains, "an iconic focus for Traherne's understanding of the whole shape of human life" (227).

In some of his poems, Traherne complains that, like Blake's iconic child, he has lost his childhood innocence as a result of the experience achieved in mature life. Still, such innocence can be regained and when it is regained, it is combined with reason, understanding, and maturity and is hence more valuable. That is the reason why in "Innocence," Traherne declares,

> What ere it is, it is a light
> So endless unto me
> That I a world of true delight

Did then and to this day do see. (in Willett 13).

Likewise, in "Ode: Intimations on Immortality," Wordsworth complains about the gradual dullness of his imagination brought about by age to him. In this poem, he is vigorously looking for "something that is gone" (in *Norton Anthology*, Vol. II. 309); something he is not able to see anymore (ibid. 308). He wonders "Whither is fled the visionary gleam?/ Where is it now, the glory and the dream?" (309). Nevertheless, the equilibrium and joy –a joy which is intermingled with a deeper understanding and wisdom– he finds in nature as "the anchor of my purest thoughts, the nurse,/ The guide, the guardian of my heart, and soul/ Of my moral being" ("Tintern Abbey," *Norton Anthology*, Vol. II. 260-1) is a "recompense" for what he has lost.

The concept of bliss or felicity in Traherne's poetry has its parallel in the concept of joy in Wordsworth. In "Tintern Abbey," Wordsworth says,

> […] And I have felt
> A presence that disturbs me with the joy
> Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
> Of something far more deeply interfused, (ibid. 260)

For Traherne felicity is the highest state of bliss. It involves a quest for the divine and essential truth of creation. Felicity is a "non-material bliss" for one's happiness (Balakier 19). It is, in Clements words, "a state beyond pleasure and pain, a state including yet transcending joy and suffering;" it is "the state of blessedness" (83). What Donne and Herbert might have termed "Love" is "Felicity" for Traherne (Drake 502). For Traherne, the "overriding factor in human endeavors," is, as Balakier argues, "the natural tendency of the mind to move in the direction of increased happiness" (24). Accordingly, for Traherne, the human soul intends naturally to move in the direction of achieving happiness and felicity. The soul's natural predilection towards this state of blessedness must not, however, be interpreted as a "naïve or Pan-glossian optimism" (Clements 30): "There is one law in Heaven and Earth abov, / That by one Inclination all should be / Led and attracted to felicities" (Traherne, "Who made it first," 168-170).

As with Wordsworth, felicity for Traherne is experienced most fully during one's childhood, for as he argues in his poem "Eden," a child's soul before birth is in heaven in a state of Edenic pleasure and tranquility. In the moment of birth and during its infancy, the child experiences the same heavenly peace and joy: "As Eve, / I did believe / Myself in Eden set," ("The Apostasy," in Willett 19-21). Traherne

believes that the first feeling a new-born child experiences is love and the child's eyes find beauty in anything they behold. This state of childhood bliss present in the poetry of both poets can be compared to the Lacanian state of the imaginary; the first stage in the tripartite stages of a person's psychological development, for at this stage of bliss, the state before the child's entrance into the symbolic realm of language, the child has no experience of "loss," but rather has an unmediated access to the "Real," which is, for both Wordsworth and Traherne, a kind of mystical and intuitive truth about human soul and psyche.

Another concept which relates Traherne and Wordsworth's practices together is their common concern for intuition. Wordsworth challenged the rigid rationalism of the Neoclassical period which put too much credit on rationality, reason, and common sense. Almost two centuries before him, Traherne criticized the same thing. Although he did not reject rationalism, Traherne did not regard it as sufficient for a complete understanding of the human situation. Besides reason, he put emphasis on imagination and the knowledge acquired through intuition as vehicles for guiding human beings in the journey of life. In fact, in all of his poems, there is a dialectics between reason and imagination; a dialectics which brings to mind what T. S. Eliot termed "association of sensibility" which is a key characteristic of the Metaphysical poetry. As Blevins argues, "although Traherne consistently expresses the joy of experiencing the world via the senses, the senses are finally a failed path to felicity; only within the imagination and mind can such a higher state of experience exist" (187). One of the adjectives Jan Ross employs to describe Traherne's poetry is the word "imaginative" (*The Works Vol. I.* xiv). The poet's "Shadows in the Water" is a conspicuous manifestation of such imaginativeness. In this poem, Traherne imagines the possibility of a parallel world behind his own where:

> By walking men's reverséd feet
> I chanced another world to meet;
> Though it did not to view exceed
> A phantom, 'tis a world indeed,
> Where skies beneath us shine,
> And earth by art divine
> Another face presents below,
> Where people's feet against ours go. (41-48)

One of the reasons for Traherne's emphasis on imagination and intuition can be traced back to the influence that Neo-Platonists, Cambridge Platonists, and

Latitudinarians had on his thoughts (Inge 34). According to Cambridge Platonists, reality is not known by physical sensations alone, but by a kind of intuition that exists behind and beyond the material world of everyday perceptions. As Balakier creeds, Traherne criticizes those who "dismiss the non-material ground of knowledge" (26) and those who circumscribe themselves simply to scientific practice, for it is "incapable of giving the mind what it most desires," (ibid. 37) the kind of satisfaction "which only bliss can produce" (37).

The concept of intuition is linked, as well, to the concept of felicity. In fact, felicity brings about knowledge through intuition. It brings about a "prelapsarian knowledge of God and the world" (Ross, *The Work Vol. II*. xxix). Related to the concept of felicity and intuition is the pantheism which is at the heart of Traherne and Wordsworth's poetry. This pantheism is partly brought about by the special importance of nature and natural beauty to these two poets. Through observing and contemplating on the book of nature and natural beauty, one recognizes the greatness of God. Every part and parcel of nature mirrors the beauty of God and God's hand can be seen and discerned in every creation. Nature is the source of inspiration for both poets. In *Centuries of Meditation*, Traherne recalls that when he was a boy, he "som times tho seldom visited and inspires with New and more vigorous Desire after that Bliss which Nature Whispered and Suggested to me" (Traherne, qtd. in Balakier 25).

This is how pantheism is linked to mysticism in the poetry of both Traherne and Wordsworth. In fact, the praise of nature in the poetry of the two is not a passive one and accordingly, the term nature/natural poetry would be a completely unsatisfactory label for the poetry of both. For it is not the celebration of nature for its own sake. It is a contemplative act which results in a higher and more sophisticated understanding of the world and its Creator. That is why Wordsworth says,

A motion and a spirit, that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things. […]
　　　[…]
[…] well pleased to recognize
In nature and the language of the sense,
The anchor of my purest thoughts, the nurse,
The guide, the guardian of my heart, and soul
Of all my moral being. ("Tintern Abbey," *Norton Anthology*, 260)

And this is how studying nature leads to a kind of philosophical mysticism. Traherne maintains, "in every Place and Thing we shall see GOD continually" (qtd. in Ross, *The Works*, Vol. II. xxxi).

Furthermore, both poets were living and writing in an age which witnessed, due to growing scientific discoveries as well as the birth of new philosophical trends –which were in contrast to the preceding classical orthodox philosophies–, an increasing inclination towards skepticism and atheism. Traherne, however, so Ross argues, remains "a compelling apologist for the Christian religion" (*The Works*, Vol. I. xiv). Like Traherne, Wordsworth maintained his pantheistic thoughts and his spiritual vision of the world in spite of the skepticism and agnosticism proliferating in his times.

Another characteristic which links Traherne's poetry to that of Wordsworth is the former's "radical experimentation with language" (Johnston 378). It is frequently discussed that the Metaphysical poets rejected the earlier Petrarchan tradition before them. They regarded Petrarchan conceits as hackneyed (Lessenich 3-4). To them, it had become, through indiscriminate adaptation and imitation, a kind of mannerism which had to be rejected if poetry was to rescue from banality. This rejection found its first voice in Shakespeare's sonnets where, for instance, he wrote his beloved's eyes were nothing like the sun (Sonnet 130, in *Norton Anthology*, Vol. I. 1074). It found its fullest expression in the poetry of the Metaphysicals, especially in John Donne's. Johnston argues that the same current found its way into the poetry of Traherne. Like other Metaphysical poets, he was under the influence of anti-Petrarchan movement (379-381). Like Wordsworth who wanted to purify the language of poetry from its artificiality brought about by Neoclassical tradition, Traherne endeavored "to move poetry back to a pre-Petrarchan innocence" (Johnston 383). On the other hand, his poetic practice seems somehow different from that of metaphysical poets like Marvell and particularly Donne in that his poetry lacks the so-called artificiality of the baroque style. The number of conceits and metaphors in his poetry is fewer than those in Donne's poetry for instance, and in this way, his poetic practice is somehow different even from the baroque style in which it is usually included. The language of his poetry is, according to Johnston, "non-metaphorical" and more like the language of prose than poetry to his readers (379). Among all the choices available to him, including the Petrarchan tradition before him and the contemporary style of Donne and other Metaphysical poets, Traherne, like Wordsworth, favors a new kind of poetic language which shuns "the guileless hyperbole of poetry typical of the end of the Petrarchan era in the English Renaissance" (ibid. 380) and welcomes the simplicity and intimacy of everyday

language.

Conclusion

As Bassnett legitimizes comparing the works of two authors writing in the same language as one of the many possible trajectories of comparative studies, the present paper offered a reading of Wordsworth's and Traherne's select poems in the light of their resemblances and the common elements they share. Writing under different cultural, historical and literary circumstances and belonging to two different literary traditions, the two poets, nonetheless, share key thematic features which originate from their similar, though not necessarily identical, views about creation, the world, and the human being's place in it. The two poets share a specific philosophical outlook towards the world which relates their works together in spite of the temporal gap of more than a century between them. This resembling philosophical vista shows itself in the thematic similarities that are discernible in the poetry of the two. Among such resemblances one can name the two poets' inclinations towards the experience of the sublime and the manifestations and reverberations of this experience in their poems, the glorification of childhood visionary innocence and the wisdom this innocence catalyzes, the celebration of nature and natural beauty, pantheism, mysticism, and the spiritual and philosophical concept of felicity or joy.

Their works also share stylistic resemblances that come from their departure from the previously dominated literary traditions, namely, Petrarchan tradition for one and Neoclassicism for the other. Finding the current literary traditions of their times insufficient for the kind of poetry they had the propensity to compose and for the kind of philosophical concepts they had in mind, the two poets departed from the monotonous repetitions and mannerisms brought to the poetic practice as a result of their contemporaries' indiscriminate copying of the canonical writers. Instead, they tried to rejuvenate poetry by introducing new themes and new stylistic features into the poetic practice of their times.

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Authorship in Muslim Slave Narratives:
Job Ben Solomon, Omar Ibn Said, and Mahommah Gardo Baquaqua

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Abstract   Literary canons reveal important insights regarding definitions of literature in specific periods and cultures. Canons considered in Anglophone literary criticism expanded significantly throughout the past five decades to include, for example, various non-fiction genres. One of these genres is the slave narrative. Despite the now widespread inclusion of slave narratives in literature anthologies, there is still little literary criticism dedicated to this genre. In particular, comparative studies focusing on more than one specific author or text omit the fact that among the many contributors to this unique type of autobiographical writing were many enslaved Muslims. This fact alters today's understanding of the polyglot nature of the New World's literary history, as it also adds a commonly concealed angle to the concept of Arab American identity. The present study discusses three slave narratives associated with Job Ben Solomon, Omar Ibn Said, and Mahommah Gardo Baquaqua and it highlights their importance for literary scholarship concerned with categories of autobiography, American literature, and historical fiction. The selection of the three authors in particular allows for considerations of amanuensis, translation, creolization and polyglot inclusion of African tribal language in the context of their narratives' literary values.

Keywords   Autobiography; Enslaved Muslims; Job Ben Solomon; Mahommah Baquaqua; Omar Ibn Said

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Introduction

Sarah Meer argues in favor of literary values of slave narratives in "Slave Narratives as Literature," her contribution to the recent *Cambridge Companion to Slavery in American Literature* (70-85), but texts by enslaved Muslims are absent from her discourse. This omission reflects on literary criticism dedicated to the slave narrative genre in general (see also *The Oxford Handbook of the African American slave narrative*; 2014). Building on Meer's argument, the present study seeks to identify literary values inherent in selected testimonies related to the enslaved African American Muslims Job Ben Solomon, Omar Ibn Said, and Mahommah Baquaqua. It highlights in particular how questions of authorship complicate such identification.

Ayuba Suleiman Diallo, known as Job Ben Solomon and allegedly born in 1701 in Senegal, met the lawyer, Rev. Thomas Bluett while imprisoned at the Kent County Courthouse. After traveling to England with Ben Solomon, Bluett published *Some Memories of the Life of Job, the Son of the Solomon, High Priest of Boonda in Africa* in 1734. Omar Ibn Said created his own testimony *The Life of Omar Ibn Said: Written by Himself* in Arabic about a century later, in 1831. Although two translations of this text originate during Ibn Said's lifetime, Alexander Cotheal's in 1848 and Isaac Bird's in 1862, the first publication of an English translation, F. M. Moussa's revision of the Bird translation, did not appear until 1925. Mahommah Gardo Baquaqua, born in the early nineteenth century in Djougou, relates details about his enslavement in Brazil in *An Interesting Narrative. Biography of Mahommah G. Baquaqua*, written down and edited in 1854 by Unitarian Minister Samuel Downing Moore. Of the three, only Ibn Said did not use the language acquired in the New World to convey his memories directly. Baquaqua relied

heavily on Moore's editorship, as emphasized in the preface, and Ben Solomon reaches his readers entirely via an amanuensis. Highlighting such discrepancies in origin and inherent language mediation, the present study compares authorship in the three respective texts and argues that the polyglot and transcultural elements of the selected narratives enhance their unique styles as literary documents.

Meer refers to the etymological relation between "literature" and "literacy" during her assessment of various definitions of the former. Yet, the field of oral tradition within literary studies does not consider the ability to read and write a condition for the production of literature. The ancient storytellers, instead, relied on their senses of hearing and speaking, to foster their talent. Folktales and songs have found their way into literature anthologies along with letters and travel accounts, types of texts not typically anthologized during the first half of the previous century, at least not in the Anglophone tradition. As Meer points out, the broadening of the definition of "literature" also results in the inclusion of slave narratives:

> … expressions of doubt are now rare. Literary critics have pored over slave narratives and published reams of analysis. Many narratives are staples of undergraduate literature courses, and are available in beautifully produced editions that assert their literary quality either implicitly or directly. (71)

The narratives Meer refers to here, as the essays throughout the *Cambridge Companion* and the *Oxford Handbook* testify, are not narratives by and about enslaved Muslims. They are the more widely studied texts by Frederick Douglass, Harriet Tubman, Harriet Jacobs, Olaudah Equiano, and Solomon Northup, for example. The present essay, with its focus on Job Ben Solomon, Omar Ibn Said, and Mohammah Baquaqua aims to remedy this general oversight. The selection of the three authors in particular allows for considerations of amanuensis, translation, and polyglot inclusion of African tribal language in the context of their narratives' literary values. The resulting comparative study highlights those literary aspects of the selected narratives that are related to the slave narrative genre, such as the issue of authorship and the relevance of socio-historical and postcolonial perspectives.

Job Ben Solomon and Thomas Bluett

Ayuba Ben Suleiman Diallo, better known as Job Ben Solomon was a son of a high Priest from Senegal (Austin, *Transatlantic* 53). An African enemy kidnapped and sold him in 1730 (Bluett 18). According to the preserved sources, he worked on a tobacco plantation in Maryland before his escape and subsequent imprisonment.

Job's literacy in Arabic attracted the attention of the philanthropist James Oglethorpe who helped to free him. Presumably, Job himself practiced slavery before his own enslavement, as well as after he gained his freedom and returned to Africa. In 1733, during his voyage from America to England, he asked Thomas Bluett to write *Some Memoirs of the Life of Job the Son of Solomon* (1734). Allen D. Austin, in *African Muslims in Antebellum America: Transatlantic Stories and Spiritual Struggles*, calls Ben Solomon's narrative not only the "earliest known 'life and thoughts' of an African who had been a slave in the New World" (Austin, *Transatlantic* 5), but also "the oldest text in African American literature." In fact, Austin's subtitle for the chapter dedicated to Ben Solomon is "A Nobleman and a Father of African American Literature."

This latter claim is curious since the preserved rendering of Ben Solomon's narrative is ascribed to Thomas Bluett, the White lawyer and reverend, who identifies himself as the one "who was intimately acquainted with [Ben Solomon] in America, and came over to England with him" on the narrative's title page. While most readers, or at least Anglophone critics are familiar with Ibn Said's narrative in one of its English translations, and Moore pretends to have functioned merely as Baquaqua's editor, Ben Solomon's text complicates the question about author identity most visibly among the three. Would what Austin describes as the "father of African American literature," then really be Ben Solomon or rather Bluett, his amanuensis? This question recalls the more recent controversy over an African American classic, the *Autobiography of Malcolm X* (1965). Scholars still argue, and their successors will likely continue to do so, whether to consider Alex Haley this testimony's author, ghostwriter, co-author, or rather collaborator. Meer mentions traditional suspicion towards functions of amanuenses in the context of yet another famous text in her study of slave narratives as literature. She specifically highlights the achievement of Solomon Northup's canonization:

> Still more interesting is the inclusion of Solomon Northup's slave narrative in the African American classics series, since his book was mediated by a white [sic] amanuensis, David Wilson; such narratives were for a long time suspect, especially for critics whose definition of literature stressed individual and original achievement. (Meer 72)

Definitions of literature based on author identification are incompatible with the expansion of a canon willing to welcome sources whose authorship may be anonymous or also communal.

In *Immigrant Narratives: Orientalism and Cultural Translation in Arab American and Arab British Literature* (2011), Waïl S. Hassan devotes an entire chapter to "The Emergence of Autobiography." Relying on the scholarship of Alfred Hornung and Ernstpeter Ruhe (1992), Hassan suggests a certain irony in the simultaneous popularity of a poststructuralist "death of the Author" and genres revolving around an author's "vital signs" (78-79). The respective developments throughout the past five decades appear less contradictory when one takes into account the potential proximity between fiction and non-fiction genres, rendering obsolete James Olney's rigid distinction in "'I was born': Slave Narratives, their Status as Autobiography and as Literature" (1984). The author's identity loses at least some significance when readers consider autobiographies not only always as one of the many kinds of literature, but when they further bear in mind the potential overlap with this umbrella category's fiction genres. As Hassan cautions,

> … the dialogical, interpersonal dimension to all kinds of narrative erases conventional distinctions between fiction and autobiography, on the one hand, and on the other, between autobiography and other kinds of nonfiction writing, including historiography, philosophy, literary and cultural criticism, and so on. If novels are always to some degree autobiographical ("Madame Bovary, c'est moi!"), autobiography is inevitably novelistic, always making use, whether consciously or not, of familiar conventions and techniques of storytelling. (79)

Granting that slave narratives are one specific form of autobiographical writing, these considerations of the genre's similarities with other genres, including fiction, as well as other forms of documentation, detract from the urgency to hold one specific or even single individual responsible for their origin. Even if authorship is uncontested, as in the case of Douglass for example, different influences and intertexts, as Meer underlines (72), provide relevant presences of other author's voices and intentions within the respective narrative.

Hassan questions several categorizations within the context of Arab American identity. He writes that the "first Arab autobiographies were written neither by Arabs nor by immigrants, but by educated Muslim slaves captured in West Africa […] and, like other slave narratives, *they were written at the urging of abolitionists*" (Hassan 79; emphasis added). This statement reminds readers of the complicated circumstances out of which slave narratives emerged, on the one hand. On the other, it emphasizes that literacy in Arabic among Muslim slaves was a result of their religion, rather than ethnicity, an important distinction the authors return to in the

following section. The extent of an abolitionist's influence on or interference with a particular narrative's creation may be more relevant for the historical rather than the literary analysis. Those literary scholars aiming for an author-centered approach would have to place considerable weight on other preserved sources, such as letters or notebooks, by the author in question.

Bluett evokes the two most prominent purposes of literature, education and entertainment, in his introduction, where he pledges faithfulness to Ben Solomon's account and underlines that this debt would make his text "most useful and entertaining" (Bluett 10). Variously referring to his writing as "account," "memoirs," and "pamphlet," Bluett ends his preface with a clear subject position that reveals his intentions as the messenger between the victim of an abusive institution and anticipated readership intending to gain knowledge but avoid boredom in the process:

Pursuant to this Resolution, I shall not trouble my Reader with any very long and particular Detail of the Geography, History, or Rarities of that Country of Africa which JOB belongs to; nor shall I meddle any farther with these Matters, in the present Account, than to relate such Observations concerning them, as JOB himself made to me in Conversation; being either not generally known, or so curious as to bear a Repetition here, consistently with the Design of these Memoirs. However, I shall endeavor to make the whole as agreeable as the Nature of the Subject, and the Limits of this Pamphlet will allow; and therefore, without any farther Preface, shall proceed to the Thing propos'd. (11)

This closing of an introduction clearly presents the self-confident voice of someone not merely convinced of his cause, but also well aware of his powers to advocate it. These powers rest in language skills. While he will not trouble his readers with tedious formalities, he will indeed trouble them with the injustice inherent in "the Nature of the Subject," and he will do so in as eloquent as possible a manner in order to maintain their attention, as well as recruit them for his cause.

While literary praise regarding form and style of Ben Solomon's narrative are accordingly due to his amanuensis, Bluett, it is crucial to remember the latter's close cooperation with the former. It is after all not merely Ben Solomon's story but also the ways in which he related it that inspired Bluett's writing. Judging by Bluett's vow to a faithful rendering, it is further likely that some of the phrasing may actually be Ben Solomon's. An anonymous report for a 1750 volume of *Gentleman's Magazine* describes Ben Solomon as "a perfect master of the *Arabic* tongue" (Davis and Gates, Jr. 4). According to the same report, his linguistic talent, presumably responsible at least partly for his journey to England and subsequent

return to Africa, was not limited to Arabic, since he was employed to translate "several manuscripts and inscriptions upon medals into *English*, of which he had acquired a competent knowledge during his servitude and passage to *England*." Such judgement allows for the conclusion that the life story of Job Ben Solomon accessible today is the result of the combined talents of two sophisticated artists, as well as of the friendship between these two storytellers in question.

Omar Ibn Said's Efforts with Recovery

The narrative preserved of Omar Ibn Said, in contrast to the one of Ben Solomon, appears in Arabic, presumably in Ibn Said's own handwriting. Allegedly, no ghostwriter, editor, or publisher has altered this manuscript, which has been on display at Harvard's Houghton Library and at the International Museum of Muslim Cultures in Jackson, Mississippi during the past years. Yet, controversies over its various journeys make its reception more problematic than the one described in the preceding section of this study. As Patrick Horn summarizes in his entry for *Documenting the American South*, not only do "the numerous sketches of Said's life contradict each [sic] other on various issues," but the short autobiography itself "raises more questions than it answers" (2004). Moreover, the reception at least among Anglophone critics is plagued by discrepancies between different translations. Safet Dabovic provides an extensive survey of a number of articles adding to the legends surrounding the figure of Ibn Said in his dissertation titled *Displacement and the Negotiation of an American Identity in African Muslim Slave Narratives* (2009). He refers, in particular, to studies by Ghada Osman and Camille F. Forbes with regard to comparisons of existing translations (Dabovic 109).

William Costel Tamplin adds new fuel to the debate with his attack on existing scholarship in "Who was 'Umar ibn Sayyid? A Critical Reevaluation of the Translations and Interpretations of the *Life*" (2016). A student of Arabic as a foreign language, Tamplin presents detailed examples of what he considers mistranslations of Ibn Said's handwritten manuscript. The authors of the present essay see no reason to doubt the identification of the "formal Arabic in a West African (Maghribi) script" (Alryyes 3) and wonder to which extent it lends itself to applications of classical Arabic grammar and spelling rules. Moreover, while Tamplin concedes that "well-informed speculation" proves "how little is known about [Ibn Said's] origins" (Tamplin 128), he contradicts this concession in the following segment of his essay. To state that, "as little as we know about 'Umar, we certainly know a lot about the society he came from," (Tamplin 129) means to assume sufficient information about the enslaved writer's origin. It appears that similar contradictions lead to occasional

premature misjudgments throughout Tamplin's argument.

Ibn Said was born in 1770, several decades younger than Ben Solomon, and forced to Carolina in 1807 (Alryyes xi), when the latter had already returned to Africa. In the opening of *The Life of Omar Ibn Said: Written by Himself* (1831), the author apologizes to a certain "Sheikh Hunter" for the mediocre command of his written language. Ala Alryyes, who first edited Ibn Said's narrative for inclusion in *The Multilingual Anthology of American Literature* edited by Marc Shell and Werner Sollors, reveals this apology as false modesty with a reference to the "fair quality" (Alryyes 59) of Ibn Said's original text. Tamplin, on the other hand, takes the apology seriously when stating that Ibn Said's "Arabic is rudimentary in terms of grammar, diction and orthography" (129), or even that "his Arabic is so bad to be almost incomprehensible" (127). Tamplin never mentions the fact that the text appears in Maghrebi script, nor that it is of an ostensibly poetic nature. He does explain that Ibn Said's first language was the African tribal language Fulfulde. This fact allows Tamplin to caution that, "it is not unreasonable to suggest that many of his mistakes may be Fulfulde or English calques" (Tamplin 131).

Dabovic, whose study remains unexamined by Tamplin, offers an intriguing Glissantian reading of Ibn Said's *Life*. Édouard Glissant provides the seminal point of departure for the Caribbean concept of creolization in his *Le discours antillais* [*Caribbean Discourse*] (1997). While this concept and resulting theories about continuous processes of transculturation emerged from recent postcolonial studies, their subject matter is at least as old as the arrival of the first non-indigenous communities in the New World. Arguably, it is much older since the authors discussed in the present essay arrived in the New World with already creolized identities, as is evident in their knowledge of tribal languages as well as Arabic. Although the amount of speculation revolving around Ibn Said's work prevents straightforward interpretations, scholars of his manuscript should remain alert to the possibility of "a creolized form of Arabic," as Dabovic puts it (Dabovic 105). It is further worth underlining that Ibn Said's spelling is not consistent, and that he holds his old age and weak eyes (Shell and Sollors 74–75) at least partly responsible. This apology makes his recollection of an entire chapter from the Koran, the *Surat Al-Mulk*, all the more remarkable (Shell and Sollors 64–72).

Since Ibn Said left his manuscript without page numbers, and the preserved copy passed through the hands of several acquaintances before its disappearance and rediscovery about a century later, it is impossible to comment on its composition. The repetition prominent in the remaining document may easily function as "refrain" not only in the sense that Dabovic assigns to it, but also in the sense in which it

might adhere to a musical, folkloric tradition. None of the scholars mentioned here have wondered why Hunter did not, as Bluett did for Ben Solomon, write Ibn Said's life story in English. Alternatively, nobody has inferred that there might have been such an English version that could have disappeared unnoticed or been destroyed deliberately. Then again, the choice of language of this particular slave narrative could have been the enslaved author's as much as the involved abolitionist's. Muna Al Badaai suggests in "Positioning the Testimony of Job Ben Solomon, An Enslaved African American Muslim" (2015) that Ben Solomon himself had an interest in his narrative's wider circulation. A close look at the manuscript pages preserved from Ibn Said's account suggest, rather, that he intended them as personal notebook or as a poetic rendering for friends, including Hunter. The following excerpt illustrates this assumed purpose:
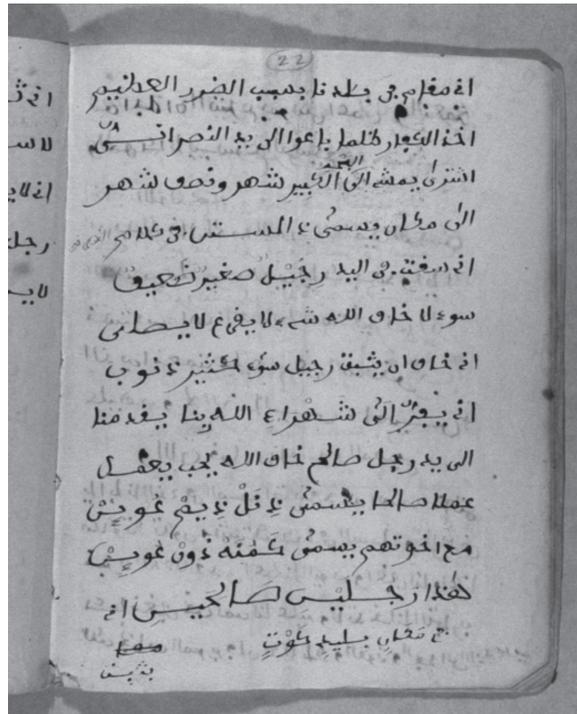

Figure 1: excerpt from the manuscript by Omar Ibn Said (1831)

The following paragraph reflects the exact reproduction of this excerpt, inasmuch as this is possible, given the age of the manuscript and its uncommon script. Parentheses indicate ambiguities and possible alternative reproductions.

انا مقام في بلدان بسبب الضرر العظيم اخذ الكفار ظلما باعوا الى يدي
النصراني اشترى الى يمشي الى البحر الكبير شهر ونصف شهر الى مكان يسمى
داستنت في كلام النصراني انا سفت (سقت) في الايد رَجِيْلٌ صّغيْرٌ ضعيفٌ
سوء ءوء لا خاف الله شي لا يفرع (يقرع) لايصلي انا خاف ان يثبت رجل سوء
كثير ذنوب انا يفر على شَهْرْاء (شَهْرْ،) الله ربنا يقدمنا الى يد رجل صالح خاف
الله يحب يعمل المعمل صاحلا يسمى جَنّلْ جِيمْ عُوْيِنْ مع اخواتهم يسمى كُمُنْهْ
عُوْيِنْ اذه رجلُلَيْنِصَالِحَانِ انا مَكَانٍ بلديدِ كَوْتِتْ

Alryyes translates this passage thus:

> I reside in our country here because of the great harm. The infidels took me unjustly and sold me into the hands of the Christian man (*Nasrani*) who bought me. We sailed on the big sea for a month and a half to a place called Charleston in the Christian language. I fell into the hands of a small, weak, and wicked man who did not fear Allah at all, nor did he read or pray. I was afraid to stay with such a wicked man who committed many evil deeds so I escaped. After a month, Allah our Lord presented us into the hands of a righteous man who fears Allah, and who loves to do good deeds and whose name is General Jim Owen and whose brother is called Colonel John Owen. These are two righteous men. I am in a place called Bladen County. (Shell and Sollors 91)

The authors of the present essay offer the following Modern Standard Arabic rendering, as close as possible to the original wording:

إني مقيم في هذا البلدان بسبب الضرر العظيم. أخذني الكفار ظلماً وباعوني إلى
يدي مشتري النصراني. مشاني إلا إلى البحر الكبير أو أبحرنا لمدة شهر ونصف إلى
مكان يسمى – في الكلام النصراني- تشارلستون. كانه سَقَطْتُ في يد رَجَيْلْ سوء
– صغير وضعيف – لا يخاف في الله شيء والو أرقى والو يصلي. تخفت البقاء
مع الرجل لأنه سيِّئ وكثير الذنوب؛ ففرت منه. وبعد شهر بفضل الله
ربنا تفرعت على رجل صالح يخاف الله و يحب أن يعمل العمل صالحاً. اسم هذا
الرجل الجنرال جِيمْ أُوّيْنْ وأخيه يسمى الكولونيل (العقيد) جُوْنْ أُوّيْنْ هذان الرجلان
صَالِحَانِ. إني الآن في مقاطعة بلادين.

The comparisons justify the Alryyes translation as apt reflection for a contemporary Anglophone reader of this text created by Ibn Said more than two centuries ago. It would gain from indications of possible influence by the author's African language, though such research would fall more into the area of linguistics and anthropology.

It is worth noting that "reading" and the implied gaining of knowledge appear explicitly as virtue in the given excerpt. The characteristics describing the unethical "small, weak, and wicked" first owner emphasize his lack of faith, and his failure to read and pray, in that order. Not to read means to disregard the first directive in the Koran, and both "small" and "weak" as descriptions for the abusive slaveholder function metaphorically, referring to personality rather than physical appearance.

Granted, Tamplin makes several valid points regarding sentence structure, but he is not correct in stating that Ibn Said's manuscript "has no punctuation" (Tamplin 134), as there are passages in which two parallel hyphens obviously signal the end of a sentence. The authors of the present essay further disagree strongly with his assessment of Ibn Said's medium as signaling "language decay" or "language retrieval slowdown and failure" (Tamplin 132). They caution instead to consider what Ronald T. Judy refers to as "graphemic displacements" (238) and "graphic enigmas" (227) in his predominantly philosophical *Dis-forming the American Canon: African-Arabic Slave Narratives and the Vernacular*. This study includes a close analysis of a different Arabic manuscript referred to as *Ben Ali's Diary*. Judy provides a translation in three columns, with Ben Ali's text "with its heterography intact" (Judy 239) on the right, the edited Modern Standard Arabic in the middle and an English translation complete with notes on spellings and irregular usages on the left. Judy's analysis recognizes a variant of Kufic script including "passages where standardized Arabic spelling conventions collapse" (238). He offers several possible explanations for such "graphemic displacements," none of them with negative implications. A phrase such as "language decay," in contrast, signals the same linguistic xenophobia creolists are alarmed by in the oldest documented reference to creolized language. George Lang traces creolization back to the eleventh century in *Entwisted Tongues: Comparative Creole Literatures* (2000), with a reference to the Andalusian geographer Al Bakri who, when working in Mauritania, lamented long before the births of Ibn Said and Ben Solomon that "the blacks have mutilated our beautiful language and spoiled its eloquence with their twisted tongues" (Lang 1). Rather than "decay" and "mutilation," creolists tend to see new potential in multilingualism, and the authors of the present essay argue that numerous other texts included in the Shell/Sollors collection testify to such potential.

A sarcastic scholar studying Tamplin's article may question whether the latter is himself a victim of what he calls "language decay" when he evokes "the *hipshot* reader" (Tamplin 134; emphasis added) of *The Multilingual Anthology of American Literature*. Alternatively, might he, with this adjective, claim for himself the kind of poetic license he so vehemently denies the nineteenth century enslaved African

as well as Ibn Said's translators? Tamplin does well to represent Arabic script in his essay. He would do better to situate Ibn Said's original script in its proper socio-historical context, as Judy carefully does for *Ben Ali's Diary* (Judy 209-244), another important source unexamined by Tamplin. This kind of careful consideration of graphic ambiguities complement respect for the fact that a translation, in particular of a poetic text, is always an interpretative creation of new poetry or (poetic) prose. When a handwritten very old manuscript so obviously makes no claim to the rules of classical Arabic, it seems a futile task to insist with such rigor on an application of such rules.

While his knowledge of Fulfulde may have influenced Ibn Said's use of Arabic, Baquaqua's text, discussed in the following final segment of this essay, actually represents an African tribal language in the opening chapter, as well as in occasional vocabulary references. Baquaqua did not rely, as Ben Solomon, on an amanuensis, but the editor Moore credits himself with a significant contribution to the final preserved document in its preface. Much more so than Ibn Said's, Baquaqua's is the most fragmented text of the three accounts selected for the present study. The first chapter of Dendi numbers with English translation and the Whitfield poem at the end frame several prose segments. The following paragraphs highlight effects of this provocative if not accidental combination of styles.

Mahommah G. Baquaqua: Numbers and Words

The long descriptive title on the cover of the text revolving around Mahommah Gardo Baquaqua's memories foreshadows the unique combination of chapters within this document. Samuel Downing Moore signs there as the writer and editor of what he calls, first, *An Interesting Narrative*. The following cover details include *A Biography of Mahommah G. Baquaqua, a Native of Zoogoo, in the Interior of Africa*, and *(A Convert to Christianity)*, note the parenthesis, and finally *With a Description of That Part of the World* (1854). Reflecting this complicated ambition expressed on the cover, the sixty-six pages of text contain two pages of translated number words, a preface by Moore, seven chapters of "Biography," a poem allegedly composed by Baquaqua's teacher, "Miss K. King," titled "Lines Spoken by Mahommah," and finally James Monroe Whitfield's "Prayer of the Oppressed." In their revised and expanded second edition of *The Biography of Mahommah Gardo Baquaqua: His Passage from Slavery to Freedom in Africa and America* (2009), Paul E. Lovejoy and Robin Law distinguish two main parts, the first describing Baquaqua's country of origin, the second telling his life story (2).

Law writes in an earlier essay, "Individualising the Atlantic Slave Trade: The

Biography of Mahommah Gardo Baquaqua of Djougou (1854)," that Moore's compilation "is not the most substantial or interesting example of the genre. It is a brief work of only sixty-six pages; and its literary merit is slight. It is written in a simple, indeed naïve style" (Law 121). In the preface to the co-edited collection, including additional correspondence, historical evidence based on recently discovered documentation, as well as an extensive annotated bibliography, Lovejoy, in contrast, writes that Baquaqua's account "is one of the most detailed and best authenticated accounts of the notorious 'Middle Passage'" (Law and Lovejoy xviii). The co-editors emphasize Baquaqua's unique significance as someone who experienced slavery in West Africa and Brazil. Baquaqua escaped from slavery in New York City in 1847, and spent two years in Haiti under the protection of the American Baptist Free Mission Society, before he studied at New York Central College and went on to write his autobiography in Canada, in the early 1850s (Law and Lovejoy 1). Many passages and the tone in general suggest that Moore had either much more control over the writing than admitted, or that Baquaqua supplied him with what the former required. "Mahommah," according to the text, "did not progress very well in learning, having a natural dread of it" (Law and Lovejoy 126). The racism in this statement is blatant. The tone equals that of the missionary who also states that "Africa is rich in every respect (except in knowledge)" (Law and Lovejoy 128). The inclusion of African languages would in this case mainly function to add authenticity to an account declared someone else's.

Tamplin assumes traces of Fulfulde in Ibn Said's manuscript. Ben Solomon's account briefly mentions that he spoke Wolof. Moore presents not only occasional vocabulary belonging to African languages Law and Lovejoy are not always certain to identify, but he opens Baquaqua's narrative with two pages of number words with their English translation. Law and Lovejoy offer the most illuminating explanation so far in a footnote conceding that though not proven "presumably these numbers are in Baquaqua's native language" (90). Relying on the scholarship of Petr Zima, they identify this language as Dendi, "the language of the Muslim community of Djougou," but they also repeat Austin's observation concerning the similarity with "the 'Timbuktu' language, i. e. Songhai, which is closely related to Dendi." The uncertainty in these explanations once more invites further research by linguists, historians and anthropologists among others. In the context of literary criticism, the focus rests on the possible meaning, purpose, and potential effect of the respective number columns. The purpose could of course be very pragmatic, to give a simple example of Baquaqua's native language. One may ask whether this purpose indeed required the given amount of number words, or if the effort

to present two entire pages of them does not, rather, imply a different intention. Given his authorial control, Moore could have placed them at the opening of his publication to feign authenticity. An analysis of the words similar to that of an experimental poem, for example, supersedes the scope of the present essay. Instead, two points will suffice with regard to literary values of this particular narrative. The first, disregarding author intention, revolves around the symbolic value of numbers versus words. This juxtaposition could lead to interpretations of numbers standing for the amounts of money paid and the amounts of people shipped in the context of transatlantic slavery. Since the number words stand entirely unaccompanied by any words of explanation, all associated interpretations remain speculations. The only certainty about the inclusion of these numbers is, however, that they provide a kind of intertext, and intertextuality has become a crucial concept in literary criticism since Kristeva elaborated on the pioneering theses of Bakhtin. Meer is right in emphasizing that "quotation in slave narratives could function as a badge of cultural belonging and allegiance to 'literature' in its broadest sense" (Meer 78).

Baquaqua's story is the richest to illustrate this fact because besides the mentioned number words and occasional shorter references, it includes two poems in their entirety. The first one, titled "Lines Spoken by Mahommah" is supposedly the work of a teacher, as mentioned in the first paragraph of this section. This poem, composed in more or less successful rhyming couplets, does admittedly not show promise of enduring value. However, it does summarize the narrative's main perspective as that of proselytizing abolitionist Protestants whose alternation between third and first-person point-of-view provides a powerful stylistic device. Both Law and Austin consider it possible that Baquaqua complied in the publication in order to facilitate his return to Africa. The delivery of the poem probably had a similar reason. A first-person narrative precedes its reproduction. "I remained nearly three years in the college, and during that time made very great progress in learning," the reader finds out at this point. The Whitfield poem selected to end the narrative is somewhat more refined than Ms. King's, but it likewise enforces the missionary abolitionist agenda.

While some intertexts are clearly identifiable, others can only be assumed, much like the extent to which individual participants, including the enslaved and anti-slavery advocates, but also additional editors and translators contributed to any preserved slave narrative. Accordingly, different readers will disagree on their literary merits. It is wise, as Meer suggests, to consider any value judgment as one element in a continuously developing broader picture. "It ought to be possible," Meer writes, "for instance, both to admire Frederick Douglass's *Narrative* and to

note its range in register, which veers between a declamatory rhetoric inflected by the pulpit, the antislavery platform, and the Bible, and statements of extraordinary, almost childlike, simplicity" (72). The more careful and interdisciplinary studies become available, the more complete this broader picture will become. It should definitely not lack analyses of stories by enslaved Muslims.

The recent *Cambridge Companion to Slavery in American Literature* (2016) as well as *The Oxford Handbook of the African American Slave Narrative* (2014) provide proof that Anglophone scholars continue to ignore the contributions by enslaves Muslims to the slave narrative as specific type of autobiographical writing. Despite book-length studies by Allan D. Austin (1984, 1997 and 2011), Ala Alryyes (2011), Ronald A.T. Judy (1993), Robin Law and Paul E. Lovejoy (2009), as well as dissertations such as Safet Dabovic's (2009), and online projects such as *Documenting the American South*, Job Ben Solomon, Omar Ibn Said, and Mohammah Gardo Baquaqua are generally absent from slave narrative scholarship, in particular in the context of literary criticism. Although two of the ten pages selected bibliography in Davis and Gates, Jr.'s *The Slave's Narrative* (1985) refer to "Narratives of African Muslims in Antebellum America," these sources are not the subject of the preceding essays in the collection. It is not surprising then that Melvin Dixon omits to mention Islam when referring to features of "Protestant Christianity and traditional African religions" in "Singing Swords: The Literary Legacy of Slavery" (Davis and Gates, Jr. 298), one among many similar omissions limiting the legacy in question.

Conclusion

The present essay's focus on the accounts by Ben Solomon, Ibn Said, and Baquaqua suggests an expansion of the scope of slave narrative studies in general and with an emphasis on literary aspects in particular. The three analyses show how the effects of amanuensis, editorship, and translation inspire speculations about style, language acquisition and formation, as they complicate questions about authorship. The preservation of original manuscripts allows for conclusions about script and individual graphics, as well as about author intentions. Intertextuality as literary device plays a crucial role as it represents the complex transculturation of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries so-called New World, as well as that of individual identities inhabiting it involuntarily, at least at first. Additionally, the multilingualism of these accounts by enslaves Muslims reflects the richness and complexity of the slave narrative genre. An excellent initiative for future studies in this area is the site on "Arabic Slave Writings and the American Canon" hosted by

Northern Illinois University (https://www.niu.edu/arabicslavewritings/), which also centers on literary merit.

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Rethinking the Slave as Hero:
A Deconstructionist Perspective in Shakespeare's *The Tempest* and Amadi's *The Slave*

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Abstract   In the search for meaning, literature has been approached from several varying viewpoints over time. One of these approaches involves viewing it as a member of a specific class which can be engaged in a comparative study. This is based on the Aristotelian notion of mimesis as production, representation and creation of the probable as artists do not just create what they see but what could happen, accounting for the nature of art as a heterocosm. Thus, the approach this paper seeks to take is the phenomenological one which in a comparative manner, searches for core values which are embedded in all literary texts. It will do this by way of searching out the poetic symbol of the hero that cuts across genre form in *The Tempest* by William Shakespeare and *The Slave* by Elechi Amadi. This image will also be considered in its contextual form as "slave" taking into account the social and historical contexts presented in the texts.
Key words   slavery; archetype; poetic image; hero; slave.

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Introduction

That Shakespeare has dominated the literary scene and canon for centuries is evident by the scale of critical writings on his works. A question that readily comes to mind on encountering the topic of this paper is, why slavery? Slavery is an issue which has had recurring significance in society from the history of time. Once human beings evolved from the nomadic and isolated life of hunting and gathering and began to live in larger social groups, they found need for slaves. Even in modern day society, slavery is still ongoing although in new and different forms. Thus we have child labour, forced labour, bonded labour and human trafficking. Akosua Perbi posits that slavery arose due to the need for labour especially for agricultural purposes. Political intrigues, simple commerce, religious and cultural practices are other factors which instigated the practice of slavery (1).

Two basic dimensions have been given of African slavery (slavery involving black people). They are the external dispersal of subjects and their internal dispersal. In this vein, it is often the case that the treatment and living conditions of the slave varies as the externally dispersed slaves tend to have less liberties than their internally dispersed counterparts (Perbi 11). However one shared trait which all slaves seem to have in common irrespective of location is the absence of "will to action." They most times do not have the right to make decisions and choices without the consent of their masters. In spite of this shared trait, it is noteworthy that the internally dispersed slaves especially those who were confined to Africa were in much better straits than their counterparts in America, Europe and other parts of the world who had been externally dispersed outside the continent (Bezemer, Bolt and Lensink 9, 10).

It is in light of this that this paper will argue the interconnectedness of the two texts: *The Tempest* and *The Slave* as both texts have central characters who are slaves but belong to the two major classes of dispersal enumerated above. *The Slave* is basically a novel about class status and the consciousness of this on the psyche of individuals. Centered on the life of Olumati who is an internally dispersed slave, it tells a story of love, strife and loss. Olumati in this text like a few other people in the Aliji community is a slave due to his association with and servitude of a god of the land, Amadioha. He is therefore banned from participating in certain activities unlike the free citizens who can engage in every and, any activity they wish to. In this process, Olumati loses the love of his life, and series of misfortune seem to trail his steps until he eventually decides to return to the house of his god and dedicate himself fully to service as living a civil life seems pointless since he cannot live it to

the fullest.

The Tempest, William Shakespeare's famous play which points to colonialism and demonstrates the phenomenon of imperialism holds invariably, the image of servitude associated with slavery. It opens up a discourse on the rigid and vastly unpleasant nature of imperial slavery where the slave has no rights whatsoever and is allowed to do nothing but the bidding of his master. This is the case with Caliban, the slave in the play who serves in company of spirits like Ariel, Prospero the master of the Island where they all reside. Like *The Slave*, this play is also riddled with the idea of love, strife and loss. However, unlike Olumati, Caliban is a slave to someone outside of his culture. His situation can therefore be referred to as externally dispersed slavery, especially as the island where he resides is not his initial home but an adopted home where he stays, isolated from the outside world after his mother's demise. While the love which Caliban has for Miranda his master's daughter is purely sexual and vengeful, he has lost his island to Prospero and the play demonstrates the strife associated with his attempt to regain control and ownership of what was once his. The play closes with Caliban regaining his freedom from Prospero and his island. However this is due to forces not of his own making.

The Slave as Caliban and Olumati

The slave is a character that occurs in both of the texts under study in this paper. Like the old wise man, the red dragon and the evil step-mother, the image of the slave is one which recurs in history and world literature. This paper will attempt to explore the idea of the slave from two different perspectives. While one view dwells on the socio-physical conception of the idea of the slave, the other will dwell on the recurrent image of the slave in myths, history and literature.

From the socio-physical perspective, Caliban and Olumati are presented as slaves in *The Tempest* and *The Slave*. However, the terms and conditions of their slavery differ bringing to mind what Perbi says about the difference between internally dispersed and externally dispersed slaves. Even though both of them are forced into slavery in situations which they do not seem to have full control over, Caliban is a slave in the 'Negro' sense of the word. He is the kind of slave associated with imperialism. His living conditions are bad, he is constantly derided and harassed by Prospero and Ariel under the former's directives. This comes in verbal and physical forms. Hence, Prospero says to him:

Thou poisonous slave, got by the devil himself

Upon thy wicked dam, come forth!...

For this, be sure, to-night thou shalt have cramps,

All exercise on thee; thou shalt be pinch'd

Hag-seed, hence!

Fetch us in fuel; and be quick, thou'rt best,

To answer other business. Shrug'st thou, malice?

If thou neglect'st or dost unwillingly

What I command, I'll rack thee with old cramps,

Fill all thy bones with aches, make thee roar. (Shakespeare AI SII)

He is thus forced to continue serving Prospero against his will as violence is used to make him comply.

Olumati in *The Slave* is not a slave to a man. He is rather, perceived by the community as being dedicated to the god- Amadioha. In this type of slavery where he has no human master, he does almost as he pleases but for the misfortunes which plague his family and certain restrictions of mixing with the free people in his community. He has a good relationship with the people of his village with the exception of the Okani family which has an ongoing feud with his family. It is only when it comes to the issue of marriage that he learns of the half-hearted acceptance which the Aliji people have towards him as Adiba mentions it to him. Prior to this time however, no one has insulted him or deprived him of any right because he is perceived to be a vassal of Amadioha. Rather, his presence is abhorred on account of the fear that allowing him to remain in the village will incur the wrath of the god. Therefore, one of the elders says to Nyege: "allowing an Osu of Amadioha to stay here is to invite the terrible anger of the god" (Amadi 20).

On the denial of Caliban's humanity, Prospero and the other characters in *The Tempest* demonstrate the moral excuse which Europeans used to facilitate slavery and colonialism. He mentions that he tried to refine Caliban but his crude nature would not allow for refinement. Olumati on the other hand is as fit and respected as any other member of the community of his age group. The people accept him for his deeds and worth and not for his lineage. From having nothing when he returns to Aliji, he becomes a great farmer, tapper, hunter and a home owner. Thus he participates in all societal activities which his unmarried status allows. Perbi has iterated the rights and privileges which internally dispersed slaves had within the African continent to include: the right to legal protection, independent income and political mobility. They include what Olumati enjoyed in his status as a supposed slave since Amadioha confirmed that indeed it was his father and not Olumati

who was consecrated to him. Consequently, the similarities and points of contrast between Olumati and Caliban become clear. Originally, they have the status of ownership and belongingness on the land in which they become slaves. However later on, their status as 'slave' differs due to their unequal treatment.

The Slave Archetype

Other than the socio-physical conditions of slavery which characterizes the conditions of Caliban and Olumati, the mythological image of the slave can also be deduced from their situations. The slave archetype like other archetypes transcend the texts under study. Going back to the history of the word, archetype which is Greek, literarily means original type or old type (Elam 1). Thus, it is an image which is found in history, folk tales, lore and literature. It is associated with the absence of power of choice, self-authority or dignity which is sometimes complete (Myss 1). This absence of power of choice may be by deference to a divine or human master. Thus Sisyphus in the ancient Greek myth is enslaved for eternity and has to carry out the task of rolling a boulder up a steep hill which results in its rolling down and his having to do it all over again, endlessly (Camus 10). This is choiceless work which demonstrates Sisyphus's lack of self-authority or dignity as well as the absence of will to power. For him, there is no respite and at no time does the myth tell of a change in his situation. The Bible also contains quite a number of this image cutting across the Tanakh books into the epistles of the apostles in the New Testament. When this same slave image occurs in the Bible in the character of Moses, the element of choicelessness is also present. However, his will and choices are surrendered to a higher power than that of man. Divinity and the God factor comes in where Moses does not do what pleases him but what pleases his divine master and gets some fulfillment in the process. Whether this slave eventually transcends this position is another situation entirely even though most times, the slave is seen to achieve this. Other characters in the Bible who demonstrate this archetypal image are Joseph and Daniel although they both serve human masters and are able with the traits of humility and wisdom to rise to positions of prominence, saving lives and bordering on heroism. It is this image of the slave which had mutated over time and transcends into the hero symbol that this paper explores.

Shakespeare has been viewed from numerous and differing perspectives over the centuries. What this paper aims to do is to review the image of the slave as a hero archetype, a recurrent symbol in literary works with the aim of finding this same image in the two texts under study. The revisionist impulse of questioning

characterization in *The Tempest* is an attempt to contextualize the text and emerge with additional, novel meanings. Thus Caliban here, is not seen as a slave which he becomes under Prospero's rule but as a hero who struggles for freedom and to reclaim what is his, his land and way of life. Hence, he will be placed side by side with Olumati in this study. Olumati will also be viewed as exemplifying the traits of not a slave but a hero who struggles against forces outside his control to find happiness and fulfillment in society.

Although the archetype theory began with the work of Carl Jung, it was Northrop Frye who in his application of it in the criticism of literary texts, popularized it as a literary theory. Ann Dobie in view of this method of reading, posits that meaning creation from a literary text should involve a deep reflection, search for the mythological element, that recurrent strain or symbol of the human memory which finds expression in folklore, myths, literature, etc (58). For Frye, it is important that:

> The criticism which can deal with such matters, be based on that aspect of symbolism which relates poems (literary texts) to one another, and chooses, as its main field of operations, the symbols that link poems (literary texts) together. Its ultimate object is to consider, not simply a poem as an imitation of nature, but the order of nature as a whole as imitated by a corresponding order of words. (96)

Jacques Lacan in positing the various minor archetypes outside of the shadow, anima and persona, iterates them as the hero, scapegoat, outcast and devil amongst other images of seasons, shapes and colours (Dobie 58-64). These symbols as they occur in texts may mutate over time, taking on additional characteristics to themselves (Akwanya 36). It is in light of this that the paper will consider the characters of Caliban and Olumati as images of the 'hero' in *The Tempest* and *The Slave*.

Rethinking the Slave as Hero

The hero as an archetype is an image which recurs in folklore, myths, legends and literary texts (Akwanya 37). Ancient literary texts such as the *Bible* contain this image in the character of Jesus the Christ who is born as a son to the lowly carpenter Joseph and his wife. He grows up as a normal child with few incidences which prepare and indicate his great future. Entwined in his role as hero however, is the element of the scapegoatism or sacrifice. His life is thus characterized by

struggle. The struggle to do good for society while faced with adversaries who are jealous, do not understand him and seek to destroy him. Joseph, son to Jacob and Rachael is another hero character in the *Bible* who is young, innocent and has events and omens which indicate his greatness. He later becomes prime minister in Egypt and saves thousands of lives while forgiving his brothers who had earlier sold him into Egypt as a slave and report him dead to their father. Other examples of the hero image in the *Bible* include David and Daniel amongst others (Gen 41:39-45; I Sam 17:35; II Sam 2:4; Dan 6). The hero is thus a young man, naïve and innocent who is born and raised in a rural setting away from cities.[15] He usually has a mysterious origin, sometimes could return to the land of his birth and suffers from a deep emotional or physical wound from which he may or may not recover.[16] It is this image which is foregrounded in this paper. Indeed the tragic element also finds expression in these characters, necessitating the contemplation of both of them as tragic heroes to a certain extent.

This paper is an attempt to compare the poetic image of the hero in the characters of Caliban and Olumati who are both slaves in Shakespeare's play *The tempest* and Elechi Amadi's novel *The Slave*. It has earlier been pointed that slaves were treated differently depending on the type of slave trade and dispersal involved. In *The Tempest*, slavery is a resultant effect of forceful conquering; aligning with the view posited by Perbi (4,5). Thus Caliban becomes a slave through no cause of his but by Prospero's colonialism and usurping of his power as ruler and owner of the island. He is then forced to undergo hard labour such as hewing of wood and fetching of water. His speech as he accuses Prospero reveals this.

This island's mine, by Sycorax my mother,
Which thou takest from me. When thou camest first. (AI SII)

Like Caliban, Olumati becomes a slave because his parents flee his ancestral home to seek refuge in the shrine of the god, Amadioha. Even though his mother is only pregnant with him before the incident and Amadioha does not claim him, Olumati is still regarded by the villagers as a slave. They attempt to send him back to the shrine when on his grandmother's insistence, they discover from a diviner that he does not belong to the god and is therefore free. In spite of this, there are those who do not believe in his freedom. Adiba says to him: "many in Aliji are still not sure you are not a slave of Amadioha…people are stubborn" (Amadi 184). Hence Caliban and Olumati are both not slaves in the actual sense but are rather perceived to be slaves and can hardly do anything about it.

The suffering which is a trait of the scapegoat hero plays up in the characters of Caliban and Olumati who are punished for crimes which they have not committed. Thus like Jesus who is tried and crucified on the basis of fear and hate, Caliban and Olumati are ostracized and never fully accepted as members of their respective communities.

On the element of birth which for the hero is unusual, Olumati like Caliban has his pregnant mother fleeing for refuge in a new place. While the former is born and nurtured in the shrine of Amadioha where his father serves, Caliban is born and nurtured on the island which his mother Sycorax choses. Unlike Olumati who leaves Amadioha's shrine and returns to Aliji, Caliban does not relocate to a new place after he grows up. Rather, he is banished by Prospero to a barren and rocky part of the island thus demonstrating the mutating nature of poetic symbols which vary slightly in their re-appearance and take on new or additional meanings over time.

Struggle characterizes the lives of both of the heroes. For Caliban, the struggle is that of reclamation. He struggles to reclaim the island which Prospero has taken from him. It is in doing this that he gets to reclaim his freedom. Thus he employs a number of means to aid him in this. First, he tries to have sexual relations with Miranda in order to people the island with 'Calibans' which will invariably lead to his regaining his title as owner of the island through population or numerical dominance. This plan fails and his second attempt involves a collaboration with new arrivals on the island; Trinculo and Stephano to displace Prospero by burning his books which are the source of his magic, hence power. Caliban finds himself in this situation of having to struggle to regain his inheritance from Prospero due to his gullibility and innocence. When Prospero arrives the island initially, Caliban makes the mistake of showing him the strengths and weaknesses of the island, its fruits and resources without thought of what could happen next and what happens is that his position as island owner is overturned and he becomes the outcast.

Olumati is a heroic character whose life is also fraught with struggles. When he appears at the opening of the story, his presence in Aliji is contested by the villagers. After that is settled, he struggles to shoulder the responsibility of heading his family. He toils to build his house, cultivate his farm and make enough money to marry Enaa. Only, he does the last too late. His life is full of troubles and the situation is so dire that it recalls to mind the fact that "happiness… (could sometimes be but) the occasional episode in a general drama of pain" (Hardy 188). In the course of struggling to achieve his goals, Olumati is challenged by Aso the son of the Okani family with whom Olumati's family has a feud. He also loses his grandmother

and only sister. With his father already dead and his mother in another village, he becomes truly alone and like Caliban, faces his battles alone.

Another point of demonstration of the hero status shared by Caliban and Olumati is in the quest which they each undertake. In *The Tempest*, Caliban's outmost desire is to reclaim his island from Prospero. His efforts are therefore geared towards achieving this goal. Thus he attempts to people the island with "Calibans" with Miranda's help and when that fails, works in tandem with Trinculo and Stephano, to oust Prospero. However, this attempt also fails and he remains a slave until Prospero leaves the island. This situation mirrors the case with numerous post colonies whose subjects did not succeed in ousting the colonial imperialists until they chose to leave on their own volition when it was no longer profitable to continue in the trend.

Olumati in *The Slave* also has a quest. His is to restore his family's place in the village and make their name great again. Even when he loses Aleru his sister and his mother requests that he leaves the house for a while, he refuses. It is the same case when Ovunda asks the same thing of him. Thus soon after he returns to Aliji, he undertakes palm wine tapping and hunting wild game in a bid to raise money for building his house as well as for the next farming season which he intends to participate in. He succeeds in his tapping, gaming and farming endeavours and plans on holding an Mgbede (outing ceremony before marriage) for his sister but she declines due to practical reasons. It is still in this quest to restore his family's place in the village that he desires to marry Enaa. This is the one event which leads to the wounding of the hero. He only relinquishes his house when it is clear that he has lost and will never achieve his quest of marrying Enaa and becoming fully integrated into the community.

Olumati in the demonstration of his ignorance and lack of maturity, decides that everything has to be right before he can ask Enaa to marry him. He waits so long and ignores the hardworking Adiba who openly demonstrates her care for him as well as offers by his kinsman Ovunda to marry one of his daughters. Olumati pursues the elusive desire he has for Enaa as he is not sure if he really understands her but makes a vow to marry her all the same when his sister dies desiring him to do so. After harvesting his yams and getting some money, he eventually feels ready to ask Enaa for her hand in marriage. However, it is too late as she has already accepted his friend Wizo's proposal. He is ignorant of the courtship and feels betrayed. It is at this point that Adiba tell him the people's opinion about him. He is still considered a slave and Enaa would not have been allowed to marry him if he had asked her to. He is crushed, subdued and retreats into the darkness of solitude.

All his struggles have been for naught since he cannot find a wife to carry on his family name. Olumati's wound as hero is emotional. It is so deep that he does not recover from it. He gives his stored money to Ovunda and Adiba and retreats back to the sanctuary of Amadioha's shrine from whence he came. He chooses this time, to become a slave to the god as he is already considered one being hindered what free men would get. Thus he says to his kinsman: "take my house…I am going away…three days later people who had gone to the market at Isiali reported that he had taken refuge at the shrine of Amadioha" (Amadi 189).

Caliban in *The Tempest* is also seen to have wounds. Both physical and emotional. He recovers from the physical injuries inflicted on him time and again by Ariel and other beings on Prospero's behest. He recounts his ordeal to himself along the way as he fetches wood.

> His spirits hear me…
> For every trifle are they set upon me;
> Sometime like apes that mow and chatter at me
> And after bite me, then like hedgehogs which
> Lie tumbling in my barefoot way and mount
> Their pricks at my footfall; sometime am I
> All wound with adders who with cloven tongues
> Do hiss me into madness. (AII SII)

As he does seem to possess still his faculties, it shows that the snake venom-induced madness lasts only for a while and he overcomes it. His emotional wound of betrayal inflicted by Propero's traitorous behavior of taking over the island and banishing him to a tiny and rocky portion of it is another wound which Caliban does not recover from. In the opening act of the play he mentions it. In subsequent scenes, he reiterates this and it is what acts as impetus to his overthrow attempts of Prospero's tyrannical rule.

The fact that the situations of Caliban and Olumati especially are not caused by any action or fault of theirs brings to mind the absence of the element of hamartia. While Olumati is condemned to a live of slavery by the singular act of his parents seeking refuge from murderers in the shrine of Amadioha while he is yet unborn, Caliban is condemned by his naivity and uncritical nature which makes him hospitable to a fault. These actions or lack of actions which could not have been preconceived and therefore prevented before they took place are the deciding factors in the fate of both characters. Caliban and Olumati are therefore presented to

be ordinary characters who in carrying out their daily activities are condemned by a power of fate beyond their control. They are therefore tragic heroes.

In viewing the slave as a hero character, some issues come up. The application of mythical or archetypal theory to literary criticism is viewed skeptically especially by critics who foreground the functional aspect of literary texts. It is often seen as reductionist and formulaic as it tends to generally exclude other extra-textual sources or phenomena. Other than this, it is also seen as old, having been over taken by more recent theories such as eco-criticism and cultural studies amongst others. To account for this, this study has already considered the social and historical factors which informed and are at play in the texts. Although archetypal criticism is seen as subsuming the uniqueness of a literary text in the emphasis of patterns and motifs, it allows for a comparative study of texts irrespective of space or time. It also facilitates an in-depth understanding of the text. "At the level of depth interpretation, the text becomes a 'genuine object of understanding,' not a pointer to something outside itself" (Akwanya 47). Hence is encapsulates the very essence of art while demonstrating life forms. It is in light of this that the paper argues the dual interpretations of the characters of Caliban and Olumati. They are thus not just slaves but heroes as well.

At the surface level the texts seem to be about the failed romantic life and a master-servant relationship. On closer inspection with the mythic image however, deeper meanings begin to emerge and *The Tempest* becomes the story of a hero ousted from his place by a greedy and ungrateful tenant. This hero demonstrates various elements of naivety, struggle, quest and damage which indicate his personality beyond the mere surface slave which he is seen to be. Olumati in like manner becomes a hero struggling to restore his displaced family name and glory. He is no longer just a man who tries to build his life and encounters numerous hurdles and experiences loss but a tragic hero who through no fault of his, is overcome by misfortune evoking pity and fear.

Conclusion

Extra-textual basis for archetypal images often abound. For the hero archetype especially, these basis are found in religion, history and myths. "The mythological image or symbol is what gives this kind of literature the property of universality. The image is not exhausted or even properly contained in its existential representation; for it embodies human meanings which are not tied to time and space" (Akwanya 51). Thus, the hero in *The Tempest* and its appearance in *The Slave* serve as indicators that all literature indeed have the poetic symbol in common

as their production or creation emerges from that unconscious part of man which reveals "collective unconscious as a store house for knowledge, experiences, and images of the human race" (Dobie 58).

Acknowledgement

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Acoustic Narrative Study and Its Development in China and Abroad

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Abstract   During the past several decades, acoustic narrative study has attracted more and more scholars' attention. Intellectual community both in China and abroad has put forward lots of inspiring ideas and conceptual terms, making continuous efforts to sharpen the critical edge and expand the boundary of the theory. The fruitful theoretical discussion and empirical criticism practice among Chinese scholars represented by Fu Xiuyan and western scholars represented by R. Murray Schafer and Melba Cuddy-Keane undoubtedly laid solid theoretical foundation and set practical norms for the future study of acoustic narrative. This paper will evaluate the significance of the rise of audionarratology by tracing the history, commenting on the recent developments and depicting a vision for its prospect.
Key words   acoustic narrative; audionarratology; development; contributions

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Introduction

Many important literary works have not been "heard" by readers carefully, because important auditory information in them are still in an undisclosed state. To discover auditory information in literary works, more and more scholars in recent years, have turned their attention to acoustic narrative. Acoustic narrative belongs to the

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category of auditory culture. It pays attention to the connection between auditory sense and narrative, the relationship between sound ontology and meaning, the interpretation of the content of soundscape in literary texts. It aims to reproduce the hazy image of the soundscape and demonstrates the artistic value of auditory sense (Fu, "A Theoretical Construction of Narrative Acoustic Narrative" 77).

During the past decades, acoustic narrative study has attracted more and more scholars' attention. Scholars both in China and abroad have put forward lots of inspiring ideas and conceptual terms, making great efforts to sharpen the critical edge and expand the boundary of the theory. The fruitful theoretical discussion and empirical criticism practice both in China and abroad undoubtedly established basic academic norms and laid solid theoretical foundation for the future study of acoustic narrative. This paper will evaluate the significance of the rise of audionarratology by tracing the history, commenting on the recent developments and depicting a vision for its prospect.

The History and Development of Acoustic Narrative Abroad

The study of acoustic narrative was initiated in the 1950s by British scholar Carothers. He believed that Westerners mainly live in a relatively indifferent visual world while the African people live in a hearing world which is warm and highly aesthetic (307). In the 1960s, Canadian scholar McLuhan sharply criticized the phenomena of audiovisual imbalances of Western culture in his book *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*, pointing out that the root cause lays in the perceptual habits of reading and writing of letters. He held that it is necessary to establish an "acoustic space" concept to be differentiated from the "visual space" experience in order to treat this "visually isolated blindness" (367).

Professor Schafer, Canadian theorist, is the pioneer in auditory cultural studies. He promoted the famous "World Soundscape Project" at Simon Fraser University in the 1970s, which lays the solid theoretical foundation for the study of acoustic narrative. Schafer's work *Our Sonic Environment and The Soundscape: The Tuning of the World* is the pioneering work and classics of soundscape research. This work opens up many prospective fields of soundscape research, systematically explains the composition, perception, classification and evolution of soundscape, creating an era of soundscape studies.

Schafer was dedicated to creating new terms and consolidating the fundaments of audionarratology. He put forward that soundscape is the sonic environment, which is short for the landscape of sounds, or the background of sounds. The term refers to actual environments, or to abstract constructions such as musical compositions

and tape montages, particularly when being considered as an environment (274). Acording to Schafer, the soundscape in the acoustic sense includes three levels. One is the keynote sound, which determines the tone of the entire sound scene, to put it simply, it supports or depicts the basic outline of the acoustic background. Keynote sound is that which is heard by a particular society continuously or frequently enough to form a background against which other sounds are perceived. Examples might be the sound of the sea for a maritime community or the sound of the internal combustion engine in the modern city (Schafer 272). The second is signal sound, which is particularly easy to attract attention in the whole soundscape due to its distinctive feature, such as the sound of whistle, siren and ringtone (Schafer 275). The third is the soundmark, which marks the sound characteristics of a place. This concept is deduced from the word landmark, referring to a community sound which is unique or possesses qualities which make it specially regarded or noticed by the people in that community (Schafer 274), and it is the iconic sound that constitutes the soundscape. The keynote sound, signal sound and soundmark do not attract the same attention. Shaffer borrows the term "figure" and "ground" from visual psychology to illustrate that soundscape is the same as a landscape painting. He asserted that some sounds stand out in the foreground and some are hidden deep in the background, but the relationship between them is not static because any sound can be consciously heard, all sounds can become pictures or signal sounds (9). Schafer also gave a detailed definition to other important terms: hi-fi and lo-fi sounds of soundscape, etc.. Hi-fi is abbreviation for high fidelity, that is, a favorable signal-to-noise ratio. The most general use of the term is in electroacoustics. A hi-fi environment applied to soundscape studies is one in which sounds may be heard clearly without crowding or masking (Schafer 272). Lo-fi is abbreviation for low fidelity, that is, an unfavorable signal-to-noise ratio, in which signals are overcrowded, resulting in masking or lack of clarity (Schafer 272). These terms are crucial important in carrying out today's acoustic narrative study.

Shortly after Schafer, Professor Melba Cuddy-Keane from University of Toronto, published his "Modernist Soundscapes and the Intelligent Ear: An Approach to Narrative Through Auditory Perception" in 2005, introducing the concept of acoustic narrative into the field of academic literary theory. In addition to adopting terms such as sound mark and soundscape corresponding to landmark and landscape to analyse novels, Keane also constructed a set of terms and methods for exploring the acoustic narrative study, among which "auscultation" is the most important one. Auscultation, meaning "inspection of sounds", is a medical term in English. Keane elaborated that for the insufficiency of terms used to describe

hearing, comparing "auscultation" with "observation" is not without grounds. Keane proposed that the new sound technology, the sound of modern cities, and the interest in auditory perception together constitute the background of the new narrative description of the subject of hearing. But to understand the new acoustic narrative, we need a proper analytical language. The term "auscultation" is suitable for describing the text-oriented analysis of sounds. It refers to the reader's reading activities, especially when they pay attention to the thinking of the textual functions of the sounds, such as how sounds promote the character creation, plot development and space-time construction etc. The ultimate goal of auscultation is to fully perceive the information in the literary works. Keane (22) insisted that auscultation shows more inclusiveness and integration than observation. Since sounds can rush from all directions to the ears of the listener, the acoustic narrative shows the reader a dynamic world that constantly emits sounds. Compared with the world created by visual narrative, this world seems more perceptual and three-dimensional, more continuous and authentic (Keane 22) . Keane's analysis tells us "Non-semantic reading" can find a new way to understand the meaning of narrative. She believed that studies of auscultation and auditory scene analysis might prove that hearing plays a considerably more crucial role in narrative than has been considered. And there may well be more for us to learn from narrative about the knowledge of the intelligent ear (396).

As well as Melba Cuddy-Keane, some other western theorists like Jarmila Mildorf and Till Kinze, Sarah Key and Francois Noudelmann, Julie Beth Napolin, also realized the importance of sounds in literary works and began to consolidate the acoustic narrative theories. Jarmila Mildorf and Till Kinze wrote several articles related to acoustic narrative study. Especially in their "Audionarratology: Prolegomena to a Research Paradigm Exploring Sound and Narrative," they discussed the preliminary thoughts and theoretical considerations of sound and narrative, music and storytelling, sound art as well as aural ways of world-making. They asserted that Schafer's writings still constitute key texts within sound studies (4). What's more, they held that as far as narratology is concerned, sound in many art forms and medial contexts seems to have been relegated, and an "acoustic turn" may therefore be what is needed in narratology, too (3). Except that, they pointed out that audionarratology is an umbrella term for narrative approaches that take into account forms and functions of sound and their relation to narrative structure and it analyzes how sound contributes to the creation of real and imagined narrative spaces and worlds. They concluded at least three axes or trajectories that this new sub-discipline of narratology operates along: from audio-visual to purely auditory

media; from literary (artistic) to more pragmatic, everyday genres; and from verbal to non-verbal forms of expression (63). Sarah Key and François Noudelmann also mentioned in their article "Introduction: Soundings and Soundscapes" that Schafer's concept of soundscape has opened up new ways of listening, and of theorizing about listening (5). They asserted that we live in a world of sounds and our ways of listening have implications for the ecology of all our thoughts, discourses and disciplinary practices (9).

The value of the newly-rising acoustic narrative study lies not principally as a codified doctrine but as a body of practice that encourages scholars to engage in a primary relationship with literary texts. Recent years also saw many western scholars carrying out criticism practice in this new field. Melba Cuddy-Keane's "Modernist Soundscapes and the Intelligent Ear: An Approach to Narrative Through Auditory Perception" analyzed the acoustic narrative in Virginia Woolf's novels and founded a new reference point for future scholars' in-depth research. Her analysis revealed Woolf's breadth of innovation and importance of applying soundscape in the creation of her novels. In addition, Jarmila Mildorf and Till Kinze analyzed Philip Roth's Novel *Indignation* and its German Radio Play Adaptation *Empörung* from an audionarratological perspective and showed how both the book and the radio play offer potential for multisensory experiences on the part of readers and radio audiences (307). In another article "Narrating Sounds: Introduction to the Forum," they went on to illustrate that the difference between "audio art" and sound presentations in written literary texts is that the former affords real sounds, voices, music, while readers of literary texts have to imagine them in order to be able to form an idea of a storyworld's "soundscape," which, they hinted, is worth investigating further in literary studies and narratology (63). What's more, Julie Beth Napolin submitted her doctor dissertation about the acoustics of modernist narrative works backed by two case studies, the work of Joseph Conrad and William Faulkner. She held that these writers proposed a way of listening to the modernist novel and to the neglected importance of sounds and voices within it (1). She deemed that the acoustics of narrative involves modernism, subjectivity, voice, and argued that the overly visual account of modernism misses a crucial opportunity to "hear" modernist narrative and composition (2). In recent years, more and more scholars and students embark on studies in this promising field.

The History and Development of Acoustic Narrative in China

Acoustic narrative study has also gained more and more attention in China these years and has achieved the currency value as an important narrative theory and

critical methodology in literature studies. Chinese scholars embraced the new theory with enthusiasm and enriched it with the critical insight of Chinese culture.

Fu Xiuyan (the leading professor of acoustic narrative study in China and a chief expert of Narrative Research Center of Jiangxi Normal University), Wang Dun (associate professor of Renmin University of China), Zhou Zhigao (professor of School of Foreign Languages of Jiujiang University and researcher of Narrative Research Center of Jiangxi Normal University), Fu Xiaoling (associate professor of Foreign Language Teaching Center of Sun Yat-sen University) are distinguished Chinese scholars committed to introducing, testing and developing the theories of acoustic narrative. On one hand, they have put forward significant research methods and strategies concerning acoustic narrative study and deepened the acoustic narrative related theories. On the other hand, they and their research teams apply the methodological terms to the close reading of many western and eastern canonical texts.

As a leading figure in the field of narratology studies in China, Fu Xiuyan introduced the whole set of audionarratology to the Chinese intellectual community. He agreed with Canadian scholar Schafer and Melba Cuddy-Keane's idea of using the auditory terms like soundscape and auscultation to analyse the acoustic meaning of literary texts rather than the semantic meaning. Fu admitted it is a new way to understand the narrative meaning of literature. In his "On Soundscape," he made a clear explanation about the levels and classifications of soundscape proposed by Canadian acoustic scholar Schafer. Fu highlighted that the concept of soundscape is very important and it is helpful to remind people that sounds have their own unique scenery. In his opinion, introducing the concept of soundscape in the field of acoustics into narrative research is not to make the ears overwhelm the eyes, but to correct the visual hegemony and restore the unity and balance of audiovisual perception (60). In his "On Auscultation," he discussed the importance of the term "auscultation" proposed by Keane, and affirmed that rereading literary and artistic works from the perspective of "hearing" helps to reverse the perception imbalance caused by visual hegemony (26). What's more, he modified and enriched some theories. For example, as to the "soundscape" put forward by Schafer, Fu elucidated that it is not only made up of sounds, but also of silence, for absolute silence is impossible as long as the subject of "hearing" is a person. Of course, one can get relatively silent for a period of time by keeping silent, but this silence as sound pause, is also an indispensable component of a soundscape. Therefore, Fu puts forward that the relative alternation of sound and silence has become a means of artistic expression among musician as well as in some novelists (61). As to auscultation, a term put forward by Melba

Cuddy-Keane to better appreciate the reading efficacy of narrative texts, Fu held that literary works, like old buildings, need to have a careful auscultation on their soundscape (31) and it is especially necessary to conduct the "perception training" in the context of media change in this era (26).

More importantly, Fu contributed a lot to the study of uncertain auditory perception in Narration. He combed and analyzed three types of uncertain auditory perception in Chinese and foreign narrative classics in his article "Auditory Hallucination, Weird Hearing and Overhearing—On Three Types of Uncertain Auditory Perception in Narration." He pointed out that the three types of uncertain auditory perception in narrative works are auditory hallucination, weird hearing and overhearing which are on the opposite side of authenticity, possibility, and completeness: the untrueness of auditory hallucination lies in the falseness of the information content; the impossibility of weird hearing stems from its bizarre channel of information exchange; the uncertainty of overhearing results from fragmentation of information. According to Professor Fu, auditory hallucination is just unreal perception that generally occurs in the auditory organs and the most prominent symptom of it is the uncertainty of auditory perception which may be closely related with mental illness (e.g. schizophrenia) of hearers, so it always serves as an effective narrative strategy in character depiction and plot design (100). Weird hearing refers to the enhancement of hearing under the influence of some subjective and objective factors with listeners usually having extraordinary hearing because of their talents, circumstances or diseases. The uncertainty of auditory perception is also quite prominent in weird hearing (Fu 103). Overhearing means listeners hearing something intentionally or unintentionally, inadvertently receiving auditory messages that they are interested in. Therefore, it is also a sudden act of being involved with listeners who do not initially have the subjective will to obtain the relevant information, and there is no doubt that it is impossible to make any preparations for this in advance (Fu 106). Thus, these uncertain auditory perceptions will inevitably lead to uncertainty in expression, and obscure auditory events can often make the content of texts more colorful, providing readers with more space to imagine. Not only that, these kinds of uncertain auditory perceptions can also provide motivation for the initiation, unfolding and turning of the story, and contribute to the creation of the characters and the expression of the themes (Fu 99). Therefore, a systematic analysis of the auditory hallucination, weird hearing and overhearing, is helpful for readers to have a deeper understanding of the richness and subtlety of the art of storytelling (Fu 99).

Wang Dun found another way approaching audionarratology. He attributed

audionarratology to the field of cultural studies and enriched it with cultural studies' vision. In the article "Soundscape: A New Vision in Cultural Studies Abroad", he discussed some questions in terms of auditory sense, Shaffer's soundscape and "auditory ecology" in cultural studies. He held that the trend of western acoustic narrative study has gradually entered the mainstream of cultural research (81). Such a trend has also enriched itself in modern aesthetic and cultural studies. What's more, in his "Auditory Problem in Urban Cultural Space," he explored the discourse and paradigm of auditory research, the modern transformation of auditory problems in modern urban cultural space, and the new features of auditory urban cultural space. He asserted that culture would become more complex with the development of society, and the auditory cultural experience and auditory civilization forms would also become diversified with the changing of new media technologies and social mechanisms, so our audionarratology research should embrace the complexity in this era (Wang 147).

Zhou Zhigao also cast a new light on audionarratology. He introduced to China French film artist Michel Chion's proposal of three listening modes in terms of how to auscultate the meaning of narrative works: causal listening, semantic listening and simplified listening in his article "Distinguishing the Meanings of Sounds in Fictional Narrative." Regarding the classification of sounds, he agreed with Shaffer as to "keynote sound, signal sound and soundmark." He emphasized that whether it is related to important events or not, sounds do have special meaning in the fictional narrative, and play a supporting role in constructing the soundscape in the fictional narrative, which can reveal important information behind the visual world (111). He affirmed the necessity of carrying out acoustic narrative in narratology in the current state of audio-visual imbalance, elaborated that only by integrating the audiovisual senses to feel and experience the fictional world, and auscultating the sounds in the fictional narrative, could we better perceive and understand the aesthetic value, social features, and historical culture of literary texts, and only through "intelligent listening," the auditory soundscape corresponding to the visually constructed landscape could be shaped, and a multi-dimensional fictional world could be totally constructed (117).

Professor Fu Xiaoling introduced and reviewed the theoretical basis of auditory studies, the necessary conditions and the feasible strategies of acoustic narrative study in her article "A Theoretical Construction of Acoustic Narrative." She pointed out that acoustic narrative is a branch of irrational narrative and belongs to the category of auditory culture. She emphasized that when we do acoustic narrative studies we should first think about the generation, circulation and consumption

of soundscape, and then explore how to auscultate theses sounds (105). She also compared and differentiated the auditory effects of English words and Chinese characters in hope to benefit English (Chinese) translation of literary texts.

Furthermore, there are many Chinese scholars like Zhou Zhigao, Zhang Chuchu, Qiu Zongzhen, Fang Chen, Yang Zhiping and Yu Kangni etc, who have provided interpretations of Chinese and western literary works from the perspective of acoustic narrative.

Professor Zhou Zhigao, a key member of the Narrative Research Center of Jiangxi Normal University, conducted an acoustic narrative study on Allan Poe's *The Tell-Tale Heart* from the aspects of simulation and imagination of sound events in the story from the audio-visual angle. He pointed out that in order to achieve the realistic effect of sound, the first-person narrative of *The Tell-Tale Heart* uses a spoken narrative method, including a large number of oral narratives such as the use of short sentences and dashes, and also including many sounds and sound images to imitate the original sounds (69). At the same time, he believed that the superiority of Allan Poe's narrative skills is to expand the auditory space of the old man's room, to connect the individual with the society, and to construct auditory space transformed from "single listening" to "common listening" (72). Qiu Zongzhen, a member from Fu Xiuxian's research team, conducted an acoustic narrative study of the French writer Roman Rowland's *Jean-Christophe*. Starting with the acoustic imagery in the text, she analyzed how the acoustic imagery represented by bells, sounds of music, and the hustle and bustle constructs the narrative space and propels the development of the story. she focused on the auditory imagery of Christophe's listening and analyzed Roman Rowland's character shaping strategies (1). Fang Cheng discussed Charles Dickens' Novels from the perspective of audionarratology in his paper "A Research on Acoustic Narrative of Charles Dicken's Novels". He used "auscultation" and "soundscape" as important research items to capture the sound symbols in Charles Dickens' Novels. Through "auscultation," he revived the auditory space corresponding to the visual space and the soundscape corresponding to the landscape in Charles Dicken's Novels. He grouped the sound description in Dickens's novels into three categories: hustle, noise, and silence, explored the richness of auditory narrative objects in Dickens's novels, and analyzed the unique textual effect of acoustic narrative such as creating a space of imagination, promoting the development of the plot, and highlighting the character of the novels (3).

Many others turned to Chinese literature interpretation. Yang Zhiping, a member of the Narrative Research Center of Jiangxi Normal University, studied acoustic narrative in Chinese classic novel *A Dream of Red Mansions*. He elaborated

acoustic narrative wildly used in this great novel and studied how it enhances the artistic value and highlights the novel's multi-significance (180). Yu Kangni, another member from Fu Xiuxian's research team, categorized the representative sound events in the four great classical works of Ming Dynasty in China including *The Romance of the Three Kingdoms*, *The Water Margin*, *The Golden Lotus*, and *Journey to the West*. She analyzed the role of the acoustic narrative in the four novels' character portrayal, plot development, scene paintings and atmosphere creation (51). Dr. Zhang Chuchu of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, started from the aspects of the symbolic meaning of sounds, situation construction, auditory psychological features, and acoustic narrative characteristics to analyse Chinese modern writer Lu Xun's novels. She maintained that except for a large number of visual narratives in Lu Xun's novels, the flexible use of acoustic narrative is also worthy of attention. The use of acoustic narrative not only expands the ideographic space of the work, but also reflects the thinking mode and writing attitude of the writer himself. In addition, the acoustic narrative in Lu Xun's novels has shown extremely important significance in conveying their symbolic meaning, the typical situation, and psychological description (Zhang 82).

Recent years witnessed more and more Chinese scholars engaging in criticism practice in acoustic narrative studies. They apply the methodological terms to the interpretation of the western and eastern, canonical or non-canonical texts, testing acoustic narrative theories on literary texts, especially on novels, short stories, poetries, even films. They pay special attention to Russian writer Lev Tolstoy, French writer Marcel Proust, American modern writer Fiszergerald, Japanese contemporary writer Murakami Haruki's novels and stories, and they also adopt the theories to the interpretation of domestic writers' works, such as Tang Dynasty poet Bai Juyi's poems, Chinese modern writer Lin Yutang's novels, contemporary writer Yu Hua's novels etc.

Conclusion and Prospect

In summary, the fruitful theoretical discussions and empirical studies among Chinese scholars represented by Fu Xiuyan and western scholars represented by R. Murray Schafer and Melba Cuddy-Keane undoubtedly laid solid theoretical foundation and set practical norms for the future study of acoustic narrative. Carrying out acoustic narrative related research is of great significance, for it is not only a theoretical reflection on the current state of audio-visual imbalance, but also a logical necessity of the "auditory turn" in the narratology field for enhancing our understanding about the auditory properties of narrative texts.

However, in order to maintain its distinctive characteristics and make it stay as an innovative and efficient method to facilitate our interpretation of literary texts, audionarratology needs to keep its fundamental principles and open up for new possibilities and diversity of literature interpretation.

Firstly, as audionarratology rose in criticizing the phenomena of audiovisual imbalances of our culture, it should avoid looming so large as to grab the job of the traditional visual narratology in interpreting narrative texts. Human narratives are closely related to human's perception of the world and our perceptive information comes from eyes, ears, nose, tongue, touching, all these channels equally important, so, for better interpreting narrative texts full of landscape, soundscape, smell scape, gustation scape etc., acoustic narrative study methodology and other narrative methodologies are not conflicting but complementary, supplementing each other.

Secondly, audionarratology cannot satisfy itself with identifying and analyzing the auditory substance of literary works. Staying at this level would necessarily lead to the oversimplification. There is no doubt that audionarratology should also be affiliated with Feminism, postcolonialism, cultrural studies and other modern or post-modern theories. Only embracing these equally important interpreting tools when necessary, can we illustrate the content intricacy and aesthetic complexity characterizing great narrative works. Only by doing so can audionarratology avoid being accused of summarizing the message of a literary work in a neat formula as some classical narrotology theories being accused of.

Lastly, besides extending the research field to auditory media, everyday literature genres, even non-verbal forms of expression (Mildorf and Kinzel 63), audionarratology may also form fruitful alliances with cognitive science. Humans are cognitive and emotional animals. When our body and mind are dominated or controlled by certain emotions, the nerve center of the brain quietly adjusts the distribution of attention, giving our nerve a special sensitivity to certain types of outside information, making it more sensitively cognizing specific signals. In this regard, auditory perception is both physiological and psychological behavior, and the perception of sounds is indispensable from our whole cognitive system. Thus, the attempt of interdisciplinary research, approaching and consolidating audionarratology by cognition study is also highly recommended.

In short, to develop into a well-established theory, audionarratology needs to let in new factors in building up its evolutionary picture.

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