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Abstract   In what ways can the coded literature that circulates in the digital realm be interpreted in light of the logic of change? At present, pre-individual hyperlinks and hypermedia, encompassing the internet, social media platforms, blogs, hashtags, Twitter, and the world wide web, are utilized to represent the database of encoded literary texts. The correlation between the internet and AI is a captivating subject in the age of artificial intelligence. The historical progression of the World Wide Web illustrates its genetic and developmental stages: from static text-based information that was easily navigable for users to the social web, which integrated user-generated content and web applications, and finally to the "semantic web," which implemented artificial intelligence and machine learning. Transductive Intermedia, an emerging technology that integrates machine learning algorithms and user-supplied data via neural networks trained by artificial intelligence, facilitates enhanced "interoperability" and "hyper-connectivity" among diverse platforms and devices (e.g., Twitter, Facebook, or YouTube). The touchscreen or electronic interface serves as an illustration that "code" can be considered an essential element of the "text" in the form of a digital world literature database. This is apparent in electronic literature, digital poetry, and digital poetics of the present day. The aim of this article was to reassess the consequences of the challenges that the convergence of artificial intelligence, intermedia, digital humanities, and digitized/born-digital world literature presents. Furthermore, it proposes the concept of the pre-individual within the realm of transductive digital world literature.

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Introduction: Electronic Texts, Coding, and Data

Since the 1960's, computer processing of textual data in textual and literary field has expanded enormously in intersection with digital technology in the forms of electronic texts which includes: 1) a computer text file; 2) encoded text, and 3) hypertext.[1] Employing these electronic texts, digital humanities incorporates both digitized (remediated) and born-digital materials from traditional humanities disciplines including history, philosophy, linguistics, literature, art, archaeology, music, and cultural studies, and social sciences. In the electronic texts, "encoded texts," in terms of encoding schemes, developed by SGML XML, and the Text Encoding Initiative (TEI), are crucial, since they "encode explicit structural markup along with robust metadata found in text." In her *Introduction to Digital Humanities, Concepts, Methods, and Tutorials for Students and Instructors: Course Book* (2014), Johanna Drucker is succinctly providing the nature of "mark-up" languages:

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1 Specifically, 1) "electronic transcription of a literary text in the form of a computer text file," in which "characters, punctuation, and words are faithfully represented in a computer file, allowing for keyword or contextual searching" or "digital image of a physical page," which represents the original appearance; 2) "encoded text," encoding schemes, developed by SGML XML, and the Text Encoding Initiative (TEI) "to encode explicit structural markup along with robust metadata found in text"; 3) "hypertext," allowing for a multiplicity of narrative choices and making the reader an active participant in the reading experience. Perry Willett provides the definition, creation, and usage of electronic texts, along with a brief history of "eletronic texts" in his essay "18. Electronic Texts: Audiences and Purposes," *A Companion to Digital Humanities*, ed. Susan Schreibman, Ray Siemens, John Unsworth. Oxford: Blackwell, 2004. http://www.digitalhumanities.org/companion/

> Mark-up languages are among the common forms of structured data. The term "mark-up" refers to the use of tags bracketing words or phrases in a document. They are always applied within a hierarchical structure and always embedded within the text stream itself [. . .] Markup remains a standard practice in editing, processing, and publishing texts in electronic forms. The use of HTML tags is a very basic form of mark-up [. . .] Mark-up is a way of making explicit intervention in a text so that it can be analyzed, searched, and put into relation with other texts in a repository or corpus. Mark-up is an essential element of digital humanities work since it is the primary way of structuring texts as they are transcribed, digitized, or born digital. (*Introduction to Digital Humanities* 46).

In his thesis titled "Multidimensional Text Code Marking," Jerome McGann discussed the conventional approach to text reading through the lens of "marked text." This raises rhetorical inquiries. McGann claims that every piece of text we currently read is encoded:

> Now scan away (as you keep reading) and take a quick measure of the general page layout: the font sizes, the characters per line, the lines per page, the leading, the headers, footers, margins. And there is so much more to be seen, registered, understood simply at the documentary level of your reading: paper, ink, book design, or *the markup* that controls not the documentary status of the text but its linguistic status. (McGann)

As the reading progresses, the reader employs visual scanning to identify the "markup," such as font sizes, margins, and the characters in line. The content is simultaneously comprehended while observing the external structure of the entire page, including the number of characters, footnotes, pages, margins, paper, and book design. The reader can perceive the text for a multitude of purposes other than reading the content, or the text can be automatically read as if they were viewing a movie without realizing it. In the case of electronic texts, while not readily apparent in a physical book, a number of characteristics of linguistically encoded electronic documents are intrinsic to the digitized book and are therefore indispensable. A markup language is a rule-based linguistic construct utilized in electronic documents to specify the logical structure of data and denote the format in which the document

is presented on the screen. In short, the purpose of markup functions is "coding."[1]

After the information has been encoded and preserved in an electronic archive, it becomes data, and it is a challenge to comprehend and discuss the data from the informational database. It is currently argued in the field of philosophical representation research that databases are taking the place of narratives. In fact, structured data represents the domain of "integration forms" from which we await "insights." The word "data" originates from the Greek word "datum," which translates to "given." To derive meaningful information, it is necessary to "capture" the given data. Therefore, the term "capta" denotes the quantitative information that is generated or constructed using the provided data. A database is a system designed to store and retrieve data-related information. The differentiation between structured and unstructured data affects the utilization, analysis, and presentation of information. The explicit formal properties of "structured data" are imparted via the secondary levels of organization, also known as "encoding." These incorporate supplementary components, data structures (e.g., tables, spreadsheets, databases), or alternative methods to enhance the interpretation or value of the data. In contrast, "unstructured data" refers to digitally encoded information that has not been endowed with a secondary structure.

Both structured or semi-structured data and the unstructured data construct the "database" which refers to digitally encoded information in the form of texts, images, sound files, or anything else. In her essay "4A. Database and Narrative" of *Introduction to Digital Humanities Course Book: Concepts, Methods, and Tutorials for Students and Instructors* (2014), Johanna Drucker foresees the significance of databases in relation to narrative in terms of the present and future form of knowledge. Drucker asserts that narratives will ultimately be supplanted by databases when examining historical, literary, artistic, and philosophical representations. The most "impactful" and statistically near-objective method for managing, accessing, utilizing, and questioning information is through the use of a database, which stores the "metadata" that describes files and materials in a repository (34-35). Non-linear databases were placed in a competitive relationship with linear narratives that was diametrically opposed. As a result, the poetics of representation in the field of digital humanities were constructed through the comparison of selection processes in fixed narrative modes and combination processes. This claim is referred to by Drucker as "database logic" (34), and

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1   For further discussion of markup and encoding, refer to Allen H. Renear's "17. Text Encoding," in *A Companion to Digital Humanities*, ed. Susan Schreibman, Ray Siemens, John Unsworth. Oxford: Blackwell, 2004. http://www.digitalhumanities.org/companion/;

becomes the logic of the new transformation that materialized in the twenty-first century the conditions of transformation or "transduction" that Simondon described during the crystalization and individuation process.

Crystalization, Individuation, and Transduction

According to Gilbert Simondon's theory of technology, "individualization" begins with "crystallization."[1] The mother liquid milieu and crystaline seed (germ/seed) crystallize. In a supersaturated solution, tiny crystal structure pieces become crystals. Crystal seeds, also known as nuclei, grow in the mother liquid, the surrounding environment, and establish their own shape and structure. A mission's cooperation between seeds in an amorphous environment and structure forms crystals. Over time, the crystal seed grows and forms a realistic structure in the "milieu." When the crystal seed grows, the surrounding environment, which was merely a potential previously, becomes a dynamic environment that encourages seed ripening and structure. Making it possible unlocks the seed's potential.[2]

Simondon's theory views "individual" as the consequence of "process of individuation" and explores the creation of the individual without presuming identification. Simondon wants to know how "pre-individual forces" as the prerequisites of natural and technological life create "individuals," such as organisms, non-organisms, biological entities (plants, animals, and humans), and technical objects. It is the process of pre-individual forces that governs the process of creation of the individual. An individual's relative reality occupies a given stage/phase of their being. The core meaning of these stages (phases/steps/stages) is "pre-individual state," and they are inherent in basic activities that expose all former state potentials. Individuation also shows the individual-milieu link. ("The Genesis of the Individual," Simondon, 300). The "emergence of individuality," an action force in the individual, is possible because "pre-individual forces" exist. These forces, called "potentialities," exist chronologically ahead of the individual and compose the individual. They have

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1   For Gilbert Simondon's theory of technology, in particular, theory of the "pre-individual" and "individuation" in relation to "crystallization," see Anne Sauvanargues's "Crystals and Membranes: Individuation and Temporality." Trans. Jon Roffe. *Simondon. Being and Technology*. Ed. Arne De Boever, Alex Murray, Jon Roffe and Ashley Woodward. Edinburgh, U.K.: Edinburgh UP, 2012, 57-70. See also Gilbert Simondon's *On the Mode of Existence of Technical Objects*. Trans. Cecile Malaspina and John Rogove. Minneapolis: Univocal, 2017; and Simondon's "The Genesis of the Individual." Jonathan Crary & Sanford Kwinter. Eds. *Incorporations*. New York: Zone Books. 1992, 297–319.

2   For the discussion of crystallization both natural and artificial in terms of convergence and transduction, see the author's paper," "Transductive Convergence of Digital Humanities/Trans Media Art/World Literature," *Forum for World Literature Studies* 13.4 (December 2021).

energy, which sustains and transforms the human. Thus, the individual is always more than itself, just as "I" might be more than "I". Pre-individual, individualized, and terminated individualized exist simultaneously. Something develops from existence as it becomes something else, a process Simondon calls "transduction."

Transduction is an operation that creates itself while concretizing and organizing its surroundings. Transformation completes dimensions, magnitudes, and directions (vectors) to let an entity survive competing pressures. Movement occurs through several forces. The entity transforms itself by cutting through its pre-individual state and constructing itself from its previous resources and forces. Transduction occurs when transfer forces "dephase" and create discrimination called a problem. This inquiry arises when a process, event, dimension, or object allows individuation to create a new order. This includes creating an objectifying relation. Thus, the movement of individuation is transductive. Transduction is the most fundamental principle and method of "conversion." Transduction temporarily unites heterogeneous forces and structures what surrounds being or substance, creating a realm that supports existence and its alteration.

Simondon develops Deleuzean deterritorialization and spatialization. Transduction creates a creative leap from pre-individual past and present to an unknown future. It develops fields, regions, and an ecosystem that supports life. Instead of logical and abstract shapes, Gilbert Simondon's transduction finds, exploits, and communicates "natural contours of the Real" through creativity. Transduction is a problem-solving ability, like deduction and induction, that addresses context rather than production. Transduction relies on singularity and specificity more than deduction and induction. Transduction uses nuanced concreteness to explain the creation of beings, objects, and processes based on the logic of "eruption." Essentially, transduction is a principle and logic of convergence, making convergence a problem-solving capacity. Deleuze's *Différence et Répetition* (1968) and *Logique de Sens* (1969) were heavily influenced by Simondon's logic of transformation.[1]

New Database of Digital World Literature: World Wide Web, Hashtags, Twitter, Blog, Paratexts in Social Media

Now, the database of encoded literary texts has been represented through pre-individual hyperlinks and hypermedia, including the internet, social media

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1   It seems that Simondon's theory of individuation and transduction profoundly influenced and inspired Deleuze. For Gilles Deleuze's explicit remark on Simondon, see "On Gilbert Simondon." *Desert Islands and Other Texts: 1953-1974.* David Lapoujade, ed. Taormina, Michael, trans. *Semiotext(e),* Los Angeles and New York, pp. 86-9

platforms, blogs, hashtags, Twitter, and the world wide web. The transductive logic underlying George Landow's notion of "hypertext" originates from textual extension systems such as glossaries, footnotes, and indexes. These systems become intermedial and hypermedial forms by linking a lexia to visual information, sounds, animation, and other forms of data. Implemented via the hypertext software *Intermedia*, George Landow's hypertext and hypermedia are considered a revolutionary framework for formally organizing texts. The notion of "hypertext" functioned as the cornerstone for Tim Barnes-Lee's hyperlinking system, which was designed to facilitate writing and reading on the World Wide Web.[1]

In 1989, Tim Berners-Lee conceived and built a prototype of an innovative hypertext initiative that he later made available to the public in 1991. This initiative utilized a web of navigable nodes to connect and retrieve information of diverse natures. By integrating multiple platforms that store data on machines, hypertext is capable of providing a unified user interface that incorporates a wide range of substantial categories of stored data, such as reports, notes, databases, computer documentation, and online systems assistance. Users are granted access to the hypertext environment via the browser application. Hypertext Markup Language (HTML)-formatted web pages continue to be the original and most prevalent document type. The markup language in question offers versatility in accommodating different categories of content—standard text, images, audio and video embeds, and scripts that facilitate complex user interactions—among others. Additionally, the HTML programming language supports hyperlinks (embedded URLs), which provide users with instant access to supplementary web resources. Web navigation, which is also called web browsing, involves the repetitive action of navigating through various websites by following hyperlinks. Web applications are webpages that function as applications for software. The information displayed on the website is transmitted across the Internet using the Hypertext Transfer Protocol (HTTP). In general, a website is composed of an assortment of interconnected web resources that share a common domain name and a common theme. While it is possible for a single web server to host multiple websites, it is worth noting that some websites, especially those that are highly visible, may be served by multiple servers. The Web has emerged as the preeminent information systems platform on a global scale. It serves as the principal interface through which billions of individuals

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1   For the information concerning George Landow's hypertext and Tim Berners-Lee's world wide web, see George Landow's *Hypertext 2.0: the Convergence of Contemporary Critical Theory and Technology,* Baltimore, MD.: John Hopkins University Press, 1992; Tim Berners-Lee, "Information Management: A Proposal." March 1989, May 1990. https://www.w3.org/History/1989/proposal.html

across the globe engage with the Internet.

By employing hypertext language, it is finally possible to establish systems that guarantee the physical continuity of literary paper texts, electronic texts, and hypertexts. The text is transformed into a hypertext by means of the hypertext/ hypermedia concept, allowing authors and readers to now negotiate reading paths. Hypertext, in fact, exemplifies the textual openness argued by poststructuralist theory and enables readers to acquire knowledge in a manner distinct from linear texts through non-linear association. The digitized literary works serve as prime examples of the dynamic and complex media landscapes of the internet, including paratexts, the blogosphere, Twitter, and social media, in accordance with the hypertext concept. Thes media platforms are potentially realizing the intermedial and transductive convergent literature of the digital age as a result.

Specifically, twitter and hashtags represent a transductive social media for a potential intermedial digital world literature. In her essay, "Social Media and Electronic Literature: Hashtags, Blogs, Tweets, and Insta," Christian Sukhil-Howard demonstrates the convergence of Twitter literature and hashtags through the transformation of the hashtag as a global form of transformative writing practice from one in which it functions as commentary and code. Sukhil-Howard's hashtag literature delineates literary hashtag communities through the allocation of "metadata tags" to literary forms and genres (e.g., #haiku or #veryshortstory). This enables Twitter users to efficiently navigate through and discern shared communities and interests, facilitating connections with an worldwide audience and ultimately establishing an online community for reading and writing. Simone Murray's concept of the "digital literary sphere," in her *The Digital Literary Sphere: Reading, Writing, and Selling Books in the Internet Era* (2018), encompasses "post-press literature" in which other literary works that are created or published on alternative publication platforms, such as social media sites and blogs. By utilizing hashtags, the Twitter writing community cultivates a global audience in this sphere. Texts are now embedded within hashtag communities on all social media platforms, including Instagram, Tumblr, and YouTube, where hashtags are used as community symbols.

As a rich illustration, Risam Roopika examines the potential of digital world literature in her essay "Digital Paratextuality in the Literary Marketplace," using the social media platform Twitter of British Asian author Hanif Kureish:[1]

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1   For the discussion of twitter, hashtags, and digital paratexts in social media, see Christian Sukhil-Howard's essay, "Social Media and Electronic Literature: Hashtags, Blogs, Tweets, and Insta"; Risam Roopika's "Digital Paratextuality in the Literary Marketplace" in *Journal of New Techno Humanities*. March 2024.

Hanif Kureish's tweet appeared a little over two weeks after an accident that left Kureishi without use of his arms and legs. Since his paralysis, Kureishi's Twitter timeline content has morphed from retweets of articles about himself or current events and issues in which he is invested into content dictated from his hospital bed and transcribed with the assistance of his son Carlo because Kureishi cannot presently use his hands. His bio on Twitter now includes the line, "Dispatches from my hospital bed" (Kureishi) and contents of his timeline reflect that. Kureishi's tweets often feature threads with titles denoted in all caps, followed by musings on his accident, medical procedures and staff, and his physical and psychological welfare. Weaving the tragic with the mundane, he shares his dreams and wishes for recovery along with what he is wearing on a given day. In addition, he offers anecdotes about writing and his past experiences with the dry humor characteristic of his literary work. Posts also include links to his Substack newsletter, where he republishes his Twitter threads for free, while offering access to published and unpublished stories, essays, and screenplays for paid subscribers as well as "a copy of one of my books, signed with an inked thumb (as I am unable to use my hands)" for founding members who pay at least $240 per year (Kureishi 2023a). At times, he refers to his Twitter feed as "this blog" and expresses gratitude that it has "connected with so many thousands of people," which he says, "is a good reason for living" (Kureishi 2023d). At others, he and Carlo express frustration with the ephemerality of the medium while connecting with the audience, noting that they had scheduled tweets that have somehow disappeared: "We wrote the blog and then we lost the blog. I am sure all of you have had this experience." (Kureishi 2023c)

Roopika, then, argues that Kureishi's posts can be interpreted as "digital paratexts" of the literary works, serving as a "threshold between the text and the public audiences that engage with them through the feedback loops enabled by participatory internet culture," while simultaneously these digital paratexts attain their own textual status and become integral components of the assemblages that comprise their body of work.

Roopika's use of Gérard Genette's "paratext" is thought-provoking. The extra components around a central text are called "paratext" in literary interpretation, including a "peritext" of headings, prefaces, and notes and a "epitext" of promotional announcements, interviews, critical reviews, private communications,

and author-editor interactions. In Genette's "Introduction to the Paratext" (1991), "paratext" refers to literary works' supplementary materials (e.g., author name, title, preface or introduction, illustrations) that introduce the text to readers. Genette's paratext acts as a "threshold" between written and real-world communication. Titles, forewords, epigraphs, and publishers' cover copy form a complex intermediary structure between the book, author, publisher, and reader. Paratexts—internal and external conventions and liminal devices—influence the book's public and private history. Following on Kureishi's case, Risam Roopika investigates the digital paratexts employed by authors of postcolonial discourse on social media. Through an examination of the extensive list of literary oeuvres of South Asian and Black diaspora authors, Roopik scrutinizes the digital paratextual applications of social media: "The Dangers of a Single Story," a TED Talk by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, and her blog posts featuring the voice of the protagonist Ifemulu from her novel *Americanah*; Instagram poetry by Rupi Kaur; "Hafiz," a Twitter short story by Teju Cole; the blog of Amitav Ghosh; Lani Wendt Young's Telesā series, which spans multiple digital platforms; and Poet *nayyirah waheed* who provides a different case of social media uses of South Asian and Black diaspora writers, Instragram. Within the domain of social media platforms, user-generated contents of these writers are most precisely characterized as "digital paratexts" which are generated indefinitely through a process of complete textual transformation. By alluding to "digital reading environments," Roopika elaborates on the feedback loops of the digital paratexts and asserts that writers have become "integral to world literature" in the digital age by producing digital paratexts via social media and websites. Roopika argues that these authors collaborate with audiences, co-author with them, and compose, thus challenging the notions of "old" and "new" media and the writer-work relationship. They do so by generating digital paratexts that give life to their literary texts. In doing so, these authors demand that we radically reimagine what it means to be "world literature," revealing the digital realm's transductive and intermedial convergent literature.

In the era of AI, the relationship between the internet and AI is an intriguing topic. The history of internet reveals the developmental and genetic phases of the World Wide Web: from the static user-friendly text-based information to the social web incorporating web applications and user-generated content, and further to the

"semantic web" which employs artificial intelligence and machine learning.[1] The World Wide Web in the form of transductive *Intermedia,* which combines user-provided data and machine learning algorithms through AI-trained neural networks but is still in its infancy, enables greater "interoperability" and "hyper-connectivity" between various devices and platforms (Twitter, Facebook, or YouTube).

Mode of Reading the Marked Text in the Database of Digital World Literature: From Human Reading to AI Reading

How can we interpret the coded literature of the digital world as it propagates via the logic of change? Moretti's distance reading technique enables users to concentrate on units that are significantly smaller (close reading) or larger (distant reading) than the text. The text itself vanishes between the two extremes, hence Moretti's motto, "less is more." It is necessary to tolerate loss to comprehend the system as a whole, according to Moretti, and theoretical knowledge is perpetually accompanied by a cost for humans. Furthermore, while reality is indefinitely abundant, concepts are abstract and deficient. World literature, in its pre-individual state, serves as an inexhaustible repository of human intellectual, sensual, and comprehensional discourse.

In "What Is World Literature?" David Damrosch describes the typology of "elliptical refraction" and proposes a double reading method of refraction. He elucidates the functioning of double refraction in the context of deciphering foreign literary works. Damrosch argues that the spatial configuration of foreign culture within a nation's literature is influenced by both the national tradition and the immediate needs of the indigenous author. A singular piece of world literature serves as a platform for intercultural negotiations. Damrosch's central argument is that receptive cultures can make numerous uses of databases containing foreign literature. An illustration of an intrinsically distinct quality that can be employed either positively to advance the development of one's own traditions in the future, negatively to point out the primitive and decadent nature of the otherness and

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1　9 By applying Marshall McLuhan's "medium" to her essay on intermedial semiotics and artificial intelligence, Asun López-Varela in her essay, "Intermedial Semiotics in the Age of Artificial Intelligence. Challenges and Opportunities for the Arts," refines the developmental and genetic phases of the World Wide Web: 1) The static web provides users with text-based information; 2) The social web incorporates web applications and user-generated content; and 3) The semantic web employs artificial intelligence and machine learning.; For the discussion of twitter, hashtags, and digital paratexts in social media, see Christian Sukhil-Howard's essay, "Social Media and Electronic Literature: Hashtags, Blogs, Tweets, and Insta"; Risam Roopika's "Digital Paratextuality in the Literary Marketplace" in *Journal of New Techno Humanities*. March 2024.

advocate for its avoidance or eradication in one's nation, or neutrally to clarify the definition of one's own traditions. This indicates that various aspects of foreign literature are undergoing a transformation. In summary, Damrosch posits that world literature reflects the values and requirements of a particular culture, much like the culture reflected in foreign literature, and argues that this can be conceptualized through the lens of the oval symbol "double refraction." By integrating the two refractions—microscopic concave and macroscopic convex—through the construction of two foci—wherein foreign and native cultures generate mutually elliptical spaces—he assembled a world literature that is not mutually limiting and is connected to both cultures. is expressing a proposal to do so. In fact, what Damrosch proposes is the transformation of the human intellect through captivating and imaginative literature.

The convergence of the logic and perspective of Franco Moretti's *Distant Reading* (2013) and Damrosch's theory of world literature is consistent with Simondon's individuation and transduction theory. Prior to expressing world literature through the concept of "scale," Moretti conceptualized it as a "database." Additionally, the concept of "glocalization" in terms of "micro-scale" and "macro-scale" is linked to the literature of world literature as a database. The graphical scale bar or representative fraction (RF) of the map is referred to as the "map scale" on the map. In reality, the notion of global localization as perceived through the lenses of "up-scale" and "down-scale" consists of "ironically, simultaneous zooming-in, zooming-in, zooming techniques." The act of focusing out and inwards enlarges and contracts the object of observation, thereby providing a visual representation and explanation of the phenomenon of concurrent and competitive global movement in response to economic, political, and cultural shifts at the regional level. It may furnish a framework for elucidating the process that facilitates the transition from downscale to upscale simultaneously. Therefore, a "dynamic, interactive map" of world literature research is constructed upon the concept of scale. While the precise extent to which digital humanities, transmedia, and world literature will converge remains uncertain, a Simondonian lens of individuation and transduction can enable us to anticipate this breakthrough through the rapid differentiation and transmission of digital humanities, transmedia, and world literature in the context of the advancement of artificial intelligence in deep learning and deep reading. The logic of transduction and the process of individuation will constitute a paradigm shift in digital world literature.

Reading underpins literature. *Proust and the Squid* (2007) by Maryanne Wolf describes the brain's flexible cognitive ability when reading, stating that the brain's

"plastic design" to "make new connections among structures and circuits" is based on cognition which activates in the reading brain in milliseconds.[1] The reading brain may "elicit an entire history of myriad connections, associations, and long-stored emotions" throughout human evolution, including visual and spoken language. Using Marcel Proust and the squid to illustrate the intellectual and biological aspects of the reading brain's development and evolution (5-6), Wolf's squid shows "basic attentional, perceptual, conceptual, linguistic, and motor processes" that are based on "tangible neurological structures that are made up of neurons built up and then guided by the interaction between genes and the environment." In contrast, Wolf's Marcel Proust's "passing over," which derives from Wolf interpretation of Proust's *On Reading* (1905), represents reading as "a kind of intellectual sanctuary" where human beings could provoke their intelligence and desires to experience the Real out of their transformed imagination. These two complementary examples of human brain's reading processes which demonstrate and elaborate how various cognitive or mental processes work in the reading brain will provide the critical issue for the current research on reading cognitively in Artificial Intelligence.

What is interesting in AI is the relationship between machine learning and deep learning. Simply speaking, AI is a system miming human intelligence, and more specifically, AI algorithms learn from the data, thereby feeding data into an algorithm by processing, predicting the outcomes, identifying patterns and making decisions. In fact, Machine learning algorithms reflect Wolf's squid's reading track, learn, and suggest. In essence, machine learning is a process of training algorithms based on data, and a learning algorithm is trained on a set of "training data" to identify patterns and relationships in the data. These patterns can then be used to make predictions about new data. Also notable in AI are "Neural Networks." Neural networks, inspired by the brain, are interconnected layers of algorithms called neurons that share data. Processing more data allows them to refine their algorithms and improve. AI can recognize speech, identify photos, and diagnose diseases thanks to this learning. This "Deep learning" models complex data patterns using artificial neural networks. Deep learning algorithms mimic brain function, and layered algorithms can extract and alter features from big data sets. Deep learning can handle unstructured data including photos, video, and audio, unlike

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1   For the extensive discussion of the human brain's plastic ability in relation to the act of reading as well as Maryanne's Wolf's models of Proust and the Squid in terms of the intellectual and the biological, see the author's essay, ["The Poetics of Artificial Intelligence and Posthumanism," *Forum for World Literature Studies* 12.1 (March 2020): 1-19] which is closely related to the linguistic and the neurocognitive aspects of the Artificial Intelligence.

typical machine learning. Structured data is needed for traditional machine learning. Deep learning systems can recognize data patterns without prior knowledge. Deep learning is used in image, audio, natural language processing, driverless cars, and fraud detection and in the fields of healthcare, entertainment, and other industries. How the AI performs and represents their deep learning is the hyper reading, which we can call "deep reading."

Author, Distributed Author against AI Authorship

Roland Barthes's "The Death of the Author" and Michel Foucault "What is an Author" has exemplified the contentious issue of the authorship ever since the poststructuralist theory of the human subject emerged. According to Roland Barthes' essay "The Death of the Author," the author is the writing subject and the text is the output of writing that manifests multiplicity. Barthes adds that "writing is the destruction of every voice, of every point of origin" and deems it "that neutral, composite, oblique space where our subject slips away, the negative where all identity is lost, starting with the very identity of the body writing" (142). The text is "a multi-dimensional space in which a variety of writings, none of the original, blend and clash" (146), and Barthes says the author "is never more than the instance writing, just as the I is nothing other than the instance saying I" (145). In his article "What is an Author?" Michel Foucault argues that "Our society has changed the idea of a spoken or written narrative as a protection against death. Writing is now linked to sacrifice and the sacrifice of life; it is a willful obliteration of the ego that does not require depiction in books because it happens in the writer's daily life" (117). Foucault claims that the author fails in life but generates an immortal book by ennobling his failure, substituting his death in the plurality of writing subjects. Foucault argues that a writer blurs his/her individuality by rupturing his/her position as a work's author and allowing "transdiscursive position" (131). Foucault considered Freud, Marx, and Nietzsche the inventors of "transdiscursivity" since they created unlimited possibilities and norms for other writings.

In a time when artificial intelligence was the dominant force, in this context, Dennis Yi Tenen in his essay, "Author: Anonymous, Massively Collaborative, Distributed," reintroduced the same authorial inquiries in a novel framework.[1] In domains where scholarly attention has waned regarding the conceptual significance of authorship, research on authorship is merely now beginning to flourish and diversify in the post-authorship era, according to Tenen. It has become "routine to

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1   See Dennis Yi Tenen's "Author: Anonymous, Massively Collaborative, Distributed." *Journal of New Techno Humanities.* March 2024.

engage in such activities to watch a television show written by dozens of writers, follow a social media robot who dabbles in poetry, cite an encyclopedia entry written by hundreds of contributors, and offer commentary on a literary work written by a troupe of Sulawesi macaques." Tenen urges us to pay attention to three overarching trends in contemporary authorship that are both commonplace and under-theorized: "texts that are authored by means anonymously or pseudo-anonymously, massively collaborative, and attributed." This is in the age of new media, which is revolutionary in the sense that it normalizes the avant-garde.

Tenen further argues that anonymity enables numerous journalists to frequently collaborate on articles and express themselves in a unified manner in "a hive mind," which provides "a unified sense of prose style" and "the authority of a collective, free from individuated ego." Tenen offers an illustration of this dynamic hive mind: Wikipedia. The indicators for dynamic hive mind included comprehensiveness, currency, intelligibility, and dependability. This dynamic is readily apparent on "Wikipedia," an exemplar of contemporary encyclopedia creation and a massively collaborative undertaking that encompasses over 26 million articles translated into over 250 languages. Wikipedia seems like a radically participatory institution: one to which everyone is invited to contribute, although research into authorship practices on Wikipedia reveals hidden complications. As the Wikipedia project increased, this product of a collective intelligence reflects the socio-economic problems of the underlying collective. "Distributed model of authorship," as described by Tenen, consists of "multiple human contributors" and "organic, algorithmic, and chance elements of composition." Distributed authorship is based upon an environment of "a continual dialog with other authors, automated editorial algorithms, and the platform itself," and is composed of "charting the literal flows of information between minds (wetware), computer programs (software), and infrastructure (hardware)."

Conclusion: Digital World Literature as Database

It is said that nothing novel exists beneath the sun. Everything was in its pre-individual state, mirroring its preceding state. Nevertheless, the endeavor to integrate the domains of literature, media, and digital humanities is a captivating and intricate undertaking. In her *The Poetics of Indeterminacy* (1981) and *Poetry On & Off the Page* (1998), Marjorie Perloff endeavors to situate the evolution and formation of art and technology within the technological and digital culture of the late 20th century. Poetic language, according to Perloff, is a system of signs with its own semiological interconnections, "simultaneously striving towards and refusing to become significations" (18), as opposed to a transparent glass indicating something

external. Perloff's conceptualization of poetic language, which she alludes to in relation to transparency and opacity, can be situated within the framework of the signified and the referent of language. Indeed, the signifier in poetic expression is perpetually "superfluous," burdened with potential meanings and thus more accurately a "cipher" which raises the inquiry into the material nature of "code." The influential *The Language of New Media* (2000) by Lev Manovich challenges the fifth principle of "transcoding" of new media, which entails the "computer layer" absorbing concepts, artifacts, and presuppositions from the "cultural layer." As demonstrated by the touchscreen or electronic interface, "code" may be regarded as an integral component of the "text" of digital world literature as database. This is evident in contemporary digital poetry, digital poetics, and electronic literature. The objective of this paper has been to reconsider the consequences of the challenge posed by the convergence of artificial intelligence, intermedia, digital humanities, and digitized/born-digital world literature. Additionally, it puts forth the notion of the pre-individual of transductive digital world literature.

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Brain Text and Vietnamese Novelists' Ethical Choices Since 1986

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Abstract　After the 6th Congress of the Communist Party of Vietnam in December 1986, innovation and opening-up policies were implemented in many fields, including literature and the arts. The change in the ethical environment—along with the context of reform, the market economy and international integration—helped local novels to reap many achievements, but it also unearthed non-educational works. These two aspects of the issue relate intimately to how an author writes a novel. The characteristics of a novelist's ethical identity are exceptional: novelists are both citizen and artist. Their writings are the textualisation of their brain texts and reveal the ethical choices made by each individual author while writing. If the novel is based on a valuable brain text, the work improves human truth, goodness and beauty. If, however, a writer's brain text does not contain teaching value, it cannot be considered a genuine literary work but should be forgotten or banned from publication and circulation. This article applies the theory of brain text (脑文本), an exclusive invention of Professor Nie Zhenzhao, to analyse the ethical choices of Vietnamese novelists from 1986 to the present. This study demonstrates (i) the uniqueness of brain text theory, (ii) the novel as a fruition of the textualisation of a brain text and (iii) the didactic function of contemporary novels on the basis of the brain text of Vietnamese novelists. [1]

Keywords　brain text; Nie Zhenzhao; Vietnamese novel; ethical choice; teaching function

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Introduction

Professor Nie Zhenzhao has affirmed that the entire history of human civilisation is the endlessly repeating process of natural and ethical selection. Ethical selection is implemented by education and it works through literature. People can only achieve edification through moral models (道德榜样) in literary writings, thereby helping humanity to complete the process of doing good and avoiding evil. That is, literature can guide humanity's ethical selection towards becoming moral persons.[1] Professor Nie's point of view illuminates two vital issues. The first one is that the writer, as an individual ethical identity, also constantly makes his or her own ethical choices to pursue an ethical selection process. The second is that literary creation and literary works are purposeful; they not only thirst to provide instructional value to readers but also to perfect the creator's personality. Literary creation is an activity that expressly manifests the writer's ethical choices and intentions to become a moral being. The author's choices are expressed through the work and what belongs to it, such as its theme, topic, content, characters and literary quality. It is arguable that the didactic values behind characters' ethical choices are one of the most direct channels reflecting an author's artistic thoughts. However, authors' ethical choices have a broader scope and connotation than those of characters in a novel. Writers are not only the originators of those characters but, in their creative animations, they must choose genres, topics, themes, narrative strategies and linguistic styles. These aspects are the core of a "writer's ethical choices", which cannot be separated from the author's brain text and the moral value of literary creation.

Vietnamese literature since *Đổi mới* (Renovation, 1986) has witnessed dramatic innovation in many aspects.[2] Changes in the ethical environment have required local writers to reform but have also created the conditions for them to experiment with new things. The ultimate goal of the renovation is to nourish human morality— that is, to consummate human ethical selection. In the field of novel writing, local authors have shown their courageous commitment to many forbidden territories after the Vietnam War (1954–1975), including complex cases of feudal history and land reform in Northern Vietnam in the mid–twentieth century. They have bravely looked back at historical issues and found lessons for contemporary life. Those are Vietnamese writers' accurate ethical choices.

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1   See Nie, *Introduction* (Chinese edition) 6–7.

2   See A. D. Nguyen, "The Ethical Environment" 939–49.

Brain Text: An Exclusive Invention of Professor Nie Zhenzhao

According to the theory of ethical literary criticism (ELC), a writer's literary work is adjacent to their brain text: authors' works are the written expression of their literary brain text (文学脑文本). Accordingly, the novels created by Vietnamese writers from 1986 to the present are the results of a filtering and textual performance of each writer's brain text. This processing of a brain text is tied to the didactic function of the work and these two processes have an interrelated and inseparable connection that clearly shows each writer's ethical choices in creating literary works. Any analysis of the characters' choices in the novel or the writers' choices in their creative activity cannot be isolated from this process. As Professor Nie asserted:

> Since literary works describe everyone's ethical choices, the criticism of literature naturally analyses the ethical choices in literary works. Of course, a deeper theory related to ethical literary criticism is brain text (脑 文 本); spiritual, psychoanalysis and emotional analysis in literature are all based on brain text. Because the human spirit, psychology and emotions all exist in brain text, the analysis of the human spirit, psychology and emotion should be an analysis of brain text[1]. (Nie, Wu and Chen 73)

Human beings (both novelists and fictional characters) exist within a framework of many constantly evolving ethical choices that reflect each individual's brain text. Their mental, psychological and emotional aspects, as well as their thoughts, behaviours and actions, are founded on the brain text. The ethical choices of Vietnamese novelists since 1986 while writing their novels (expressed in the selection of thematic and artistic forms) indicate their choice of how to textualise their brain text system into specific works. The text must mobilise memory and simultaneously use the vocal organ to convert memories into sound signs/symbols so others can receive the specific content of a particular brain text. The exciting thing is that the process of forming, storing and transmitting a brain text is the continuous, cyclical and shifting within the human brain of an individual (in this case, the novelist) to another object, brain or individual (in this case, the readers). Before being transferred into sounds, signs or physical texts, the brain text only exists in the brain of an individual, which is private and cannot be read or perceived

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1   Translations provided are by Anh Dan Nguyen unless otherwise noted.

by others.[1]

Although the existence of brain text is personal and private, if it is exposed to the outside, it can deliver the shared memories of many people and can thus construct the so-called "collective brain text" or "the brain text of community." The brain text survives in the brain through memory; one of the conditions for exposing it is by memory/recall; there is thus no need for people to die just for the brain to be damaged or cannot remember or lose memory permanently, conditions for the existence of brain text is no longer. The invention of characters (文字) thus guarantees the existence or persistence of the brain text. Humanity's civilisational achievements are in this way increasingly thickened. To allow the brain text to reach readers in a sustainable, convenient and transmittable way, novelists materialise or textualise their brain texts—they convert them into material texts. The material text is the objective existence (the physical manifestation) of the brain text. Only after being transformed into a material text can the brain text be known and received by others. Only then does it have meaning and value. This is the nature of literary creation. As Professor Nie has stated: "Fundamentally, almost all literary works result from writers' retrieving, assembling, processing, rewriting, storing and representing the brain text. Without brain texts, writers would not produce texts and thus there would not be written texts or digital texts" ("Sphinx Factor" 194). Every writer's creative activity must start from their brain text. The methods and skills that each person uses to process their brain text constitute a writer's style. Vietnamese novelists are no exception. Each specific author turns his/her brain texts into works based on the artistic intentions and messages they want to bear. Vietnamese novelists from 1986 up to the present form an extensive group that follows many different trends in presenting their brain text to readers and manifesting the "collective brain text" or "brain text of community."

In Vietnamese novels since *Đổi mới*, each author's artistic ideology is prominent in depicting their brain text. His/her thought is integrated into each literary work, which is the emanation through processing operations for perceiving, understanding and interpreting objective and abstract things (i.e. thinking activities) thanks to the brain concept (脑概念). These thought manipulations result in brain texts. There are many forms of brain text, but the writer, in particular, perceives the world and accumulates resources in the brain for literary activities. They then have to abstract and conceptualise those perceptions to establish the brain concept. The human brain relies on certain literary forms to think and combine its brain concepts and the brain text created through this process is the literary brain text (文学脑文

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1   See Nie, "Ethical Literary Criticism" 12–13.

本). In their thoughts and practical actions, each person thus holds countless brain texts that can be characterised in different ways—that is, as philosophical, artistic, scientific, political or historical brain texts. These types of brain text take shape depending on how its owner intends to use it in real life. Each owner thus acts as an "author" when generating a brain text. Because each author is distinguishable, the characteristics, nature and level of these texts differ. When these owners share the texts in their brains outside (by speaking or materialising them), others gain a genuine awareness of the content, characteristics, properties and level of specific brain text. Literary brain texts are not inherited. They are limited according to the situation of the human brain. In literary activities thus ought to materialise brain texts to ensure that the writer's artistic ideas are conveyed to others. The premise of this procedure is the thoughtful manipulation of the brain via the brain concept, which is a thinking tool. The combination of the signifier and signified brain concept forms thought. The human thinking process is a continuous combination of brain concepts. The brain text thus has a decisive influence on human thought and behaviour. Human thinking, consciousness, choices, judgments, emotions, actions and ethics are all determined by the brain text and what a person's brain is like will decide that person's virtue.[1] In the case of contemporary Vietnamese novelists, each writer's brain text determines the quality of that writer and of his/her works. That is the reaction of their ethical choices in fiction writing activities.

Brain text occupies a crucial position in the theoretical system of ELC. As Professor Nie has emphasised: "Without brain text, there would not be oral, written, or literature for telling and writing. Without brain text, there would be no thinking, writing, editing, telling, or memory" (*Introduction* [English edition] 183). Before appearing in physical and tangible language (e.g. written texts and digital languages), humans used brain text to establish their civilisation, which is a novel insight by Professor Nie Zhenzhao, who has provided all these new terms (e.g. brain text, brain concept and literary brain text) to delve deeply into the nature of human language generation and application. This invention is very profound and creative. If Ferdinand de Saussure is one of the fathers of modern linguistics, then Professor Nie can also be considered the father of primitive linguistics. The theory of the brain text asks us to reconsider the origin of language (as well as the interconnection between brain text, language and written text) and the definition of literature.[2] Brain text theory certifies the basis of artistic exercise and literary composition. The act of literary creation is an extraordinary mission. Not everyone can become a writer:

1   See Nie, "The Forming Mechanism" 33.

2   See Nie, *Introduction* (English edition) 16, 183.

only those who can produce literary brain texts can be writers. Suppose a person owns a literary brain text but is not qualified to process and communicate it to the outside in a suitable form; it is also impossible for them to compose a literary work. There is thus an inseparable connection between the ethical choices in forming a literary brain text and making it into a literary work. Writers create instructional values to implement the didactic function of literature. They should therefore make legitimate ethical choices; otherwise, writers and their literary works cannot help to perfect humanity's ethical selection.

Textualisation of Literary Brain Texts and the Fruition of the Novel

The brain text is established during learning and education. Due to the richness and diversity of this process, however, the brain text formed in this way is also very plentiful. The fundamental activity for learning is reading. The content of what is read is transformed into brain text. The more a person reads, the more brain text he/she gains; his/her brain text becomes more prosperous and more diverse with reading. Along with reading texts (where literary works are a valuable channel for forming brain text), every individual's life experience is another necessary source for building brain text.[1] Writers are unique because of their experiences and knowledge, which are essential for generating valuable literary brain texts. The learning and teaching process is very distinctive in the novel writing activities of Vietnamese novelists from 1986 to the present on account of the dissimilarities in the different generations of writers (e.g. pre-1975 generation, post-1975 generation, post–*Đổi mới* generation, 8X generation and Gen Z). Specifically, each writer's knowledge and experience differ, so their novels, too, come in various realms.

Because the level of brain text creation is not the same in each writer, the choice of novelistic theme also differs. Even if authors choose the same topic, how they exploit it will not be the same. The themes present in Vietnamese novels have expanded since *Đổi mới*. The four major thematic types are historical, war, rural and urban novels.[2] Generally, authors who came from the battlefield wrote about the Vietnam War. Their novels are produced based on literary brain texts acquired through their personal experiences. For examples, Nguyen Quang Ha (1941–) joined the army in 1967, serving at the Thua Thien Hue battlefield, where he worked secretly with farmers in remote areas. These experiences helped him write the novel *The Concave Area*[3] (2008). Chu Lai (1946–) was a special forces soldier

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1   See Zhang, "Ethical Literary Criticism" 87.

2   See A. D. Nguyen, "The Ethical Environment" 939–40.

3   *Vùng lõm* in Vietnamese.

in Saigon. His novels, such as *The Beggar of the Past*[1] (1991) and *Three Times and Once*[2] (1999), involve the atmosphere of the Southern battlefield, with the exception of *Red Rain*[3] (2016), which was set in the Thanh Co Campaign of 1972. Nguyen Tri Huan (1947–) became an Air Defence–Air Force soldier in 1965. He was later sent to the Central battlefield, where he spent his life with the 3rd Golden Star Division fighting in Binh Dinh province; this forms the primary backdrop of the novel *Swallows Fly*[4] (1988). Trung Trung Dinh (1949–) fought for many years in Central Vietnam and the Central Highlands. Imprints of these war years can be found in his novel *Lost in the Forest*[5] (2010). Meanwhile, Khuat Quang Thuy (1950–), author of outstanding novels such as *Firewalls*[6] (2004) and *Direct Fight*[7] (2015), served in the army in 1967, fighting in fierce war zones such as Quang Tri and the Central Highlands. During the war, Bao Ninh (1952–) joined the army on the B-3 Central Highlands front and retired from active service in 1975. His novel *The Sorrow of War*[8] (1987) carries the shadow of his experience.

There are also many novels about the Vietnam War written by authors with this type of military identity, such as *The Deep Area*[9] (2012) by To Nhuan Vy (1941–), *Sacred Forest, Pure Water*[10] (2014) by Tran Van Tuan (1949–), *The Wilderness*[11] (2014) by Suong Nguyet Minh (1958–) and *Sandy Love*[12] (2016) by Nguyen Quang Lap (1956–). Because they were once soldiers in the war and harboured many thoughts about their experiences, they formed literary brain texts related to the past when they were a part of war. The destiny of this generation of writers is probably living, fighting, surviving and writing about war. The period of living through war formed the rough material for their novel writing and led to reality, thoughts and feelings processed in the brain text of each writer. These brain texts are meticulously related to war; their inevitably result in works written on war. The type of literary brain text produced by soldier writers differs from that generated

1   *Ăn mày dĩ vãng.*

2   *Ba lần và một lần.*

3   *Mưa đỏ.*

4   *Chim én bay.*

5   *Lạc rừng.*

6   *Những bức tường lửa.*

7   *Đối chiến.*

8   *Nỗi buồn chiến tranh.*

9   *Vùng sâu.*

10   *Rừng thiêng nước trong.*

11   *Miền hoang.*

12   *Tình cát.*

by those not involved in war. Unlike the writers listed above, authors such as Da Ngan (1952–), Do Phan (1956–), Ho Anh Thai (1960–), Y Ban (1961–), Nguyen Viet Ha (1962–), Dang Than (1964–), Nguyen Binh Phuong (1965–), Le Anh Hoai (1966–) and Nguyen Danh Lam (1972–) have focused on depicting urban issues. These novelists are intimately familiar with Vietnamese society before and after *Đổi mới*, particularly the social and human fluctuations present in the ethical context of subsidies, the market economy and international integration. Their works are filled with the breath of urban life and its moral downsides. The tragedy of love, marriage and family is passionately described in the novel *The Tiny Family*[1] (2005) by Da Ngan. Meanwhile, Dang Than's 3.3.3.9 *[Fragments of Earthly/Naked Souls]*[2] (2011) presents the chaos of social morality and the abuse of evil. Do Phan's novels, such as *Almost Living*[3] (2013), *Flies Are Flies*[4] (2014) and *Falling on an Illusory Day*[5] (2015) point out the conflicts between the ethical identities of the urban intelligentsia and those who wish to become townspeople. These novels also declare the risks of traditional cultural breakdown, the ecological environment and other matters that emerged through the power of money.

Novelists like Ho Anh Thai (author of *Ten and One Nights*,[6] 2006; *The Human Realm Rings the Doomsday Bell*,[7] 2009), Nguyen Binh Phuong (who wrote *Children Who Died of Old Age*,[8] 1994; *The Absentee*,[9] 1999; *Declining Memory*,[10] 2000; *Sit*,[11] 2013; *At the Beginning*,[12] 2014) and Nguyen Viet Ha (*God's Opportunity*,[13] 1999; *His Trinity*,[14] 2014; and *Citizen Novel*,[15] 2019) are interested in attacking high-ranking intellectual figures—including teachers, professors, artists, writers and mandarins—to expose the dark side of Vietnamese society after *Đổi mới*. In addition, Nguyen

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1   *Gia đình bé mọn.*

2   *3.3.3.9 [những mảnh hồn trần].*

3   *Gần như là sống.*

4   *Ruồi là ruồi.*

5   *Rụng xuống ngày hư ảo.*

6   *Mười lẻ một đêm.*

7   *Cõi người rung chuông tận thế.*

8   *Những đứa trẻ chết già.*

9   *Người đi vắng.*

10   *Trí nhớ suy tàn.*

11   *Ngồi.*

12   *Thoạt kì thủy.*

13   *Cơ hội của Chúa.*

14   *Ba ngôi của người.*

15   *Thị dân tiểu thuyết.*

Danh Lam delves into the burgher's loneliness in modern life. These authors and their characters must answer the questions "Who am I?" and "Why do I live?" The protagonists in the novels *Amidst the Earthly Encirclement*[1] (2005), *Life Outside the Door*[2] (2014) and *Amidst the Lost Flow*[3] (2015) often have to search for their true ethical destiny. Their adventure is always full of obstacles, and sometimes they pay with their lives.

Novelists attached to the countryside—such as To Hoai (1920–2014), Dao Thang (1946–), Nguyen Khac Truong (1946–), Duong Huong (1949–), Trinh Thanh Phong (1950–), Ta Duy Anh (1959–) and Do Bich Thuy (1975–)—engage in rural reflection. Their literary brain texts analyse the colourful life of countryside society and the fate of farmers. Since 1986, Vietnamese researchers have witnessed a stream of novels about land reform in North Vietnam in the 1950s and 1960s. Typical works in this genre include *Stories of Cuoi Village*[4] (1991) by Le Luu (1942–2022), *The Three Others*[5] (2006) by To Hoai, *Farewell to the Darkness*[6] (2008) and *The Old Kho*[7] (2014) by Ta Duy Anh, *Hurricane*[8] (2008) by Nguyen Phan Hach (1944–2019) and *Who Knows Hell or Heaven*[9] (2010) by Nguyen Khac Phe (1939–). Vietnamese pastoral novels since 1986 also portray the struggles among rural clans for reputation, power and interests, in which the characters confront ethical tragedies. The novels *A Land of Many Ghosts and Many People*[10] (1988) by Nguyen Khac Truong, *The Riverbank of Without Husband*[11] (1990) by Duong Huong and *The Village Ghost*[12] (2002) by Trinh Thanh Phong are powerful portrayals of farmers' calamities. The local patriarchal culture and feudal customs also lead to adversity. Do Bich Thuy's *Silence in the Abyss*[13] (2017) is an excellent and haunting story about the miserable fate of women oppressed by depraved customs and the patriarchy.[14]

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1 *Giữa vòng vây trần gian.*

2 *Cuộc đời ngoài cửa.*

3 *Giữa dòng chảy lạc.*

4 *Chuyện làng Cuội.*

5 *Ba người khác.*

6 *Giã biệt bóng tối.*

7 *Lão Khổ.*

8 *Cuồng phong.*

9 *Biết đâu địa ngục thiên đàng.*

10 *Mảnh đất lắm người nhiều ma.*

11 *Bến không chồng.*

12 *Ma làng.*

13 *Lặng yên dưới vực sâu.*

14 See A. D. Nguyen, "The Ethical Choice" 47–58.

Writers passionate about history—such as Nguyen Xuan Khanh (1933–2021), Nguyen Quang Than (1936–2017), Hoang Quoc Hai (1938–), Tran Thuy Mai (1954–), Vo Thi Hao (1956–), Tran Thanh Canh (1959–), Bui Anh Tan (1966–) and Phung Van Khai (1973–)—produce historical novels. The historical novel in Vietnam traces its roots back to the medieval period and has developed to the present day, and such novels have flourished within the new ethical environment since 1986. The brain text writers at this period played an essential role in the blossoming of historical novels. Local novelists have sought to rediscover and reanalyse Vietnamese history from various perspectives in the spirit of democracy and looked directly at the past to be fair to the present. The authors have decoded the obscure points, hidden corners and deep mysteries of history as inspired by profound assumptions, demystification and contemplation. Historical novels since 1986 have thus become personal impressions, experiences and reflections.[1] This change has transformed writers' historical brain texts (i.e. about historical knowledge) into literary brain texts (in which the light of the literary imagination operates through history). The novels *Storms of the Royal Court*[2] (2003) by Hoang Quoc Hai, *Secret of Imperial Harem*[3] (2012) and *Nguyen Trai*[4] (two volumes, 2010) by Bui Anh Tan and *Queen Mother Tu Du*[5] (two volumes, 2019) by Tran Thuy Mai resonate with the fierce struggle of royal power and palace in-fighting, thus highlighting the good and evil inherent in the characters. The merits and crimes of some of the controversial figures in Vietnamese history, such as Tran Thu Do (1209–1264), Ho Quy Ly (1336–1407), Nguyen Trai (1380–1442) and Le Loi (1385–1433) have been evaluated with a more even hand in the novels of Hoang Quoc Hai, Nguyen Quang Than, Tran Thanh Canh and Nguyen Xuan Khanh. Tran Thanh Canh has tried to create a line of historical novels about one of the most brilliant dynasties in Vietnamese feudal history, the Tran Dynasty (1226–1400), through three works: *Saint Tran* (2017), *Tran Thu Do* (2020) and *Tran Nguyen Han*[6] (2021). Nguyen Xuan Khanh, meanwhile, has made a remarkable impression with his cultural-historical novels, and his *Our Lady of the Forest Palace*[7] (2006) and *Bring Rice to the Temple*[8] (2011) resonate with unique cultural life and local customs, while also

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1   See V. H. Nguyen 36.

2   *Bão táp cung đình*.

3   *Bí mật hậu cung*.

4   *Nguyễn Trãi*.

5   *Từ Dụ thái hậu*.

6   *Đức thánh Trần*, *Trần Thủ Độ* and *Trần Nguyên Hãn*, respectively.

7   *Mẫu thượng ngàn*.

8   *Đội gạo lên chùa*.

depicting the ethical conflicts between that local culture and other cultural entities.

On the whole, the novelistic content that Vietnamese writers since 1986 have provided to readers is the fruition of the textualisation of their literary brain texts. There are individual similarities and differences for each author as they materialise this brain text. This characteristic has led to various literary trends that have shaped the diverse and rich appearance of Vietnamese novels. Textualising the literary brain texts is, meanwhile, strictly attributed to each writer's ethical choices. Each particular novel is a specific embodiment of the writer's ethical choices when writing, and these ethical choice since *Đổi mới* are conveyed in two striking aspects: content and technique. One of the most important contributions of writers of war novels is that they portrayed the Vietnam War and its victims through a new humanitarian, regardless of whether those victims are Vietnamese or American. For pastoral novels, in addition to portraying local colour over time, one of the novelists' bravest ethical choices is to enter fearlessly the "forbidden area" of land reform—a campaign that led to many achievements but also resulted in many mistakes by the Communist Party of Vietnam (CPV). By these choices, Vietnamese authors have boldly rephrased a bitter page in Vietnam's history. More vitally, they have analysed human tragedy in a very exceptional ethical context to supply moral enlightenment for the present. The urban novel, meanwhile, has a contemporary rhythm that shows many painful of the aspects of post-war Vietnamese society, such as its moral crisis, human loneliness, urbanisation, ecology, feminist problems and sexual instincts. Last but not least, historical novels since 1986 have used historical and fictional relationships to re-interpret history. The past has been dissected from many angles, which provides readers a new experience of Vietnamese history.

From the creative perspective, Vietnamese writers' ethical choices are situated in the ethical context of the literature of *Đổi mới*. Innovating in the art of fiction has become a vital requirement for writers. If these authors cannot meet the demands of artistic renovation, the community of readers with increasingly sophisticated aesthetic tastes and expectations will no longer be interested in them. Novelists have thus reformed their artistic concepts, diversified their modes of expression and engaged in structural and narrative innovation.[1] They have thus actualised the poetic characteristics of a new literary period, distinguishing it from the previous one. The physique of contemporary Vietnamese novels has become more muscular.

From Brain Text to Executing the Didactic Functions of the Novel

The writer's ethical choices determine the value of his or her literary works. This

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1 See A. D. Nguyen, "The Ethical Choice" 39–59.

is clear for Vietnamese novels since 1986. Excellent novels concern human fate, the ethical situation and the moral state. True literary works guide people towards humanism and the values of truth–goodness–beauty (真善美), thus improving the human world in a positive way by successfully executing the teaching function of contemporary Vietnamese literature. Banned books,[1] meanwhile, partly show that the writer's literary brain text is not appropriate to the ethical criteria accepted by society. Such works have no rational educational value. Without an edifying function, literature in general—and novels in particular—cannot survive, as Professor Nie has stated: "As long as it is literature, no matter ancient or contemporary, Western or Chinese literature, teaching is its fundamental function. It can even be said that literature without teaching function does not exist" ("On the Ethical Value" 14). The ultimate role of literature is to help humans become moral and then to consummate each person's ethical selection. This function has an obvious purpose, and it is valid in all literary genres and periods. It does not change the utmost aspiration despite fluctuations in the ethical environment. As Professor Nie has argued: "Literature, no matter if it is in the written form or oral form, embodies social institutions, laws and rules derived from ethical choices. The moral teaching function of literature remains unchanged despite the changes of conditions" (*Introduction* [English edition] 165). His proclamation thus warns writers as they work on their novel: without brain texts that contain edifying values, the work will be unreasonable. In fact, Vietnamese literature since 1986 has witnessed many "không tải" (literally, "empty" in English or " 空载 " in Chinese) novels.[2] Although the ethical environment dictates the style in which brain texts are formed and despite the changes in the environment, the absolute function of literature has not vanished.

The moral teaching function of literature can only be realised when literature transforms the recipients' brain texts. Readers receive the knowledge and education described in the work by thinking; they turn the content over their thoughts and build new brain texts after reading literary works. The dominant aim of this process is to acquire the edifying value from the work and to start a self-education process. Readers can then adjust their behaviour, change their thinking and inaugurate a better life. As Geoff Hall pointed out: "For ethical criticism, the first and most urgent question is to explore the meaning of the text as also a search to establish ethical

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1   E.g. *The Crystal Messenger* (*Thiên sứ*, 1988) by Pham Thi Hoai; *The Age of Deities* (*Thời của thánh thần*, 2008) by Hoang Minh Tuong; *Lovesick* (*Dại tình*, 2009) by Bui Binh Thi; *Chains* (*Sợi xích*, 2010) by Le Kieu Nhu; and *Queen Termite* (*Mối chúa*, 2017) by Dang Khau (another pen name of Ta Duy Anh).

2   See A. D. Nguyen, "The Ethical Environment" 945–7.

significance. Is this text worth reading/good/bad, why might that be, i.e. how can a reading of this text contribute to a better life, whether the critic be a Marxist, an ecocritical reader, feminist or neoliberal, or perhaps some combination of these or other ethical positions" (63). The didactic function of literature is for everyone, and the difference lies in how receptive each person is and how well they convert what they read into brain text. From ancient times, literary texts have been a guideline for how people become human. In the phrases "learning to be human" or "learning to be a moral human", ELC not only emphasises "learning" but also focuses on the role of "teaching" and "moral". A human being needs to learn and to be educated. Teaching and learning have an intimate relationship with each other. ELC attaches significance to the teaching and learning methods that help a man become a moral person.[1]

In Vietnamese novels since 1986, readers can witness how a lack of instruction can lead to immoral people and actions. Many ethical choices break ethical taboos and violate the moral standards of society portrayed in contemporary Vietnamese novels. The people who make these choices are often uneducated and need more adequate instruction from school and family. Characters are often affected by the violence of those around them, including the violent tendencies of family members. They are also negatively influenced by the ethical environment (e.g. the imperfect side of the market economy and international integration). An outstanding example of this is Lep, a male character in the pastoral novel *Sugarcane River* (2004) by Dao Thang. Since childhood, he lived in a community of hired farmers who talked smut, told obscene stories and loved loud singing as well as eating and drinking indiscriminately. The man is the result of a secret affair between the landlord and a poor woman. Lep thus has to live with a hidden ethical identity and needs to receive a proper education. These facts transform the male farmer into a demon as part of this fate as a deformed man; he is an illustrative Sphinx factor: one part is human (an unwed child) and one part is animal (his appearance is heteromorphic, like a fish or a creature of rivers). When Lep is a man, he knows his human ethical identity. When he is an animal, Lep lets his instincts act freely. In many cases, Lep is controlled by a natural will that kills his human part. He thus engages in ungratefulness, violence, rape and murder in his village. Witnessing his evil, Mr Nghia, another character in the novel, thought: "He was born in evil spirits, raised in bitter hatred, and educated in an unnatural way, which has stimulated feud and division. The conciliation of evil consolidates him" (Dao 161). Growing up in an awful ethical context, with a lack of rational education, surrounded by hatred and cruelty, Lep turns into a devil's minion. Notably, in his ethical identity, he is an uneducated farmer, but not everyone

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1   See Nie, "Analysis" 6.

with that identity acts inhumanely.

Losing rational control over the natural will is an elementary explanation for the poor ethical choices in some of the novels on land reform. In pastoral novels by Le Luu, To Hoai, Ta Duy Anh, Nguyen Khac Phe, Nguyen Phan Hach and Dao Thang (mentioned above), illiterate farmers are dominated by unacceptable motives such as greed, revenge, power, status and sexual desire, which incite them to engage in unrighteous actions. In a context in which land reform has drastically changed the ethical environment, the ethical identity of the farmers has also been transformed. The uneducated peasants are guided by natural will that pushes them into criminal behaviour. They are the perpetrators of sexual assaults, false defamation and violent attacks; they even directly or indirectly cause others to die. In the novel *Hurricane* (2008), for example, Nguyen Phan Hach describes a young landlady, Lan Vien, and her mother, Mrs Nghe Nguyen, as victims of land reform. They are intelligent characters who differ from ordinary farmers. Because they are educated, they understand the ridiculous reality no matter how many injustices they suffer. The two ladies sympathise with the dilemma of Ham and Hung, who were forced to write papers denying the family relationship with their mother and wife. Owing to their knowledge, Lan Vien and her mother also comprehend the present wrongness. They believe in their honesty, and the two women await a "correction"[1] order. They are given back their properties, reunited with loved ones and, most importantly, still preserve their lives. In another work, *The Three Others* (2006) by To Hoai, mistakes and unjust ethical choices come from educated people representing the CPV and the revolution. Cu, Boi and Dinh are land reform operators; these three men are incarnations of power. Their level of awareness and education is higher than that of the farmers, but they are also opportunists, utilitarians and selfish officials. They take advantage of the reform and the farmers' stupidity and childishness to commit wrong acts, including using communist power for personal gain and sexually abusing village girls. These are immoral choices and should be condemned. In these novels, not all peasants are evil, nor are all educated people good. The characters' ethical choices rest on the contemporary ethical context, their ethical identity and,

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1   Land reform in Northern Vietnam was carried out from 1953 to 1956 to redistribute agrarian areas, which helped to provide farmers with land while destroying hostile forces and feudal culture. The campaign sought to develop rural societies and agriculture, thereby devoting itself to the proletarian revolution of the nation. The actual implementation, however, involved many serious violations: many people were wrongly and unjustly killed. Therefore, in February 1956, the Central Committee of the Vietnam Worker's Party (the predecessor of the CPV) admitted its mistakes, suspended the revolution and made corrections.

most vitally, whether the strength of their rational will is enough to subdue their natural will. The biggest lesson for each person is to protect the rational will against malicious impulses. Only then can human beings survive in any situation, even if it is the "world-shaking" ethical context of land reform.

Pastoral novels on the land revolution should also be viewed as voices raised to eliminate class hatred, which would lead to national harmony and democratic equality. These writers are very audacious in choosing a susceptible topic that could affect their writing career, but their ethical choices are not to defame history or criticise the mistakes of the CPV. Their greatest desire is to provide enlightenment for present life through the rediscovery of history. History contains mistakes that should not be repeated. An honest writer does not rely on the darkness of land reform to deepen hostility but courageously examines the truth, even if it is shadowed by mistakes, to say farewell to the past and to greet a better future. These are the crucial edifying values that novels on sensitive topics, such as land revolution, can bring to readers.

From another perspective, depicting ugliness and evil is also a way to propagate the didactic message of Vietnamese novels since 1986. By specifically portraying the villains, novelists show the significance of instruction in developing human personality. In an urban novel by Ta Duy Anh, *Looking for Characters*[1] (2002), the writer presents a beautiful prostitute who is very cruel. Her lover deceives her. She falls pregnant and gives birth alone. In taking revenge on the depraved man, however, she loses her rational will and humanity: she hatches and carries out a cruel, unimaginable revenge plot. She raises her daughter into a pretty girl to seduce her ex-lover; the daughter, ignorant of her relationship to the sexual buyer, violates the ethical taboo of having sex with her biological father. The poor girl's mother intentionally created this crime, and the mother is happy and satisfied with her plan. She has avenged herself against the man who betrayed her in the past without worrying about motherly love, bloodline relationships or social morality. The failure of her first love, the feeling of enmity and the impact of her job (prostitution) greatly influenced the prostitute's ethical choices. All these factors push the female character to engage in dehumanisation. For Ta Duy Anh and other Vietnamese novelists, engraving evil images in their works is not intended to praise the bad but to alert readers so they can understand evil clearly and draw moral lessons for themselves. The stories of such villains raise the awareness of the audience, thus helping them to learn and teaching them to become virtuous. In

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1   *Đi tìm nhân vật.*

the novel *The Oath Ceremony*[1] (2009) by Nguyen Quang Than, for example, the generals of the Lam Son insurgents are rough, rude, intolerant and unkind, primarily due to their background. Their ethical identities are peasants and the rural heroes who had little contact with books. The author poses a question worth pondering: "Is it because they have never read *The Book of Songs*?" (24), an anthology of ancient Chinese poetry, which here not only means a classical literary work but stands in for all so-called "holy books". In the writer's opinion, books contain moral and ethical scriptures to nurture people's humanity; *The Book of Songs* here is an allegory of the didactic function of literature. Because they refuse to read books, even if they are generals or heroes, these characters are less moralised. Unlike the characters in *The Oath Ceremony*, Hoang Quoc Hai and Nguyen Xuan Khanh present heroic images adept with both the pen and the sword. In the novel *Storm of the Tran Dynasty*[2] (2003) by Hoang Quoc Hai and in *Ho Quy Ly*[3] (2000) by Nguyen Xuan Khanh, the protagonists are leaders who regularly read books to find the best way to rule the country. These characters depict the importance of reading and learning in perfecting the human personality.

The didactic function of Vietnamese novels since 1986 is indisputable, because it is one of the foundations for the existence of genuine works. As Vietnamese scholar Le Huy Bac has commented: "Like all other art forms, literature does not ignore the purpose of educating man. Teaching is an immutable principle for any artistic creation, whether implicit or explicit" (89). The function of contemporary Vietnamese novels is often subtly hidden through a new, innovative artistic style. This makes it possible to reject the rigid, blatant didacticism associated with political goals, as proved in the revolutionary literature (1945–1975). Particularly in the post-war ethical environment of the country, when the wave of renovation and international exchange is opening up, there are still gloomy factors that have crept into every corner of life despite the many favourable conditions and flashy achievements of the era. Writers must thus combine their novel creation with moral and social responsibility by fighting negativity via literature. This task is difficult, because the novelist must avoid falling into the trap of subsidised literature, which is severely affected by class ideology. Authors also have to innovate in their literary art so that the moral didactics achieve a profundity that is acceptable to the souls of readers. Thus, Vietnamese novelists have unearthed various pathways to integrate moral and ethical themes into their works. Nguyen Binh Phuong, for example,

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1   *Hội thề.*

2   *Bão táp triều Trần.*

3   *Hồ Quý Ly.*

has paid much attention to social and ethical issues. He is a quintessential writer in this field. His series, mentioned above, addresses many excruciating matters of contemporary life, and these illnesses are a consequence of the negative side of *Đổi mới* in Vietnam. These ailments cause moral crises, human connection loss and broken families. Contemporary characters lose their dignity, honour, conscience, personality and morality in this ethical context. Characters who are moral traitors in Nguyen Binh Phuong's works are divergent. They can be immoral state officials or high-ranking, disorganised and undisciplined intellectuals. They plot darkly to compete for rights, conspire to embezzle public funds, participate in wild games and engage in adulterous relationships. Such men can be found in two novels, *The Absentee* (1999) and *Sit* (2013). In the former, not only the intellectuals are depraved, but even naturally honest farmers can be corrupted by the chaotic whirlwind of the market economy and urbanisation. The latter novel, meanwhile, reflects inhumanity and violence at all levels—individuals, families, communities— and all subjects, including human beings, animals and nature.[1] The unethical choices of the characters illustrate immorality. By revealing these poor choices, the writer contributes to the struggle against evil to protect the good, and the value of moral teaching is engrained in the novelist's writings.

In addition to Nguyen Binh Phuong, other writers such as Ho Anh Thai, Nguyen Dinh Tu (1974–), Suong Nguyet Minh and Do Bich Thuy also describe evil to remove it from society. Due to the differences in each novelist's brain text, the values they propagate are not identical. Although there are diversities, they all share a desire to help literary readers choose good from evil. This familiar aspiration satisfies the moral standards of the community. This then constitutes the community brain text and constructs a community teaching value. Since 1986, many novels have depicted the bad, the pessimistic and the evil of people and society. These writings are a way to fight against the darkness, with the ultimate goal of maintaining the ethical order of society. Writers who delineate evil, even evil would be unimaginable in reality, are not accomplices to crime. They do not encourage moral catastrophe to take over life and deny the role of good. Rather, in essence, their works guide human goodness. Belief in literature's educational path and didactic function is shared among contemporary Vietnamese novelists. A noticeable example can be found in Ho Anh Thai's novel *The Human Realm Rings the Doomsday Bell* (2009), in which a mother is cruelly tortured to death during the Vietnam War. Before she passes away, she prays for her daughter to be able to punish evil in the future, and this curse is placed on the heroine, Mai Trung, who

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1   See Bui.

does not feel happy, even if evil is against her. Mai Trung is not happy to be chosen as the avenger; rather, she seeks to protect humanity. Her actions contradict her mother's dying wish. According to common judgement, in betraying the plight of the mother (as a war victim), it is easy to accuse Mai Trung of being unfilial. The innocent girl's ethical choices have two essential meanings. First, the mother's vow is embodies hatred. If humans use enmity to deal with evil, the human realm cannot find a good path, and Mai Trung deceives her past mom to follow a more relevant path. Second, she believes the human race does not deserve such harsh discipline: it is still possible to teach them by education. "Human beings," said the lady, "are not worthy of such painful punishment. They can still be influenced and changed by education" (Ho 205). Evil must be penalised, but humanity can be transformed through teaching and learning. This is a very humane view, and the novelist's moral concern is transferred to the reader via virtuous ethical choices based on the creditable brain texts that dignify the novel.

In the context of contemporary Vietnam, the cultural sphere is changing. Economic status is replacing artistic status and has become a severe risk. Art and literature, in general—and novels in particular—need to stand at the centre of culture. As La Nguyen has argued: "In fact, economics has strongly impacted on man's mentality, changing the thinking and discourse style of the times" (85). This statement forces readers to revise the socialist-oriented market economy that the CPV implemented since the 6th National Congress in 1986. Renovation policies indubitably guided the country to overcome the crisis after the Vietnam War, but economic development creates many forms of aftermath, including generations who worship materialism. Such consequences seriously affect the integrity of ethics. The continuation of literature, in turn, is greatly challenged by this ethical environment. "Once one is opening one's mouth to talk about economic affairs, taking economic language to discuss everything in life, who cares whether it's literature or not?" (La 86) In this ethical context, the destiny of Vietnamese novels is strictly linked to their didactic function. As long as a literary work apply moral models, the fate of ethics is guaranteed. As he contemplated morality, Le Huy Bac requested that national education concentrate on training students to be human. This is adjacent to the ELC focus on "learning to be human." The Vietnamese scholar explores the moral flow of this process of becoming human in local culture:

A human must have morality,[1] generally known as 'Human Ethics'.[2] Morality

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1   "Đạo lý" in Vietnamese or " 道理 " in Chinese.

2   "Đạo Người" in Vietnamese or " 人之道 " in Chinese.

appeared long ago and has been preserved, supplemented and developed. Morality requires each person and community to aim for three primary goals: individual, national and humanity. Human ethics today is limited within a nation or a country and needs to be broader. Contemporary men are world citizens. Moral personality is distorted by abandoning these goals, which makes it difficult to match and integrate with the national community and humanity. (24-25)

Vietnamese novelists have genuinely attended to all three main goals in cultivating human ethics for themselves (as individuals) and for readers (as representatives of the nation and humanity). Unfortunately, their success in worldwide literary circles is not impressive; for example, no Vietnamese writer has ever won a Nobel Prize. However, they are at least trying to approach the world level through novelistic philosophy, narrative art and artistic methods. In terms of content, Vietnamese writers have struggled to reflect issues of universal scope, such as Bao Ninh's *The Sorrow of War* (1987), which is immersed in the context of the Vietnam War as Bao Ninh attempted to illustrate the multiple relationships between us and others, between goodness and badness and between justice and injustice. In the novel, war is no longer judged from an ideological standpoint but from a human one: the nature of war is evil because it is against human beings. Bao Ninh and other Vietnamese writers generally strive to portray what is anti-human and inhuman. They put good and evil together, and then they force protagonists to make choices within the established dilemmas and predicaments. Their works are tools to support people in identifying morality and immorality, ultimately orienting readers to choose the good. They thus help to achieve human ethics at the individual level through the creation of a moral person.

Conclusion

When writing novels, writers confront various complex moral relationships. They bear the ethical identity of both a verbal artist and a general citizen. This identity defines their creative and social responsibility. It also affects novelists' ethical choices in their fictional productions. Vietnamese writers' ethical choices appear in their novels through content and form. Regardless of their selections, the premise of these choices lies in whether their brain text in general—and their literary brain text in particular— is valuable or not. If a novelist composes a work that does not provide favourable teaching values, then his/her ethical choices are atrocious. In contrast, if a novel escapes from a marvellous brain text, then the writer's ethical choices are legitimate. The reality of post-war Vietnamese literature clarifies that, in specific ethical contexts,

not all authors make appropriate ethical choices. Some writers were expelled from Vietnam, such as Duong Thu Huong (1947–), while some novels were banned from publication and circulation, including works by Pham Thi Hoai (1960–), Hoang Minh Tuong (1948–), Le Kieu Nhu (1983–), Bui Binh Thi (1939–2016) and Ta Duy Anh. In these cases, the deviation in their ethical choices sprang from their moral motivation and attitude towards the specific issues they included in their works. Poor choices are the result of fallacious literary brain texts and cannot execute the teaching function. Overall, Vietnamese novelists since 1986 have reaped bountiful harvests in showing their social responsibility through novels. Moral and ethical matters related to humans and society, of a nation and the world in the past and the present, have been reflected with valour and have provided readers with actual edifying values. As we search for the root of this phenomenon, we are grateful to the theory of brain text, an exclusive creation of Professor Nie Zhenzhao.

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The Triumph of the Snake Goddess: A Composite Creative Translation of Verse into Prose

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Abstract For both practitioners and theoreticians concerned with literary translation, *The Triumph of the Snake Goddess*, translation of *Manasamangal Kāvya*, must be a classic. The earliest form of *Mangal Kāvya*, the epic narrates the story of Manasa, the snake goddess, who seeks everyone's devotion, ultimately conquering the worshippers of other deities. The paper aims to examine how prose translation of verse retains the depth and appeal of the original text like *Manasamangal Kāvya*. The book is a composite translation from the medieval Bengali epic, which, of course, is not easy for a modern reader to unravel. Kaiser Haq, the foremost English language poet and one of the leading translators of Bangladesh, renders the poem into modern English, employing the creative translation process. The paper focuses on omissions and incorporations, and therefore on the consequent much deliberated issues of loss and gain. The paper also offers a meticulous comparative study between the source text and the translation, with an object of discovering if creative translation commits violence to or enriches the original. The paper further investigates how much the translation is relegated from the original, or how the original resonates with the translation, as far as meaning, form, and style are concerned.

Keywords *Manasamangal Kāvya*; Creative Translation; *The Triumph of the Snake Goddess*; Classic; Kaiser Haq

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Introduction

One of the key concerns of critical writings on literary translation is to evaluate or analyze a translated text to discover how close or distant the translation is to or from the original. Besides, research in the field of Translation Studies explores translation literature to vindicate if the translation is beautiful or faithful to the original, how much liberty the translator has taken, if they have created a new text out of the original, or they have blindly adhered to equivalence. Does the translator do justice to the original author and text by becoming creative, or they commit a damage to the text. The vital question arises if the translation is good, and therefore is commendable. Wook-Dong Kim, a translator and scholar of Translation Studies from South Korea, articulates his views about translation as a creative act in his notable article entitled "The 'Creative' English Translation of *The Vegetarian* by Han Kang" published in *Translation Review*, ". . . we have no way of knowing whether a given translation is good or bad without a severe, scrutinized comparison of a source text with its translation. Any assessment of a translation is bogus unless it has gone through a rigorous comparison of the source and the translated texts" (65). Kim's observation springs forth from his meticulous reading of *The Vegetarian*, translated into English by well-known translator Deborah Smith, which won Man Booker International Prize in 2016. After scrutinizing and comparing the original and the translation, he discovers that the translator has transformed into a creative writer while rendering the text into English, taking liberty to the fullest.

    This article attempts to analyze Kaiser Haq's translation of *The Triumph*

of the Snake Goddess, the original of which is *Manasamangal Kāvya*, an influential medieval narrative, recounting the story of Manasa, the snake goddess. *Manasamangal Kāvya*, composed in verse rhyming all through the work, poses a threat to even an accomplished translator. It is an "egregious sin" (Greene) to claim that a translator improves upon the original, but I argue that complying blindly with the original to be more accurate certainly causes a damage to the final product. I confine my attention to what occurs to the translated text, as it is carried across from medieval Bengali into modern English, from verse into prose. Critics have a wide range of views about translation in general and translation of verse in particular. Translation of verse, no doubt, is more challenging than any other genres, but Forrest Gander believes that "all poems are untranslatable until the right translator shows up" (228). Although translation of verse is more daunting, as Gander implies, good translators are capable of producing a reliable text in the target language, no matter if it is prose or verse. Poetry is usually believed to be untranslatable, but accomplished translators can make it possible. *The Triumph of the Snake Goddess* is indeed translation of a skilled craftsman. Wendy Doniger, Mircea Eliade Distinguished Service Professor Emerita of the History of Religions and South Asian Languages and Civilizations at the University of Chicago, has written a long and rich introduction to the book, in which she states that *The Triumph of the Snake Goddess* is a "remarkable translation" (28). Doniger's introduction, in general, upholds the value of the book as an epic, and this specific statement does justice to Haq's devotion and the standard of the translation.

Haq has not chosen a particular text to translate; rather, he has read various versions of the original, from which he picked different episodes. In this respect, Doniger observes "This new translation by Kaiser Haq reflects the permeable boundaries . . . between the various retellings of the story, picking one piece from here, another from there, just as a traditional storyteller would do" (27). *The Triumph of the Snake Goddess* is a composite prose translation, as already pointed out, and Haq has translated from different extant versions of *Manasamangal Kāvya*. Various episodes from Puranic tales, myth, historical incidents, religious rites, among others, are taken from multiple versions. In the prologue, Haq also makes it clear, "My version is a composite prose retelling of the Manasa legends, rather than a complete rendering of a single text, which is the more common scholarly practice; and hence a word of justification and a brief explanation of the way it has been put together are in order" ("Prologue" 35). Given that Manasa is an important goddess to the people of the East, especially South Asia, her devotees worship her to attain her blessings. As a result, the Manasa tale has been told and retold in different eras,

and its written versions composed by numerous authors are also available. Haq has attempted to give it a composite shape, exploring major versions of the original. Haq also explains why he has chosen to render the text in prose, "Prose versions are more reader friendly and also avoid the hazard of churning out imperfect verse renditions" ("Prologue" 36). All the original versions are written in verse with the strict maintenance of rhyming couplets as well as triplets. According to Haq, verse renditions would have been more hazardous, and the final product, therefore, could have been substandard compared to the prose version.

The factors for which I have grown an interest in exploring *The Triumph of the Snake Goddess* include the original text's status as a medieval classic in verse composed in medieval Bengali, the translation done by Haq, the publication of the book by Harvard University Press, and its warm reception and critical attention. Besides, rhyme in both couplets and triplets has been maintained all through the original versions, the case that elicits interest, because it is, by all possible means, tough to translate. All these factors obviously suggest that the translation of the text is challenging. Hence is the fascination for exploration of the text—my purpose is not to find only misrepresentation of the original, if any, but assess the translation in general. In doing so, I intend to foreground the article on relevant research work in the area of creative translation. As I would like to highlight the translator's creative self as he carries the text across English, I would apply the methods of creative translation to evaluate the translation performance.

Theoretical Framework

Various factors, in general, unsettle translators' confidence and performance, exerting an impact on the overall translation quality. In this respect, Juliane House's observation is noteworthy, ". . . a multitude of . . . conditioning and constraining factors also routinely impinge on its processes, performance and of course on translation quality" (3). There are various factors that impact on the translation process, along with its overall quality. House has developed a model for evaluating translation quality, which is called Translation Quality Assessment (TQA). Drawing on the TQA offered and elaborated in her influential book *Translation Quality Assessment: Past and Present*, I intend to evaluate and analyze *The Triumph of the Snake Goddess*. House has offered numerous categories of assessment, and out of all of them, I would like to apply two categories—covert and overt.

For an assessment of the translation quality, House's Translation Quality Assessment model is highly relevant and appropriate—her model is standard and widely applied for research in translation. On the basis of House's two categories

of translation, covert and overt, errors in translation can also be identified. House claims:

> An overt translation is thus one which is overtly a translation, not a 'second original.' ... A *covert* translation is a translation which enjoys the status of an original source text in the target culture. The translation is covert because it is not marked pragmatically as a translation text of a source text but may conceivably have been created in its own right . . . an original and its overt translation are to be equivalent at the level of language/text and register as well as genre. . . . In overt translation, the work of the translator is important and clearly visible. . . . In covert translation, on the other hand, the translator's task is to betray the original and to hide behind the transformation of the original; he is certainly less visible, if not totally absent. (65-67)

House's categorization of translation into overt and covert reflects two kinds of translations that turn out to be markedly at variance. In overt translation, the translator is more visible to the target language audience, while in covert translation, the translator remains aloof from the translated text as well as the target language audience. Through covert translation, the translator creates almost a new text that does not retain so much of the original; rather, it is mostly a new text in itself, a creative work. Haq's *The Triumph of the Snake Goddess* may be examined on the basis of this significant assertion on translation in order to vindicate that the text is an overt translation, and it is unquestionably a remarkable creative work.

There are more about the categorization of translation in House's model of Translation Quality Assessment. In her book titled *A Model for Translation Quality Assessment*, House reflects on overt translation more closely, further categorizing "overt errors into seven subcategories: (1) not translated; (2) slight change in meaning; (3) significant change in meaning; (4) distortion of meaning; (5) breach of the source-language system; (6) creative translation; and (7) cultural filtering. Overall, House's model is based on the degree of change or distortion of the meaning of the source text" (qtd. in Kim 67). As this categorization suggests, a translated text is assessed to find the cases of omissions, changes in words and meaning, distortions, misrepresentations, the translator turning into a creative writer, and filtering cultural aspects. From the model, these subcategories are well applicable for comparison of two texts—the original and the translation—in order to identify the level of excellence or mismatches in translation. In comparing the two texts, the original and the translation—*Manasamangal Kāvya* and *The Triumph*

of the Snake Goddess—I will focus on the subcategory of creative translation, rather than applying the whole model widely.

The concept of creative translation sounds paradoxical, but the act of translation is nowadays compared to creative work—hence arises the comparison between a creative writer and a translator. That a translator in work is a creative writer is now an established concept, with which writers, readers, critics, and scholars of Translation Studies are well familiar, although it is not beyond arguments. According to Hermeneutic scholars of Translation Studies, "Translation is ... regarded as an individual creative act, in the process of which the 'meaning' of a text is also 'created' anew" (House 10). Meaning, not words, is more important in creative translation on which House emphasizes. And the statement suggests that the act of translation entails an appreciable amount of creativity, and it is certainly an engrossing solitary act. House further argues, "In a predominantly poetic-aesthetic text, however, the limits of translatability are reached: a TT is then no longer a translation but a kind of creative transposition" (37). This observation is appropriate in evaluating *The Triumph of the Snake Goddess*, as the original text is a "poetic-aesthetic text," which poses a threat to the translator. So Haq transposes the original creatively while translating it into English. Levy Jiri's statement, thus, adds to the concept of creative translation, "Translation is a reflective and creative process which always leaves the translator some freedom of choice between several approximately equivalent possibilities of realizing situationally appropriate meaning" (qtd. in House 16). There is no denying that a translator has to think deeply, concentrate on the work, and attempt to produce the best possible output, and in doing so they have to create something in the process. According to Jiri, the translator's freedom leads them to be creative so that they can convey the best meaning and the essence of the original in the target text.

Research on Bengali literature in English translation is exiguous, but *The Triumph of the Snake Goddess* being a major work is entitled to give rise to interests of world academics—the text merits critical attention and widespread recognition. Haq quotes Professor Muhammad Shahjahan Mian, "*Padmapuran*, or *Manasamangal*, is the national epic of Bangladesh" ("Prologue" 51). The claim, which is justified, adds value to the text, highlighting the importance of its translation into English for a wider access to this major Manasa tale. *The Vegetarian*, as referred earlier, is also such a text that has made an impact on English-speaking readers after its translation. Kim's observation about Deborah Smith's translation of *The Vegetarian* is relevant here, "Despite Smith's apparent flaws, her translation can be regarded as 'creative' and positive at least in that it is highly accessible for

target language readers. The translator's faulty grasp of both the source language and the source culture can potentially be fatal because the reader does not know the original version" (66). Through comparison, contrast, and scrutiny, Kim finds numerous flaws in the translation, but he does not repudiate the significance of a Korean novel's access to world readers. It is the limitation of translation in general that target language readers do not know if the original is misrepresented or the translation is flawed, because they do not have access to the original text. Susan Bassnett and André Lefevere observe:

> Translation is, of course, a rewriting of an original text. . . . Rewriting is manipulation, undertaken in the service of power, and in its positive aspect can help in the evolution of a literature and a society. Rewritings can introduce new concepts, new genres, new devices, and the history of translation is the history also of literary innovation, of the shaping power of one culture upon another. But rewriting can also repress innovation, distort and contain, and in an age of ever increasing manipulation of all kinds, the study of the manipulative processes of literature as exemplified by translation can help us towards a greater awareness of the world in which we live. (xi)

If translation is "a rewriting of an original text," as Bassnett and Lefevere claim, *The Triumph of the Snake Goddess* is certainly one—the translator introduces a certain tradition of a particular society, its rituals, history, cultures, religions, and so forth to other nations and cultures. The translated text emerges as something new and exciting to the target audience, as they are familiarized with a different culture and society. The translator plays an important role in the reshaping of the source culture for the target culture. *The Triumph of the Snake Goddess* introduces readers from various countries and cultures of the world to an interesting and rich tradition, especially the snake cult in ancient Bengal. In his prologue, Haq notes, "The fear and fascination inspired by snakes have given rise to colorful myths and legends and snake cults across cultures" (29). Many cultures throughout the world have a great attraction to snakes, and even religious books such as *Veda* and *Mahabharata* are replete with tales of snake cults. Moreover, in folklores, Puranic tales, myths, and in holy books of Hinduism and Buddhism, snakes are intrinsically connected to human beings and gods and goddesses.

Background to the Translation of *The Triumph of the Snake Goddess*

The Triumph of the Snake Goddess, no doubt, is a notable work, reaching a wider

audience in various countries and cultures across the globe. If any piece of work of a particular language is carried across into a global language such as English and it receives rave reviews as well as wider readership along with critical acclaim, the nation should be proud of the work. Literary circles in Bangladesh—writers, poets, translators, and critics—are excited about a seminal work like this, *The Triumph of the Snake Goddess*, about which Fakrul Alam, another distinguished translator of Bengali literature and renowned scholar, claims that *The Triumph of the Snake Goddess* is "a sort of national epic . . . a work in the tradition of the major epics of the world." The title, *The Triumph of the Snake Goddess*, has already been recognized as a work of international importance alongside its importance nationwide. Alam's observation makes it clear that the book emulates the great epics written in different centuries and still read and highly evaluated around the world.

Haq, the translator of the text, gives a background to his taking up the project of this challenging task, the task of translating a difficult classic of Bengali literature into modern English. The translation is "based on," as the blurb of the book states, "five extant versions." The translator cites the names of the extant versions as sources at the end of the book, which are the versions of Ray Binod, Vijay Gupta, Radhanath Raychaudhuri, Tantrabibhuti, and Vipradasa. The blurb further mentions that the book is "the first comprehensive retelling of this epic tale in modern English." *The Triumph of the Snake Goddess*, therefore, bears significance and merits attention. Already a renowned translator, Haq is also a leading English-language poet in Bangladesh who is well-known across borders. Currently a professor of English at the University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh, he has taught at the University of Dhaka, where he received his BA and MA in English, for more than two decades. Later, he earned his PhD in Warwick University, England. He has translated a number of books, both poetry and prose, from Bengali into English, including *Selected Poems: Shamsur Rahman* (1985, enlarged edition is published in 2016), Anis Chowdhury's *The Perfect Model and Other Stories* (2010), Rabindranath Tagore's *Quartet* (1993), Nasreen Jahan's *The Woman Who Flew* (2012), and *The Wonders of Vilayet* (2002). Among his translated works, *The Triumph of the Snake Goddess* is unquestionably a major one, drawing international attention.

Analysis of the Translation of *The Triumph of the Snake Goddess*

The original text *Manasamangal* was composed, as mentioned earlier, in different times, starting in the fifteenth century, and the translator has used all the versions as source texts. The chapters of *The Triumph of the Snake Goddess*, thus, are based on

those versions of the original. From a version composed by Narayan Deb and Janaki Nath, a few lines are cited here, "মহাপুণ্যময় কথা অমৃত লহরী। / শুনিলে পাতক হরে পরলোকে তরি" (3), which Haq translates as "Strange and marvellous is the story of creation" (59). The lines in Bengali are obviously in verse, which are rhymed as well. The line in English here is not exactly the translation of the original; rather, it is the meaning of the above lines, including a few other lines from the original. *Manasamangal* begins with these lines that give an introduction to the creation myth. With a mark of precision and an adroit use of powerful words such as "strange and marvellous," Haq gives an apt introduction to how the story progresses, retaining the depth and significance of the original. The translator creates something which, of course, adds value to the text. Here are a few lines more:

যখনে না ছিল সৃষ্টি মর্ত কি পাতাল।

নাহি ছিল চন্দ্র সূর্য দশ দিকপাল।

শূন্যেতে উদ্ভব হয়ে ব্রহ্মা নিরঞ্জন।

ঘর্ম হ'তে অনাদির করিলা সৃজন। (Deb and Nath 4)

Haq's translation of the above lines, "In the beginning formlessness reigned everywhere. There was neither heaven, nor earth, nor underworld; no land, water, wind, fire, sky. There were no men, women, or animals; nor any supernatural beings, divine or demonic. Only the supreme spirit, Niranjan, radiant and immaculate, extended everywhere as pure consciousness" (59). The sentence "In the beginning formlessness reigned everywhere" succinctly conveys the meaning of several lines in the original. The next lines in translation flow well and continue from the sentence, although a few words are added—such as "radiant" and "immaculate" —after Niranjan. It is the creative translation in which the translator takes some liberties. In regard to taking liberties, Haq remarks, "I have taken certain liberties, as all *Manasamangal* authors have done, adding a flourish here and a flourish there and leaving out bits, but keeping narrative consistency in view. I have kept literary interest and comprehensiveness of treatment in mind in deciding which source or sources to use for a particular chapter" ("Prologue" 38). This is indeed the translator's elucidation on the justification of creativity while translating a text like *Manasamangal*. But it is worth noting that he has maintained flow and sincerely attempted to retain literariness throughout the work. Ensuring literary quality as much as possible in the target text is indeed the highest concern of a literary translator.

Haq translates the chapter called "মহাজ্ঞান হরণ" (*Mahagyan Haran*) from Vijay

Gupta's version as "Neutralizing Chand's Occult Power." The title of the chapter in translation is proof to what extent the translator has remained creative throughout the whole work. "Neutralizing Chand's Occult Power" is the interpretation of the whole chapter that indicates what is going to take place in subsequent lines. The chapter begins like this:

দেবগুরু ভক্ত চান্দ ছোট জন কহো।
একমনে ভাবে শিব বাপ পিতামহে।।
শিব পূজে ভক্তি ভাবে অন্যে নাহি মন।
স্বপনেতে পিতামহ পায় মহাজ্ঞান।।
……………………………
সেবকেরে জ্ঞান কহে জগতের নাথা।
বিষ নিবারিতে বস্তু দিল তার হাতা।।
হেতাল কাষ্ঠের বাড়ি দেব অধিষ্ঠান।
তাহারে দেখিয়া সর্পের ভয়ে কাঁপে প্রাণ।।
……………………………………
বাপের ঠাঁই জ্ঞান পেয়ে বেড়ায় অহঙ্কারে।
তোমার তরে গালি পাড়ে লাগল পেলে মারে।। (Gupta 90)

The translator first provides the background to the episode and then gives an introduction to the whole chapter, covering a range of details. In this episode, as Chand does not follow Padmavati or Neta, Neta considers it Chand's arrogance, so she instructs Padma to give him a lesson with her power. It is important to note that Padma is another name of Manasa, and Neta is her elder sister, whereas Chand is a mortal who is gifted with a mantra, for which he does not care to worship Manasa— hence Manasa's anger upon Chand. The way Neta asks Padma to devastate Chand's garden is elaborated in this part, and Haq translates the above lines in the following manner:

> Padma was deeply concerned at the unbending arrogance of Chand and consulted with Neta on the course of action to adopt. 'Sister,' said Neta, 'I told you that after our parents imparted to him the great occult knowledge that guarantees immortality Chand lost all fear and became overwhelmingly arrogant. His greatest passion now is a garden containing every variety of flowering and fruit-bearing plant or tree. He loves to spend his leisure there, gazing at the natural loveliness. You should take your nagas and destroy the garden. (190)

In the original, there are a number of verse lines, but the translator presents the whole subject matter in a single line. Hence is the justification of calling it a creative translation of the text, which resonates with covert translation. This particular part is a bit elaborate in comparison with the original, as the original does not describe Chand's luxurious life that Neta illustrates when she talks to Manasa. While describing Chand's life-style, Haq incorporates some extra facts and figures about him along with his passion for gardening. There is not any description of the garden in the original, but the translator takes liberties and portrays Chand's state of mind and his garden. After reading the verse lines, the translator transforms them into prose, retaining the terseness in the translation. Next lines in the original go as follows:

> নেতা বলে পদ্মাবতী স্থির কর হিয়া।
> নটীর বেশে চল তুমি সকল জিনিয়া।।
> সাধুর সহিত তুমি নিসর্গ করিয়া।
> গুণের গামছা তার আনহ হরিয়া।। (Gupta 91)

The lines above reveal that Neta is giving advice to Manasa to entrap Chand so that he gets into trouble and subsequently transforms into one of her devotees. Neta's suggestion to Padma is carried across in this way, "Assume the form of a sexy nautch girl and seduce Chand to make him yield the great occult knowledge. Once he does that it will lose its potency" (Haq 191). Here in the original a word such as *gamcha*, which literally means a piece of cloth, belonging to Chand should be plundered away from him. It is also evident that the word is metaphorically used in the original, and the translator takes it granted as the occult knowledge, the power that Lord Shiva bestowed upon Chand. Haq's deep exploration of the rhymed verse and his clear understanding of the substance of the original text attunes to the standard translation, which is spontaneous and reads smooth.

 Receiving order from Neta, Padma transforms herself into "a sexy nautch girl" so that she can entice Chand and make him suffer and then submit. Padma exposes herself as a dancing girl in disguise so that Chand and his allies cannot recognize her. When she adorns herself like this, she looks attractive and seductive. The original goes like this:

> নেতার হাতে পদ্মাবতী পাইয়া উপদেশ।
> প্রভাত সময়ে পদ্মা ধরে নটীর বেশ।।

সহজে নাগিনী পদ্মা নানা মায়া জানে।
তাল যন্ত্র গন্ধর্ব্ব ডাক দিয়া আনে।।
সংবাদ পাঠাইয়া আনে দুই বিদ্যাধরী।
ত্রিভুবন মোহ যায় পরমাসুন্দরী।।
পদ্মার বিষম মায়া জানে কোন জন।
সর্ব্বাংগ ভরিয়া পরে নাগ-আভরণ।। (Gupta 91)

It has already been mentioned that the original of *Manasamangal Kāvya* is so complex that one has to struggle to carry the text into any language let alone English. These lines obviously have the same difficulty level, and the translator, therefore, renders the text into English through interpretation. The translated version of the above lines:

> No sooner said than done! Padma mustered her nagas and arrived at the gate to Chand's garden in the twinkling of an eye. With its well-ordered rows and clumps of exquisite plants it surpassed in its beauty Indra's heavenly abode of Amaravati. But that didn't prevent Padma from ordering its prompt and all-out devastation. The serpents systematically poured venom on the plants and trees, causing them to shrivel and die instantly. (Haq 190)

As advised by Neta, Padma summons the snakes instantly and reaches Chand's garden, which is as beautiful as heaven. The nagas poisoned the trees and flowers in the garden following Padma's order to devastate the whole garden, subsequently infuriating Chand. Haq continues presenting the incident as if he were telling the story in his own way. Here lies the justification of calling *The Triumph of the Snake Goddess* a retelling of the *Manasamangal Kāvya*, a creative translation of verse into prose.

In the same chapter titled "Neutralizing Chand's Occult Power," Gupta tells half of the story in *lachari*, a certain form of verse. As the tale continues, Manasa, adorned as a nautch girl, begins to discharge her tantric acts. While doing so, she embellishes herself in a distinctive way, and Gupta describes her in the following lines:

সাধিতে বিষম কাজ,   মনসার নাহি লাজ,
          দেবকন্যা হইলেন নটী।
কাণাকাণি করে দেবে,   মনসা কি করে এবে,
          চণ্ডিকা হাসেন খটখটি।।

সাজিয়া আসি সকলে,   আকাশ পথেতে চলে,
     অবশেষে হইল দিনভাগা।
বায়ুগতি অনুসারে,   চলিল চান্দর দ্বারে,
     পঞ্চস্বরে গাহে নানা রাগা। (Gupta 91)

In order to punish Chand or to make him her devotee forcibly, Manasa takes all measures to put him under a magic spell. The above lines demonstrate how the goddess beautifies herself—the poet gives a long description of how she prepares. Interestingly, the description in Haq's prose translation adds something more. The translation of this part:

> Neta's words dispelled Padma's qualms and she prepared for the mission—dressing to kill, as the saying goes. She scented her hair by blowing incense fumes through it, then drawing it firmly, fixed it in a tight bun; put on large round earrings; a nosepin as charming as the sesame blossom. . . . She was now feminine beauty incarnate, the epitome of seductive power, ready to humble her foe. . . . 'Padma has become a courtesan!'—and her stepmother Chandi couldn't contain laughter.
> The seductress and her entourage set off, borne along in their celestial chariots by a compliant wind, and they sang various ragas as they flew over fleecy clouds and reached Chmpaknagar. (Haq 191-192)

If we set the translation in alignment with the original, we discover that the translator has created a new text, remaining, however, close to the essence of the Bengali verse. But it is important to note that the translation retains the poetic language, although it is rendered in prose. One of the best translators of the country, Haq, who is also the master of modern English, is capable of maintaining high literariness in his writing. The proof is his successful rendering of the difficult old text written in a certain kind of verse into modern English prose. The kind of verse used in the above lines is called *lachari*, which is called *tripadi* metre. In the prologue of *The Triumph of the Snake Goddess*, Haq explains the kinds of verse in different versions of the original text. Thus Haq gives a detailed account of the verse forms:

> The Bengali texts are in alternating sections in the *payar* and the *lachari* or *tripadi* meters. The first is like the English heroic couplet, with rhyming end-stopped lines and a marked caesura. . . . The *tripadi* verses comprise triplets,

rhyming *aab*, *ccb*, *dde*, *ffe*, and so on. Each triplet is like a three-ply end-stopped syntactic unit arranged with the first two phrases on two sides of one line and the third phrase centered in the next line. ("Prologue" 36)

The original text is written in both *payar* (couplet) and *tripadi* (triplet). The same text tells the Manasa tale simultaneously in both couplet and triplet. Haq wonderfully explains how he handles both kinds of verses in his prose translation. Reading the verses both in couplet and triplet, gleaning the essential meaning of the text, the translator performs the task of carrying over as if he were writing something original, but nowhere can anyone detect the gross deviation from the original, especially when it comes to raising concerns over translating literary texts. To retain the meaning of the original, a literary translator has room for improvisation on the level of adding and deducting words or phrases in order to make the final product worthy as a literary text. Besides, a literary translator enjoys a certain amount of liberty in transforming the original into an independent text.

The translator's liberty is clearly marked as he translates the line "পদ্মাবতী গাহে গীত কোকিলের স্বরে" (Gupta 2009, 92) as "Padma's voice rang like a koel's" (Haq 192). In the original, the singing bird is "কোকিল" that is called "cuckoo" in English, but the translator renders it as "koel" in the target text. In the same episode, enchanted by Padma's beauty and sensuality, when Chand whispers the mantra into her ear, she shouts in a feeling of triumph, "পদ্মা বলে চান্দ তুমি অবোধ চঞ্চল। / কামে অচেতন হয়ে হারালে সকল।।" (Gupta 94). Haq carries the lines across as "You are utterly stupid, Chand, you have lost everything because you gave in to lustful desire" (194). The translation of the two verse lines is a bit longwinded in comparison with the original. The couplet could be rendered in a more precise and succinct form—hence an instance of the loss of poetic essence in the translation. But the translator has expressed his view that poetic translation might have been more damaging to the original.

The chapter titled "Eliminating Chand's Six Sons" is the translation of "ছয় পুত্র বধ" from Gupta's version titled *Padmapuran*. In this chapter, Neta and Padma hatch a plan to kill Chand's six sons, because Chand badmouths Padma now and then. The chapter begins:

মহাজ্ঞান গেল চান্দর টুটিলেক বল।
অধিক পদ্মার সঙ্গে বাধিল কোন্দলা।।
রাত্রি দিন গালি পাড়ে কোপ অহঙ্কারে।
কোপ মনে বেড়ায় চান্দ সর্প পেলে মারে।।
রাজ্যের ঠাকুর চান্দ পথে দিল থানা।

চম্পক নগর মধ্যে পূজা করল মানা।।
মহাদেবের কন্যা পদ্মা সবে করে ভয়।
আপন মুখে গালি পাড়ে যত মনে লয়।।
লঘুর ভর্ত্সনা আর সহন না যায়।
দেবতা মনুষ্য বাদ প্রাণে কত সয়।।
কোন মতে করিব চান্দর বংশক্ষয়।। (Gupta 95)

In these lines, there is a reflection of how Padma shows her fury to Chand who not only denies to pay homage to her but belittles her every so often as well. As a goddess, Padma does not stand abjuration by a mortal. She therefore decides to bring misery to Chand's family, killing his near and dear ones. Haq beautifully carries the lines across, retaining, as usual, the essence of the original. Thus goes the translation of the lines, "'We destroyed his property, he got help to restore it, we eliminated those who restored it, and yet he keeps badmouthing you,' said Neta to Padma, summing up their campaign against Chand so far. 'Now we get at those he holds dearest. His wife worships you and is our ally. We will go for his six sons'" (Haq 217). This is simply the substance of what Neta and Padma talk in regard to executing their plan of killing Chand's six sons. Most of the things that Neta and Padma mention in the original text are not directly found in the translation, but the translator, no doubt, remains close to the meaning. The quintessence of the text is skillfully conveyed in the target text.

The most interesting part of this section is how Sonaka and her six daughters-in-law cook for the dinner. In the original, the cooking part is beautifully described in couplets, and it seems impossible to translate this into English. A few lines from the original:

অগ্নি প্রদক্ষিণ করি চাপাইল রন্ধন।
ডান দিকে ভাত চড়ায় বামেতে ব্যঞ্জন।।
অনেক দিন পরে রান্ধে মনের হরিষ।
ষোল ব্যঞ্জন রান্ধিল নিরামিষ।।
প্রথমে পূজিল অগ্নি দিয়া ঘৃত ধূপা।
নারিকেল কোরা দিয়া রান্ধে মুসুরীর সুপা।।
পাটায় ছেঁচিয়া নেয় পোলতার পাতা।
বেগুন দিয়া রান্ধে ধনিয়া পোলতা।।
জ্বরপিত্ত আদি নাশ করার কারণ।
কাঁচা কলা দিয়া রান্ধে সুগন্ধ পাঁচন।।
জমানি পুড়িয়া ঘৃতে করিল ঘন পাক।

সাজ ঘৃত দিয়া রান্ধে গিমা তিতা শাকা। (Gupta 96)

Those who are familiar with Bengali language may realize how tough it is to translate the above couplets into any language let alone English. Traditional Bengali local items of food and their cooking processes are described here. The recipes are so region and culture specific that one must be in trouble to render them into English. The sixteen recipes of vegetables and their cooking processes are described elaborately—it is indeed a prolonged description, and I have quoted only a few lines from them. But the translator has compacted the whole description into a single paragraph that has successfully captured the original. Haq presents the whole cooking process and the recipes this way:

> The cooking began—rice on one stove, accompanying dishes of vegetables, fish, meat on the other. Once the rice was done both stoves were used to cook the latter—of which there was an enormous number. There were sixteen vegetable dishes—various leafy vegetables, plantain, eggplant, the cucurbitaceous *jhinga*, pumpkin, kidney bean, varieties of lentils, arum, all cooked in best-quality ghee, some also with coconut added. For the fish dishes there were carp, catfish, tiger fish, eels, prawns, small varieties of fish. A dish of tender goat's meat was the last course before several kinds of dessert, rice pudding, sweet cakes, some of them steeped in thickened milk. A whole cookbook could be written about Queen Sonaka's creations of that evening. She sighed with satisfaction when the last dish was cooked and waited for her husband and children to come in to eat. (223)

Haq's translation of this part is so precise and summative that a reader can understand the whole cooking part. Gupta describes the sixteen recipes in detail, including the specifics of the ingredients for the recipes. Haq assays to name all the recipes, stating the scientific name and retaining the original in italic on one occasion. He also adds an extra piece of information—"A whole cookbook could be written about Queen Sonaka's creations of that evening"—which is not available in the original. It may be dubbed as the licence that a literary translator enjoys, and the translator applies it more in translating poetry. It seems that the translator is tempted to add a note on the recipes, but this addition enriches the text rather than incurring any loss as far as translation as a whole is concerned, and his prose reads as if it were a poetic language. This is a conspicuous example of creative translation, as the translator sometimes takes boundless liberties.

Translation of a literary text makes an impact on the readers and critics of both the source text and the target text. Scholars of Translation Studies attempt to discover to what extent the translation does justice to the original. In this respect, Victor Hugo's observation is relevant, "When you offer a translation to a nation, that nation will almost always look on the translation as an act of violence against itself" (qtd. in Lefevere 2). This way translation in general elicits criticism. Target readers and critics, in their primary observations, react the way Hugo indicates in the above statement, but it is undeniable that ". . . different types of texts need to be translated in different ways" (Lefevere 3). The rules of translation are not absolute, which is why the same text may have different versions if more than one translators render the text. From their individual levels, translators take on differing methods and strategies. In Haq's translation, there is, no doubt, a mark of high literariness as he maintains a literary standard, which is certainly suitable for Anglophone readers anywhere in the world. At the same time, simplicity of presentation is another quality of his translation.

In regard to simplicity of translation, Goethe's words are worth noting, "If you want to influence the masses, a simple translation is always best. Critical translations vying with the original really are of use only for conversations the learned conduct among themselves" (qtd. in Lefevere 5). To Goethe, simple and easy presentation through translation is far better than making the target text complex for readers. Simple translation reaches common readers easily, makes a more profound impact on them, touches them, and receives more attention all over the world. *The Triumph of the Snake Goddess* can be ascribed as a simplified text in English translated from a complex text in verse in Bengali. Grappling with the original text, unravelling its meaning, even consulting with various experts of the subject, Haq renders it in English with an intent of simplifying the difficult text. In doing so, the translator gives more emphasis on innovation rather than blind representation of the original. In support of this position, Gander's observation is remarkable:

> Some readers may question whether such innovative translations represent the original. But I wonder if the goal of 'representing' the original is the goal of translation at all, given that the work is necessarily subjected to alteration, transformation, dislocation, and displacement . . . there are times when NOT 'representing' the original is precisely what permits the creation of something less definitive but more ongoing, a form of translation that amplifies and renews the suppleness of the original poetry's meanings. (228)

This observation, in a true sense, is highly compatible with the aim of evaluating a text like *The Triumph of the Snake Goddess*. Gander rightly questions if translation should aim merely to represent the original. According to him, instead of representing the original, the translator needs to "renew the suppleness of the original poetry," grasping its essence and meaning. Haq does exactly the same— instead of merely rendering *Manasamangal* and representing the original in English, he internalizes its poetic essence, grasps the storyline well, and then retells the tale, altering, transforming, dislocating, and displacing the original.

Conclusion

Although *The Triumph of the Snake Goddess* is translated from verse into prose, the text reads as if it were a creative work; in fact, literary translation nowadays enjoys the status of creative work. If the text has lost something, it is predominantly the poetic form and structure, and more importantly rhyme, but the target text reads so well that one feels that it is not a translation. About translation in general, Gander's observation must be fitting to fine tune the conclusion of this article:

> Translation might be considered a frequently borrowed divine apparatus, a warped and leaky alembic for the transference of energy, rhythm, language, and imagination. Its elaborate theories are compelling as ideas – note that Benjamin's translations of Baudelaire's Parisian Tableaux are utterly ordinary, not partaking at all of his radical translation theory – because the theories, finally, are not of much practical use. Google Translation is never going to translate literature because literary translation, like literary writing, is an art. After all is said and done, translation is more of a spiritual than a transcriptural activity. (228)

Gander gives translation a lofty place by calling it "a divine apparatus." The image of "alembic" is fresh, and it creates a powerful metaphor. If translation is an alembic, as Gander compares, "energy, rhythm, language, and" even "imagination" transmit through it. Through translation, a powerful tool, a translator transmits his thoughts, ideas, language, and even his dream and imagination. The statement commends innovation, creation, and freedom that Haq enjoys while translating *The Triumph of the Snake Goddess*. Gander further mentions that translation is an art as well as a spiritual act that cannot be restrained by theories, transcripts, or rules.

The translator of *The Triumph of the Snake Goddess* is not bound by any theory or rule or transcript, but House's argument ". . . a TT is then no longer a translation

but a kind of creative transposition" is applicable to assess the Bengal's epic as a translated text. Haq leaves various words, phrases, idioms, or even lines from the original text, which are untranslatable or unnecessary for creative translation. However, the translation retains rhythm, flow, fluency, and spontaneity that are the indispensable characteristics of good prose as well as of poetry. What Haq does most is interpret and he, therefore, offers the essence of the original. There are the cases of omissions from the original, but no misrepresentations; there are the instances of mismatches between the original and the translation, but not any superfluity. As the translation is precise and compendious in comparison with the original, there are so many cases of loss, but the issue of gain is undeniable, and therefore the translation is commendable. It is the first narrative of Manasa in modern English, the retelling of a grand tale, which definitely enriches and adds to the valuable treasure of world literature. The Anglophone audience have the opportunity of being familiar with a rare tale from the old tradition of Bengali literature.

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Who Was Machiavelli to Marlowe: Barabas and Ferneze's Destiny

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Abstract   Marlowe's The Jew of Malta starts with a preface put into Machiavelli's mouth. This introduction has sparked a lot of controversy. According to scholars, Machiavelli was a genius, and Marlowe believed that Machiavelli knew of him. There is debate whether the preface is related to the rest of the play, or whether it is a sensational work that may have been added after the play was written. Marlowe seems to have achieved his goal of exploring Machiavellian ideas through Barabas and Ferneze and demonstrating some Machiavellian guidelines. This research attempts to explore various issues related to Machiavelli as well as Machiavellianism. A large number of discourses in the history of Western thought has been associated with Machiavelli as he is reckoned a philosopher of the first rank based on his ideas and actions which had a lasting impact on his succeeding philosophers and political thinkers over time. It also examined the character of Barabbas as his resistance is important to shed light on the struggle he had to make under Catholicism. On another, the massacre in Paris is compared because it contains a theme similar to Geese. Marlowe's play touches on the subject of Machiavellianism and explains some of the religious and political influences of his time.

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Introduction

In the history of nations, through the present recurrence of a strong age, a lot of attention has been given to Niccol Machiavelli, whose shadow still haunts the minds of people. Recently, a writer in the Springfield Republican pointed to the increasing burden of Machiavellianism in German books which has been disturbed for many years (Warshaw 28). The contemporary representative of Machiavelli's political theory has been able to popularize his concepts and ideas if not his name. Like Nietzsche has philosophized Machiavelli. In the opinion of a few, Germany is putting him into practice nowadays. Over time, his name became renowned and was frequently taken especially in England. His ideas and thoughts were however misunderstood and his methods were not comprehended (Warshaw 28).

The playwrights of the Elizabethan era cultivated diligently their pseudo acquaintance with him and Eduard Meyer in his Elizabethan drama and Machiavelli has shown impressively the vogue enjoyed by Machiavelli among characteristic writers for the stage such as Peele, Ben Jonson, Kyd, Greene, Dekker, Heywood, Middleton, Chapman, Beaumont and Fletcher, Shakespeare and the lesser lights of the theatre (Warshaw 28). Since a large part of this play is related to different aspects of Machiavelli's thoughts as expressed in his various books, the current paper shall examine these concerning the play to identify similarities or differences in how Marlowe introduces situations based on Machiavelli's writings. *The Prince*, one of Machiavelli's most important works, will be studied concerning the implementation of villainy by both leading characters in the play.

Barabas is Malta's wealthiest Jew, Abigail's father, and Malta's Jewish protagonist. He was very greedy and corrupt and gained wealth by Machiavellian means. That is, he is very deceptive and malicious. Barabas often mentions his identity which is Jewish and the hatred and prejudice he faces in Malta, but this is where Barabas' connection to his faith and beliefs closes. He continuously fabricates truth, does frauds, and, misbehaves with the people of his life, even when other Jewish citizens who consider him as their fellow, ask Barabas for his help when Ferneze uses them to pay Turkish compliments. Barabas every time refuses them or neglects them. Barabas may resemble Ferneze in his policy of adopting Machiavellianism in terms of villainy, but not in terms of handling political matters; Ribner offers this example: "[T]he one political action [Barabas] does undertake during his brief rule as Governor of Malta is in direct contradiction to some of Machiavelli's most often stated maxims (Ribner 352). This occurs when "Barabas enters into a conspiracy with Ferneze, his bitter enemy, to overthrow Calymath, the

Turkish conqueror of Malta. Barabas here disregards at least two of Machiavelli's precepts, for "not only does Machiavelli warn against alliance with Princes who have no power of their own, but one of his most constant precepts is that a former enemy, or one who has been injured in any way, must never again be trusted (Ribner 353)."

Ribner makes it clear that "in trusting Ferneze, Barabas, in very un-Machiavellian fashion, invites his disaster." It is interesting for Marlowe to demonstrate that Barabas' failure to follow some Machiavellian scheming is the reason for his fall. It may be suggested that Marlowe uses his protagonists to show that villains will fall if they fail to show proper villainy; in other words, a suitably Machiavellian approach. It is possible to view Marlowe's representation of Machiavellianism as divided into different categories. He identifies Machiavelli with both Ferneze and Barabas, but such a representation is ambivalent; for instance, as Menpes argues, "Barabas is not as good at revenge as he is at making a profit" (Broude 67), whereas Ferneze is more gifted than Barabas in matters of state.

The Concept of Niccolo Machiavelli

Niccolo Machiavelli was born in 1469 in Florence. Machiavelli came from a wealthy background, his father was an authoritative lawyer. Machiavelli received his higher education and worked as a secretary at his first job. This is where he started writing government documents. However, shortly after his appointment, Florence exploded politically, expelling the Medici who ruled it for 60 years, suffering decades of political instability, and then Macavelli's career changes.

Machiavelli wrote his most famous work, *The Prince* (1513), about how to get and keep power and what makes individuals effective leaders. He proposed that the overwhelming responsibility of a good prince is to defend the state from external and internal threats to stable governance. This means he must know how to fight, but more importantly, he must know about the reputation and the management of those around him. People should neither think he is soft and easy to disobey nor should they find him so cruel that he disgusts his society. He should seem unapproachably strict but reasonable. When he turned to the question of whether it was better for a prince to be loved or feared, Machiavelli wrote that while it would theoretically be wonderful for a leader to be both loved and obeyed, he should always err on the side of inspiring terror, for this is what ultimately keeps people in check.

Niccolo Machiavelli developed and presented his concepts in *The Prince* that exerted a deep impact on the Elizabethan dramatists. Before they could incorporate these concepts in the Elizabethan drama they were deviated and disparaged by

Gabriel Harvey, Father Parsons, Innocent Gentillet, and a few others. As a result of this, Machiavelli's original ideas were hardly recognizable in the Elizabethan interpretations at that time. The main ideas of Machiavelli are; the ruled majority of individuals are weak, passive inconsistent, mutable, simple, and ungrateful therefore they can be subjected and controlled easily by *The Prince* (Machiavelli 2004). Whereas "*The Prince* is ambitious, determined, noble, superior to rule, and unconquerable; war is dominant over every other thing," also, religion is "just a prop of the state which is used to keep the people under control and the use of force and fraud will help to conquer successfully" (Janssen 5).

In short, Machiavelli believed that a successful government has political power in which *The Prince* makes use of love and fear to pressure the subjects to obey his orders. The corrupt ideas upon which Elizabethan drama's hero and villain are based show the vilification of Machiavelli's ideas "Machiavelli is too complex to be reduced to a simple formula, on the other, he lends himself to create the villain characters needed by the Elizabethan theatre and society" (Ceramella 6). His political cynicism is practically applied to personal and political affairs virtue opposes moral virtue, selfish motives substitute the goal of the common good through the unification of the Italian state. It results in a black and corrupted fiend, the one who is superior to everyone, cruel, violent, deceiving, and incredibly ambitious. Christopher Marlowe used these ideas to develop the main character Barabas in The Jew of Malta. Barabas demonstrates the selfishness, villainy, ambition, and dishonesty of a stereotyped Machiavelli. The careers of both hero and villain follow Machiavelli's pattern of life. Barabas gains great power and success by force and fraud and is fallen into the trap of destruction by fate which he believed that he controlled. "But learn that fortune cannot be controlled by any human not even a conquering hero or superman" (Janssen 6).

Barabas refusal to pay Malta the tax leads to him losing his properties as a punishment for refusing to take Ferneze orders. When Bosco arrives, Ferneze at first does not allow him to sell Turkish slaves because of the presence of the Calymath. Bosco promises military aid from Spain and Ferneze allows the sale. Ferneze then defies the Calymath, refusing to give the collected tribute money. When Bellamira and Pilia-Borza tell him of Barabas' connection to his son's death, Ferneze has Barabas arrested. When Barabas dies, Ferneze has the body thrown over the city walls rather than properly buried. Barabas helps Calymath take over Malta but then attempts to double-cross him with Ferneze. However, instead of helping to kill Calymath, Ferneze springs the trap early, killing Barabas. He then informs Calymath that he is a prisoner until the Turkish emperor promises Malta freedom.

Ferneze vs Barabas

The differences between Barabas and Ferneze in their representation of Machiavellian qualities may have certain historical roots. The concept of the "two sides of Machiavelli" runs parallel to Marlowe's discussion of the "two religions." Whether it is Catholicism versus Protestantism or Catholicism versus Judaism, Marlowe's interest in developing his drama by investigating two sides is clear. In this play, whether on purpose or not, he divides Machiavellian features into two groups, one belonging to Ferneze and the other to Barabas. "Marlowe makes such accounts of Machiavelli similar to how Machiavelli himself was viewed during his life and after his death in that people and the way they reacted to him were also divided into two sides. For example, those who read Machiavelli in the Renaissance era were divided into those who approved of him and those who did not" (Al-Mutawa 157). Was Marlowe aware of such trends when he wrote his play and divided Machiavellian features between Barabas and Ferneze? This is a possibility, although the problem goes beyond that as there is, in the first place, the question of where Marlowe would find sources of information on Machiavelli. It is, indeed, interesting to see Marlowe depict two sides of Machiavelli in these two characters because it gives more scope to how Marlowe received readings of Machiavelli. One of the most important strands of Machiavelli's political thought can be seen in the way in which a ruler should keep the faith. This is something that can easily be observed in Marlowe's drama:

> How laudable it is for a Prince to keep the faith, and to live with integrity and not with guile, everyone perceives: nonetheless, in our times one sees by experience that *The Prince*s who have done great things are the ones who have taken little account of faith, and who have known to turn men's brains with guile: and in the end have surpassed those who grounded them. (*The Prince*, XVIII, 65)

Machiavelli encourages his prince to abandon honesty in his treatment of others because success comes only to those who care little about keeping their word. This can be seen in the way in which Barabas relies on Ferneze's word that he will help him to rid Malta of the Turks. These teachings reflect the action Ferneze takes when he considers faith a worthless thing in his treatment of Barabas. Ferneze manages to adapt his pretense according to the situation he is in. In act five, scene two, pp. 84–89, Ferneze is in the weak position of being Barabas' prisoner, so he

acts accordingly, following Machiavellian policy that "one needs to be a fox to recognize traps, and a lion to dismay the wolves" (Calhoon 211). In that situation, Ferneze recognizes that he must act as a weak person because he is a prisoner, whereas Barabas does not exploit the power he is given and thus fails to implement Machiavellian policy. Barabas does not even resist, as he did earlier in the play. Machiavelli is content that any prince should be virtuous or keep the faith; the problem is that others will not, so Machiavelli urges princes to overcome their enemies by adopting a villainous attitude rather than persisting in their honesty and losing everything. If this has any impact on Barabas, it is seen in his transformation into someone who seeks revenge for what Malta has inflicted on him. With the exception that his past was full of violence, Barabas succeeds in revenging himself on Ferneze by becoming as cruel as him, killing his son and retrieving money from his house; but he then loses his authority after gaining power.

Guise in the Massacre at Paris

Barabas becomes a mericless villain because of Ferneze orders. He considers Ferneze a defiant who must be stoped. Barabas' resemblance to Guise is significant if we exclude the political experience of Guise, which Barabas lacks. "It is possible to say that the characters in The Massacre at Paris and The Jew of Malta manifest similarities since political awareness is an obvious trait of some of the characters in both plays" (Al-Mutawa 159). The contempt that Ferneze shows for Barabas, which also leads him to exploit the Jews' wealth and property, is similar to the hatred that the Catholics have of the Protestants in The Massacre at Paris. For instance, Ferneze and one of his knights tell Barabas:

> (…) If your first curse falls heavy on thy head,
> And make thee poor and scorned of all the world,
> 'Tis not our fault, buy thy inherent sin
> (JM, I, ii, pp. 108–110)
> and:
> For through our sufferance of your hateful lives,
> Who stand accursed in the sight of heaven,
> These taxes and afflictions are befall'n.
> (JM, I, ii, pp. 64–66)

Ferneze's policy in targeting the Jews springs from two major factors: one is their religion, which he hates, as "Marlowe clearly illustrates; the other is their wealth,

which tempts him to exploit them and take their money" (Al-Mutawa 159). Ferneze here and Guise in The Massacre at Paris seem to share the goal of eradicating an opposing group – the Jews and the Protestants respectively. "They both direct their efforts to destroy the enemy, but this destruction takes different forms" (Feiner 92). Ferneze aims to take the Jews' money because it is their dearest possession, while Guise conducts a massacre because it is the only way to eliminate the Protestants. Both actions are taken because of hatred although political expediency is also a reason for such action. Hatred seems to come first since both characters clearly express it in both plays. Ferneze is aware that Barabas and his coreligionists would not agree to become Christians, so he offers them the chance to convert to Christianity as an alternative to paying his unjust tax (JM I, ii, pp. 73–74) and thus manages to take their money out of hatred. On the other hand, Guise deals with Protestants by raging against them when they make heretical pronouncements.

The offer of conversion is based on Ferneze's belief that his religion is better than other religions, whereas Guise's rage arises because he witnesses an offense against Catholicism. Both Ferneze and Guise attempt to elevate their religion in different forms. In this example, Guise expresses irony towards what Lorraine, a Protestant preacher, does because Guise hates Loreine, just as Ferneze hates Barabas:

> Guise: (…) Lorraine! (...) are you a preacher of these heresies?
> Lorraine: I am a preacher of the word of God;
> And thou a traitor to thy soul and him.
> Guise: 'Dearly beloved brother'—thus 'tis written.
> [stabs Loreine, who dies]
> (MP, VII, pp. 2–5)

Guise ironically calls Loreine "brother," which carries the wholly opposite meaning in an expression of extreme loathing. "Guise's action represents the rejection by Catholics of Protestants because, for Guise, Loreine is not the preacher of the word of God as he claims" (Al-Mutawa 160). Because the Protestant preacher calls Guise a traitor to his soul, Guise is enraged and stabs Loreine in an expression of his loathing of Protestants. "As mentioned before, the policy adopted by Guise is also followed by Ferneze who makes sure that all matters are kept under control. Ferneze hates Barabas in the same way that Guise hates Loreine because both hate for religious reasons" (Al-Mutawa 160). Ferneze knows how to turn his hatred for the Jews to his political advantage in his administration of the country, whereas Barabas

is unable to do so when given the opportunity of wielding political power, with the help of the Turks, later in the play. Beecher argues that Marlowe may wish that "a reader might extend his sympathies to a character the victim of Christian prejudices, more sinned against than sinning" (Don Beecher 47). This point is interesting since it calls into question the feeling of sympathy for Barabas. In this situation, Barabas is truly being unjustly treated and if Marlowe tries to create any kind of sympathy for Barabas, it might be a step towards making the Catholics seem abhorrent in their treatment of others.

Barabas' Politics

Barabas fails to keep his word when swearing to destroy Malta, although Ferneze attempts to murder him. Shortly before Calymath finds Barabas, the Jew has woken from unconsciousness caused by drinking a potion which has made the Catholics think that he is dead. Barabas then expresses his desire for revenge on them:

> [Rising] What, all alone! Well fare, sleepy drink!
> I'll be reveng'd on this accursed town;
> For by my means Calymath shall enter in:
> I'll help to slay their children and their wives,
> To fire churches, pull their houses down,
> Take my goods too, and seize upon my lands,
> I hope to see the governor a slave
> And, rowing in a gallery, whipt to death.
> (JM, V, i, pp. 61–68)

Barabas' "sleepy drink" may also represent the disguise and pretence which occur throughout the play since he drinks it to fake his death. The oath of revenge which Barabas makes in these lines is not realised. When Barabas talks about what he intends to do, the audience calls to mind Barabas' previous actions, when he killed innocent people. Here he threatens to burn churches and other buildings, so this warning is perceived as serious. In the end, however, he does not put these threats into practice. Marlowe demonstrates that Barabas is somewhat villainous but not so much as to implement Machiavellianism in the political sense. This is because Ferneze has outwitted him by predicting the situation if Barabas stays in control, which has made Barabas think instantly of reconsidering his position as the new governor.

When Barabas becomes governor, he is quickly tested in his political role.

Marlowe then gives him one of the most important speeches in the play, a soliloquy in which he expresses his concerns about governorship, fearing that Malta will hate him. This indicates Barabas' unjustifiable ignorance of the fact that being governor means power; he sees power only in money, not in political office. "He also forgets that he was hated long before coming to power" (Al-Mutawa 162). Comparing the lines quoted above, where he swears to take revenge and destroy Malta, with the following passage from his later soliloquy reveals the great shift in the way he thinks and the way he analyses his position after obtaining political power:

> Thus hast thou gotten, by the policy,
> No simple place, no simple authority:
> I now am governor of Malta; true –
> But Malta hates me, and, in hating me,
> My life's in danger; and what boots it thee.
> (JM, V, ii, pp. 27–31)

Barabas is simply unable to act as a politician and it is there where the shift is seen. When Barabas is tested and given a political role, he is seen to be incompetent at wielding power. Despite all this, it is clear that Marlowe presents to his audience a stereotyped picture of the Jew. Barabas grieves for himself: "Poor Barabas, to be the governor/ when as thy life shall be at their command?" After that, he searches for quick solutions, saying: "No, Barabas, this must be looked into/ and, since by wrong thou gott'st authority/ Maintain it bravely by firm policy at least, unprofitably lose it not" (JM V, ii, 34–37). Once again, Barabas returns to the question of money: "for he that liveth in authority/ and neithergets him friends nor fills his bags/ lives like the ass that Aesop speaketh of" (JM V, ii, 27–40).

Barabas is confused when thinking about his next step. His language implies hesitancy and it is apparent that all his concerns are still present, although he is in power. He is preoccupied with those who will hate him because he angered them, forgetting that he is above everyone, in supreme authority. Barabas thinks more about money than he thinks about being in authority. Power "for him is money, not the performance of political missions" (Al-Mutawa 163). He fears angering the people of Malta because they might strip him of his money, just as Ferneze once did. Marlowe, through Barabas, defines power as requiring ambition. In that sense, those who manage to obtain and make use of power are people like Guise and Ferneze. The importance of power is strongly related to ambition and broad thinking. Barabas' narrow interest in money makes him limited in thinking about

how to exploit power, whereas Ferneze's ability to represent power in the play is manifested. As soon as he has taken matters in hand following Barabas' death, Ferneze orders that Calymath shall "live in Malta prisoner" (JM V, iv, 118), which is an indication of how Marlowe is interested in representing power in the play.

The confusion Barabas shows when he reveals some degree of political inexperience, or rather lack of political sense, may predict his destiny in that it leads to his failure to survive the events of the play. Marlowe's representation of power has some components which are seen in Machiavelli's warnings:

> *The Prince* has enemies among all those whom he has injured in seizing that principality, and he is not able to keep those friends who put him there because of his not being able to satisfy them in the way they expected, and he cannot take strong measures against them, feeling bound to them. For, although one may be very strong in armed forces, yet in entering a province one always need the goodwill of the natives (Machiavelli *The Prince*, III, 7)

If Barabas is not aware of Machiavellian politics, he is also ignorant of how to rule the state properly. This also tells how Marlowe brings Machiavellian ideas into the play by introducing Barabas, the ignorant, against Ferneze, the expert. Marlowe's purpose behind "such representation of Machiavellian thought seems to be that he is interested in representing the power of Machiavellian tactics which Barabas fails to implement" (Al-Mutawa 164). Barabas' reliance on Ferneze to help him find a resolution to his difficulties is a step which confirms his failure to recognize what sort of person Ferneze is, and how Machiavellian Ferneze is in his approach to politics and the inhabitants of Malta. Barabas becomes figuratively blind when he deals with Ferneze. "He seeks his help because Ferneze is more aware than he is of the situation in Malta, but Barabas does not recognize that his actions will destroy him" (Al-Mutawa 164). Machiavelli, as we have seen, advises rulers that they need the goodwill of the indigenous people, but Barabas' choice of Ferneze is wrong and he seeks the help of the one person who most hates him. "Barabas' misuse of power and his inability to exploit it makes him fall" rapidly (Al-Mutawa 164). It would have been better for Barabas if he had never undertaken the role of ruler, because he was a more successful villain before he rose to power. For example, although he was not a ruler, he was able to give warnings to Ferneze such as:

> (...) But theft is worse: tush! Take not from me, then,
> For that is theft, and, if you rob me thus,

I must be forc'd to steal, and compass more.
(JM I, ii, 126–128)

Barabas seems to be saying that Ferneze's actions will lead him to steal and commit other illegal acts. He is warning Ferneze and when Ferneze does not take Barabas' words seriously, Barabas can implement villainy, in contrast to the situation when he is seeking help and advice as ruler. There is another aspect of Barabas' downfall related to his failure to identify that Ferneze is not a good friend. Let us consider how Machiavelli depicts a strong prince who ensures that he cannot be beaten by exercising extreme caution in his choice of the people surrounding him. Machiavelli recommends that a careful prince:

> Must have a third mode, choosing wise men in his state, and only to those must he give license to speak the truth to him, and of those things alone that he asks about and of nothing else; but he must ask them about everything and hear their opinions; therefore, to deliberate alone, in his way. (Prince XXIII, 87)

Machiavelli intends the choice of the individuals surrounding the ruler to eliminate any undesirable follower who might be a threat to him. "A prince ought also to show himself a patron of ability, and to honour the proficient in every art. At the same time, he should encourage his citizens to practise their callings peaceably, both in commerce and agriculture, and in every other following, so that the one should not be deterred from improving his possessions for fear lest they be taken away from him or another from opening up trade for fear of taxes; but the prince ought to offer rewards to whoever wishes to do these things and designs in any way to honour his city or state" (Machiavelli 72). In the context of the play, Barabas' ignorance of how to choose his intimates leads him to fail to bring in people who can support him. It appears that the detailed description of rulers and those surrounding them are carefully chosen by Machiavelli, who is concerned with presenting a strong prince with independent thinking. Ferneze appears in act one, scene two with the officer who can be considered his right-hand man. Later, the first knight of Malta wisely asks Del Bosco, the Spanish vice-admiral, to help his country against the Turks:

> Del Bosco, as thou lov'st and honour'st us,
> Persuade our governor against the Turks.
> This truce we have is but hope of gold,
> And with that sum he craves might we wage war.

(JM II, ii, 24–27)

This speech is uttered after Ferneze has expressed his inability to do anything because of the tributary league with the Turks; thus, the knight comments sensibly on his lord's speech, in that he asks for advice and states that all he does is for the good of Malta and Ferneze, whereas Barabas chooses the wrong people when he depends on Ferneze to give him advice while he is the governor. An example given by Machiavelli of the cities of Germany shows how they "are most free, have little countryside and obey the emperor when they want to" (Machiavelli, p. 40). This reflects how *The Prince* seeks his interest according to how he views matters, deciding when to follow an emperor and when not to. Machiavelli aims to create a strong ruler with no regard for any other matters such as religion. Machiavelli's prince seeks domination, not allowing any kind of rebellion against him; he will always seek to stabilize the political situation, even if he is required to declare war to avoid being a victim. Machiavelli says that "it will always be more useful to you to come out openly and make a good war; because in the first case, if you do not come out, you will always be the prey of whoever wins" (Machiavelli, p. 82). In the play, Ferneze is ready to wage war against Barabas and the Turks through his secret alliance with the Spanish fleet; thus he prepares himself to overcome the outside forces which stand in his way. The relevance of Machiavelli's example to those in Marlowe's play is notable because the representation of power is seen in *The Prince* whom Machiavelli is trying to construct. On the other hand, Marlowe's text offers great interest in its representation of power and in how his two main characters' deal with that feature. Marlowe makes sure that the Spanish fleet is the threat and danger that plays a major role in the stability of that area to possibly remind his reader of the role of Catholic Spain and what it represents.

Breaking an oath is a subject that Marlowe uses in his drama to show how people can free themselves from commitment and become powerful through their ability to defeat their enemies; it could be taken as a reference to Machiavelli and his teachings. This is perhaps one of the most important perspectives that Marlowe offers in both The Massacre at Paris and The Jew of Malta, where he depicts Catholics as people who cannot be trusted to keep a promise. This point is made in The Massacre at Paris about the marriage, when the Catholics break their word by adopting the marriage scheme, whereas in The Jew of Malta, the breach of an oath occurs after Ferneze has been assured by Del Bosco of his protection against the Turks on condition that he cooperates with Del Bosco. Ferneze is satisfied with this pact with his brother in religion, declaring war "against these barbarous

misbelieving Turks," and accepting that "honour is bought with blood and not with gold" (JM II, ii, 56). The play's "major premise is the notorious Catholic doctrine that promises made to heretics need not be kept" (Kocher, p. 123). Marlowe exploits this point to demonstrate how Catholics, represented by Ferneze, dominate Barabas, despite his villainy. The ideas Marlowe uses in his play could be said to highlight some aspects of Machiavelli's tactics which Marlowe attempts to symbolize.

Marlowe and His Play

The setting in Malta seems to mirror Marlowe society and the conflict between Protestant and Catholics. Machiavellianism contributed in aiding Marlowe to explore the theme. Malta is indeed a suitable setting for Marlowe to discuss issues related to Machiavellianism because circumstances such as the presence of more than one religion made conflicts more likely to take place. "It may be that England was not far from Marlowe's thinking when he wrote the play because of the similarity of the conditions in the two countries" (Al-Mutawa 168). This is an interesting point which seems central to the play as a whole. One particular idea that can be taken as a reflection of the contemporary historical perception of England is Marlowe's apparent attempt to use the political events of the play to shed light on what happened in England in 1588. The defeat of the Spanish Armada at the hands of the English about two years before the play was written may also have been one of Marlowe's interests in depicting such historical implications. A further similarity between Malta and England is that both are surrounded by sea, giving Marlowe the chance to depict treacheries and conflicts between different forces using the sea as a source of danger; for example, when Del Bosco arrives by ship to support the Catholics. In many ways, Malta was thus not very different from England, allowing Marlowe to use it to symbolise his own country.

In the play, the policy which Ferneze adopts is considered successful. There is a marked contrast between Ferneze and Barabas, as already mentioned. Ferneze says that his government takes Barabas' money "to save the ruin of a multitude" and that "better one want for a common good than many perish for a private man" (JM I, ii, 97–100). This sounds intelligent, because it achieves his purpose, which is to take the Jews' money, whereas Barabas' simple comment on the burden of authority he bears when becoming governor, in addition to the fear that people will hate him, suggests that he thinks differently and unwisely. He would prefer to have wealth for himself, even though being governor might bring more wealth. He sees the threat from the people as a reason not to be happy with being governor, perhaps because Ferneze has shown him how hated and unwelcomed he is in Malta. He decides to be

more careful about the situation to recover his money, simply because he is given a political role that he is not able to handle:

> But Barabas will be more circumspect.
> Begin betimes, occasion's bald behind:
> Slip not thine opportunity, for fear too late
> Thou seek'st for much, but canst not compass it
> (JM V, ii, 43–46)

Marlowe reveals Barabas as a relative simpleton with politics. The final betrayal of Barabas by Ferneze may reflect Marlowe's point that Ferneze makes no mistakes. Barabas falls short of the attributes of a successful politician. In addition to what has been said before about his failure in his conversation with Ferneze. Ferneze gives Barabas an answer full of perspicacity with politics. For example, he answers Barabas thus:

> (…) Since things are thy power
> I see no reason but of Malta wreck,
> Nor hope of thee but extreme cruelty:
> Nor fear I death, nor will I flatter thee.
> (JM V, ii, 57–60)

Ferneze repeats words that denote Malta's destruction, such as "wreck" and "extreme cruelty." This makes Barabas fear the loss of his commercial prosperity in exchange for exercising power in Malta and Ferneze is aware of this. When Barabas asks for Ferneze's opinion, it is clever of Ferneze to keep pace with him. First, he alludes to the wreckage of Malta under Barabas. This political cleverness and his balanced, coherent decisions make Ferneze a survivor of the political conflict in Malta. Because he has been cruel to Barabas in the past, he now tells him that he assumes that he will suffer the same cruelty that he once practised against Barabas. Having gained power, Barabas now feels that there is no opponent for him and thus decides to offer peace to Ferneze. Ferneze is successful in making Barabas shift his position from revenge to mutual assistance because he knows that the Jew only wants money.

Barabas' weakness is seen in his dealings with Ferneze. When Ferneze suggests that he will bring destruction to the whole of Malta, Barabas becomes afraid, since the destruction of Malta means that he will lose his opportunity to trade

and make profits; thus he feels that it would be better to relinquish the political role to Ferneze so that he can return to his business, whereas Ferneze will secure Malta politically. Thus, Barabas sees the prosperity of Malta as dependent upon Ferneze's political leadership, preferring to limit himself to trade. Ferneze knows that Barabas' behaviour is that of a person who does not flatter, having dealt with him before, so he feigns the same attitude with him to show that neither he nor Barabas is a flatterer. Ferneze attempts to make Barabas trust him and his words while being his enemy. Knowing that Barabas is aware of the Christians' hypocrisy, he, therefore, strives to convince him otherwise and gain his trust.

Marlowe presents Ferneze as successful even when he does not hold power and as one whose ability to take advantage of every minor opportunity helps him to succeed in his pursuit of power. Ferneze simply controls and enslaves Barabas either way, while for Barabas, as Menpes argues, the case is different. Menpes describes how Marlowe presents an image of a ruler who cannot govern politically: "It is at this moment that Barabas' bondage is revealed most clearly. Even though the Jew is now the pre-eminent political power of his dramatic world, he does not recognize his new status" (Menpes 82). Menpes' argument can be seen in Barabas' desire to relinquish his political role to Ferneze in exchange for being allowed to live and make money. Barabas does not recognize his position as living in bondage, even when he is in authority: "Where Ferneze, after some obvious disappointment, refers to Barabas as 'my lord', Barabas still refers to Ferneze as governor" (Menpes 82). Ferneze can adapt to the change in political power, whereas Barabas can adapt himself to anything except in the field of political power. Another deceit is practised by Ferneze when he pretends that he is powerless before Barabas. When Ferneze mentions that power is in Barabas' hands (JM V, ii, 57), for instance, this encourages Barabas to see his position as that of a strong ruler, so he decides to make some kind of reconciliation with Ferneze, suggesting a truce and co-operation to defeat the Turks; Ferneze's statement gives Barabas the comfort of believing that his opponent can be his friend, but Ferneze misleads Barabas, who does not realize that he is leading him to his downfall, despite his original desire to seek revenge. Marlowe makes this flattery an indication of Machiavellian policy.

Ferneze flatters Barabas by hiding behind friendship to gain authority in Malta through Barabas. Machiavelli warns that "whoever imagines that new services will extinguish the memory of former injuries amongst great men deceives himself" (Machiavelli, 70). Stating that it is wrong to trust someone who has previously been injured. Barabas is wrong in his belief that he can trust Ferneze because Barabas killed Ferneze's son. Minshull suggests that "Marlowe could not have

been unaware of the gulf between Machiavelli's creed personified by Barabas, and Machiavelli's actual teaching, because he makes Ferneze and the Christians ruling Malta astutely put into practice Machiavelli's major political axioms"(Minshull, 45). Minshull's argument is possibly based on the consideration that Marlowe's treatment of the Catholics is related to Machiavelli because Machiavelli represents the image of villainy, whereas the opposite can be suggested of Barabas whose lack of Machiavellian policy might make him less abhorrent and might also create sympathy because of his ignorance of such political considerations. Barabas' downfall, resulting from his trust in Ferneze, according to Minshull, comes because he has not followed a proper Machiavellian policy. Minshull's argument further demonstrates Marlowe's awareness of Machiavelli, the employment of whose creed offers a range of political implications. Marlowe presents a variety of examples of how to capture power, and Machiavelli's teachings seem to be similar to many events in the play. The following example from *The Prince* can be applied to Ferneze and his ability to disguise: "It is necessary to know well how to disguise the characteristic, and to be a great pretender and dissembler; and men are so simple and so subject to present necessities, that he who seeks to deceive will always find someone who will allow himself to be deceived" (Machiavelli, 62). Machiavelli's ideas find their way into Ferneze's behaviour when he dissembles and pretends. Machiavelli uses the example of Alexander VI in his demonstration of pretence and dissembling:

> Alexander VI never did anything, never thought of anything other than to deceive men, and always found subjects to whom he could do it. And never was there a man who had greater success in asserting, and with greater oaths in affirming a thing, who observed it less; nonetheless, the deceptions always succeeded for him because he knew well this part of the world. (Machiavelli *The Prince*, XVIII, 66)

Marlowe's depiction of Ferneze is similar to Machiavelli's example: In both cases, rulers lead others through deceit. It is necessary, according to Machiavelli, for *The Prince* to have "a spirit disposed to turn as the winds and the variations of fortune command him" (Burchard 59). Marlowe is staging Machiavellian situations to present a ruler who can defeat others even if he is not in a powerful position, as is the case with Ferneze, the prisoner. Marlowe's ability to present Ferneze as being able to adapt himself suitably must reflect Marlowe's desire to depict Machiavellianism.

Potter argues that Marlowe links Machiavellian policy with Catholicism in the character of Ferneze, writing that "The Jew of Malta emphasised the evil of Christians—for instance, by doubling Machiavelli with Ferneze" (Potter 68). This suggestion also implies the validity of the idea that Minshull articulates, that "if anyone in the play conforms to the Machiavellian code set out in the Prologue to the play, it is not Barabas, but Ferneze, who in true Machiavellian fashion is primarily interested in power politics and military matters" (Minshull, 41). Earlier in the chapter, Pineas stresses that it is Catholicism, not Christianity, which is being satirised (Pineas 9). Whereas Potter (Potter 99) refers to the "wickedness of all Christians." Each writer ascribes the play's satire to either Christianity and/or Catholicism; but considering Marlowe's representation of Catholicism, specifically in the other two plays, it is possible to claim that it is, indeed, Catholicism on which the play focuses rather than Christianity in general. For Marlowe's audiences, at least, any sign of Machiavellianism as they understood it would automatically be associated with Catholicism, and this is also how recent critics, such as Pineas, have read the play. This indicates that the implementation of politics, whether Machiavellian or not, can, in reality, be attributed to Ferneze, more than to Barabas, because of his ability to manage the state and make wise decisions. Ferneze's policy indicates a knowledge of political machinations which is seen in his treatment of the situation in Malta. Ellis-Fermor discusses policy concerning Barabas rather than Ferneze, noting how Barabas reacts to that issue in comparison to the Catholics. Ellis-Fermor states that Barabas adopts "policie," which is the Catholics' profession, defined by its association with "cunningness," "wickedness," and "cruelty." Such features are seen in the Catholics in the play. Ellis-Fermor adds that Barabas takes up their "own weapon against them, as it is the only one remaining to him," "but he never deceives himself; he becomes perforce a Machiavellian in his tactics, not a blind hypocrite as are his opponents" (Ellis-Fermor 99):

> As good dissemble that thou never mean'st
> As first meane truth, and then dissemble it,
> A counterfeit profession is better
> Than unseen hypocrisie.
> (JM I, ii, 289–292)

Ellis-Fermor's suggestion that Barabas is implementing Machiavellianism is correct. However, it is not obvious what type of tactics she refers to since the downfall of Barabas comes largely from his tactical mistake of trusting an old enemy. If there is

any implementation of Machiavellianism by Barabas, it is certainly not political but rather that which is related to villainy. In light of what Ellis-Fermor suggests, it is vital to define what "policy" means, because "Barabas' ability to maintain any kind of policy is related, in the first place, only to villainy" (Al-Mutawa 174).

On the other hand, Marlowe might be revealing Barabas as incapable of implementing Machiavellian policy, which is related to governing the state. Having identified Barabas' incapability to follow Machiavellian policy, Marlowe demonstrates that the true danger lies in the Catholics because of their ability to apply Machiavellian policy, unlike Barabas, who ostensibly has no background of statecraft despite his Machiavellian bent. Ellis-Fermor's argument seems to go in one direction, that Barabas' Machiavellianism is related to every aspect of evil Machiavelli was known for, except handling matters of the state. In addition, Barabas implements what Catholics implemented, that is, Machiavellian villainies. The Machiavellian tactics Fermor refers to are simply those which are associated with Machiavellian villainies, not politics. Discussing the treacheries of Machiavellianism, Iwasaki argues that "Barabas fails to follow Machiavellianism, and so fails as a result of his miscalculation of how to act in the right place" (Iwasaki 12). Barabas fails when he believes Ferneze and fails again when he betrays the Turks. Marlowe does not depict any obvious hostility between Barabas and the Turks, who do not seem to be his enemies; it is his inaccurate calculations that reveal his political inexperience in betraying the Turks unnecessarily. Ferneze's behaviour is accurately assessed by Holmes, who describes loyalty as a form of deceit, hiding which side he truly favours. We have noted above how clever Ferneze is in his dealings with Barabas when he pretends to warn him that Malta will be destroyed under his rule. Of clear relevance here is the opinion of Holmes, about two contemporary Catholic writers whose example is similar to what we shall see in Ferneze:

> "It was all very well for Allen (1546-1610) and Parsons (1532-1594), who were contemporaries of Marlowe and who was related to responses to the Spanish Armada and the circumstances under which Marlowe was writing, to cover the difficulties of their ideological position with rhetorical professions of loyalty to the Queen. But if asked directly to choose between the Pope and the Queen they had to resort to sophistry or silence." (Holmes 46)

The way Ferneze acts in his attempt to hide his evil from Barabas reminds the reader of the situation to which Holmes refers, where Catholic writers attempted to hide

their true beliefs. Marlowe could also be recalling this example in which he brings Ferneze forward to deceive Barabas and act as if he is advising Barabas. Ferneze uses such pretence to mislead Barabas. He knows that to recapture power he has to make Barabas reluctant to carry the responsibility of the governorship. Ferneze does manage to eliminate Barabas politically while he is still governor, causing him to hate the role and so to relinquish it and offer a truce to Ferneze. He returns to the political domain by cleverly engineering a reconciliation with Barabas, which begins the shift of political power back towards him.

The success of Ferneze in handling the political affairs of Malta seems to reflect Marlowe's ascription to him of Machiavellian attributes. Ferneze is capable of this political success because he remains powerful even when immediate power is taken from him. Marlowe, by representing Machiavellian theory in his plays, stands among his contemporaries who also discussed and represented Machiavelli for an Elizabethan audience. Machiavellianism, as described by Marlowe, offers insight into many thematic representations regarding policy, power and control. The discussion of both characters implies similarity with many of Machiavelli's works in different ways.

Conclusion

The Jews of Malta provide a rich illustration of the religious and political influence of the struggle between Barabas and Farnese. Barabas resistance can be seen as a manifestation of the situation in which Marlow wrote that such resistance to unreliable Catholics was necessary. Machiavellianism is obvious in Ferneze, but contradictory in Barabas. Machiavelli's portrayal of Marlowe can be seen as a reflection of his perception of how Machiavelli was portrayed. Meanwhile, Marlow reveals how Catholics abuse authority to hurt Barabas and others. The play's criticism of Catholicism is evident in the treatment of Ferneze and his brothers. Pineas argues that "Marlowe's play exhibits the usual picture of corrupt Catholic friars; it introduces the new element of an outside spectator and commentator on that corruption, in the person of the Jew, Barabas" (Pineas 9). Barabas removes the masks of his brothers and reveals how unholy they are. This is a way to show Marlowe's interest in portraying devout Catholic accusations and plots. This play, which provides insights into many of Makiavelli's characteristics of politics, power, and domination, shows Marlowe's interest in the issue of political-religious interaction. Both Massacre at Paris and The Jew of Malta are plays depicting Machivillian themes of power: the power of force used to conquer lands, subjects and kings, also the power of fraud used to gain personal wealth and destruction

of enemies. Machiavelli's composite image, created by the fusion of Ferneze's qualities and Barabas' qualities, is the image of a powerful, proud, cruel, violent, deceptive, and endlessly ambitious man. He lives a tragic career that begins with hatred, is helped by crafts, and ends with underestimating the abilities of others and overestimating his power to avoid death. Each Machiavelli can change his fate in his way for some time, but fate eventually learns to bind *The Prince* to the wheel of fortune and rob him of success and fame to bring him back.

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The Politics of Female Identity in Diasporic Contact Zones: A Case Study of Arab Diasporic Short Fiction

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Abstract   In the speech she delivered to the Modern Language Association in 1991, Mary Louise Pratt described contact zones as ideal spaces for cross-cultural interaction. This idealism, however, means not that contact zones are conflict-free spaces, since living in a place where cultures "meet, clash, and grapple with each other" (3) is expected to take the individual out of his comfort zone. This cultural instability, nevertheless, is what helps him acquire one of the arts which Pratt sees essential to successful social interaction in contact zones. Acculturation, the process by which the individual selects the aspects he finds suitable from the host culture and rejects those he does not find so without getting emotionally involved, helps him form a less culturally fixed identity and more socially successful relations across cultures. When read in light of a later article in which Pratt (1994) studies the relation holding the female to her nation, this speech can help give a better understanding of the formation of the female's identity in culturally diverse settings, especially in the case of the diasporic female who, due to harsh political, social or economic conditions, has been forced to leave her home country and to settle in a foreign one. To this end, the study examines the impact contact zones have on the formation of the female's identity in a diasporic context, specifically the Arab-American diasporic context by analyzing four selected short stories by four Arab American writers: Mohja Kahf's "Manar of Hama", Laila Halaby's "Hair, Men and Prayers", Samia Serageldin's "It's Not About That" and Pauline Kaldas' "He Had Dreamed of Returning". The aim is to examine the extent to which the diasporic female protagonist in each of them is able to form a less culturally rooted identity and to establish more successful social relations with members of other cultures in

contact zones.

Keywords   Contact zones; Arab-American diasporic literature; cross-cultural interaction; arts of the contact zone; diasporic identity; acculturation

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Introduction

In one of her articles, "Women, Literature, and National Brotherhood" (1994), Mary Louise Pratt remarks that a relationship of unease ties the female to her native community in the modern nation. In those societal spaces, to which Benedict Anderson (1983) has given the name of 'imagined communities', the female occupies a position "precariously other to the nation" (51) as her role is seen to be limited to the functions of reproduction and the mothering of future generations. The diminutive role she is given is, as Pratt explains, expected due to the androcentrism of the Andersonian model which defines citizenship by three masculine criteria: limitedness, sovereignty and fraternity. Given the difficulty of defining the feminine by these masculine criteria, the female is likely to be perceived as a source of threat by the male who, to guard himself against this "fundamental instability" (51), chooses to limit her role to the biological function. To this end, Pratt contends that Anderson's model should not be taken at face value in assessing the female's relation to her own nation or to foreign ones. For, what validates seeing "the reproductive capacity...of those infinite, all too elastic female bodies" as a source of peril is its being beyond "the control of fraternity" (7).

Pratt's description of the female's ability to reproduce "outside the control of fraternity" (7) as a "source of peril" (7) is better understood when read in light

of the speech she delivered in 1991 on contact zones. In Anderson's model,[1] the female's reproductive capacity is perceived from a masculine perspective and this explains why her elasticity is seen as a source of peril to the stability of the nation. It also explains why the identity she acquires there is fixed and culturally rooted. Pratt, however, does not agree that her instability represents a threat against which the nation should be guarded, for she believes that this instability is a feature shared by the nation as a whole, not only by its women: "to say that women are situated in permanent instability in the nation is to say that nations exist in permanent instability" (51). The impossibility of geographically isolating women from men in the same community and the inability of men to reproduce without women prove that the female's instability is not "precariously other to the nation" (51), but is intrinsic to its construction. Nevertheless, the "deep [gender] cleavage in the horizontal fraternity" has kept the female "especially anomalous" (52) in her own nation and forced her to seek "political and social engagement" (51) elsewhere.

> In the face of their exclusion from the national fraternity,..., women's political and   social engagement became heavily *inter* nationalist, and often *anti* nationalist. Elite women activists established a long-standing presence and commitment in such spheres as the Pan-Americanist movement, international pacifism, and syndicalism, and in transnational issues of health, education, and human rights. (51-52)

It is here that the connection between the two works by Pratt can be detected. The statement she makes on the female's predicament in the modern nation in "Women, Literature, and National Brotherhood" intersects with her perception of contacts zones as spaces of cultural instability in her speech "Arts of the Contact Zone." This common aspect requires more attention given Pratt's observation about the "heavily *inter*nationalist, and often *anti* nationalist" (51) engagement of women who feel excluded from their own nations. The significance of reading the two works along each other and of employing this intersecting reading as a critical framework

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1   It is clear that restricting our perception of the nation to Anderson's imagined communities does not help render a better understanding of how social relations and interactions are formed and maintained across the culturally diverse communities of the twenty-first century, for rarely are such communities found in the world nowadays. However, what makes Anderson's model of the imagined community of relevance to the current study is that it can be employed as a background against which the kind of identity the female forms in contact zones can be better examined and evaluated.

in literary studies lies, therefore, in giving a better understanding of the formation of the female's identity in culturally diverse settings, especially in the case of diasporic females who, due to harsh political, social or economic conditions, have been forced to leave their home countries and to settle in foreign ones.

Diasporic Settings as Contact Zones

In her speech, Pratt defines contact zones as spaces where multiple "cultures, meet, clash, and grapple with each other" (3). The instability resulting from the meeting of different cultures in contact zones makes them ideal spaces for the female who will feel less socially pressured in such an environment to repress her unstable nature. Pratt does not, however, give special focus to the question of gendered identity, the female's identity in particular, in her discussion. The examples she cites are mostly limited to geographically small multicultural settings such as the classroom which are not representative of other more geographically and culturally diverse settings in which gender is considered a key element in shaping social interaction. Thus, when read along the article "Women, Nation and Brotherhood", "Arts of the Contact Zone" can help give a better understanding of the role living and interacting in multicultural spaces play in the formation of the female's identity, especially in the case of women whose residence in those zones is conditioned by political, social or economic reasons beyond their control. Moreover, given that contact zones can also be found in settings which are more culturally diverse, more geographically extensive and more politically and socially invasive such as war zones, countries with diasporic populations and refugee camps, looking for points of meeting between the two works can help understand the challenges the female faces as she tries to form new social relations there.

Amongst the numerous forms of contact zones which have noticeably increased in number nowadays and where the question of identity formation (female identity in particular) is controversially approached in the academia are diasporic settings. Given that social interaction in those settings is not only affected by the individual's cultural background, but by other factors shaping the power network in them such as gender, politics and class necessitates giving more attention to understanding how social relations are formed in them, especially in the case of the female who finds herself forced to deal with differences between cultures and genders as well. As those women interact with culturally different groups (men and women) in the new countries, they do so based on the cultural codes they have internalised in their home countries. Their cultural mindsets, however, are expected to change as a result of their exposure to new culturally different ones. When seen in light of Pratt's

perception of contact zones as spaces of cultural instability, this change shows that the unstable nature of the female's identity is not repressed in contact zones as it is in monocultural settings. As the female interacts with individuals of different cultural backgrounds there, her unstable nature manifests itself in her ability to deal with cultural differences without getting emotionally involved, to form a less culturally rooted identity and to establish more healthy social relations.[1]

This said, the study examines the impact contact zones have on the formation of the female's identity in a diasporic context, specifically the Arab-American diasporic context by analyzing four selected short stories by four Arab American writers: Mohja Kahf's "Manar of Hama", Laila Halaby's "Hair, Men and Prayers", Samia Serageldin's "It's Not About That" and Pauline Kaldas' "He Had Dreamed of Returning". The aim is to examine the extent to which the diasporic female protagonist in each of them is able to form a less culturally rooted identity and to establish more successful social relations with members of other cultures in contact zones.

Diasporic Contact Zones as Transcultural Spaces

When Pratt first introduced the notion of the 'contact zone' in her 1991 keynote address to the Modern Language Association, she stressed the heterogeneous nature of those meeting points. Contact zones are spaces where the reductive representations produced by "discrete, coherently structured, monolingual edifices" (4), whether in real life, literary works or speech, are rejected. This, however, should not lead to the rash conclusion that contact zones are utopian spaces where discrimination is brought to an end and difference is accepted unconditionally. This point is stressed by Pratt, who explains that the contact zone encounters are not expected to be conflict-free. Those encounters are intentionally meant to take us out of the 'safe houses', which in the Andersonian model of the modern nation, are indispensable to building a shared foundation of "healing, mutual recognition...

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1   In *Contact Zones: Aboriginal and Settler Women in Canada's Colonial Past* (2005), Katie Pickles and Myra Ruther Dale study interaction in contact zones by tracing them back to their points of origin (colonial spaces). Their focus is directed towards aboriginal and settler Canadian women whose interaction has taken place in colonial settings. Their study shows that whether belonging to the dominant or the marginal culture, women usually exist at the juncture between their culture or origin and the foreign culture. Thus, as Canadian women "occupied the spaces of colonial encounter between Aboriginals and newcomers" (1), they have proved to be better suited for cross-cultural interaction, which is a point Pratt highlights in her article "Women, Nation and Brotherhood", as she notes that women who have been denied political and social engagement on the national level seek it across borders.

shared understandings, knowledges" (8) amongst the members of the same community. Anderson's imagined communities might seem to many to be conflict-free zones, especially when coupled with strong feelings of comradeship. Yet, this seeming peacefulness, very much like the feelings of fraternity bringing their members together, is 'imagined' and therefore unproductive. The clash resulting from the meeting of different cultures, languages and sometimes mindsets in one space, however, is real, lived and productive. It is real because it is not born out of a "homogeneous community or a horizontal alliance" which, according to Pratt, is "[professed], but systematically" (5) unrealized. It is productive because it helps arrive at a better understanding of how social relations are formed transculturally.

As culturally different groups are brought together, a two-way process of interaction is initiated between those belonging to the dominant culture and the other ethnic minorities. The viability of the interactive process, no doubt, is dependent on how deeply rooted the network of power relations is into the structure of the multicultural society,[1] for just as social interaction in imagined communities "is defined from the point of view of the party in authority (the male)" (6), it is so in contact zones which also represent "contexts of highly asymmetrical relations of power, such as colonisation, slavery, or their aftermaths as they are lived out in many parts of the world today" (3). Nevertheless, the conflicts arising from the bringing together of different factors do not block the possibility for social interaction. This point is emphasized by Claude Helen Mayer in an article entitled "Navigating Contact Zones in Twenty-First Century Schools: Creative Identity Development in Two Complex Transcultural Spaces" (2021), in which she explains that when the individual starts seeing himself as a member of a transcultural society, he learns to start "expanding or minimizing selected identity parts to create 'safe zones'" (abstract) where cultural differences are accepted, understood and selectively adopted. Those safe zones, it should be noted, are different from the ones that Anderson's imagined communities represent, for while the shared foundation which brings the members of an imagined community together results in a culturally fixed identity, it does not in contact zones. This entails that interacting in contact zones is not possible when the individual insists on sticking to an identity transfixed

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1   In "Identity trans-formation in contact zones: sociallization of Israeli immigrant youth in Canada" (2013), Yonah Atari explains that "multi-directional" (abstract) power relations are at work in contact zones: vertical power relations with members of the mainstream culture and horizontal power relations with the other ethnic cultures. The interplay between the two spectrums of power relations creates a matrix of intermingling safe spaces and contested ones, "hindering and facilitating social interaction" (abstract) simultaneously.

by his cultural orientation. The way to make interaction a successful process is, therefore, to start a dialogue between the culture in authority and the one on the margin in a process where the latter is given the space to "construct a parodic, oppositional representation of the conqueror's" (3) own.[1]

In order for a meeting space to become a contact zone, it has to be perceived as a transcultural space by those living and interacting in it. Leaving one's native country and settling in a new one does not, therefore, condition getting accepted in the new place with complete assimilation into the mainstream culture. Acculturation can sometimes lead the individual to risk losing his own national identity as a replacement to a new one in line with that of the country he has chosen to reside in. At the same time, living in a contact zone does not entail rejecting the mainstream culture altogether, for as much as acculturation works by fixating identity, deculturation does the same. This point is repeatedly dwelt on by Pratt who believes that no contact zone can serve the designated function of a healthy network of cross-cultural relations without witnessing a two-way process of interaction taking place between the different cultural groups there. That explains why she repeatedly emphasises that interaction in the contact zone ought to be transcultured, meaning that individuals belonging to ethnic minorities should be given the chance to "select and invent from materials transmitted by a dominant metropolitan culture" (4). The importance of the process of transculturation[2] lies in the space it opens for selective appropriation. As members of ethnic minorities are exposed to the mainstream

1 How can this "parodic, oppositional representation" (3) take place in reality? First, such parodic dialogues serve a means to respond to certain representations employed by the ones wielding authority. In her speech, Pratt uses the term "space of colonials encounters" to describe contact zones since it is in colonial settings that they first came to exist. Recently, however, those encounters have started to be seen from multiple perspectives, many of which have taken the form of responses to previous one-sided representations.

Second, the parodic dialogues which take place in contact zones can be seen as part of the process of transculturation at work there. Contrary to the other two extreme processes of acculturation and deculturation, transculturation is based on selective appropriation . This means that, as a member of an ethnic minority, the diasporic chooses not to go to the extreme of either rejecting the "representational repertoire" (4) of the mainstream culture or language or of blindly imitating it. Quite the opposite, he realizes that though he cannot "control what emanates from the dominant culture," (4) he still can control what he absorbs from it.

2 The term transculturation was coined by the Cuban anthropologist Fernando Ortiz in 1940 to refer to the process of how two or more cultures merge and converge. Unlike its two other extremes, acculturation and deculturation, transculturation gives more space for the individual to adopt what suits him from the mainstream culture and to keep what serves him from the native culture. Due to this flexibility, Pratt lists it as one of the arts needed in contact zones.

culture, they do not feel pressured to adopt every aspect of it; they are given the freedom to select what suits them and discard what does not. The same process, of course, applies to the other side of the spectrum, so that members of the dominant culture are encouraged to appropriate what they deem apt to their own from the minor cultures. In this sense, no aspect of either culture, the dominant or the marginalised, is reduced or under-represented and this initiates the ongoing process of interaction needed to turn that meeting space into a contact zone. Here only and under such conditions can we observe a change in the individual's, whether the member of the dominant culture or the marginalised culture, perception of cultural difference so that he not only starts to accept difference but is able to engage in more successful relations with those different from him without feeling the threat of losing his cultural identity or being forced to assimilate to be socially accepted.

In the following section, the four selected short stories will be analyzed to examine the extent to which the diasporic female protagonist in each of them is able to lead a life of her own choice in the host country, whether in the relations she forms with members of her own ethnicity, members of the other ethnic minorities or members of the dominant culture, by appropriating the aspects of the mainstream culture which suit her and rejecting those which do not. The aim is to prove that the more social relations are transcultured in societies where different cultures interact, the more those societies are seen as contact zones and the more those women are able to understand and accept the difference of those with whom they are interacting. The effect is as well observed in the more inclusive identity those women acquire in those societies. Thus, whether living in a contact zone and engaging tolerantly with those who are culturally different can help the female develop an identity not solely defined by her cultural upbringing is the question the current study will attempt to answer through the analysis of cross-cultural interaction in the four selected short stories.

Discussion

The selected short stories are written by four diasporic writers coming from different Arab countries. Kahf is Syrian, Halaby is Jordanian, Serageldin and Kaldas are Egyptian. The four short stories feature four women (Manar, Jubayna, Nadia and Nancy) who move from their native countries to foreign countries for different reasons. As the authors represent the women's interactions in the new multicultural settings, they send implicit messages about the impact those interactions have on the kind of identity they acquire in diaspora as well as their ability to develop the needed arts to make those interactions successful. To start with, the four women

exhibit some similarities and differences at the same time. First, they realize that since their social interactions take place in multicultural settings, new communication skills are needed. However, not all of them act according to these realisations; some of them choose not to as will be shown in the discussion below. Second, the four women show similarities and differences in the way they deal with the two societies of which they are part now, the native and the host societies. While some choose to solely define their relations in light of their native cultural upbringing, others choose to straddle the two cultures and to define their relations based on mutual recognition of the two cultures. Third, the four women's cultural upbringing plays an integral role in the relations they form in the host countries. In the case of some of them, it serves to hinder their progress in the new society; in the case of others, it serves to ease the process of integration. Fourth, the four women develop, with varying degrees, a more inclusive identity as they engage in new relations which help bring them to the awareness that a less fixated identity is needed in contact zones. This new identity, however, is not equally embraced by the four women. While some choose to reject being brought out of the comfort zone that a culturally fixed identity offers them; others see this new identity as the green card they need to become full fledged members of those new societies.

The discussion below will analyse the similarities and differences listed above between the four women in the selected short stories by questioning the extent to which each of them has acquired and improved the art of transculturation which, according to Pratt, is indispensable to making the contact zone experience a successful one.

Deculturation: Rejecting Blindly

Many immigrants arrive to the foreign country with an unwavering determination to reject its culture and people. They do so with the pretext that the mere exposure to the new culture is likely to result in the erasure of their cultural identity which they derive from being physically attached to their home countries. Their fear is also intensified when they choose to settle in culturally open and diverse societies. In the face of this openness, they find themselves in a defensive state through which they insist on avoiding, or at least minimising, any form of communication with members of the dominant culture and sometimes with members of other ethnic minorities. Some choose to reside in separate areas of the country, while others go to the extreme of developing feelings of hatred towards those who are culturally different (Lalami, 2017).

A case in point is the short story "Manar of Hama" by the Syrian-American

writer Kahf. In the story, the reader is introduced to Manar, who has been forced to leave Syria because of the war. The resentment she feels at being forced to leave her home country and to live in America extends to the food in the country which she completely rejects; she cannot even bear the taste of cheese, cucumber or eggplant there. The keen desire to eat and cook Syrian dishes only shows that Manar has constructed an identity based on fixated associations rooted in the culture of the country she has been born in. Moreover, the fact that she has not chosen to leave Syria but has been forced to takes those feelings to an extreme. She finds it difficult to become transcultured, thinking that by doing so, she will have to let go of the old self and form a new one which is alien to her.

Two points are worth pondering on here. Manar sees her life in America as one placed on the verge between two extremes she has to choose from: acculturation or deculturation. She can either accept to be absorbed by the new culture or reject it altogether. The feelings of guilt at having to abduct her old self and those of fear at having to face the unknown force her to choose to reject whatever form the American culture takes in front of her eyes. In the story, she does so by refusing the food Americans eat, the educational system they follow at school and the social relations they form in daily life. Her refusal is as well extended to the daily activities she is forced to participate in. In the story, we see her interacting with the principal at her kids' school, with the shopkeepers and with the hippies later as she follows the spice girl. In those interactions, she is rarely noticed to exhibit the ability to adopt what suits her from the dominant culture and to reject what does not without showing prejudice.

> My children can babble away in English by now and they look at their mother who cannot speak two words to the school secretary and I know they are embarrassed. They are already in another world, one I don't understand. They do things that make the hair go white... What do Americans care about modesty, they are the world leaders in immorality, this everyone knows. (111-112)

It is clear that Manar fails to forge a link between the multicultural space where the interaction takes place and the productive features Pratt associates with the contact zone. She is neither able to start a process of cultural exchange through which she can adopt certain aspects from the dominant culture as her own, nor is she able to reject it without getting emotionally involved. As Pratt makes clear in her discussion, those people spend a difficult time trying to get used to life in the

foreign country, because, for them, the difference represented by that culture is not only threatening, but also repulsive. This makes life in America hardly bearable for Manar, compared to her husband who urges her to accept the taste of the American cheese instead of reminiscing about the taste of the Syrian cheese, and to her children who offer to teach her some English to use in her school visits.

The climactic incident in the story, however, sheds light on a different side of Manar's personality. As she follows the spice girl and meets the culturally and religiously diverse group the latter resides with, her attitude starts to change. In fact, the short meeting and interaction Manar has there serves as a good example of the significant role the contact zones arts play in creating a harmonious space where different cultural groups can coexist. Upon first meeting them, Manar not only rejects their lifestyle, but feels offended as well. The way those people are dressed, the fact that men and women socialize with no gender-enforced boundaries, the weird rituals and chanting all make her confused. And given that Manar lacks the art to make this experience a transcultural one, by choosing what befits her cultural upbringing and rejecting what does not tolerantly, it is expected to see her leaving the place immediately. This, however, does not happen in the story. She not only starts a conversation with them asking about their religion and origins, but joins them in the meal they have been preparing, shattering, in this way, the readers' expectations. Unlike in the previous interactions, Manar is able to accept the different behaviors and rituals the group has and this helps her to choose not to see them as a threat to her. She also starts to identify herself with some of these aspects and is able to find common ground on which to relate to those people and to stop rejecting them for their difference.

It is clear that that short meeting will undeniably affect Manar's future interactions with culturally different people in America, and this is, to a large extent, seen in the open ending of the story when Manar is driven by the spice girl back to the point from where she started following her, thinking of their last words with her, "God is love." The universality of their farewell statement intensifies the impact this short meeting leaves on Manar, building in us the expectation of seeing a more open-minded, tolerant version of the biased Manar in the future. This point is emphasized by Priscila Campolina De Sá Campello, who argues in an article entitled "Reconfigurations of the Concept of Home in Mohja Kahf's 'Manar of Hama'" (2015), that Manar's perception of the place she should call a home becomes less culturally rooted towards the end of the story (28-30). Nonetheless , we are never sure whether this change will help become more culturally tolerant, for in contact zone not only is the individual expected to show flexibility in his

perception of who he is and how he interacts with different individuals, but is also expected to acquire and improve certain skills to help him make the best out of that experience. The hope is there, but will Manar work as hard as needed to nurture it all the way through?

From Deculturation to Acculturation: Standing on Shaky Grounds

Despite realizing that rejecting cultural difference is not the needed means of social survival in the foreign country, some individuals face difficulty making this new experience a transcultural one. They keep wavering between acceptance and rejection, each based on past experiences through which the current experience of cross-cultural interaction is defined (Lalami 2017). In "Hair, Prayer and Men," Halaby portrays an airplane episode in the life of her protagonist Jubayna, a Palestinian woman residing in the US. Early in the story, the reader is told that Jubayna's complexion and hair colour make her look more American than Arab, to the extent that she is in many situations taken by Americans to be one of them. During the years she has lived in America, Jubayna has come to the realization that her American appearance forms an important part of who she is. She has also learnt as well that she should make use of this privilege to build successful social relations with culturally different individuals there. Read in light of Pratt's discussion on the arts of the contact zone, Jubayna's reliance on her American-like appearance can be seen as a form of transculturation, as she selects this aspect from the American culture and tailors it to serve her in her social life there.

> She counters this with her own war on the War on Terror, by using her American passport and crazy blond hair to blend in. What are they going to do? Put her, a tall blond female attorney, in Guantanamo? Send her back to Jordan? Threaten that if she doesn't give up some names or whereabouts of sleeper cells that they will tell her parents she left her Republican husband for a Zionist? (225)

It is clear that Jubayna has made herself comfortable with being taken as an American because of her looks. Compared to Manar, whose rejection of the American culture and lifestyle is openly expressed, Jubayna knows well how to play it safely by making the best out of her looks.

When she boards the plane and is seated next to the talkative American man, she does not mind spending the flight "sitting next to a radio interview" (229), talking, pausing and talking again. Unlike Manar, Jubayna is good at accepting

difference without feeling threatened to lose her identity. This, of course, does not mean that Jubayna has chosen to completely assimilate into the American society and to let go of the Palestinian part of her identity. In the story, Halaby implicitly indicates that behind the American appearance, there is a mind that perceives its surroundings from the perspective of an Arab who senses fear when someone is treated differently because he looks Arab. In her frequent travels, Jubayna has shown readiness to act as "the Ralph Nader for Middle Eastern travelers" (226), readying herself to "jump to [their] defense should someone act inappropriately or even just unkindly" (226). Like Manar, Jubayna is aware of how sticky the terrorist stereotype has become to Arabs there, and being herself the Barbie-looking girl who is immune to it has not made it vanish. It lurks there at the back of her head every time she notices a dark-skinned man or a scarfed woman detained at any of the airport checkpoints. These thoughts, however, do not seem to threaten the relations she forms with the Americans with whom she interacts, and this makes her more qualified to form successful long-term relations with individuals whose cultural backgrounds are different from hers. The long period she has spent living in the US and the fact that she, as a member of a second-generation family of Palestinian immigrants, has not experienced forced displacement first-hand as Manar has might have made it easier for her to show tolerance of cultural difference and to make the best of any social interaction she takes part in. Dwelling on this point in an article entitled "Singaporean and British transmigrants in China and the cultural politics of 'contact zones'" (2005), Brenda S. A. Yeah and Katie Willis note that living in contact zones weakens the impact culturally constructed stereotypes has on the individual. As contact zones act as "frontiers where 'difference' is constantly encountered and negotiated" (abstract), forming relations not filtered through those stereotypes becomes easier, a fact seen in the malleable personality Jubayna has developed as a second-generation immigrant living in America.

It is ironic that though airplane settings are expected to serve as ideal sites for contact zones, in reality, not all of them do. In the story, the airplane episode represents some of the features of the contact zone. Amongst the passengers Jubayna interacts with or notices during the flight are Brian, the American man who sits next to her, Clueless, a Palestinian-American businessman, Good Citizen, an Arab-American man, and an Asian woman. The plane episode starts off as a good example of a contact zone where cross-cultural interactions take place. Brian, for instance, starts off several short conversations on a myriad of topics, a thing that Jubayna does not seem to mind despite not feeling comfortable doing it. She is noticed to take part in those conversations, either by listening or by talking back,

despite the fact that some of them seem weird or uninteresting to her. It is during that interaction that a contact zone is established. Like Brian, Jubayna shares information about her culture, habits and behaviours, without trying to enforce any of them on the other. The rest of the plane episode, however, does not match its beginning. Part of it could be ascribed to the fact that Jubayna does not literally interact with the other passengers she notices till the end of the flight. She only observes what they are doing and figures from what they are saying or doing that they are both Arabs like her. The rest of the interaction is conducted virtually in Jubayna's mind based on pre-set perceptions, one of which is the all-Arabs – are – terrorists stereotype that the American part of her seems to take seriously.

Prior to the take off, Clueless is speaking loudly on the phone in Arabic, discussing what seems to Jubayna as a business transaction. Part of the failure to establish a contact zone here stems from Clueless' lack of awareness that those around him can hear his conversation, but cannot reciprocate it. In the story, Halaby tells the reader that Jubayna has had the inclination to ask him to lower his voice, but does not in fact do so. The same applies to the case of Good Citizen, whom Jubayna notices reading the Bible in the Arabic language. Here again, Jubayna filters that would-be interaction through a biased lens leading her to the conclusion that it does not really matter that the Arab man is reading the Bible as long as the letters on the front cover are written in Arabic. The only real interaction between Jubayna and the two Arab men takes place when they are about to leave the plane. The inconvenient comment Clueless gives on the blouse Jubayna is wearing is reciprocated by a curse word from her which she intentionally says in Arabic. The fact that Jubayna utters the word in Arabic can be seen as an attempt on her part to initiate an interaction where cultural differences are harmonized, especially that, as mentioned in the discussion above, Jubayna's American looks and her twelve-year stay in America have not made her more American than Arab. Nevertheless, that attempt on her part does not find a fruitful ground to prosper. As the three men, the American and the two Arabs, meet in the aisle after the plane lands, the kind of conversation they engage in gives Jubayna a diminutive role that it is only through what is written on her blouse that she can be accepted as an eligible participant in the interaction. Thus, compared to the more harmonized conversation she has had with the American Brian during the flight, this conversation is oriented by the gender component rather than the cultural component. This is not to deny the presence of a successful contact zone in which cultural differences are understood, accepted and selected from by the participants, but the success of the interaction taking place in that multicultural space is, to some extent, hindered by the domineering impact

the presence of the three male participants in the interaction has on the only female participant. This restricts her role as an eligible participant and puts her on defense, undercutting the interaction.

The same fluctuation is noticed on the part of the main character in Serageldin's "It's Not About That". The short story takes the form of a letter (not necessarily sent to the designated addressee), in which intimate thoughts are shared by its writer, an Egyptian-American woman called Nadia, and a close American-Jewish male friend on the impact their cultural and religious differences have had on their relationship. Early in the story, we are told that Nadia and the man have known each other for a long time. They have also exchanged and shared their thoughts on a number of topics, many of which have caused tension in their relationship. As with the airplane episode in "Hair, Prayer and Men", old and intimate relationships between individuals belonging to different cultures are expected to act as contact zones enabling them to develop a more malleable personality that accepts cultural difference without prejudice. This, however, does not seem to be the case in that relationship.

> It's not about that. It was never about that, between us, so when did it become about that? It was never about my being from Egypt and your being American, about our coming from opposite ends of the spectrum on almost every issue. A few months after we met, I wrote to you: "It's a miracle that we come from worlds so far apart, and met the way we did, and connect the way we do." I saw the distance between us better than you could, because I could see your starting point as well as mine. (275)

As we get more information about Nadia, however, we start to understand that their relationship is not as ideal as it seems to be, to both of them at least. Nadia is an Egyptian woman who has immigrated from Egypt to America, but who has witnessed life-changing events in the history of Egypt which she does not seem to have forgotten. The considerable period of time she has lived in the US has, no doubt, made her more eligible to start this relationship in the American sense. As she writes her words describing their relationship, she is wary enough of the fact that they barely share any memories, apart from those they shared at the university. Her memories about the Egyptian-Israeli War, the October War, the death of the Rais, the assassination of the Sadat are hard to intersect with his memories about the War in Vietnam and the "single mindedness" that, she is sure, "must have taken its toll on [his] marriage" (278) to establish a business. And though she knows that he

"demonstrated for civil rights, [he] had black friends" (277), she is still aware that he is a "card-carrying member of the ACLU" (277).

These hard-to-bring-together memories, however, do not block the space for interaction. In fact, Nadia explains that by the time she got used to the new lifestyle and people in America, there has been little "room in this brave new world for memories of Egypt" (278).[1] The good thing about Nadia, which she shares with Jubayna but not with Manar, is that she realizes that she should not stick blindly to what she has grown up to believe in, because it does not necessarily suit other people in other places. And this makes her, as Yeah and Willis (2005) explain, a potential candidate for successful cross-cultural interaction who is capable of forming relationships not blindly shaped by preconceived stereotypes. Like Jubayna, she does not mind overlooking some of the behaviours which are not acceptable to her as an Arab. In Prattian terms, Nadia exhibits the skill needed to survive in a contact zone. Unlike Manar who rejects the behaviours and habits of Americans regardless of their impact on her and her family, Nadia accepts the fact that other nations' behaviours and habits are different from hers. This point is emphasized by Ewa Bal who notes in "Knowing in Contact Zones" (2020), that the contingency of the encounters taking place in contact zones is what helps redefine many of the historically structured intercultural relations when "peoples geographically and historically separated come into contact with each other and establish ongoing relations," which, to go back to what Pratt says, "usually [involve] conditions of coercion, racial inequality, and intractable conflict" (2008b: 8). Thus, as Nadia engages in this relationship with one who is supposed to be an enemy, she focuses on moving on with the relationship rather than on making their interactions harmonious. This, it should be noted, is one thing that sets her apart from Jubayna. Nadia pressures herself to make the relationship last; she convinces herself that cultural differences can be overcome and that creating a utopian relationship in which no conflict is insurmountable is possible. That is why she is shocked every time her companion lets go of the harmonious tone she expects him to always use. Quite differently, Jubayna is hardly noticed to set any expectations in any of the

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1   Serageldin might be referring to her own experience after leaving Egypt and settling in the US. In a 2003 interview she explains, "I made a very different life for myself in which there was no room for my memories of another place and another time; I tried to blend in like a perfect chameleon. But whenever I returned to Egypt for extended visits, I saw such far-reaching changes sweeping the country, that it seemed to me the world I once knew would soon be gone with the wind. And that was the original impetus to set it all down on paper. But what may have begun as an exercise in "recollections in tranquility" as Wordsworth put it, soon became a very personal and painful attempt to reconcile my own present with my past."

interactions she engages with, whether it is with Americans or Arabs. And this shows that she is experienced enough to know that social survival in a multicultural setting is not conditioned by cultural erasure or cultural assimilation. Thus, while engaging in a harmonious interaction in such a setting requires adopting some habits and behaviours from the dominant culture, the individual is free to choose what suits him and to avoid what does not.

This misconception on the part of Nadia makes her suppose that cultural differences should not be brought to the surface in social interactions as they can wreck the stability of the relation. Nonetheless, and as Pratt (1991) explains in her study of multicultural educational settings as contact zones, the element of 'tension' is an essential component of the process. Having a group of individuals with diverse cultural backgrounds involved in a tension-free interaction either means that none of them understands that those with whom he is interacting are culturally different or that none of them takes that difference seriously enough to exert the needed effort to acknowledge it. Thus, though Jubayna's attempts at engaging in conversations which take into consideration the cultural differences of the other participants are undercut by her failure to overcome the stereotypical representations one culture has for another, she does not shy away from expressing how culturally different she is. Nadia, however, chooses to keep those differences hidden for the fear of them causing tension in the relationship. She even goes to the extent of avoiding communication with her friend in order to guard the relationship against any possible conflict. The ending of the story is where Nadia reaches a degree of self-realization. Calling her friend to make sure his son is safe after the World Trade Towers attacks in September 2001, she is shocked by how mean his generalizations are about all Muslims being terrorists. His attacks leave her speechless then, forgetting that what he said is fuelled by his cultural background, not by individual considerations. Unable to accept the truth that what her friend has said is not directed at her, she chooses to put an end to future interaction despite his repeated apologies.

> ... You said you never meant for me to take what you said personally; that you were willing to put aside our differences for the sake of our friendship. I know that. I know you wouldn't hurt me for the world, not in cold blood. I will always wish you well. But try to understand. We   have nothing left to talk about. This time, it is about that. (283)

The suddenness and harshness of her realization make her adopt a totally different

approach to their relationship, resembling in this sense Manar's approach in rejecting all that is different. It is at this point that Nadia comes to understand that communication between culturally diverse individuals should not repress those differences. Unfortunately, she learns the lesson the wrong way so that she refuses to see the tension that results from interacting with her Jewish friend as a healthy symptom of how harmonious the relationship is. Hence, she chooses to put an end to it.

Transculturation: Bridging the Two Ways

In Kaldas' "He Had Dreamed of Returning," the protagonist Nancy is not an Arab woman. She is American but is married to an Egyptian man, Hani. While the focus at the beginning of the story is on Hani who flees Egypt with his father and mother after his elder brother is killed in the war and who is able to adapt to life in America, it shifts to his wife after he decides to return to Egypt. Like Nadia, Hani is overwhelmed by memories of the war in Egypt, the death of his brother and the fear the family lived during that time. Nadia, however, lets go of those memories as she is taken by life in America, while Hani does not. And this is what pushes him into taking the decision of going back home despite the fact that he is leading a well-established life there. During the years he has lived in the US, he has showed wariness not to get too immersed in the new culture. Like Jubayna, he has demonstrated the ability to select what suits him as an Arab and to avoid what does not with no prejudice. And this, as Kaldas shows in the story, is what has made him succeed in the few relations he has formed with Americans there. As a student at school and at the university and even after graduation, he has established a limited number of relations; nevertheless, in the relations he formed he has demonstrated an ability to get himself acquainted with the cultural background of the individual with whom he is interacting without getting too involved in the relation to the extent of self-erasure. This is not to deny that he has faced difficulties socialising with Americans because of his Arab origins, but, unlike Manar and Nadia and more like Jubayna, he has proved to be a potential candidate for harmonious cross-cultural interaction.

Things, however, do not proceed as expected after his return to Egypt. He is shocked by how different from his relatives he has become. He is also shocked by the different ways relations are perceived in Egypt and the US. Contrary to the ease with which he has expected his interactions with his relatives in Egypt to proceed, he has found it really hard to try to understand and accept their behaviours and habits the way he has accepted those of Americans. At the time that he could accept

the American culture and select what suits him from it, he failed to do so in Egypt. The frequent visits of his relatives who have felt free to inquire about the details of his life, the nosy people he met at work and the illegal ways by which business transactions have been sometimes carried out there made it all the more difficult to turn any of those spaces of cross-cultural interaction into a contact zone. Like Manar, he eventually chooses to reject their difference as it threatens the stability of the identity he has come back home with. This rejection makes him all the more isolated from the people he has thought he has come back to. At work, he starts to lose the passion for what he has been doing for years in America, carrying out his daily tasks there in a robot-like manner.

It is in Egypt that the focus is shifted to his wife who shows more ability than he does to interact with culturally different individuals tolerantly there. To begin with, she does not object to her husband's decision to return to Egypt; contrary to his expectations, she welcomes the idea as one that will give her the chance to experience interacting with a culture different from hers. In Egypt, she embraces the Arab lifestyle and is able to transculture herself more than her Egyptian husband. In "Power, Social Marginality, and the Cultural Psychology of Identities at the Cultural Contact Zones" (2008), Ramaswami Mahalingam explains why individuals in the same social setting manage to form more successful relations cross-culturally at the time that others fail to. As those see the formation of identity as a two-way process of interaction between the culturally different groups in the same setting, they start to "reconfigure their identities and representations of culture" (abstract) transculturally. While in Egypt, Nancy is not annoyed as Hani is by the frequent family visits or by what the latter sees as the 'nosiness' of his relatives. During those visits, she listens carefully to what the women tell her about Egyptian traditions, dishes and history. She even starts to learn cooking the Egyptian way. Unlike her husband whose unexplained unwillingness to interact with his own people with whom he shares a lot, Nancy succeeds at turning every family meeting or work meeting into a contact zone where she could learn more about the new culture, adopt what suits her and accept what does not with no prejudice. It is ironic, in this sense, that for all the years she has spent living with her husband in America, she did not get to know about the Egyptian culture as much as she did in the short period of time she has spent in Egypt.

The story ends ironically with the husband's decision to go back to the US. His wife, however, rejects his decision this time and chooses to stay in Egypt. The opposite decisions they take makes the situation more ironic. Back in America, Hani has shown more ability to interact in a multicultural setting, a thing which he could

not do in the Egyptian society, which is supposed to be analogous to Anderson's imagined community with which he has a lot to share. The fact that for all those years in America he has been able to interact with people of different cultural backgrounds and has not expected to find much in common between himself and them has taught him to accept difference, selecting from it what he sees suitable and rejecting what does not. In Egypt, he feels overwhelmed with how little differences he finds between himself and his relatives and this leaves him with no choice but to have to adopt all their habits and behaviors, which is a thing he has not been used to back in America. This explains why he decides to go back to the US. His wife, likewise, welcomes the idea of accepting cultural difference and this helps her turn the different cross-cultural interactions she engages in into contact zones in Egypt. In fact, this is observed early in the story as she was getting to know her husband before their marriage. In Egypt, this multicultural space becomes wider and more diversified, giving her the chance to get exposed to the culture and the lifestyle there, to choose what to adopt and to reject what she does not want to tolerantly. Eventually, and despite the fact that each chooses to live in a different country, both prove able to interact in multicultural spaces as they realize that such diversity gives them more space to choose, rather than limit their choices to what they have culturally become familiar with. This point of intersection between the partners is highlighted by Nisreen Sawwa and Shadi Neimneh (2017), who argue in an article studying the effects of exile in two short stories by Kaldas that both Hani and Nancy are able to arrive at self-actualization in the countries they immigrate to (207-209).

Conclusion

The fact that the four authors come from different Arab countries does, no doubt, affect their perception and, thus, their representation of the different interactions taking place between the individuals or groups belonging to different cultures in the short stories. Nevertheless , the personal experience the authors share as individuals living in the US and interacting with white Americans and the different ethnic groups in the American society has enabled them to see the larger picture with a minimum degree of prejudice and to understand the feelings usually caused by such clashes to be able to represent them objectively and accurately. Thus, as the discussion above has shown, the four authors' perception of spaces of cross-cultural interaction in America today is not identical; it differs from one short story to another and from one character to another in the same story. Some characters, like Jubayna and Nancy, manage to understand the inevitability of those clashes, and are, therefore, more capable of developing a degree of awareness to enable

them to deal with difference not as a source of threat but as a source of diversity. Those characters, when viewed in light of Pratt's understanding of the contact zone, are able to employ the arts needed in those spaces to benefit the most from those interactions and to make that experience a successful one. Other characters such as Manar, on the other hand, mistake the purpose behind engaging in cross-cultural interactions and start seeing the clashes resulting from them as win-or-lose scenarios. Those individuals are in most cases fuelled by extreme feelings of belongingness and a fixed form of identity, which makes them identify any difference as a source of threat to the stability they derive from their cultural rootedness. Unlike the first kind, they lack the basic arts of the contact zone. A third category, represented in Nadia, still remains. Here, individuals waver between acceptance and rejection. They do realize that absolute rejection of difference is not the correct solution, and thus, without the needed level of awareness, venture blindly into assimilating themselves into the new culture, thinking that by doing so they can manage to overcome those clashes peacefully and gain social acceptance. In their case, the peaceful resolution of those clashes lasts for a short period of time, after which the conflict is initiated anew, more aggressively this time. Unfortunately, those individuals exhibit a degree of knowledge about the arts needed in a contact zone, but they fail, due to past memories usually associated with the home country or to social or political conditions taking place there, to maintain a peaceful treatment of those conflicts. That is why the process of transculturation, in their case, is usually truncated leaving them with feelings of frustration.

The three categories of individuals are observed in the four short stories understudy, with sometimes one story bringing together characters belonging to more than one category at the same time. This diversity on the part of the four authors reflects an awareness that individual reactions in multicultural spaces vary, as the characters acquire a higher level of maturity every time they face a new conflict. And this emphasizes the need to view those interactions as part of an ongoing process in which one's attitudes change and mature to make the best out of that experience. It also shows that the four authors realize the importance of the role of contact zones in creating the harmony needed in multicultural societies. Their personal experience, as immigrants who have spent a relatively long period of time in the US, their awareness that extreme feelings fuelled by complete rejection or assimilation into the mainstream culture is self-destructive, and their globalized perception of human relations as relations which should transcend geographically and culturally defined boundaries have contributed to shaping their attitudes to what is culturally foreign in their stories, making it more inclusive and less culturally prejudiced.

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The Struggle of Youths in Mamduh Adwan's *Hamlet Wakes Up Late*

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Abstract   This article reads Syrian playwright Adwan's appropriation of *Hamlet* as a representation of the grappling of Arab youths against authority. Unlike previous articles on *Hamlet Wakes Up Late* (1976), this article considers Laertes as a central figure to this analysis, and hence, it views his fight, and by extension that of Arab youths, as an attempt to defy totalitarian regimes. By relying on the conception of the intellectual, as developed by both Gramsci and Said, we attempt to demonstrate how Laertes, a standout figure in Adwan's rewriting of *Hamlet*, is the one who leads a revolution that gives voice to the youths in the MENA region. Notwithstanding this fact, Laertes remains unable to stand against the regime, which represses these youth-led revolts. This fact is historically proven as this article takes Adwan's narrative as a counter discourse and a resistance to *Shabiha*, a group of thugs working to maintain the regime's apparatus. The play represents the role *Shabiha* play in detaining and torturing dissidents such as Lorenzo; a character that Adwan adds to highlight how brutally totalitarian regimes reply to any attempt to change the status quo.

Keywords   Adwan; Laertes; Lorenzo; *Shabiha*; youths

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Introduction

Mamduh Adwan was a distinguished Syrian playwright, critic, poet and writer. He was born in 1941 in Qayrun, near Masyaf, Hama and died in December 2004. As a prolific playwright, Adwan was known, alongside his contemporaries like Mustapha Al Hallaj, Walid Ikhlasso, Ferhan Bulbul, and Saadallah Wannous, for being a political, ideological and nationalistic playwright as he commented regularly on the current status of the Arab nation (Meisun Ali 95). Adwan's *Hamlet Wakes Up Late* (*Hamlit Yastaiqizu Muta'akhiran*) was published in 1976, and performed in the National Theatre in Damascus in 1978. Adwan's play centers on Hamlet's unconsciousness about his surroundings. In Adwan's play, Horatio, the narrator of the story, describes Hamlet's drinking habits that blind him from seeing Claudius's arrangement of deals with Fortinbras, Ophelia's attempt to become a queen by seeking impregnation from him, and Rosencrantz's behavior as an informant to Claudius's regime who captures Lorenzo; a layman and a revolutionary character whom Adwan created to reflect Claudius' manipulative strategies to quell revolutions and maintain power.

Instead of imitating the Bard's text, Adwan captures and recreates a completely different plot, a story that would appeal to local conflicts to which Arab readers could relate. This perspective makes one recall Linda Hutcheon's and Julie Sanders's comments on the implications of interpreting and re-reading literary works. In her attempt to define adaptation, Hutcheon believes that it "comes simply from repetition with variation" (4) which applies to Adwan's recreation as the text diverges from the Bard's *Hamlet*. Instead of centralizing Hamlet's internal conflict, this article attempts to show how the play projects Laertes's interconnectedness with reality in terms of words and action. In *Adaptation and Appropriation* (2006), Julie Sanders uses the term "appropriation" to accentuate the ephebe's, to borrow Harold Bloom's concept in the *Anxiety of Influence*, "decisive journey away from the informing source into a wholly new cultural product and domain" (26). In this sense, the ephebe, Adwan, redirects Shakespeare's representation of Hamlet's soliloquy to a concrete fight that appeals to a large segment of Arab youths in the MENA region. Through this reading, Adwan not only deviates from the Bard's text, but also recreates an entire canon that prophesizes the youth-led revolutions of the

Arab Spring that started almost four decades after his writing.

The above concepts, despite being independent in their sense, fall within the framework of intertextuality. This postmodern feature has been of major significance to the writings of standout literary thinkers as Kristiva and Eliot who believe that all literary productions are mere recreations of writings already developed in the past. Yet, as much as this element proves the knowledgeable character of the writer, some argue that it mainly disrupts a writer's creativity. However, to Ania Loomba and Martin Orkin (1998), dwelling on an already existing text does not necessarily mean creating a replica, but offers a "reinterpretation" of the current situations the world is encountering (3).

Accentuating the aforementioned notion, Huang and Rivlin (2014) maintain that appropriating an already existing literary text cannot be considered an "unethical" act as it bears "strong overtones of agency" (2). The new text is shaped by political, social, and cultural aura that marks its agency and difference from the source text. Having pointed out the significance of intertextuality in modern time, re-writing Shakespeare has become a tendency that surpassed seeing Shakespeare as a Western canonical figure. Owing to the wide range of adaptations/appropriations of Shakespeare, it seems that the Bard's texts became the property of the entire world and its population. His timeless themes seem to reveal the inner complexities of individuals; he addresses the ambivalent human nature and that is why his texts are still influential.

Arab playwrights have been adapting and appropriating Shakespeare's texts to comment on the current socio-political situations the MENA region is witnessing. For instance, Margaret Litvin (2011) has investigated a new tradition that involves the recreation of Shakespeare's texts that she terms "The Arab Hamlet tradition". In her definition, she maintains that "the Hamlets one meets in Arab countries are different; they are marked by extensive experiences and concerns" (12). Arab playwrights seek Shakespeare's texts to reflect on the status of Arab countries and their youths. The so-called Shakespeare's Hamlet, in England, has become Arab playwrights' Hamlets to keep recreating different agencies and a new tradition that dwells on Shakespeare's text but recreates its socio-political aura to raise awareness.

A significant scholarship has been written on Adwan's play. In her introductory note on the English translation of the play, Litvin (2015) comments that the play discusses both foreign and internal affairs (*Four Arab* 65). She insists that Adwan's play "satirizes two betrayals, domestic and national" (65). Socially, "the silent ghost," for Litvin, does not only represent the nationalistic ideals of the deceased Egyptian president that "haunts Hamlet" but also "Baʿthist Syria's own socialist

ideals" (Ibid). Litvin maintains that the play is open to multiple interpretations (5). She insists that the text is a "social satire" that mirrors 1970s Syria:

> Hamlet's madness is plausibly troped as a resigned intellectual's alcoholism; the added characters Lorenzo and the actor highlight the problem of class division in an ostensibly socialist society, Ophelia's pseudo-liberated sex life brings no happiness but turns her into a disposable tool of the men around her. (65)

As Litvin succinctly puts it, 1970s Syrian society roamed in a gothic atmosphere as the regime came into power. Cleveland (2004) argues that "as the regime sought to implement the original Ba'[a]th principle of social transformation, it also imposed political rigidity, cultural uniformity, and intellectual obedience […] Syria was to be controlled by the state, not fuelled by the creative energy of individuals" (404). At the national level, Baa'th Syria imposed many restrictions that limited freedom of speech. This echoes Bessami and Abu Amrieh's comment on Arab playwrights who adapted and appropriated Shakespeare's *Hamlet* in the sense that they "comment on the contemporaneous issues in the Arab world" (1791).

In "Hamlet in Arabic," Al-Shetawi (1999) writes that Adwan's play projects the playwright's darkest thoughts about the "political repression and corruption in his native Syria, and probably the Arab world at large" (50). He elaborates that the text is a direct critique to Arab intellectuals who failed to act "positively" towards the Arab region's conflict with Israel especially after the loss of the 1967 war (50). In this sense, Hamlet's alcoholism, Al-Shetawi maintains, echoes the intellectual slumber in the Arab world as "he embodies the image of the educated Arab in the sense that he is always taken by surprise" (51). Al-Shetawi's focus on the portrayal of these particular secondary characters draws our attention to one of the significant changes in recontextualizing Shakespeare in the Arab world. Similarly, in "Hamlet as an Arab Intellectual: A Marxist Reading of Mamduh Adwan's Play *Hamlet Wakes Up Late*," Bedjaoui and Abu Amrieh (2022) argue that Adwan's play "criticize[s] the Syrian policy of the post-1970s under the rule of President Hafez Al-Assad" (90). As a Marxist scholar, Bedjaoui and Abu Amrieh claim, that Adwan uses Shakespeare "to critically respond to the modern Arab politics" (90). Bedjaoui and Abu Amrieh conclude that "in delineating Hamlet as an Arab intellectual, he criticizes through him the hypocrisy not only of the Syrian regime, but of the Arab world in general" (90). Unlike Al-Shetawi's , and Bedjaoui and Abu Amrieh's readings, this article focuses on Adwan's representation of Laertes. By changing

Laertes's and Ophelia's characters drastically, Adwan points out how the 1970s in Syria were indeed "an interesting time" (71). For Bessami and Abu Amrieh "the representation of the political, social and cultural malaise of the region began from 1970s as the death of the late Egyptian leader Gamal Abdel Nasser (1918-1970) shattered all hopes of establishing an Arab "unity" (174).

In *Hamlet's Arab Journey*, Litvin (2011) writes that Adwan went in the same direction as Sadiq Jalal al-Azm who encouraged "his Arab leaders not to oversleep and let 'the Fortinbrases of his world…win the day and have the final say'" (27). Litvin affirms that Adwan's Hamlet's reproduction of Shahrayar is "self-expressi[ve]" of his "moody" thoughts and realizations (186). She adds that Adwan's readers were able to grasp that Hamlet's mouse trap is no "resistance" as she quotes Ghassan Ghunaym's interpretation of the Arabic Hamlet as "'an exhausted intellectual'… distinguishable from an outright 'opportunist' only by the guilt he suffers" (191).

In her analysis of the Arabic adaptations of *Hamlet* on the screen, Khoury (2010) writes in her article that Mamduh Adwan's play "awakened" the Arabic Hamlet Tradition (157). Similarly, Alghaberi (2018) writes that Adwan is a leading figure in the making of the "Arab Hamlet Tradition and Canon" (11). He argues that the tradition's concerns with socio-political criticism urges producers to think outside the box in reconstructing different "Hamlets" (10). In another article, Litvin (2014) illustrates that Adwan's theatrical piece:

> alludes to contemporary politics: Elsinore (read the Arab World) is recovering from a bitter defeat by Fortinbras (Israel/the West), who still occupies a piece of its land (The Golan Heights/Palestine), the new king (Sadat) is treacherously planning to make peace with Fortinbras. (*Arab Near* 325)

Indeed, Litvin's reading of Adwan's text is purely political that comments in general on the Palestinian dilemma. She writes, furthermore, that the playwright's Hamlet "is helpless but far from blameless" as he appoints himself as "Christ, quoting the Gospel of Mathew to express his opposition to Claudius's proposed peace making with Fortinbras" (*Arab Near* 325)

Indeed, Adwan was a leading dramatist who commented regularly on the Palestinian question. He was an effective contributor to the Palestinian National theatre (1970) which helped in "politicizing" its audiences after the Six-Day-War through which theatrical pieces were seen as a form of "resistance" to Israeli occupation (Robin 192). The theatre historian Edward Ziter (2015) contends that

the writings of Adwan, Wannus and Maghut explore post Six-Day War effects (61). He argues that Adwan's play was written after "Sadat's historic speech to the Israeli Knesset in 1977" which was a "shock" to the Arab region and its "attack on 'the martyrs of the Arab World'" which was interpreted as a "normalization" of the death of the martyrs (Ziter 24). Ziter believes that similar to Hamlet's father's ghost, "the dead demand vengeance, but the greatest betrayal is political appeasement, not sexual transgression" (Ziter 25). He insists that the incorporation of the "angry ghost of a father" is very often incorporated in the Syrian theatre as a connotation of "martyrdom" (Ziter 25).

'Ismat (2019) writes in his article that Adwan was "nicknamed 'Zorba' for his wild and vivid personality" (123). 'Ismat affirms that the playwright "opposed the Alawites religious thinking and was inclined towards leftist ideology" (Ibid.). For Cooke (2007), Adwan views the prison narrative as a mirror to the Syrian everyday life (*Dissident Syria* 4). She maintains that Adwan was attacked for his ties with the Syrian regime due to being a part of the Arab Writers Union (*Dissident* 153). She quotes Adwan when he said that the status of intellectuals is "agonizing […] who need to choose between daily security and revolting […] Intellectuals had to negotiate between twin evils: state control and attempts at cooptation on the one hand and perception of appropriation on the other hand" (Cooke, 76-77). In *Dancing in Damascus*, Cooke (2017) illustrates that Adwan urges "readers and theatre audiences to think the unthinkable: coercion is not normal, stolen dignity must be redeemed, liberty seized" (23). Cooke quotes Adwan as saying:

> We believed that a poem could overthrow a dictator. We were enchanted with the thought that art is a weapon. Of course, it is. But no poem, no piece of music can overthrow a dictator. It can, however, resist the normalization of oppression. It can focus on human beings and their deep humanity, reminding them constantly that they are human. (quoted in Cooke, 120)

Indeed, this quote in particular reminds us as readers of the importance of artistic production in fostering awareness of the sociopolitical situation as well as humanizing individual experiences. As stated by Adwan, writing a poem does not change an entire political system/regime, but it contributes in one way or another to the process of making change in society.

By contrast to the already conducted scholarship on Adwan's play, this article attempts to fill in a gap widely disregarded in academia. While the mainstream focused on analyzing the text as a commentary on the Arab-Israeli conflict, as stated

in the above-mentioned critical pieces, this article reads the play as a reflection of the domestic affairs of Adwan's Syria. It investigates the way *Hamlet Wakes Up Late* comments on the emergence of *Shabiha* and how the group oppresses youths to maintain the country's status quo. This article probes into how Adwan depicts the struggle of youths under the Syrian repressive regime. While the latter attempts to preserve its authority on Syrian lands, youths find themselves suffocated and frustrated to organize revolutions to voice out their concerns. Reading Adwan's play from this lens would help us as readers better understand the nature of the repressive regime and most importantly the tactics and strategies employed to silence an entire generation namely containment and coercion. This socio-political reading attributed to Adwan's play is inspired by the emergence of the Syrian uprising in 2011. In this sense, Adwan's text can be read as a revolutionary play that prophesizes the revolution of Syrian youths against authoritarian regimes.

Mercenaries in Shakespeare's *Hamlet*

Informants, thugs and mercenaries as characters, are present in Shakespeare's *Hamlet,* which further explains why Shakespeare's text is helpful in highlighting Syria's malaise. Claudius, in Shakespeare's *Hamlet,* refers to the "Switzers" to protect him (Kliman and Lake, *The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark*, 117). He says:

> KING: Where are my Switzers? Let them guard the door.
>   *Enter a Messenger*
> MESSENGER: What is the matter?
>   Save yourself, my lord (Ibid).

In the explanatory note, Bernice W. Kliman and James H. Lake (2008) write that the "Switzer" is a name that refers to the Swiss "bodyguards" who used to protect "foreign princes" (Ibid). Arguably, Adwan selected Shakespeare's *Hamlet* to draw an analogy between the Switzers and the *Shabiha* as two repressive apparatuses that protect the regime in power.

John Casparis (1982) highlights in his article that "by the end of the fifteenth century, the Swiss had mastered the new tactics and developed a reputation as invincible, fearless and ruthless soldiers" (597). He argues, furthermore, that "the mercenary" worked "for a specific wage… under a centralized, bureaucratic, hierarchal authority" (605). Seen from this angle, Claudius's use of the Switzers was to for the purpose of being protected from the revolution coming from the

people. Similarly, the *Shabiha* ring is considered the "bodyguard" of Claudius's regime, having both Polonius and Rosencrantz as protectors of the regime. Here, the analogy drawn between both texts help us have a better understanding of Adwan's rewriting of *Hamlet* as a palimpsest of Syrian youths' struggles owing to the fact that the Bard's play offers an inspiring environment to reflect on Adwan's native Syria.

Furthermore, Shakespeare's Rosencrantz and Guildenstern as informants in *Hamlet* who vouch their services to Claudius when they say: "we both obey/ And here give up ourselves in the full bent/ To lay our service freely at your feet, To be commanded" (Mowat and Werstine, *Hamlet*, 45). Similarly, in Adwan's appropriation, both characters insist on the fact that they are "carrying out the king's orders" (127). This entails the presence of the *Shabiha* phenomenon that works for the king and follows his orders. Both Claudius and Polonius are considered part of the authority; therefore, they order acts of violence toward the population but not doing them themselves.

Shabiha: An Etymology

In *The Impossible Revolution: Making Sense of the Syrian Tragedy*, Yassin Al-Haj Saleh (2017) traces the emergence of a group of "thugs" who called themselves *Shabiha*. He argues that the very origin of this phenomenon is oblique as it can have multiple sources: "*ashabaah* (ghost), since they are outlaws who work in the dark or Shabah that relates to the Mercedes Benz that senior *Shabiha* preferred? Or idea of *Shabh*, the extending and expanding of privileges and powers" (46). The group "surfaced in the second half of the 1970s, after Syria's intervention in Lebanon in 1976 and the rise of the economic smuggling from Lebanon which is open economically into the Syrian isolated economics" (46). Indeed, the central source of their financial income was "smuggling […] electronics, tobacco, drugs, alcohol, antiquities…etc" (47).

Al-Haj Saleh argues that due to the close ties shared between both *Shabiha* and the government, they were never stopped by the latter, only if one of their interests were put at stake (52). He writes that the *Shabiha* group was incorporated within the state as a part of "security then discharged them in a form of generalized, organized, and legitimized violence against society" (53). The *Shabiha*'s uncontrolled behavior bestowed signs of hostility, aggression and humiliation, and attempted to show the civilians the hierarchal system to let them understand their position as ruled subjects (54). For al-Haj Saleh, the *Shabiha* are "outlaws, having relation with *Mukhabarat* and police officers and gaining money from illegal practices" (55). Al-Haj Saleh

adds that by the 1980s, the president was to be seen as "the leading father" figure while the governed took the role of "children" (56). During this time, the group became so powerful, "untouchable, operating freely and with impunity in the coastal city of Latakia" (47).

Syrian Youths and *Shabiha* in Adwan's Appropriation

Adwan's play comments on Syria's socio-political life in the 1970s. He comments on the rise of *Shabiha* as a primary state apparatus that manipulates and silences the revolt of youths. Adwan starts his play by incorporating Shakespeare's ending scene as a beginning in his; Laertes fencing Hamlet with a poisoned sword, having Claudius and Rosencrantz watching the fight. As it is written in the Bard's original tragedy, Hamlet asks Horatio to be "fair" in retelling his version of the story. The stage is described as "dark" to reflect the gloomy atmosphere of injustice prevailing in Denmark after Hamlet's death. Horatio comments, moreover, on Hamlet's inability to grasp his surroundings by saying: "Life was not cruel to him, but he did not know that he lived in a difficult and interesting time" (*Four Arab* 71). Horatio's comment entails the danger of being unconscious of the current surroundings of the individual. Hamlet's downfall is a result of his blindness to the sociopolitical situation, and thus Horatio, or Adwan, predicts the future of Arab youths, represented by the unconscious Hamlet, in case they fail to act against authority that continuously and maliciously manipulates them. In other words, this section highlights youths' difficult journey of self-assertion in Syria, and thus, the MENA region and their ongoing manipulation by the old regime and its apparatuses.

Horatio, furthermore, comments on the "interesting time" as a "time of great responsibilities and self-discipline and daily anxiety for oneself and for others and for the nation" (*Four Arab* 72). We believe that the responsibility Adwan is referring to is linked to the responsibility of Syria towards Syrians in providing a good life that guarantees an acceptable level of dignity, as well as its responsibility towards Palestine which the Arabs lost after the Six-Day War. Adwan's recontextualization of *Hamlet* in the Arabic context reminds us of Harold Bloom's theory of the *Anxiety of Influence* whereby he asserts that influence by Shakespeare had a similar sense to "inspiration" (xvi). He further maintains that "strong poems are always omens of resurrection. The dead may or may not return, but their voice comes alive, paradoxically never by mere imitation, but in an agonistic misprision performed upon forerunners by only the most gifted of their successors" (xxvi). Applying this to Adwan, his re-writing of Shakespeare's tragedy was not merely a mimesis of Shakespeare's theatrical piece, but rather a new production that is "inspired" by a

canonical piece of writing, and as stated by Bloom, this "inspiration" is triggered in only those equipped enough to "resurrect" new interpretations to an already existing text in the literary canon.

As stated above, this section attempts to highlight Adwan's play as a projection of Syrian youths' struggle for self-assertion while being silenced and manipulated by the old regime's apparatuses such as *Shabiha*. In the first scene of his play, Adwan uses the motif of drinking to reflect the status quo of the country. Even if most characters are sober, they are drunk. This might be interpreted as Adwan's comment on socio-political life in 1970s Syria as its population suffered under the regime's *Shabiha*. Laertes's first appearance in the play shows that he is no ordinary character as his first statement entails a critique of people's "ignorance" when he enters a debate with Lorenzo and Guildenstern about the late king's corpse. This again can allegorically refer to Adwan's socio-cultural critique of Syria's government whereby the level of "illiteracy" in the country reached around 60% of the country's inhabitants (Cleveland 403). Adwan; therefore, uses the techniques of "redrafting" and "recrafting" (Sanders 46) to draw an analogy between his Syria and Shakespeare's Denmark. Perhaps, one can say that *Hamlet Wakes Up Late* has its own "aura" that makes it very hard to detect that one is reading an adaptation of Shakespeare's *Hamlet.* It seems that readers detect the Bard's text only through the names of characters but what is attributed to them does not resonate with Shakespeare's text.

Laertes's reasonable thoughts and logical arguments prove that he cannot tolerate discussions that are not based on reason. As proof, he is never able to finish the discussion with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern as they relate the nation's bad situation to people's deviation from religion. In this way, Laertes's character connotes the Saidian concept of the secular intellectual. For Edward Said (1994) the "public" job of the intellectual is to be an "outsider, 'an amateur' and disturber of status quo" (*Representations* x). To begin with, Adwan's Laertes is an educated man who studied abroad and is closely related to his native culture as he wrote a thesis on "folk singing" that relates mostly to the masses. This accentuates the way he is close to the public, thus having a broader view that allows him to raise people's consciousness. According to Gramsci, the essence of intellectualism should not be judged from "eloquence" as an undistinguished criterion rather a true intellectual, which he labels as "organic", should be able to actively engage in real life "as a constructor, organizer, 'permanent persuader', and not just a simple orator" (10). This definition fits our understanding of Adwan's representation of Laertes as an organic intellectual whose quest is to raise people's consciousness and awareness

about their surroundings.

Moreover, Laertes is a secular organic intellectual in the way he bestows the intellectual's "universal" approach. For Said, an intellectual aims at deconstructing ideas "limiting to human thought and communication" (xi) and thus "universality means taking a risk in order to go beyond the easy certainties provided [to] us by our background, language, nationality, which so often shield us from the reality of others" (xiv). Laertes's comment on religion, including his mockery of the appearance of the Virgin Mary, makes him a secular intellectual *par excellence.* Despite being attacked by Rosencrantz and Guildenstern for forgetting his religion after studying abroad, Laertes feels that his behavior is rather logical as a secular intellectual favors substance over superficiality, and thus, reason over emotion. As a secular intellectual, he analyses the situation reasonably as an "amateur" who studied outside his country, and thus, he can offer an alternative version of perceiving the country's status quo. He has no affiliation to his homeland's religion or background; therefore, he can offer a socio-cultural critique in a neutral objective way. For Levin (2002), Shakespeare's Laertes represents Hamlet's "Foil". Indeed, even though both are triggered by revenge, Hamlet's closeness to his father is juxtaposed with Laertes's "cold, formal and annoyed […] sardonic" (222) relationship with Polonius.

Lorenzo regards Laertes as the country's savior from Claudius and Polonius's corruption. When they enter the stage, accompanied by both Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, Lorenzo tries his best to talk to Laertes about his father's embezzlement. He blames both Rosencrantz and Guildenstern for their unnecessary comments that drove Laertes off-stage. He says: "You guys wasted our chance, I had wanted to bring the conversation around to his father" (*Four Arab* 75). Lorenzo draws a line of separation between Laertes and Polonius and tells his friends that the former differs from his father in terms of beliefs and morals. Indeed, Lorenzo has blind faith in Laertes' justice. He says: "Laertes is better than his father. I was wondering what he would do if he found out. But you guys ruined everything" (76).

Laertes's father, Polonius, is a corrupt politician who "embezzled" the money that was donated to help war victims. This fact is shown through Lorenzo whose dissident voice is brutally silenced by the regime's repressive apparatuses. Lorenzo is the incarnation of the voice of wisdom and justice. As a character, he wants to reveal Polonius's corruption to his son Laertes. He tells both Rosencrantz and Guildenstern that Polonius "took more than three million [and] stole from the people" (75). Rosencrantz takes Polonius's side by telling Lorenzo let "him steal" as everybody in the country is "stealing" (*Four Arab* 76). Later on in the play,

Lorenzo's hatred towards Polonius is intensified as he "spits after him violently [and says that he] can't stand the sight of that man" (78). Laertes is not aware of his father's wrongdoings in the kingdom. Relating this to Al-Shetawi's and Litvin's arguments, it appears that Hamlet is not the only intellectual in the play waking up late to his surroundings; apparently, Laertes is also unconscious of his father's corruption and involvement in filthy political deals.

Laertes's portrayal is also reminiscent of Robin Yassin-Kassab and Leila al-Shami's illustration of Syrian elites who were torn during the revolution, which further accentuates the relevance of reading Adwan's text as prophetic of the Arab Spring revolutions. Yassin-Kassab contends:

> As Syrians rose up against the regime, the old oppositional elites inside the country and in exile succumbed to catch up. Of the three main projects which resulted, one depended on the empty hope that the regime would negotiate itself out of existence, and two threw themselves to the mercy of foreign states. None were able to establish deep roots in the revolution on the ground, neither among activists not the armed resistance (183).

This feeling of being lost among Syrian elites has accentuated the masses' loss of revolution. Not only has the authoritarian regime taken the upper hand in terms of revolutions due to its heavy reliance on different apparatuses, but also Syrians have suffered a double-oppression having been betrayed by their elites. Similarly, Lorenzo and the actor in Adwan's play seem to have been betrayed by Laertes, their only hope to expose the corrupt regime and its *Shabiha*. In here, as it will be detailed below, the regime has used two main tactics to manipulate and quell the masses from revolutions and this includes coercion and containment.

When Polonius asks about the whereabouts of Laertes, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern start looking for Laertes in their pockets. When Polonius tells them to stop acting like children, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern say: "Unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven" (*Four Arab* 77). This, we believe, entails Adwan's prophecy about Syria's *Shabiha* who started telling people to consider the president as "the leading father" to whom citizens would take "the role of children" (Al-Haj Saleh 56). The latter are to be controlled and governed by the parental figure as they are unable to decide their lives themselves. The kingdom of heaven, we reckon, connotes Syria's authority, meaning that devotion to the leader and behaving like children would allow citizens to live peacefully under Claudius's absolute reign. Practicing the required

behavior would lead Lorenzo and the other characters to "enter the kingdom of heaven," meaning good life. Moreover, it shows how Adwan exposes the regime's infantilization of its people and youths.

Lorenzo believes that each time he sees Polonius he "feels that he's filled his belly with the blood of the martyrs" (*Four Arab* 78). Rosencrantz tells Horatio and Lorenzo that working with Hamlet would guarantee them immunity from Polonius which again reminds us of the *Shabiha* who are "devoted to their leaders" (Al Haj Saleh 47), and thus, they gain absolute protection by authority. Polonius, in this case, bestows many signs that show he is a *shabih* in every sense of the word. According to Al-Haj Saleh, members of *Shabiha* share "powerful ties of loyalty" towards authority (55) which is itself a significant feature in Polonius who protects the regime with all his power. Moreover, Al-Haj Saleh argues that if the existence of the regime was threatened, "the masks would drop and *Shabiha* would practice unlimited violence, random and discriminatory" (56). This is reflected in Lorenzo's case: he is tortured after his comments on the regime under Polonius's orders as will be explained in the following paragraphs. Al-Haj Salah writes, furthermore, that Baaʿthist members were rich and this entails Polonius's richness that he took from the citizens' money as well as the authority.

Polonius is indeed Claudius's sidekick. He works hard to protect Claudius's position as a king. He hires a group of citizens to support Claudius's regime by giving them specific flags; he also teaches them to "chant the approved cheers" (112) and gives them orders to arrest and torture those who oppose the regime, particularly Lorenzo whom we know of his death later in the play. Indeed, Lorenzo's rebellion is accentuated after he discovers his friend's betrayal when he says that his act of treason is "just a natural result of the general corruption" (105). He carries on by saying that all the series of kidnappings and executions are done to "those who show their discontent" (105). He points to Hamlet's ignorance and incites him to defy authority by saying "You have to stop what's happening, you have to halt the current situation that's corrupting the people, [and] end the waste of the nation's resources" (106).

In Act II, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern torture Lorenzo whose "face is covered with blood" being accused of national treason after being condemned of "inciting the people to curse Fortinbras" (*Four Arab* 126). This, as stated above, signifies the strategy of containment in which Lorenzo's rebellion was contained by torture. Here, containment would guarantee control over the masses as any voice that expresses revolution is silenced before it reaches the wider masses. This again confirms Adwan's critique of *Shabiha* whose main job is to capture the regime's

opposition and torture them (Al-Haj Saleh 60). When Horatio remonstrates that this is not a treatment fit to a "friend," Rosencrantz confirms that he is fulfilling the king's "dirty orders" (127). As stated above, *Shabiha* performed unconditional violence, and this shows Adwan's critique of the country's repressive apparatus. Rosencrantz knows that he has immunity since he serves the king, and thus, he allows himself to follow the orders to the extreme. He even tells Hamlet that he does not have authority as a crown prince over him as an informant, i. e. as a *Shabih*. Horatio narrates "and so Rosencrantz turns into an executioner of his old friends. Friends who were useful to him in difficult times, he became a weapon against them in the hands of the new time" (*Four Arab* 148). Rosencrantz symbolizes the authority's repressive apparatus. Because people in authority cannot themselves execute people, they hire thugs and informants to do the job for them.

This depiction by Adwan in his play is reminiscent of Al-Haj Saleh's condemnation of the unlimited force practiced by *Shabiha* in the Arab Spring. He comments on their savagery which is "propelled by a combination of violence, kinship and despotism" (52) and explains how it served the regime's purpose in quelling revolutions. After being tied to the country's organism, Al-Haj Saleh continues, "[*Shabiha*] paralyzed society, making resistance impossible outside the context of a full-blown revolution" (53). To bring insight into this suffocating environment, Al-Haj Salah quotes lines from Mamdouh Adwan's book *Hayawanat al-insan* (*The Animalization of Man*) in which the playwright explicitly refers to the vicious and inseparable ties between *Shabiha* and its regime. Adwan writes: "despite the fact that it was the *shabih* who had broken the traffic laws, he still got off his bike and started cursing at the driver […] he kicked [the driver] in the face, the *shabih* answered, 'Don't you know that this whole country belongs to us?!'" (Quoted in Al-Haj Saleh 53). This use of "us" by the *shabih*, the critic argues, not only bestows signs of power, but shows how all violent actions are legitimized by the authoritarian regime (53-4). This intimidation surpassed physical boundaries to reach psychological and linguistic humiliation of populace (54).

Moreover, the authority seems to be quite scared of Laertes's spirit of activism. Adwan's characterization of Laertes as the representative of the "rabble" echoes Shakespeare's portrayal of the same character in *Hamlet*. The Bard writes:

> Than young Laertes, in a riotous head,
> O'ever bears your officers. The rabble call him "lord,"
> And, as the world were now but to begin,
> Antiquity forgot, custom not known,

The ratifiers and props of every word,

(they) cry "Choose we, Laertes shall be king!" (Mowat and Werstine 107).

As a young intellectual, Laertes seems to have planted the seeds of revolution in the masses. He was put in prison for "he entered the country by stealth and went to rally them and spread fabricated news about [the king,] inciting the people to rebel" (*Four Arab* 144). The informants affirm to Claudius that Laertes is popular among the "rabble" thus a possible leader of the revolution. People, in this sense, consider him as their representative instead of Hamlet. After being detained, the informants tell Claudius to offer Laertes a symbolic position in the palace without having any official "power" to reduce the masses' rebellion since the presence of a representative within authority would make the population feel that their hopes and aspirations are "realized" (144).

Similar to Shakespeare's text, Laertes, who realizes the death of his father, seeks revenge. He is blinded by the spirit of vengeance, and manipulated by Claudius who tells him that the informants carried orders he did not make. In Adwan's re-writing, Laertes approves his sister's marriage to Guildenstern to conceal her pregnancy, and agrees to have a position in authority as a medium between authority and the "rabble." He is tricked into believing that Claudius wishes him good fortune. As in Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, Claudius arranges a duel between Hamlet and Laertes the outcome of which is the death of both. Adwan, thus, warns Syrian youths not to fall into the regime's manipulation and to be cautious. Revolution is mandatory to attain political, social and cultural stability. At this stage, Adwan reveals another strategy of manipulation by the regime namely coercion in which Laertes is subjected towards agreeing on becoming part of the regime rather than defending his own people. Even if the essential plan to which he agrees links him to the populace, Claudius could have never allowed any rebellion or contact with the masses. The position he offered Laertes was a title without effective authority or power as he was doomed to die with Hamlet.

Adwan's belief in the power of youths is omnipresent in the text. Claudius is aware that "young people are the blessing of life. They always set examples we should learn from. We should speed toward our goals with the speed of youth" (86). This statement can be read in two different ways. On the one hand, one may argue that Claudius is sarcastic since he is not interested in encouraging the youths to participate in the political life because they pose a threat to his rule. On the other hand, Adwan uses Claudius to project the importance of youths in fostering awareness and change in society as they can be a "blessing" to the entire community

when knowing how to react to oppression.

That is why we reckon that Claudius's use of Fortinbras as a pretext reflects again his manipulation of the masses and justifies the presence of Syrian *Shabiha*. For Al-Haj Saleh, "the Baaʿthist used 'ideological tashbih:' accusing treason, a collective atmosphere of paranoia, putting population in guard of the conspiracies allegedly planned against them" (Ibid, 58). In this sense, it appears that Adwan's choice of *Hamlet* emanates from the fact that more than one feature of the play applies to Baaʿth Syria that roamed in corruption and secularism. For instance, the play comments on how *Shabiha*, while claiming to be protecting people from external dangers and threat, are heavily involved in "smuggling." In the play, the actor says: "in the poor quarters they say that everyone from the palace only cares about arranging deals and smuggling money abroad" and that "no one cares anymore about the land Fortinbras has occupied" (*Four Arab* 97). Here, Adwan's reference to *Shabiha* is rather clear. Members of *Shabiha* used to practice "smuggling" from Lebanon. "Abroad" here, may refer to the easy access members of the *Shabiha* have to strengthen their existence in Syria through Lebanon. Moreover, the actor accentuates the carelessness by which the Palestinian question is being dealt with as no action has been made against the territory "Fortinbras occupied."

Adwan's incorporation of Syria's *Shabiha* is detailed when he mentions the "informants" to Claudius who "bring him all the news" (100). Al-Haj Saleh (2017) writes that the government used *Mukhabarat* who put citizens under "surveillance" to lower down all risks of revolution (49). This is evident in Claudius's use of Hamlet's friend, Rosencrantz, as an informant to control Hamlet's actions, mainly the play production. Using informants at this stage would help the authority maintain its power and preserve the status quo. Polonius hires Rosencrantz or as Adwan writes, Polonius has "been using him [Rosencrantz] for a while" to reveal a piece of information of great "value" (*Four Arab* 101). Rosencrantz informs both Claudius and Polonius of the changes in the play as well as the good relationship between Horatio and the actor.

Indeed, Polonius shows the threat that the actor poses as he questions this close tie when he asks "what could a youth who lives in the palace like Horatio have in common with a poor man like this actor" (102). This sentence entails two main facts. On the one hand, it refers to the fact that the people of the palace and those outside the palace live two completely different lives. It is, as if Adwan is making a distinction between the people living in the "kingdom of heaven" or inside the regime's palace including informants and members of the authority, and another

world or what we shall allow ourselves to call the "kingdom of hell" outside the palace in which people are poor, do not have preferences (*Four Arab* 95) and are barely recalling their humanity and dignity that they were deprived of by authority. On the other hand, it seems that Horatio's interest in the actor stems from the very fact that he is the narrator in the story, and thus, the version he plans to tell does not only do justice to Hamlet but also does justice to the people living outside the castle.

At this stage, Adwan is calling on youths to look beyond the confines of the palace, or the Baaʻth principles, disregard *Shabiha*, and use their powers of change to look at the truth that exists outside the realms of authority. His call for youths is indeed the solution he thinks possible for a revolution in Syria to make important decisions on both national and international spheres. This is evident when the actor tells Hamlet to stop turning around Rosencrantz's "betrayal" and focus on the planned "reconciliation with the enemy" (Ibid, 105).

Conclusion

In *Hamlet Wakes Up Late*, Mamduh Adwan re-writes Shakespeare's play to comment on the sociopolitical conditions in Syria, and by extension the Arab World, in the 1970s. Numerous researchers have focused on the character of Hamlet, who, according to most, represents the Arab intellectual who is unaware of the conspiracies that surround him. This article, however, has focused on Adwan's representation of other characters to comment on the strategies that the old guards employ to maintain their control over youths and manipulate them. This is explored through a detailed analysis of both Laertes and Lorenzo. In this article, we have argued that Laertes is an intellectual whose closeness to the masses has qualified him to speak on their behalf and defend their rights at one point. However, manipulated by Claudius, Laertes is distanced from the people whom he represents, and therefore, he becomes a pawn in Claudius's grand plan of silencing people and crushing their revolts. While Claudius manages to contain Laertes's anger by offering him a position in his government, Lorenzo, a character that Adwan invents, is detained and tortured by Claudius's informants and thugs. In this way, Adwan exposes how the totalitarian regime employs filthy ways to quell revolutions namely containment and coercion.

In fact, the intricate system of surveillance, detention and torture that Adwan's play depicts is a reflection of the repressive system that the government invented in the 1970s to protect the regime and silence dissident voices. At the heart of this coercive apparatus is *Shabiha*, a group of thugs and informants who swear allegiance to the regime. Nurtured under the country's regime, *Shabiha* have

traditionally played crucial roles in averting protests against the regime. During the 2011 Syrian Revolution, *Shabiha* have played even a more visible role in torturing and killing civilians. Hence, while Adwan's play draws on Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, it clearly depicts Claudius's cruel techniques and tactics to keep the youths silent. While the theme of rebellion is already present in Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, Adwan appropriates it in the Syrian context to demonstrate how Syrian youths, and by analogy Arab youths, are manipulated by the regime through the use of the *Shabiha* represented by both Rosencrantz and Guildenstern who have no qualms about torturing and murdering young rebels and dissidents like to Lorenzo.

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Is Mankind Victim or Victimiser?: Environmental Refugees in Amitav Ghosh's *Gun Island*

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Abstract   This paper intends to deal with *Gun Island* by Amitav Ghosh by focusing on the consequences of anthropogenic environmental degradation which leaves deep scars on members of both human and non-human worlds. Basing the theoretical framework on the term environmental refugee, which is also referred as climate refugee or eco-migrant, the study focuses on how environmental derangement turns into a push factor in migration. Presenting the ecological mishaps arising not only in the Sundarbans but also in Los Angeles, Venice, and Rome as reflected in the novel, this study claims that as environmental degradation ultimately results in either internal or external migration, it is not a local but a global issue threatening the entire universe. To this end, firstly the study attempts to establish the conceptual underpinnings of environmental refugee as a term primarily because it is a topic which has been neglected legally and does not have an accurate definition. Then, it examines how environmental disruption and disasters leave human beings and animals with no choice but to flee from their traditional habitats. As such, the study analyses the novel's text as a research methodology in order to present how environmental degradation leads living beings to migrate as it is conveyed through its human and animal characters and plot.

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Introduction

Initiating from the genesis, mankind has been enduring migration which has

evolved into a complex socio-political incident in contemporary era. Alluding to the journey of people who either cross international borders or move within their countries, migration arises from various reasons some of which are economic, religious, or political. As a through consequence of migration, the term refugee has come to the fore which is in its simplest sense defined as "a person who has been forced to leave their country or home, because there is a war or for political, religious, or social reasons" (Oxford Advanced Dictionary 1224). Not different from its lexical meaning, its juridical status also has a parochial nature as it mainly refers to those people who are "unable or unwilling to return to their country of origin" since they have a strong fear of being victimized due to their "race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion" (The United Nations Refugee Agency [UNHCR] 3). However, as the world has been globalising and everything seems to be changing, the nature of migration and scope of the concept of refugee also have been in a state of flux. One of the factors leading to such changes is anthropogenic environmental degradation which leads initially to global warming and climate change and ultimately to natural disasters that result in countless people to be displaced. As such, as a term "environmental refugee" first appeared in a report published by United Nations Environment Programme in which environmental refugees are described as "those people who have been forced to leave their traditional habitat, temporarily or permanently, because of marked environmental disruption (natural and/or triggered by people) that jeopardised their existence and/or seriously affected the quality of their life" (El-Hinnawi 4).

According to a briefing published by European Parliamentary Research Service in 2021, due to extreme weather conditions or natural disasters such as droughts, forest fires, floods, hurricanes, or rising sea levels, more than 318 million people have been pushed out their habitats since 2008 (Apap and de Revel 1). Despite the fact that the number of environmental refugees may experience fluctuations over the years, the recent decades have been witnessing a general upward trend as extreme weather conditions leave those people living in vulnerable regions with no choice but to flee. Although the number of people who have been displaced due to climate induced disasters tend to increase, the measures taken by national or international institutions or governments to deal with the problems of environmental refugees are severely limited which results in inadequate protection of environmental refugees. This mainly derives from the fact that in spite of the increasing concern, there are still complexities regarding the definition of environmental refugees and also they have not been formally or legally recognized.

On the one hand, it is indicated that "the absence of an accurate definition of

what constitutes a person displaced by environmental factors" makes it impossible to determine the exact amount of people who have been already displaced and possible displacement flows (Borges 17). Despite this ambiguity, according to Docherty and Giannini there are six elements which can be used to define an environmental refugee which are "forced migration, temporary or permanent relocation, movement across national borders, disruption consistent with climate change, sudden or gradual environmental disruption, and a 'more likely than not' standard for human contribution" (372). Therefore, it can be said that people who are to be affiliated as environmental refugees should be affected by environmental degradation whose responsibility mainly lies with human beings and their actions. Besides, another criterion which can be used to describe environmental refugees is that as they are forced out their homelands, they search for an area where they can settle down permanently or temporarily. However, different from Docherty and Giannini's criteria, environmental refugees do not only cross national borders but they may cross or at least attempt to cross the international borders legally or illegally; thus, there may come out both internal and external displacement of people.

On the other hand, in addition to the obscurity in the definition of the term, environmental refugees are also troubled with the deficiency of a legal status or recognition which is based on basic human rights. It is true that many institutions and organisations, including European Union, are concerned with climate change as it may result in several forms of crises affecting not only some specific countries or regions but also the whole earth and thus they have taken tangible measures to restrain or at least minimise its effect. Nevertheless, none of these institutions has "comprehensive and solid policies and legislative framework yet for climate change-induced migration" (Karayiğit and Kılıç 17). The underlying reason for this is that 1951 Geneva Convention (also known as Refugee Convention), which sets out both the definition of refugee and the rights of refugees, has been created after the Second World War and thus it mainly focuses on the war-related issues and geopolitical concerns. Therefore, it is relatively outdated and falls behind the migration movements induced by climate change. Although European Commission acknowledged climate change as a reason for migration in 2019 in European Green Deal Initiative, UNHCR claims that instead of making a new universal treaty or convention which includes those who are displaced due to environmental change, the protection of environmental refugees should be allocated to their national governments mainly because they are different from traditional refugees in that the latter ones believe that their governments are the cause of persecution which makes

it impossible to leave themselves to the tender mercies of their local governments. Contrarily, regarding the environmental refugees, it is claimed that as the root causes of environmental migration are not overtly caused by the fear exposed by the local governments, environmental refugees and their problems might be handled by local governments. Nevertheless, since most of the areas which are hit by climate disasters already suffer from structural problems, entrusting the protection of those victims to local governments worsens the conditions by causing problems to overlap. For this reason, a universal treaty which addresses the climate change related displacement should be formulated.

One of the underlying reasons which puts environmental refugees into legal void is that the term refugee has been precisely defined by the 1951 UN Convention, and anyone migrating because of environmental factors cannot go under this definition. In addition to this, there are some researchers who go against the notion of environmental refugees as they believe that many works about the link between climate change and human flows are shaky and sloppy. In other words, it is claimed that the root causes of migration is more than just climate-induced disasters. In his article "Environmental Change and Forced Migration: Making Sense of the Debate" Stephen Castles (2002), for instance, puts fore that "the notion of the 'environmental refugee' is misleading and does little to help us understand the complex process at work in specific situations of impoverishment, conflict and displacement" (5). A reasonable conclusion from Castles quote is that in spite of the fact that environmental factors may be a significant trigger for migration, they sound more sensible when viewed together with some other more significant factors which are economic, social, and political ones. Therefore, it is asserted that factors related to environmental degradation cannot be the exclusive factor leading to migration; contrarily, economic, political, and also social conditions of a susceptible area may directly influence the migrant flows.

Despite the blurred boundaries in its definition or being in legal limbo, the reality is that environmental refugees exist. What's more, the number of people who leave their houses behind willingly or unwillingly, temporarily or permanently due to climate change induced disasters set to rise. Discussing the refugee definition provided by UNHCR, it is asserted that "the term refugee describes only a narrow sub-class of the world's forced migration" (McAdam 3), and thus it falls short to cover the current desideratum and tendencies. Myers also addresses the gravity of the case by claiming that despite being considered to be a peripheral issue, the case of environmental refugees is "fast becoming prominent in the global arena" and more significantly "it promises to rank as one of the foremost human crises of our

times" (Myers, *Environmental Refugees* 175). As such, Myer is of the opinion that the differentiations between those people who are forced migrate due to economic, social, and political factors and those who are basically environmental refugees had better be highlighted, and he proposes a concise definition for environmental refugees:

> Environmental refugees are persons who can no longer gain a secure livelihood in their traditional homelands because of environmental factors of unusual scope, notably drought, desertification, deforestation, soil erosion, water shortages and climate change, also natural disasters such as cyclones, storm surges and floods. In face of these environmental threats, people feel they have no alternative but to seek sustenance elsewhere, whether within their own countries or beyond and whether on a semi-permanent or permanent basis. (Myers and Kent *Environmental Exodus* 18-19)

Though there may be various typologies about eco-victims, based on Myer's definition it can be argued that while some environmental refugees may stay within the borders of their own countries which is referred to as internally displaced persons, some tend to go abroad where they hope to find better life conditions such as affordable food or permanent jobs and they are called externally displaced persons.

Not only the fiction but also the non-fiction of Amitav Ghosh, a writer of Indian origins, deal with the ecological destruction and its consequences. In most of his earlier works he raises critical questions regarding human-nature equation which directly or indirectly results in environmental degradation that can be observed mostly in the Indian sub-continent. However, in his 2019 novel *Gun Island* Ghosh moves from local repercussions of environmental change to global scale by following Deen, the protagonist of the novel, who travels through the Sundarbans, Kalkutta, Venice, Los Angeles, and the Mediterranean Sea. Therefore, the novel offers ample room to discuss not only the different forms of climate crises such as extreme weather events e.g. cyclones in Sundarbans, floods putting Venice into jeopardy, or wildfires threatening Los Angles but also the refugees who are somehow pushed out of their permanent habitats due to these extremities. For this reason, the essay aims to argue how environmental changes lead to not only human migration but also different animal species flows in different parts of the world and the desperate plight of eco-victims.

Eco-Refugees in *Gun Island*

In his non-fiction *The Great Derangement: Climate Change and the Unthinkable*, Amitav Ghosh investigates the history, politics and cultural depictions of climate change and it is in Part I of this book where Ghosh explicitly refers to his ancestors as "ecological refugees long before the term was invented" (Ghosh, *The Great Derangement* 2). By dating as far back as mid 1850s, he describes how "the Padma River, one of the mightiest waterway in the land ... suddenly changed course, drowning the village" which was once his ancestors' permanent land, an incident that led Ghosh's family to "move westward and did not stop until the year 1856" (Ghosh, *The Great Derangement* 2). As such, Ghosh underlines the repercussions of an environmental disaster which, in his own words, is an "elemental force" that both make his ancestors start a series of journey out of their permanent lands and shape Ghosh's own life (Ghosh, *The Great Derangement* 2). Standing out on his family history, Ghosh, in his 2019 novel *Gun Island*, explores climate crisis and environmental degradation becoming mise-en-scène for migration which, though in different forms, can be monitored not only in the Indian sub-continent but also in Venice and Los Angeles, taking the novel from local to continent-spanning scale.

In *Gun Island*, which can be seen as a memoir of Ghosh's 2004 novel *The Hungry Tide*, Ghosh represents an experimental journey into the current globalized world that has been metamorphosed due to anthropogenic climate catastrophes, which is highly likely to prompt migration. The novel follows the journeys made by the protagonist and narrator of the novel Dinanath Datta, also called Dinu or Deen, who is a Brooklyn-based but Sundarbans-native rare book dealer. During one of his trips to the Sundarbans, he observes and testifies the fragile nature of Indian Sundarbans's ecosystem, which is in sharp contrast with the developed parts of India. Through Nilima Bose's account book which is labelled as "Cyclone Relief Accounts, 1970", Deen realizes the fact that islands of the Sundarbans have been repeatedly "swallowed up by the sea" for many years (Ghosh, *Gun Island* 18). By referring to the cyclone that hit the Sundarbans in 1970 which is later given the name of Bhola cyclone, it becomes vividly clear that such natural disasters are contributing factors of "steady flow of refugees"(Ghosh, *Gun Island* 14). Though it is stated that these refugees predominantly come across the Pakistan border as they attempt to escape from the political, economical, and social turmoil, it cannot be denied that "the greatest natural disaster of the twentieth century", Bhola cyclone, paved the way for uncontrollable migrant flows into India, which in turn has lead to the migration of Indians who have been already suffering from a lack habitable

and arable areas because islands of the Sundarbans "are disappearing" due to such natural disasters (Ghosh, *Gun Island* 18).

According to Steve Lonergan (1998), five primary factors, in his own terms "environmental stress", may result in displacement of people, that is in environmental refugees and he underlines natural disasters which cover "floods, volcanoes, earthquakes, and droughts" as the first push factor (9). In addition to Bhola cyclone, while travelling to a remote part of the Sundarbans in order to record Manasa Devi, which is a shrine presented in a popular Bengali legend called Gun Merchant, Dinu is introduced to Cyclone Aila "which hit the Sundarbans in 2009" (Ghosh, *Gun Island* 52). Having occurred nearly four decades after Bhola during which "three thousand lives lost" (Ghosh, *Gun Island* 13), Cyclone Aila did not result in such large numbers of casualties primarily because:

> Starting in the late 1990s warning systems for storms had been put in place across the region so there was plenty of time to prepare. Mass evacuations had been planned in advance and millions of people were moved to safety, in India and in Bangladesh. (Ghosh, *Gun Island* 52)

In spite of this seemingly positive outcome and the low level of short term destructiveness of Aila, its "long-term consequences were even more devastating than those of earlier cyclones" (Ghosh, *Gun Island* 52). First and foremost, Cyclone Aila left many people landless, whose primary economic mainstay is farming as the cyclone swept away miles of arable areas and resulted in increasing sea levels which occupied the habitable areas and productive farmlands which had never happened before. As a consequence of saltwater intrusions which have "adverse repercussions for irrigated cultivation of rice and other crops and for household water supplies", farmlands have become uncultivable, leaving native population with no means of living (Myers and Kent, *Environmental Exodus* 143). Upon the interconnectedness of land loses and human displacement, Lonergan states that "likely the greatest impact on people's decision to move will be degradation of the land" as there will be no resources by which eco-victims may survive (Lonergan 11). Additionally, salinisation has deprived habitants in cyclone-stricken areas of potable water, one of the basic needs for survival, as Moyna, one of the characters in the novel, describes it: "When people tried to dig wells, an arsenic-laced brew gushed out of the soil" (Ghosh, *Gun Island* 53). Thus, as a consequence of water deficit, having no water to drink or to use, and agricultural stress, no farmland to get crops, these people had no alternative but to migrate. At this very point, another devastating effect of

natural disasters or more specifically Aila which "no one could have foretold" turns up. Many victims have been rooted out of their villages and turned into internally displaced refugees because many evacuees who had already been trying to cope with hard life conditions in their homelands believed that their lives "would be even more precarious now" and as such they resolved not to go back (Ghosh, *Gun Island* 53). Therefore, Cyclone Aila and other similar natural disasters, which turn "both land and water against those who lived in the Sundarbans", have become a prominent factor, though not pre-eminent, to result in migration and ecological refugees (Ghosh, *Gun Island* 53).

Elaborating the results of natural disasters upon the displacement of people, Lonergan alleges that effects of such disasters are not directly connected to the "severity of the disaster" but to "the number of vulnerable people in the region" (9). In underdeveloped or developing countries which are disaster-stricken, poor people, young ones, and women are the most affected individuals as they are generally the most vulnerable groups, which does not necessarily mean that others such as adult males do not struggle with the destructiveness of such disasters. As in the case of Aila, the post-climate-change-intensified periods are the times when "making a life in the Sundarbans had become so hard", and these times witness "the exodus of the young which was accelerating every year" (Ghosh, *Gun Island* 53). The prima facie motivation of this tendency is that these young people long for job opportunities whereby they may have a stable and improved life, and thus Moyna states that they leave no stone unturned to flee from the Sundarbans:

> Boys and girls were borrowing and stealing to pay agents to find them work elsewhere. Some were slipping over the border into Bangladesh, to join labour gangs headed for the Gulf. And if that failed they would pay traffickers to smuggle them to Malaysia or Indonesia, on boats. (Ghosh, *Gun Island* 53)

Moyna's argument indicates that young people - legally or illegally, willingly or unwillingly - leave their homelands to find jobs as it is in the case of Rafi, who illegally moves to Venice where he earns his life by working in different jobs even if he undergoes some forms of exploitation of labour. Not different from Rafi's case, it is stated in the novel that "over the last couple of years there had been a huge increase in reports of teenage boys and young men leaving home". This resonates particularly in Venice where many Bengalis or Indians migrate so as to find lucrative job opportunities. In short, the life conditions in those youngsters' homeland which are worsened by natural disasters and put them into dire predicament lead them to

migrate.

In addition to resolute young people who dare passing borders even illegally, women are another group of vulnerable people who, different from the youngsters, frequently become internally-displaced because they have "very few options in the face of environmental change" or very little mobility (Lonergan 11). As such, they move to "Kolkata or elsewhere" to be able to find jobs though they frequently end up in brothels (Ghosh, *Gun Island* 52). Nevertheless, it is not only the youngsters or women who are pushed out of their homelands as a result of insufficient employment opportunities mainly intensified by natural disasters. Fishermen whose "boats would come back loaded with catch" now think "themselves lucky if they netted a handful of fry" (Ghosh, *Gun Island* 53). As a fisherman, Horen stands out as a vivid representation of those victims whose lives have become unbearable due to natural disasters as Alia not only "capsized two of his trawlers and a couple of other boats" (Ghosh, *Gun Island* 59) but also caused a decline in his profit mainly because "fish catch is down" (Ghosh, *Gun Island* 65). As such, it is claimed that since many people in Sundarbarns or more generally in developing areas rely on natural resources in order to earn their lives, environmental degradation which destroys such resources as water and soil and ruins substantial professions leads in severe poverty. Therefore, Tipu, who becomes Deen's guide on his visit to Manasa Devi, underlines that as a consequence of all the devastating consequences of natural disasters which "blow everything into pieces every year", it is impossible to "sit on your butts till you starve to death" which ultimately results in mass migration (Ghosh, *Gun Island* 65).

Taking the relationship between the effects of anthropogenic environmental degradation and displacement of people from local to global scale, Ghosh explicitly renders New York, Los Angeles, and Italy, particularly Venice and Rome, as vulnerable areas which are hit by different kinds of climate-change-induced disasters that lead to migration, particularly internal migration. By dwelling on the wildfires that have been on an increase in recent decades which shed light on the anthropogenic climate change, Ghosh highlights the fact that floods or hurricanes are not the only factors which result in environmental disruption and migration. Alleging wildfires, Williams indicate that "human-caused warming has already significantly enhanced wildfire activity in California", which, besides other factors, undoubtedly reveals anthropogenic climate change as a decent element in wildfire activities (Williams 892). While flying to Los Angeles to participate in a conference, Deen overhears such words as "fire" and "evacuation" which makes him think that "they were talking about a film" as he is far from envisaging what is coming about

(Ghosh, *Gun Island* 125). As it is stated in the briefing published by European Parliamentary Research Service, "EU looks set to become increasingly concerned by forced displacement due to climate change within its own borders" and one of the main reasons of such forced displacement is wildfires which are mainly caused by "extreme temperature and drought" (Apap and de Revel 11). Not much different from the EU countries, wildfires are raging in Los Angles where the chaos resulted from those massive wildfires is notable as "thousands of acres of land had been incinerated and tens of thousands of people had been moved to safety" (Ghosh, *Gun Island* 126). Besides this, even if it is on the micro level, internal displacement has been witnessed during the conference which Deen participates in Los Angeles. Due to the wildfires which "are moving faster than expected", all the attendees have been told that they "need to evacuate this building" (Ghosh, *Gun Island* 138). As such, the staff that can be viewed allegorically as the reincarnation of governments have to be hard at work so as to find a new venue where attendees can be moved to. In brief, the turmoil caused by wildfires which lead to "inferno-like landscape" and whose "towering columns of flames were advancing upon orderly, neatly designed neighbourhoods" cause many people to be uprooted from their natural home to find a safe area (Ghosh, *Gun Island* 146).

Extreme weather events largely caused by climate change make life and conditions at home unbearable which, in the end, results in environmental refugees. Discussing the consequences of sharp weather shifts, Myers indicates that weather extremities "have capacity to generate large numbers of environmental refugees, albeit of short term duration for the most part" (Myers and Kent *Environmental Exodus* 47). Through Deen's odyssey, Ghosh underscores the fact that such catastrophic events and their results are not confined to the Sundarbans or Indian subcontinent; contrarily, they may lead to unpredictable outcomes in any parts of the world, including the United States or Europe, no matter how developed they are. Accordingly, during his stay in Italy, Deen encounters several weather anomalies which are represented as follows:

> Soon we learnt that the strange weather was not just a local phenomenon: all of Italy had been affected in different ways: some northern cities had been deluged with rain and hail; many parts of the country had been struck by gale-force winds; in the mountains of the Sud Tirol entire forests had been flattened; elsewhere too trees had been knocked down, damaging houses and blocking roads. (Ghosh, *Gun Island* 276)

The repercussions of these anomalies may be observed through people living in Rome who look for "sheltering from hailstorms" (Ghosh, *Gun Island* 277). Moreover, one of the most striking consequences of these events lie in Gisa's case, whose family is exposed to the first-hand experience of these extreme weather conditions because of which "they'd left their apartments and moved in some friends; they were planning to spend the night there" (Ghosh, *Gun Island* 278). As indicated, though it may be for a short term, Gisa feels bewildered and explicitly refers to her family as refugees by saying "Can you believe it? In Rome – of all places – my family have become refugees" (Ghosh, *Gun Island* 278). Therefore, though the ultimate result of the relation between climatological reasons and human displacement may seem to be different from the Sundarbans where eco-victims feel obliged to migrate externally to find lucrative opportunities, those victims in Italy also fall under the umbrella term of environmental refugees despite being internally displaced possibly for a short duration.

Besides the sudden-onset events, another push factor that prompts environmental displacement is slow cumulative changes which are also referred as slow-onset changes. As these changes are generally a part of natural processes, they are prone to occur at a slower pace, yet they are frequently accelerated by human activities. One of such cumulative changes is climate warming which results in not only human displacement but also displacement of different animal species. Underlining the global nature of the ecological refugees, in *Gun Island* Ghosh once again moves to a European city, Venice, which is "under significant threat from rising sea levels and flooding" and this makes scientists to refer it as the "true Atlantis" (Apap and de Revel 3). In *The Great Derangement*, Ghosh plainly juxtaposes the Sundarbans and Venice by writing:

> Can anyone write about Venice any more without mentioning the *aqua alta,* when the waters of the lagoon swamp the city's streets and courtyards? Nor can they ignore the relationship that this has with the fact that one of the languages most frequently heard in Venice is Bengali. ... many of them (Bangladeshi refugees in Venice) displaced by the same phenomenon that now threatens their adopted city – sea-level rise. (Ghosh, *The Great Derangement* 63)

In addition to the similar layouts of the landscape that the Sundarbans and Venice have, "an estuarine landscape of lagoons", Ghosh indicates that they suffer from similar ecological problems (Ghosh, *Gun Island* 162). While the inhabitants of the former have to struggle with tides and dampness, the inhabitants of the latter have

to get used to slowly rising water which is primarily caused by human activities. Regarding this Cinta claims that the primary factor of rising sea levels is global warming which is "happening because there is more and more carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, and other greenhouse gases" emitted from "cars and planes and factories – whistling kettles and electric toasters and espresso machines" things that "nobody needed a hundred years ago" (Ghosh, *Gun Island* 234). In other words, the "things humans have done" lie behind the rising temperature which ultimately "means that the habitats of various kinds of animals are changing" (Ghosh, *Gun Island* 234). One of the most distressing examples of this is shipworms "more and more" of which "are invading Venice, with the warming of the lagoon's water" (Ghosh, *Gun Island* 251). Shipworms carry a major thematic significance as they cripple the foundations of Venice, "wooden pilings", which can metaphorically stand for the base of humanity that is going under threat as a consequence of humans' own actions. Similarly, the pier that Cinta and Deen walk on in Venice topples over due to mass shipworms weakening the wooden base by eating up from the inside which causes Cinta and Deen to be caught in a trap on the pier which is also hit by acqua alta. Here, Ghosh describes the conditions of Cinta and Deen by allegorically highlighting the indifference of the society towards the anthropogenic environmental degradation and its consequences:

> The lights of the city were glowing in the distance and things seemed to be carrying on much as usual, despite the flood. I could even hear a band, playing somewhere far away. But our immediate surroundings were in complete darkness; there was not a single light to be seen nearby. (Ghosh, *Gun Island* 252)

By illustrating the regular flow of the daily life despite the hardships that two environmental victims - Cinta and Deen - go through, Ghosh creates a microcosm where the society is indifferent to the devastating effects of anthropogenic climate change. This can be seen as an allegory of societies and governments which do not have any legislative framework concerning the climate-change induced migration, a deficiency leaving ecological victims – particularly refugees- in darkness. Regarding this, Tipu overtly explains that environmental problems such as floods or the arsenic in ground water are not enough attention grabbing for the westerners as he says "none of that shit matters to the Swedes. Politics, religion and sex is what they are looking for (Ghosh, *Gun Island* 67).

In the novel, pollution and global warming play a key role in forcing animals

to alter their movement patterns and become displaced. Dolphins which have been kept under close observation by Piya, a Bengali-based woman with an Indian-American identity, are one of the animal groups whose patterns of movements used to be "regular and predictable. But then the tracks had begun to vary, becoming increasingly erratic" (Ghosh, *Gun Island* 101). Piya clearly stresses the fact that such a shift in animal behaviours is mainly caused by the conditions in their habitats which have been made inappropriate by human actions and it is expressed as follows:

> ...this was due, Piya believed, to changes in the composition of waters of the Sundarbans. As sea levels rose, and the flow of fresh water diminished, salt water had begun to intrude deeper upstream making the certain stretches too saline for the dolphins. (Ghosh, *Gun Island* 102)

As such, salinisation in water stands out to be a threat not only for human beings but also for animal species as they tend to change their old-settled habitats, which creates more and different dangers. As it is in the case of dolphins, due to the human-based disruption in their habitats, they tend to venture in the upper river, a "populated and heavily fished area", and they fall victims to fishermen's nets or accidents which ultimately results in a sharp decrease in the number of this species. In his 2008 research paper, Etienne Piguet expresses that "development projects that involve changes in the environment" is a significant push factor which may result in migration and this echoes in the case of dolphins in the novel as Piya thinks that the refinery which was launched a few years ago around the upriver plays a crucial role in the poisoning the Sundarbans by dumping its chemicals into the river (Piguet 4). As a result of this refinery, Rani, one of the dolphins, and its pod have to abandon their usual habitat which becomes a "huge source of stress for them" (Ghosh, *Gun Island* 106). Discussing the effects of environmental displacement on dolphins, Piya expresses how Rani feels as a ecological refugee:

> There she is, perfectly adapted to her environment, perfectly at home in it – and then things begin to change, so that all those years of learning become useless, the places you know best can't sustain you any more and you've got to find new hunting grounds. Rani must have felt that everything she knew, everything she was familiar with – the water, the currents, the earth itself – was rising up against her. (Ghosh, *Gun Island* 106)

Though Piya describes the despair that Rani and its pod feel, this draws an analogy between dolphins and people who have to leave the Sundarbans as it is in the case of Rafi's grandfather who "used to say that things were changing so much, and so fast, that I wouldn't be able to get by here ... one day I would have no choice but to leave" (Ghosh, *Gun Island* 95). Not different from the hardships that people live through mainly caused by environmental degradation, as a result of going under "a huge source of stress" Rani and its pod beach themselves which bears a similarity with the case of Tipu, who leaves the Sundarbans to go to Italy illegally, but stranded in Turkey. On this, Piya feels as if "she were witnessing another stranding" (Ghosh, *Gun Island* 200). Therefore, at the end there appears a world in which "no one knows where they belong any more, neither humans nor animals" (Ghosh, *Gun Island* 106). Similarly, Rafi implies the destiny that animals and the people in the Sundarbans go through by describing "a cyclone, a really fearsome *tufaan*" (Ghosh, *Gun Island* 175). As a consequence of an exceptionally strong cyclone which carries off houses, the water level also starts to rise leaving Rafi and his family with "no choice but to take shelter in a tree" (Ghosh, *Gun Island* 175). However, this is the same with snakes which also climb up to the branches of trees because they also attempt to escape from the high tides. As such, having the same ground to survive in common, both people and animals turn into refugees or asylum seekers who need to leave their traditional habitats due to the disruptive effects of environmental disasters.

Besides dolphins and snakes in the Sundarbans, Ghosh once again draws attention to global nature of the environmental refugees by pointing "yellow-bellied sea snake" in Los Angeles and brown recluse spiders in Venice, both of which are not native to these areas (Ghosh, *Gun Island* 145). Upon yellow-bellied snakes, by referring to an article Piya has read, she explains that they "generally lived in warmer waters, to the south, but sighting in Southern California had become increasingly common: their distribution was changing with the warming of the oceans and they were migrating northwards" (Ghosh, *Gun Island* 147). Similarly, regarding the brown recluse, Larry who is an expert on spiders explains that the range of this species has been extending because "it's getting so much hotter in Europe" (Ghosh, *Gun Island* 223). In brief, global warming whose main agency is human activities put both human beings and different animal species into jeopardy by pushing them to leave their habitats so as to be able to survive and making them environmental refugees.

In addition to elucidating the contemporary effects of climate change on human and animal displacement through different natural and human triggered

environmental disasters, Ghosh also perpetuates old legends to depict the deeply-rooted nature of ecological refugees. On the significance of storytelling and its role, Ghosh states that "it is only through stories that the universe can speak to us, and if we don't learn to listen you may be sure that we will be punished for it" (Ghosh, *Gun Island* 141). As such, Ghosh recalls the legend of Manasa Devi, the goddess of snakes who is deeply resented by a rich merchant that refuses to become Manasa Devi's devotee. A figurative reading of the legend makes it clear that while Manasa Devi stands for the power of nature, the merchant symbolizes the greedy nature of mankind who is unconcerned about the power of nature. As a consequence of his rebellious behaviours against Manasa Devi or the nature, the merchant gets "plagued by snakes and pursued by droughts, famines, storms, and other calamities" which makes him an environmental refugee who has to "flee overseas to escape the goddess wrath" (Ghosh, *Gun Island* 17). Believing to be able to find a land where there may be no serpent, an agent of Manasa Devi, the merchant takes refuge in Gun Island. However, he is unable to hide himself from Manasa Devi even in an iron-walled room, where "she had hunted him down: a tiny, poisonous creature had crept through a crack and bitten him" (Ghosh, *Gun Island* 18). After barely surviving, the merchant once again tries to flee from Manasa Devi by moving to a new island, "The Island of Chains" where he is imprisoned by some pirates. However, it is only after promising to be a devotee of Manasa Devi and to build a shrine for her that he becomes free. Through the vein efforts of the merchant, it is implied that it is impossible to ignore the power of Manasa Devi, the embodiment of the Mother Nature, and the close relation between humans and the nature. Thus, it can be said that Manasa Devi attempts to draw mankind's attention to the natural world and its effects by punishing the merchant through different natural phenomena until he accepts humanity's dependence on nature which will possibly reconcile the balance between these two. Finally, Ghosh also indicates that the disasters that the merchant suffers from are due to the environmental changes resulting from the Little Ice Age in the 17th century; hence, there appears a parallelism between the legend and the Deen's experiences because in both there are environmental refugees seeking for asylum as well as having the same setting, Venice.

The novel reaches its climax when the Blue Boat, a vessel which is overloaded with refugees, including eco-refugees, from different nations such as "Ethiopians, Eritreans, Somalis, Arabs and Bengalis" moves forward in the Mediterranean Sea to arrive in Italy (Ghosh, *Gun Island* 286). However, it turns out to be a source of a great controversy between the new-right wing government of Italy which has promised to be strict on migration and a group of activists whose main target is to

welcome the refugees in the Blue Boat. In Palash's words, a young Bangladeshi immigrant in Italy, the Blue Boat "has become a symbol of everything that's going wrong with the world – inequality, climate change, capitalism, corruption, the arms trade, the oil industry" (Ghosh, *Gun Island* 218). Despite being the symbol of various socio-ecological problems, it also brings hope as Palash believes that "people will wake up" and "there's still time to make changes" (Ghosh, *Gun Island* 218), and this comes true with the help of mother nature as many different species of animals including dolphins and whales around the boat and birds creating "a halo" above it and bioluminescence create a miracle which was said to be the only way of refugees to "set foot in Italia" (Ghosh, *Gun Island* 207). By taking responsibility, Admiral Vigonovo, the representative of the interior minister of Italy, rescues all the refugees on the boat by explaining that "What the minister has said, in public, was that only in the event of a miracle would these refugees be allowed into Italy.' 'And I believe that what we witnessed today was indeed a miracle.'(Ghosh, *Gun Island* 309). Through the self-ascribed responsibility of Admiral, Ghosh signifies that almost everyone "knows what must be done if the world is continue to be a liveable place" (Ghosh, *Gun Island* 237).

Conclusion

Taken as a whole, although there are no solid definition, legal framework, or practical concerns addressing the plight of the vulnerable people who have no choice but to flee due to the fragile nature of their traditional habitats, this does not necessarily mean that environmental disruption or living in high risk areas which are prone to witness weather extremities or anomalies cannot be push factors of large scale migration. It cannot be denied that it is difficult to discern the differences between refugees forced by environmental reasons and refugees driven by other reasons such as economic, political, social, or security-related factors; however, this is not to say that environmental disruption in migration is not a major factor. As such, Ghosh in *Gun Island* represents the conditions which result in climate-induced migration. Starting from the Sundarbans, which is constantly hit by cyclones, floods, or tides that leave the habitants with no arable lands, potable water, or job opportunities, Ghosh explicitly refers to the inexorability of migration. Additionally, by representing the wildfires in Los Angeles, rising water levels in Venice, and extreme weather events in Rome, he reiterates the fact that environmental problems resulting in migration are not confined to a specific area which implies the global nature of the crisis. By depicting different characters from different age groups, genders, nationalities, and socio-economic background all of whom somehow fall

under the term 'environmental refugees', Ghosh underlines the desperate plight of mankind. Nevertheless, he also highlights that human beings and animal species are co-dependent in nature which indicates that any environmental problem affecting humans is certain to affect non-human bodies as well. Hence, not very different from Rafi and Tipu, who dare to pass borders illegally at the risk of dying because of the environmental problems that make their traditional habitats uninhabitable, Rani and her friends (orcaella dolphins), who need to leave their habitats because of pollution, move into upper river where they cannot survive and beach themselves. Besides, Ghosh refers to the yellow-bellied snakes and brown reclusive spiders as the embodiment of non-human bodies that turn into environmental refugees because of anthropogenic activities.

Last but not least, regarding the derecognised status of environmental refugees, it is implied that if the authorities can take responsibilities and go into action as it is in the case of Amiral Vigonovo, there may come out a miracle whereby ecological victims may gain recognition or protection. Finally, even though it is laid bare that climate change leading to environmental disruption and forced displacement cannot be considered as two disparate phenomena, possible solutions or measures to be taken are much beyond the scope of this article, yet towards the end of the novel through the story of the Blue Boat Ghosh implies the necessity of political, social, and scientific recognition and awareness about the environmental refugees.

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Europhonism, Transgression and Subversive Politics in Lola Shoneyin's *The Secret Lives of Baba Segi's Wives*

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Abstract   When postcolonial writers insert their Indigenous *knowledges* in the body of texts written in any of the Metropolitan languages, two things are achieved: a (re)enactment of Manichean dualism or the creation of texts that trade their monolithic cultural identity for a syncretised configuration. Binary politics is re-enacted within the texts as various local epistemologies expressed through Indigenous language(s) struggle with hegemonic European language(s). The texts become a site of linguistic and epistemological contentions, as the major battles with the minor for supremacy. Rather than having a completely English/French/Portuguese African text, the reader is left with a potpourri of languages and episteme. This article builds on the foregoing contentions to revalidate the concerns of critics on the imperativeness of using Indigenous *knowledges* in African literature so as to end the marginality of Africa languages and literature in global literary scholarship. Lola Shoneyin's *The Secret Lives of Baba Segi's Wives* is analysed to expound this concern and indicate how an African writer employs linguistic/literary strategies to subvert Europhonism and prove that world literatures should embrace cultural plurality. The article submits that global knowledge production is not monolithic, but multifarious. It, therefore, calls for the recognition of other knowledge sources outside the purview of European epistemology.
Keywords   world literatures; postcolonial African literature; Chinua Achebe; code-switching; pidgin English
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Introduction: African Writers and their Use of Linguistic Strategies

This article builds on the observations of some critics of African literature and interrogates their concerns about the perceived marginality of Africa languages in global literary scholarship. Drawing on criticisms of these critics, it provides a dialogic analysis and expounds the resonance of glocalisation that pervades some recently published African texts in which writers deliberately glocalise their Indigenous epistemologies using certain linguistic, cultural and literary strategies to achieve their aim. While this area of research in African literature has enjoyed good attention of scholars (Achebe 27-30; Wästberg 135-150; Marzagora 1-6; Okafor 1-17; Kunene 315-322; Ngugi 285-306; Wali 281-284; Tsaaior 1-17; Ayeleru 19-29; Dalley 15-34; Teke 71-81; Adeseke 49-59; Ukam 46-53), I contend that this aspect of African literature is still open to interrogation in view of the continuous interests of writers to borrow extensively from their Indigenous cultural resources for the enrichment of their creative works (Adeniyi[a] 87). The article studies Lola Shoneyin's *The Secret Lives of Baba Segi's Wives* (2010) with a view to ascertaining how meanings are generated in the text in view of the pervasive dominance of her Yorùbá epistemological perspectives, the feminist bias and political message of the text. The article argues that Shoneyin, like other third generation of African writers, pushes for the recognition of African knowledge production, and submits that the necessity of this recognition is "contingent on exploring abundant Indigenous epistemology in African culture" (Adeniyia 88).

Cultural gaps are bridged in African literature by a series of discursive strategies which African writers aptly deplore in their works to assert the identity, difference and individuality of their literary tradition. While some may be doing it out of conscious awareness; others, however, may not have set out to consciously use their works as sites of subversive politics, but do so out of their creative ingenuity. In her assessment of some of the strategies often used by African writers, Aduke Adebayo reveals that the writers now use "transgression, integration, translation, transliteration, transposition, deviation, word-coinage, and mixture of levels of language and code-mixing […] now termed 'textual heterolingualism' or 'textual plurilingualism'" (see Ayeleru 23-24). Bill Ashcroft et al. also list "syntactic fusion; neologisms; code-switching; untranslated words" (123) as discursive tools used by writers to express differences between African and European cultures,

while Zabus, identifies relexification, pidginisation, calquing as some of the linguistic strategies common among African writers to subvert Europhonism in their writings. All these linguistic strategies are *transgressive* tools, and transgression is a model of subversion. It is a metonymic model used to subvert normativity and gainsay Universalist tendencies or break boundaries of orthodoxy. Put differently, transgressive discursive model relates to art in which "orthodox moral, social, and artistic boundaries are challenged by the representation of unconventional behaviour and the use of experimental forms" (Glomb 211).

The use of tool in literary writings corroborates Alastair Pennycook's learned observation that "We do not live in a world where people conform mindlessly to the putative rules of language; we live in a world of language transgressions, impossible without some order worth transgressing, and made possible by the desire for difference" (Lee 55). Pennycook further describes the model as a "profound and methodological investigation of how to understand ourselves, our histories and how the boundaries of thought may be traversed" (Lee 55). To transgress the *rigid* orthodoxy of a major language, a writer from the Global South who wishes to use the language to convey their peculiar Indigenous experiences may adopt Chinua Achebe's belief on the use of imperial language to express native *knowledges*. According to him, "I feel that the English language will be able to carry the weight of my African experience. But it will have to be a new English, still in full communion with its ancestral home but altered to suit its new African surroundings" (30). Being a *new English* that is *altered* to accommodate local contents, as Achebe submits, is indicative of a break from the normal practices that rigidly enforce strict adherence to English grammar, syntax, lexis and structure, or narratology. It is a domesticated language that "re(present) the linguistic manipulation of English for reasons of cultural particularity and authenticity" (Tsaaior 3). This is why Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Obi Wali, Daniel Kunene, Chinweizu et al. descended heavily on early African writers for their mimicry of European literary tradition.

The critics' envisioning revolves around the production of African literature that is independent of European linguistic domination. While some of the critics advocate absolutism, the others believe that European language can still be used but has to be domesticated in such a way that it carries the weight of African thoughts, philosophy, folklore, and epistemology without losing its originality. This is where the paradox lies! How does one use a foreign language to express Indigenous *knowledges* without transgressing basic structures, values, and strength of the language? When two different languages meet in the body of a text, the corollary is the birth of a language form that is neither uniquely exogenous nor uniquely Indigenous. Examples of this

language form are what C.B. Lawrence calls "*Konglish*, *Chinglish*, *Janglish*" (Lee 53), which I regard as parallels of *Yoruglish*, *Igboglish*, *Hausaglish*, *Shonaglish*, *Gandaglish*, and many other varieties all over the world. These new varieties of the language emerged from a "potential contact vernaculars […] between English and the local language, which normally include morphology, semantics and syntax but may also include pronunciation, pragmatics and discourse" (Lee 53). A good example of an African writer who writes in a Metropolitan language, and transgresses the canonicity of the language by domesticating and subjecting the structures, grammar, logic and beauty of the language to his Indigenous cultural, linguistic and epistemological groundings is Amos Tutuola. Tutuola is a study in subversion, as he deploys transgressive linguistic strategies in his novels so vehemently that he is accused of writing *Yorùbá English* (*Yoruglish*) or uneducated, rotten English. Gabriel Okara also reveals that he (Tutuola) often uses "vernacular expressions" (Ngugi 288) so as to be able to capture or express his African ideas, philosophy, folklore, and imagery to the fullest extent possible (Ngugi 286).

Translation and Other Discursive Agencies Used in African Literature

Translation, as a linguistic strategy, involves interpretation of "meaning of a text in one language […] and the production, in another language, of an equivalent text […] which ostensibly communicates the same message" (Ashcroft et al. 215). It is, according to M. R. Pinheiro, the decoding of "a written piece of discourse from the source language according to our private language but considering the private language of the original writer and the original context as much as possible, and then coding that piece again according to our corrected-to-an extreme vision of the target language and context" (122). While Pinheiro identifies three types of translation: cultural, literal and artistic; Reito Adachi, in his study of audiovisual translation (AVT) of Hayao Miyazaki's anime, bifurcates translation techniques into: larger categories and smaller categories (183). Under the larger categories are "Liberal" and "Literal" translations, while smaller categories comprise "Interpolation", "Deletion", "Replacement", and "Literal Translation". In his table of translation techniques, he further breaks down the smaller categories into: interpolation comprising "Amplification" and "Substitution"; deletion comprising "Deletion"; replacement comprising "Adaptation, Description, Discursive Creation, Generalization, Particularization, Transposition"; and literal translation comprising "literal translation" (Pinheiro 183).[1]
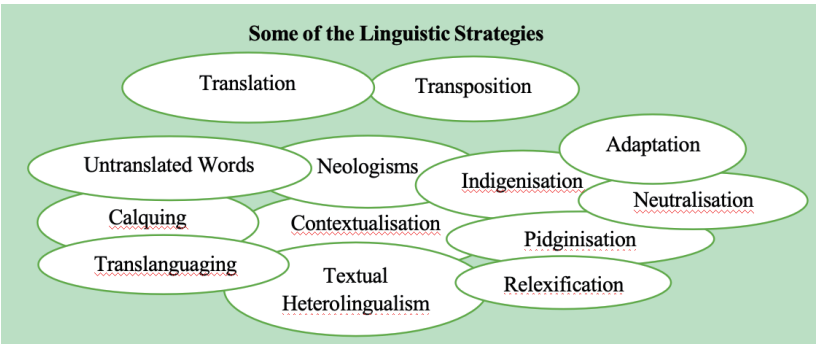
    According to him, amplification is the discursive strategy of adding detailed

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1   This table can also be found in Pinheiro's article (123).

information, which includes compensation technique "defined as recreating the source language (SL) effect by strategically using target language (TL) linguistic devices or reproducing the effect in a different part of the text. […] It also includes creation, which means adding a whole new sentence to fill in pauses and silences" (Pinheiro 183). He defines substitution as "replacement between linguistic elements and paralinguistic elements, including verbalized paralanguage" (Pinheiro 183-184), while deletion is the suppression of information taken from the source language in the target language (Adachi 184). In adaptation, cultural terms from the source language are replaced with the ones from the target language, while description entails substitution of "a word or phrase with a description of its form or function" (Adachi 184), just as generalisation is the use of "a broader and more general term than its original context to refer to a specific object" (Adachi 184). Adachi also defines particularisation as the opposite of generalisation, meaning to use "details or specific examples of a more general and neutral idea" (185). It is imperative to know that translation as a "form of interactive communication" (Granqvist 31) possesses subtlety. This artfulness explains its use not only for linguistic interaction, but for subversion by postcolonial writers in their quest to undermine European politics of homogenization (Granqvist 37).

While transposition is to "change a grammatical attribute" (Adachi 185) of the source language in a target language, literal translation is the technique used in translating "a phrase or a sentence […] word for word to express in another language the exact meaning of a word, or the form of words, of the source language rather than to convey the sense or function of the original" (Adachi 185). Another form of translation is calquing (loan words) in which words are translated verbatim from one language to another. This linguistic technique can be used by writers to engender "lexical competition" (Andronache 151) between one language and another. The competition according to Liliana Andronache, "can only end in two different and divergent ways: either in lexical addition (the loanword will be included in the vocabulary of the target language) or in lexical replacement (the loanword will replace the native term, which will be perceived as obsolete)" (151). Though Andronache conceives European/superstrate language as the beneficiary of calquing, I hold a different view. This is because in the African speech community where writers with nationalist awareness are making frantic efforts to reverse the major-minor, centre-periphery configuration of exogenous-Indigenous languages; English, French, Portuguese are always at the receiving end, as the writers deliberately use words to either complement or replace the subsisting ones in the dominant languages. Charles Teke further asseverates the

foregoing in his submission that though imperialist languages are agents of Western epistemologies, they have paradoxically been "dominated within the matrix of anti-colonialist struggles which used these same languages as strategic assets in quite different communicative and discursive contexts" (72). According to him, "What one discerns is the susceptibility of imperial language in the possession of the postcolonial 'subject', and the clear demonstration that imperial language ceases to be a symbol of dominance over the colonised and instead serves as a weapon of attack or redress against the coloniser" (72). Below is a diagrammatic representation of the metonymic linguistic strategies often employed by African writers.

Some of the Linguistic Strategies

Translation · Transposition · Adaptation · Untranslated Words · Neologisms · Indigenisation · Neutralisation · Calquing · Contextualisation · Pidginisation · Translanguaging · Textual Heterolingualism · Relexification

Other linguistic strategies often used by African writers to transgress (subvert) imperial language(s) include contextualization, neologism, textual heterolingualism/code-mixing, relexification, acculturation, code-switching/translanguaging, neutralization, untranslated words. Contextualisation implies the linguistic approach of inferring meanings from the words or information items surrounding a concept. It is to place in proper context the concept being studied. In his comment on Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* (1958), Zabus provides an insight into the use of this strategy in meaning inference by stating that:

> Achebe introduces Igbo words to the non-Igbo reader either by explaining them within the dialogue or by having the reader infer from the context or the syntax or both whether the Igbo word is a noun phrase, an adverbial or a nominal construction and then what it means. This riddling device, which we identified as contextualization, involves the non-Igbo reader in a guessing game. (180)

Neologism involves word-coinage, especially when a writer inserts new words or phrases from a minor language into the major language which may either be

translated or untranslated. Code-switching characterises bilingual or multilingual situation (Wardhaugh 88) in which a speaker switches "back and forth of languages or varieties of the same language, sometimes within the same utterance" (see Koban 1174). The switch can be effected at inter-sentential, intra-sentential, or extra-sentential levels, and this is done for several reasons, among which is to create ethnic affiliation and assert prestige about a given language (Ayeomoni 91; Redouane 1921; Wardhaugh 101). It is inter-sentential if the switch occurs "from one language variety to another outside the sentence or the clause level, as in "Le dije que no queria comprar el carro. *He got really mad*" (see Koban 1175). It is intra-sentential if the switch is from "one language variety to another at the clause, phrase, or word level within a single utterance, as in "Abelardo tiene los *movie tickets*" (see Koban 1175), and extra-sentential if the switch is done to insert "tag elements from one language into an otherwise monolingual discourse in another language, as in "*Porque estamos en huelga de gasolina, right*?" (Koban 1175). Textual heterolingualism describes "texts or performances where speakers place more than one linguistic system into play at the same time" (Pratt 288), and this is done in written literature "when writers undertake to explore linguistic difference as a social force, a site of power, and a source of knowledge" (Pratt 289). It is a kind of code-mixing languages in a text that resultantly creates a scenario in which one language serves as a host, while the other serves as a guest. In this condition, heterolingual elements are interchanged between the languages. However, since "Languages are […] outwardly disposed to seize elements from others with which they come in contact" (Pratt 290), "the heterolingual elements introduce a foreignness into the host language and literary system, a strangeness that carries both danger and possibility, threat and promise, fear and desire" (Pratt 288).

Indigenisation can manifest as pidginisation and relexification (Zabus 6), and the two models are used by African writers who are "strategically seeking decolonization and liberation from the vast colonial discourse in which writing was previously rooted" (Zabus 7). Pidginisation is a "linguistic process that occurs when people who do not speak the same language come into contact. It involves the simplification of the contacting language and the exploitation of linguistic common denominators. It is essentially an oral process and limited communication" (Todd 19). It expresses the condition of pidgin, which, in turn, is a linguistic phenomenon "believed to have an English-language base upon which are imposed features from indigenous languages" (Zabus 56). Pidginisation is associated with low-level of education in West Africa, possibly for its exiguous linguistic features. This is why it is regarded as lacking "articles, the copula, and grammatical inflections, rather

than those they possess, and those who speak them have often been treated with disdain, even contempt" (Wardhaugh 58). It can be regarded, in this sense, as a marginal transgressive linguistic mode used by African writers, mostly from West Africa, to break the homogeneity of Metropolitan language(s) in (West) African literary writings and introduce a variant of Europhone language that contends with the language of the centre for social space and recognition; after all, Europhonism serves as a "site of discrimination, [and] of hatred of Other" (Zabus 52).

Towards the Indigenisation of Superstrate Language in African Literature

Shoneyin's *The Secret Lives of Baba Segi's Wives* is a social realist text that demonstrates the age-long cultural practice of polygyny in a rigidly phallocentric African (Yorùbá) setting. It also interrogates "the inferior categories through which society judges" the womenfolk (Eze 315). Being overtly patriarchal, men in a typical African society exert undue influences on the womenfolk, one of which is their supposed *inalienable rights* to have more than one wife (Adeniyi[b] 35). In the cultural setting of the text, men can marry as many women as possible, but it is abominable for a woman in the society to have more than one husband at the same time. The protagonist in Shoneyin's novel, Baba Segi (Ishola Alao), is in a polygynous relationship having married three illiterate women (Iya Segi, Iya Tope, and Iya Femi). He later marries the fourth wife, Bolanle – a university graduate – who is unable to conceive. Subjected to what Catherine Williams and Simeon Sonde call "Housewifization" (100), the women are made to depend on their husband's income for their total sustenance (Williams and Sonde 100). They are cowed into obedience by their male chauvinist pig (MCP) (husband) whose androcentric views aften take better part of him. Baba Segi exerts control on the women, flaunting his machismo or manliness as a badge of pride unbeknown to him that all the children he thinks are his are sired by another men. Being a victim of male infertility, Baba Segi's wives put him in dire straits by exploring other avenues of making babies, while their husband is left to fool himself bragging about the sexual conquests of his women. The coming of Bolanle into Baba Segi's large family brings the narrative to the climax, as her inability to conceive leaves a chasm that Baba Segi seeks to fill at all costs. Having a barren woman under him flattens his ego and depletes his sexual or fertility prowess. The news of his infertility is eventually revealed at a hospital where he has gone to conduct a medical test. With the intricate weave of the narrative, Shoneyin unleashes her feminist anger on the patriarchy/

polygyny[1] to lay bare its inherent labefaction and inconsistencies. She puts up an argument that gender exclusivism or arrogance is inhibitive to the quest for social growth and gender inter-subjectivity, as more havoc is done to the social fabric the moment social groups are at friction with each other. Above all, Shoneyin invests her energies into the novel to respond pointedly to the emasculation of women and their objectification or thingification by the regressive androcentric structures in the society (Adeniyib 57; Eze 311).

In spite of the feminist tenor of her opus, Shoneyin demonstrates her profound proclivity for the zeitgeist of the third generation of African writers, which, according to Chielozona Eze, is partly to address contradictions noticed about Africa and its multiplex cultures, instead of being "bound to the ideological need to explain Africa to the world" (311). The writers are "creating a new type of language that draws the readers into African daily life" (Onwumere and Egbulonu 157) similar to the dramatic shift in style witnessed in "The 1970s […] [when] writers like Ahmadou Kourouma of Cote d'Ivoire introduced his native Malinke linguistic features into French" (Onwumere and Egbulonu 157). Being a part of the third generation of African (women) writers, Shoneyin conspicuously responds to the aspects of her culture she perceives to be oppressive to women (Eze 311), and draws "attention to certain ethical questions such as the relation between the African man and the African woman" (Eze 311). As noticed earlier, a *new* thematic addition of third generation of African writing is the writers' exploration of their collective consciousness and the deployment of values immanent in their Indigenous cultures in fictional narratives written in European languages. This is done to assert their Africanity, subvert unwittingly, or transgress European literary canonicity, deflate the Western vaunted ego and, most importantly, rescue African literature from its abjected status to which it is confined. It is imperative to state that this practice is not in any way new, as many of their predecessors also wove their Indigenous epistemologies into their narratives, though such a practice may not be as pronounced as it is now among the third generation of African writers. Situating the practice in the present may further validate the past-present inter-textual dialogue, since the present always involves the past in fictional interrogation

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1   As a matter of fact, advocates of polygyny have advanced a polemical argument to justify "plural marriage" (Williams and Sonde 96) among Africans against Western disapprobation of the practice, even though the West favours homosexual relationship, which has received a widespread condemnation in Africa. One of the justifications for polygyny among Africans is placed at the background of polygamy/homosexuality binary, and couched in a poser: "Between polygamy and homosexuality, which is better?"\

of human conditions (Dalley 18; Eze 311).

To demonstrate the zeitgeist of her generation and its undercurrents, Shoneyin explores the vast repertoire of her Yorùbá cultural terms which undergird the people's epistemology, ontology, and cosmology to subvert or taper imperial English in her fictional narrative. Most importantly, she demonstrates the practicability of mixing Indigenous language (its lexis, grammar, syntax) with that of an exogenous language to create ambivalent texts without compromising standard or creating paradoxes. Consequently, she employs linguistic (metonymic) strategies to achieve her goals. Some of the dominant strategies used in the novel include: translation, contextualisation, textual heterolingualism (code-mixing) and translanguaging (code-switching). I conceive the linguistic strategies as metonymic when they are positioned by writers to represent a whole, or used as a substitute for someone, groups, concept, or things (Adeniyia 91). Shoneyin decidedly translates many Yorùbá words, cultural terms and belief systems into English to possibly weaken the strength of the English language. She uses various translation techniques, including literal translation, replacement or substitution to achieve this aim. When certain words or statements are translated from one language to another, the idea is to make the translated text reachable to non-speakers. More often than not, when the translation is done the target language bears the brunt of "translation politics" (Adeniyia 91). Though the language still looks like its original self, when checked properly its strength may have been weakened as it is compelled to carry the weight of the source language (Adeniyia 87). Shoneyin indicates this trend in her text as the Yorùbá and English languages engage each other in the politics of subversion. For instance, while the entire Baba Segi's family is watching their favourite television programme, *Afowofa*; Shoneyin translates the signature tune of the soap opera from Yorùbá to English:

> *Talaka nwa paki*
> *Olowo nwon'resi*
> *Igbi aye nyi o*
> *Ko s'eni to m'ola*
>
> *The impoverished search for cassava flour*
> *While the rich consume rice by the measuring bowl*
> *The tide of the earth turns*
> *No one knows tomorrow.* (9 italics in the original)

The above is a straight literal interpretation of a song from Yorùbá to English. In literal interpretation, a near perfection of language-to-language meaning is achieved, but the politics of subversion seems to play out as the song rendered in Yorùbá language jostles for space with the English translation of the song. Shoneyin's aim in that part of the narrative is to indicate the delectability of a TV programme often heralded by a familiar sign tune. However, she could still indicate this without creating translation politics. The excerpt brings to the fore the North-South dichotomy, and how an *othered* language seeks a re-ordering of African literature to privilege Indigenous over exogenous tongue (Adeniyia 87). Shoneyin deliberately domesticates English by using the language to express her Yorùbá Indigenous thoughts. Just as Zabus comments on Taghi Modaressi whose Persian narratives contain his Indigenous thoughts; Shoneyin, like Modaressi, and any other postcolonial writer, translates her Yorùbá thoughts into English, but the translation "suggest[s] another language. It has a different 'tempo', a different rhythm" (Zabus xvii).

Statements, phrases or clauses in the novel are couched in indigenized (Yorùbá) English. They include: "And your wives will not come and drive me out with a broom?" (7), "Kole is as thin as an old man's cane" (10), "Why are you not feeding my son?" (10), "I feed him but the food disappears as soon as it reaches his belly. That boy would eat this entire house if you let him" (10), "Then cook him this entire house. And then when he has eaten that, serve him the neighbour's too" (10), "A woman cannot know the weight of a child until she has carried one in her womb" (13), "Iya Femi picked me up with her eyes and threw me to the floor" (55), "Has this woman's head scattered that she now scrubs my mouth? Have my words become so insignificant that they can now be contested?" (62), "I will not let you destroy this home with your excess. You have allowed the concubine to become the husband. I have not known anyone to worship a penis the way you do!" (86), "She will hear it from today" (93), "Let Bolanle know that people are like water. And the same waters that the streams divide meet again in the great ocean" (141), "What sense does it make to treat ringworm when the body is consumed with leprosy?" (188), "Segi, do not delve into matters that don't concern you!" (205), "I could not believe that Iya Femi's mouth could still be so sharp after all the evil she had done" (210), "May the dogs eat your mouth" (232), "Keep these words in your left hand lest you wash them away after eating with your right" (238). Specific excerpts rendered in domesticated (Yorùbá) English include: "Does your blood not boil when you see other women carrying their babies on their backs? Do tears not fill your

eyes when you see mothers suckling infants? You of all people should be willing to try everything! Offspring make our visit to this world complete! Do you want to remain a barren maggot?" (43), "Iya Femi, you are in the habit of saying things that are too big for that little mouth of yours. If you are not satisfied with the way I share provisions, take your ingratitude to another man's house. Mind you, make sure you are the first wife and not a lowly third" (49).

The foregoing quotes are reminiscent of the belief that some writers often think and express their thoughts in Indigenous languages before translating the thoughts into any European language of their choice. Gabriel Okara is one of the African writers who advocate this narrative approach. According to him, the best way to make effective use of local ideas and oral traditions in a foreign language is "to translate them almost literally from one African language native to the writer into whatever European language he is using as medium of expression" (Ngugi 288). He believes the exogenous language can also be emulsified with native African systems or African ethics (Adeseke 52). Okara admits that this may be seen as a way of desecrating the exogenous language, but on the contrary the approach affords him the opportunity to capture vividly the images of African speech by first of all expressing himself in his Indigenous language, rather than in English. With the translations of her thoughts in indigenized English, Shoneyin has been able to construct a cultural difference within the body of a text rendered in Europhonism. She has been able to reify postcolonial epistemology and bridge the metonymic gaps between English and Yorùbá by studding a Europhone African narrative with local words, cultural terms and beliefs (Zabus xvii).

Apart from translation techniques used by Shoneyin, other dominant linguistic strategies in her novel are translanguaging/code-switching and literary heterolingualism/code-mixing. I conceive these terms as being monolithic to avoid dragging the reader into sociolinguistic conundrum which attempts to delineate the language contact phenomena, since both concepts refer to language alternation which may include "sentences and/or phrases from both languages in a long and successive sentence or paragraph" (Mabule 340). In fact, foremost linguists, such as Dell Hymes, Eyamba Bokamba, Ronald Warhaugh, conceive the concepts as monolithic. The concepts refer to the use of more than one language in a conversation, even though switching of language is believed by some linguists to be done on purpose. One of the purposes could be to enable interlocutors "identify themselves as members of certain social groups and […] negotiate their position in interpersonal relations" (Mabule 340), or create group solidarity, language integration, and assert the writer's/speaker's identity. Shoneyin switches between

English and Yorùbá with ease mostly at intra-sentential level: "Baba Segi raised his arms so his *agbada* could be prised off by Iya Segi's deft fingers" (8), "She did the same with his *buba* and Baba Segi stumbled" (8), "*I* have never had reason to come here before, Ogun bears witness" (32), "Most weeks, Iya Femi got Sunday because she enticed him with her groundnut stew, her *ekuru* with shrimp sauce, her yam balls, her *asun*" (48), "Do you really think I would go to a *babalawo*, let alone ask for something that would harm you?" (60), "In those days, it was common for wealthy men who owned *gari* factories in Ibadan to dazzle village farmers" (79), "His skin was oily and supple whereas my father's was flaky and dry like *orogbo* shells" (79), "My father shouted my name and instructed me to turn out a large mound of amala to be accompanied by efo made from the freshest spinach leaves I could find" (81), "Iya Segi smiled but I could see her chest thumping beneath her *buba*" (83), "Iya Segi spoke sourly of me and referred to me as *apoda* – the stupid, slothful one – behind my back" (87), "I had become quite adept at making *fufu* and like my mother, I had a stash of money under my mattress" (97), "'*Eyin Iyawo o ni m'eni.*'" "'*Ase o!*'" (102), "Ten years ago, I stood beneath that same *agbalumo* tree not far from here" (110), "Before I could give him the *eja kika* I prepared for him, he was fast asleep (138), "At least she still remembered how much I loved *awin* (142), "She was sifting *elubo* into a wide-mouthed basin" (143), "She thought I would die in hospital but Eledumare did not permit it" (144), "Indeed! Or you would be left with a plain lump of *moyin-moyin*" (195).

Code-switching or translanguaging in *The Secret Lives of Baba Segi's Wives* (2010), as hinted earlier, is functional and deliberate; it is not done unconsciously. As a matter of fact, it is used as a linguistic tool to "leave the Western reader fragilised and at times incapacitated to discern full textual meaning without trying to engage with the strategically infringing language" (Teke 77). One of the functions Shoneyin uses the linguistic strategy for is to make it to serve as a vehicle for cultural signification and identity. She similarly employs the strategy to indicate the otherness of African language, culture and literature in a Europhone African text, and expose how a mother tongue and an exogenous tongue are at odds, leaving the latter triumphing over the mother tongue in question (Zabus 2). To this end, Shoneyin ingeniously subverts the English language to portray her disavowal of Europeanisation of African literature, since the literature of any people often constructs a definitive image or defines the language of the people (Ukam 46). To start with, some of the cultural terms in the text are italicised and untranslated, while quite a few are translated but not italicised. Cultural terms like *agbádá* (a long loose flowing gown), *bùbá* (blouse), *èkuru* (a delicacy made from

beans without pepper and palm oil), *àsun* (spicy smoked barbecued meat), *gaàrí* (powdery granules made from cassava), *babaláwo* (a diviner or an *Ifá* priest), *orógbó* (garcinia kola), *àgbálùmọ̀* (African star apple), *èlùbọ́* (yam/cassava flour), *àmàlà* (a delicacy made from yam/cassava flour), *ẹja kíká* (rounded smoked fish), *mọ́ín-mọ́ín* (a delicacy made from beans with pepper and palm oil), *àwín* (African velvet tamarind) are Yorùbá cultural terms used to foreground a *marginal* language/ culture inserted into the body of a Metropolitan language/culture. These terms, therefore, become metonymies standing for an *othered* language, culture and literature within the body of an imperial literature, language or culture. Considering the structure and mode of use of these terms, their intra-sentential usage suggests alterity, difference, asymmetry, and marginalisation of African language, culture and literature in a cultural space to which it is autochthonous. It reads like the terms are caged and handicapped by a powerful hegemonist Western force, just as it suggests metaphorically that African culture, language and literature are under the heteronomy and oppression of the West. However, the reverse may be the case, because the writer uses an Indigenous language to covertly attack an imperial tongue.

Aside using this narrative style to carve a niche for an African language, indicate its subalternity, construct African identity for Shoneyin and work, and possibly signify her bilingual identity; another hermeneutics derivable from the insertion of Yorùbá words into English is to taper the strength of the English language, and make it possible for Shoneyin to create a system of communication (the *Yorubaised* English language) that is *double-barrelled*. This can be proved by the use of metonymic elements, such as "shit-scraper" (56), "lick-spittle" (56), "*apoda*" (87), "fat frog" (130). These phrases are metaphors (parts) that stand for a whole — indexing some of Shoneyin's characters. My major concern with the metonymies is that they are transferred from the Yorùbá language to English either directly or indirectly. Their direct transference indicates they are left un-translated, while the indirect transference shows that they have been translated. In the sentence, "One day, that fat frog, Iya Segi, asked if I'd noticed that Iya Tope had left all the house-cleaning to me" (130), Iya Femi uses the metaphor as a part to represent the whole; that is, she uses a particular body feature of Iya Segi to ridicule her, since she is chubby. Iya Tope describes herself as a "shit-scraper" to denote her humiliated despicable condition in Baba Segi's house. It is an indirect translation of Yorùbá "*akógbẹ̀*" — an abusive epithet to show her ignoble plebeian descent, just as "lick-spittle" is a metaphor used metonymically to reflect her supposed oleaginousness. In fact, this condition is foregrounded in Iya Segi's tongue-lashing of Iya Tope whom

she describes as *apòdà*, a simpleton translated by Shoneyin as "the stupid, slothful one" (87).

While pidginisation is used sparingly as its usage is only confined to the conversation between Bolanle and the thief who owns a bric-a-brac stall at Sango market: "'Dat one come all the way from Italy" (44), "'I won't take a kobo more than five hundred naira from beetifu' lady like yase'f'" (44), Shoneyin employs relexification to nativise or indigenise the English language. When Iya Femi visits her village to revenge the shabby treatment she receives from her uncle after the death of her parents, her uncle's wife renders the English exclamatory sentence: "Don't kill me!" (135) as "*Don-key* me" (135). Even with the thief's statement, Shoneyin uses calquing to achieve the same purpose: "beetifu" (44), instead of "beautiful", "yase'f", instead of "yourself", in the superstrate language. In all, Shoneyin turns her text into a site of postcolonial contestation where her Indigenous language competes with the Metropolitan language. Most interpretations of *The Secret Lives of Baba Segi's Wives* (2010) have interrogated the feminist discourse of the text, neglecting the more critical concern of a creative writer who uses language uniquely to reveal her unconscious. We submit that the unconscious of Shoneyin and the text goes beyond feminist tensions, polyandry, social and economic structures underlying her Yorùbá (Nigerian) society to signify the fixation of a postcolonial African writer on the need to taper European language used in African literature. She interrogates the subalternity of African literature and constructs a different image for it as a corpus that has migrated from the margins to the centre of world literature.

Conclusion

Lola Shoneyin's novel affirms the thrust of this article about the imperativeness of mining Indigenous cultural resources and deploying local epistemology in African literary scholarship. The approach helps to carve a niche for African literature and also construct a unique image for it among the pantheon of world literatures. She employs various translation techniques to reflect the otherness of the Yorùbá language, but covertly uses the language as a counterpoise to English that arguably misrepresents her Indigenous African thoughts and obscures (her) authorial judgement or mutes her (authorial) voice. Shoneyin particularly employs translation techniques, calquing, translaguaging, literary heterolingualism, relexification, and pidginisation to taper the strength of English used in her novel. These transgressive techniques enable her to advocate linguistic freedom for African literature and push for the use of nativised Europhone language(s) in African literature. Her advocacy

can, similarly, be interpreted as a reaffirmation of one of those five conditions, which Moyibi Amoda believes are important identity markers in naming an African literary writer. These markers, according to Amoda, must include conditionalities, such as: the necessity of the writer being African, must use traditional themes from oral literature, use African symbols, use linguistic expression taken from African languages, and use local imagery, that is, images from immediate environment (Ilo 13). While these defining elements help to determine the imprint of Africanity in belles-lettres; Shoneyin, just like other third generation of African literary writers, has demonstrably indicated the possibility of adopting a nativised European language in her writings. This adoption helps her to carve a unique image for African literature in her novel. The image doesn't project African literature as a copycat literature that mimics European narratology, *it rather portrays it as* a postcolonial literature that artfully vitiates Europhone *tongues in African literature, and,* in the process, exposes *its numerous inadequacies in naming African epistemological* thoughts and realities.

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A Discussion of Speciesism and Cannibalism in Agustina Bazterrica's *Tender is the Flesh*

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Abstract　　This article explores the representation of cannibalism in a contemporary Argentinian novels and reveal how the motif is employed as one of humans' ultimate fears: to be treated like animals. As anthropocentric point of view inevitably enables speciesism, and since through similar hierarchical structures, humans justify their domination over each other through class stratification, the discriminatory discourses that perpetuate human aggression towards humans and animals do not stem from completely distinct psychological processes. Justification of violence, mass massacres, killing and exploiting animals, their transformation into normative human behavior requires the utilization of very similar defense mechanisms. *Tender is the Flesh* presents a world where animal meat becomes inedible after a pandemic and animal agriculture is transformed into a cannibalistic business. Humans who are raised for meat are called heads. Cannibalism and its maintenance, and the language used to refer to the practice are closely monitored by an autocratic government, and the cognitive dissonance people might experience as a result of their participation in a violent process is kept under control. The article provides a close reading of the novel by highlighting how cannibalism is rendered normal and natural through psychological mechanisms such as dehumanization, objectification, and deindividualization.
Keywords　　Critical Animal Studies; anthropocentricism; dehumanization; dystopia; Argentinian literature

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Introduction

Critical Animal Studies is a relatively recent cultural theory and an effective tool to analyze fictional representations of human-non-human animal relationships. Thanks to its interdisciplinary nature, the field also reappropriates theoretical concepts from other fields to better understand intersections between different kinds of oppression and explores ways to dismantle discourses that naturalize them. Through the textual analysis of a contemporary Argentinian novel, this article applies Critical Animal Studies framework to fiction while also utilizing results of various social psychological research about human perception of animals as a social group, how they determine the valuing and devaluing animals and their implications for human intergroup relationships. *Tender is the Flesh*, originally written in Spanish, was published in 2017, translated to English in 2020, and gained international recognition soon after. The plot revolves around a grief-stricken processing plant worker, Marcos Tejo, and introduces us to a cannibalistic society and the discursive foundations on which the society relies on to perpetuate violence against its outgroups.

Critical Animal Studies, as opposed to Human-Animal Studies, is a theory to action interdisciplinary field of Humanities and Social Sciences opposing the passivity of detached, disinterested academic work, challenging the insular nature of academia with the purpose of targeting "theory-for-theory's sake, an academic disorder, which involves the severing of theory from ordinary meaning (or, often, meaning in any sense) and from action, practice, and politics, and the separation of scholarship from citizenship" (Best 33). Although animal rights and animal liberation movements preced the birth of Critical Animal Studies by centuries, its official beginning as an "interdisciplinary…multidisciplinary intersectional and multi-movement approach for a total liberation field of study" (Nocella II et. al., *Introduction* xxii) is marked by the foundation of Center on Animal Liberation Affairs (now called Institute for Critical Animal Studies) in 2001. The field, in addition to working closely with animal rights activists also aims to promote intersectionalism and reveal the interconnected nature of various forms

of domination and exploitation. In other words, one of its central claims is that speciesism is closely related to other forms of discrimination against people.

> Speciesism strips animals of all intrinsic value to reduce them to instrumental value, to mere tools and objects whose cosmic purpose is to satisfy human purposes. Once humans defined animals as creatures devoid of reason, autonomy, and inherent value, they could use and abuse them without mercy or compassion. Various social elites then applied *the same speciesist discrimination model* to oppress other human beings. For once "rational" white, male, wealthy, privileged, propertied elites designated women, people of color, and other groups to be deficient in rationality, and thus in humanity, they declared them to be subhuman, "mere animals," closer to nature and animality than to culture and humanity, and thus could be thrown to the dungeons of damnation where they could be exploited, enslaved, and slaughtered like animals. (Best et. al., *Introducing* 8)

With its holistic understanding of oppression, CAS aims to deconstruct binary oppositions advance a radical non-hierarchical politics, and claims that the liberation of animal, human and the earth liberation is inseparable (14). Social psychology has been one of the sub-disciplines that provided data for Animal Studies to fill in the knowledge to action gap. Human tendency towards othering, discrimination, and violence, unquestioning obedience to authority (as in the Milgram experiments) or brutality (as in the Stanford Prison Experiment) have long been subjects of fascinating and at times ethically debatable studies results of which were later popularized through literature and film. Social psychology's main contribution to Critical Animal Studies has been to apply the results of some of these studies to human-animal relationships and conceptualize the unseen discursive mechanisms of legitimization of speciesism. In fact, the term speciesism was first used by an American psychologist in the 1970s and later popularized by Peter Singer. Richard D. Ryder claimed that "species," like many socially constructed categories, is prone to change and cannot be precisely defined. Speciesism is the exclusion of a member of another species from the scope of ethics. He also coined "painism," an altruistic theory which is based on the moral consideration of others in terms of their ability to experience pain and increasing "the individual happiness of all suffering creatures by…seeking to reduce their individual pains" (77). Mainstream animal rights theory is now similarly based on sentience, the ability to feel in general, pain as well as pleasure.

Another important term was coined by Melanie Joy, a social psychologist in her work analyzing how human beings rationalize cruelty and normalize discrimination against animals of different species. Carnism is an invisible ideology and a system "in which eating certain animals is considered ethical and appropriate" (30). Because it is invisible and entrenched, people are unaware of the extensive violence that accompanies the system or that they have a choice not to participate in that violence or to subject it to scrutiny. There are various cognitive processes people go through to normalize and naturalize their participation in violence towards animals. Joy writes about three of these mechanisms:

> …*objectification, deindividualization,* and *dichotomization*. These defenses are actually normal psychological processes that become defensive distortions when used excessively, as they must be in order to keep carnism intact. And, unlike some other defenses, these mechanisms are more internal and less conscious and intentional; they are less about *what* we think than they are about *how* we think. (117)

Animals are objectified, mainly through language and later through how they are treated, like inanimate objects devoid of sentience. Deindividualization further distances animals from human beings, by being perceived as groups of objects rather than individuals with identities of their own. They are thought of as abstractions, numbers, and masses of things which makes it impossible for people to empathize with their suffering. Dichotomization is the basic human tendency to classify things into groups often in opposing terms. These classifications help people organize information but they also determine how they emotionally respond to the individuals categorized in these groups (122). One such classification is made between edible and inedible animals. This classification is not based on morally relevant criteria such as sentience or consciousness but had already been naturalized based on convenience, profitability, and efficiency.

> Once an animal belongs to the "food" category, category-relevant attributes are more central (e.g., tastiness, tenderness, fattiness) and category-irrelevant attributes become less central. Importantly, because suffering is not food-relevant for most consumers, placing an animal in the food category may reduce its perceived capacity to suffer, helping to reduce dissonance. (Bastian & Loughan 281)

The arbitrariness of this particular classification can easily be discerned by its cultural relativity. What is considered a delicious rarity or a staple source of nutrition for one culture might disgust or shock another. This is one of the main reasons why Erica Fudge believes it is easier for the human psyche not to consume meat rather than to do so, since by doing the latter one increases the experience of dissonance and contradictions (52). Whether it is associated with virility, human dominion over nature, prosperity, and excess, or inadvertently legitimized through various cognitive processes, eating animals, and consuming dairy products have been part of human experience for a long time. Opposition to one or all of the practices exploitative of animals are as ancient as the practices themselves.

Speciesism, Social Psychology and Literature

Literary representations of animal abuse, particularly from nineteenth century on aimed to highlight the moral implications of inhumane treatment of animals. Vivisection, use of feathers and fur, mistreatment of horses, and cattle were some of the concerns nineteenth century authors dealt with in their essays and fiction. Anna Sewell's *Black Beauty* (1877), Margaret Saunders' *Beautiful Joe* (1893), Mark Twain's *A Dog's Tale* (1903), Elizabeth Stuart Phelps' *Loveliness: A Story* (1899), and to a certain extent Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle* (1906) questioned how natural and necessary animal abuse was and forced the readers to come to terms with their lack of compassion towards animals. A 2016 study on the influence of literary fiction on people's attitudes towards animal welfare proves that reading literary fiction about animal abuse can indeed modify people's opinions and behaviors towards animals and promote animal welfare. By the 20th and 21st centuries, "a canon of meat texts" (McCorry & McMiller 14) had already emerged as more scientific evidence linked natural disasters and climate change to animal agriculture as well as animal agriculture-related deforestation.

Post-apocalyptic novels also featured an inversion of human supremacy after global ecological disasters and their belated awareness of the necessity for a sustainable lifestyle, and a much less destructive existence in order to survive as a species. Many such works used the nature's vengeance motif to articulate the irreversibility of human's treatment of their habitat and its inhabitants. An ethical and narrow view of anthropocentrism is closely related to ethical discussions about the environment, the valuation of the natural world, and determine how people live in relation to that world. The belief that humans intrinsically are the sole ethical agents and possessors of moral value in the world is the cause of short-sightedness about the consequences of their actions and the interconnected nature of ecological

issues. The novel this research focuses on implies similar concerns about human environment but accentuates the transience and arbitrariness of human-animal divide which is easily and haphazardly transformed into a human-human divide under extraordinary but seemingly inevitable circumstances.

Agustina Bazterrica in her second novel portrays a post-pandemic world where all animals are culled in order to prevent the spread of the virus including companion animals such as cats and dogs and animals kept in zoos and laboratories. Animal agriculture is replaced by human agriculture through abduction and breeding of members of vulnerable groups such as immigrants and indigenous populations and eventually cannibalism is sanctioned by the government to provide a substitute for the animal meat market. The language used to refer to the process is strictly regulated. Human meat is called special meat or head; the unaltered, non-modified humans are called FGPs (First Generation Pure); the radical shift from carnism to cannibalism, the "transition". Despite no significant cognitive and emotional differences between humans who consume them and the heads who are slaughtered, a new class system emerges to normalize the transition to cannibalism.

> Throughout the novel there is a continuous play between two potential justifications for the Transition. On one hand, there is the fact that a virus has made animal meat toxic and inedible. Industrial production of human meat serves to prevent people who crave meat from causing social unrest. On the other hand, there is a theory, as in the passage above, that the virus is merely a pretext for an anti-overpopulation social intervention. (Hendrichs 186)

In addition to the consumers of human flesh and the humans transformed into product, there is another socio-economic class of people living in absolute poverty, called the scavengers who live on the meat discarded by the slaughterhouses. Special meat can be purchased and raised at home as domestic head and be consumed alive but cannot be used as cheap labor or enslaved. Violators are sent to the slaughterhouse which further obscures the boundary between who is considered abject and who is considered worthy of life. Heads' vocal cords are removed so as to render them silent; females are artificially inseminated and their limbs are cut off to make milking more convenient. Babies are separated from their mothers at birth just like calves in the dairy industry, mothers are sent to the slaughterhouse once they are past ideal reproductive age. Humans are now hunted, tested on, eaten; sex trafficking involves eating sex workers for an additional fee and any protest is violently crushed. The plot revolves around Marcos Tejo, a slaughterhouse worker

who guides the reader through a processing plant, a game reserve, a former zoo, a laboratory where vivisection on humans is performed, and a butcher shop.

In literary accounts, cannibalism has long been used as a symbol, traditionally to symbolize savagery, moral degradation or desperation. It is usually represented as a radical act of a marginal group either as an expression of a religious ritual, a gratuitous act of cruelty, or a desperate move for survival. Some fairy tales where cannibalism is used as a motif are usually set in times of famine. "Since the Renaissance, and as recently as the nineteenth century the cannibalism taboo was mobilized to allow civilized peoples to delineate themselves from their barbaric neighbours, commonly in situations of colonial contact" (West 237). Accusation of cannibalism justified the exploitation of the colonized by denying them their humanity and legitimized the way the colonizers defined themselves as civilized and superior. Conversely, in what is categorized as a dystopian setting, albeit uncannily reminiscent of contemporary society, dehumanization or animalization targets vulnerable groups and transforms them into meat to be consumed. Dehumanizing sentient human beings creates a widespread cognitive dissonance repressed by censorship and manipulation. This in turn breeds a knowledge to action gap, since there is no evidential reason why the heads are considered to be lacking similar cognitive and emotional lives as their consumers. After the transition, when cannibalism becomes habitual and widespread, cultural normativity "ultimately protect[s] people from feelings of dissonance associated with morally troublesome action" (Bastian & Loughan 283).

Kimberly Costello presented an interspecies model of prejudice based on three studies on laypeople, children, and children and parents respectively. The studies confirmed that animalistic dehumanization of other species is closely related to outgroup dehumanization of people and reducing the human-animal divide should reduce intergroup prejudices and preference for social hierarchy and inequality. Although people tend to refuse the correlation between their speciesist attitudes and their outgroup prejudices, the results "established the human-animal divide as a meaningful dehumanization precursor" (iii). As human-animal divide is an empirical predictor of dehumanization of outgroups, Bazterrica's account of the transition is not as radical a shift as one might initially expect.

Extreme intergroup violence is incited and sustained through description of the outgroup member in animalistic terms, as deficient in "culture, self-restraint, moral sensibility, and cognitive capacity", as a savage who "has brutish appetites for violence and sex, is impulsive and prone to criminality, and can tolerate unusual amounts of pain" (Haslam 252). Thus, if speciesism, discrimination based on

membership to a particular species was not the normative approach to interspecies relationships, animalistic dehumanization of people would not lead to degrading human beings and legitimizing violence directed towards them. On a similar note, in *Tender is the Flesh*, after attempts at finding a cure for the virus prove unsuccessful, the government starts a full-scale extermination process of animals, before vulnerable outgroup members are abducted and eaten. "He wants to erase the distant images, the memories that persist. The piles of cats and dogs burned alive. A scratch meant death. The smell of burned meat lingered for weeks. He remembers the groups in yellow protective suits that scoured the neighborhoods at night, killing and burning every animal that crossed their paths" (Bazterrica, 9). Marcos's memory of killing his two dogs, and their lingering spiritual presence continues to haunt him as he continues to be an integral part of dehumanization and slaughtering of heads. Only after animals are exterminated as a cautious but brutal measure of self-defence, it becomes acceptable to move up in the ladder of social hierarchy and render outgroup members as undeserving of life by transforming them into mere meat.

> Groups of people had started killing others and eating them in secret. The press documented a case of two unemployed Bolivians who had been attacked, dismembered, and barbecued by a group of neighbors. When he read the news, he shuddered. It was the first public scandal of its kind and instilled the idea in society that in the end, meat is meat, it doesn't matter where it's from. (9)

In 1973, Herbert C. Kelman writes about three interrelated processes that make sanctioned mass massacres possible without any moral restraint on the part of the perpetrators of violence. These are authorization, routinization, and dehumanization. Authorization usually replaces and surmounts normal moral principles, and when they no longer operate, explicit orders and tacit approvals encourage people to act on their prejudice or passionate hatred. "An important corollary of the basic structure of the authority situation is that the individual does not see himself as personally responsible for the consequences of his actions", he is no longer a "personal agent, but merely an extension of the authority" (39). Although Marcos suspects the virus was part of a governmental conspiracy to control population growth, poverty, and crime, and media manipulated people into believing cannibalism was the only viable option to stay alive, and refuses to eat "special meat" himself, his involvement in the process evokes more disgust than guilt. When he exercises his agency, it is to rape a First Generation Pure female and impregnate her in order to compensate for

the loss of his infant son who died soon after he was born, Ency one of the former operators at the processing plant Marcos works at, is the only person in the novel, who is consumed by the awareness of the horrid consequences of his actions and one day decides to set the heads free by cutting off the chains of the resting cages. Ency urges the heads to escape, as they are about to be slaughtered, but having been raised in captivity, the heads do not comply, as they are dazed and confused about their circumstances. Ency implores them: "You are not animals. They are going to kill you. Run. You need to escape" (Bazterrica 63). Upon being fired, Ency kills himself without being able to save a single head or interrupt the brutal work in any meaningful manner. Ency's failure to make the transition from carnism[1] to cannibalism[2] causes him to become ostracized but despite his awareness of the societal injustice, he uses the same moral exclusion mechanism when referring to animals.

The second process Kelman refers to is routinization which transform mass massacres into "routine, mechanical, highly programmed operations" (46). Initially, like authorization, routinization frees the perpetrator of his agency, then through mechanization the perpetrator is focused on the distinct operational work he is assigned to and is exempted from facing the consequences of his actions and coming to terms with its meaning. Both on an organizational and individual level, to their advantage, the actors are alienated from their work. "As they become habituated to their assignment in a supportive organizational context, they come to treat it more and more as if it were a normal job in which one can take pride, hope to achieve success, and engage in collaborative effort" (47). As Marcos takes two applicants on a tour of the processing plant to determine whether they are fit for a job, they go through the unloading yard, where the human excrement is collected to be made into manure, human hair is shaved in order to be sold, the resting cages where the heads rest for a day before being slaughtered because meat of a stressed head is tough, box sector where the heads are stunned with a club before being killed, slaughter sector, the slitting room, the offal room, where the heads are gutted, and the cutting room where the bodies are cut into pieces. Operators in each sector have a specific task and as a result the responsibility of the act of killing is diffused. The meticulous way the tasks are performed serves efficiency and profit rather than a consideration for the well-being of the victims. The language borrowed from animal agriculture

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1   Melanie Joy's term for the "vast mythology surrounding meat" which is related to what she calls "the three Ns of Justification: eating meat is *normal*, *natural*, and *necessary*" (96).

2   Considered to be a ritual and social institution as opposed to anthropophagy, the act of eating human meat.

also helps disguise the true meaning of their work. "The euphemisms allow them to differentiate these actions from ordinary killing and destruction… The moral revulsion that the ordinary labels would arouse can be more readily suppressed and the enterprise can proceed on its routine course" (48).

In her work *Sexual Politics of Meat*, Carol J. Adams describes how victims of animal agriculture are rendered invisible first "through language that renames dead bodies before consumers participate in eating them. Our culture further mystifies the term 'meat' with gastronomic language, so we do not conjure dead, butchered animals, but cuisine" (66). She argues that animals become "absent referents" in three ways. The first one is in order for people to consume them, they should already be dead, which is the literal manner in which they are made absent. The second way is through euphemisms like calling baby animals veal or sheep, mutton. The third way is describing human experiences through using animal metaphors as in "feeling like a piece of meat" when one becomes a target of violence. Since meat is dead flesh deprived of all feeling, it is impossible to share an experience with meat (66-67).

In addition, animals people consume are mostly raised, bred, and slaughtered outside of the residential areas, behind closed doors, shielding them from the reality of mass massacre. Commercials and advertisements of meat and dairy products use humane washing and present the public with animals peacefully grazing on meadows and mothers breastfeeding their babies both of which are implausible ways for the overwhelming majority of the meat and dairy companies to operate. In the novel, Marcos is wary of the many euphemisms enforced by the government and the society to prevent people from questioning the moral implications of killing human beings for food. "His brain warns him that there are words that cover up the world. There are words that are convenient, hygienic. Legal… The words carry the weight necessary to mold us, to suppress all questioning" (Bazterrica 7). Yet the notion of the absent referent in animal agriculture has become shockingly inverted in the nameless dystopian society of the novel. Building a cold room, keeping a domestic head at home (preferably a First Generation Pure), relying on the bestselling cookbook called *Death by a Thousand Cuts*[1] are considered trendy and a symbol for high socio-economic status. Therefore, the act of killing becomes a familial ritual through which members learn about the intricacies of cutting a head into pieces and eating her and in the meantime, trying to keep her alive as long as possible to ensure freshness. Invoking a similar sentiment, hunting facilities offer paying off the debts of celebrities who surrender themselves to the grounds for five days during which time the wealthy elite try to hunt them down. If they are

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1   Named after *lingchi*, an old form of Chinese torture meaning lingering death.

hunted down, they are feasted on, their flesh prepared in the most exclusive manner possible, each part of their body devoured by a group of wealthy businesspeople, all men, with seemingly no qualms about their actions. In Bazterrica's account of cannibalism, the referent becomes disturbingly present. Absent referents are supposed to be "disembodied entities, beings whom we never touch, hear, or see" (Adams, *Neither* 125). However, although heads are unrecognizable by the time they reach the butcher shop or the table, their presence is unable to foster any moral scrutiny, either.

Adams provides another concept borrowed from American philosopher Willard Quine to illustrate the deindividualization, particularly of animals raised in factory farming for human consumption. It comes as a surprise to most people who grew up in cities to learn that cows, sheep, or chickens have distinct personalities even though they readily accept that each dog is indeed a unique individual. This cognitive dissonance, resulting from a speciesist worldview, hinders people from coming to rational conclusions about members of different species. Animalistic dehumanization of an outgroup would not automatically legitimize mass massacre if speciesism or interspecies prejudice did not systematically widen the human-animal divide to begin with. What Quine, and later Adams call "mass term" refers to "things like water or colors; no matter how much you have of it, or what type of container it is in, water is still water. You can add a bucket of water to a pool of water without changing it at all. Objects referred to by mass terms have no individuality, no uniqueness, no specificity, no particularity" (5).

Deindividualization of victims of mass massacre is a prerequisite for dissociation from the ethical repercussions of denying them unique identities and moral worth and adopting a Cartesian view of animals or applying the Cartesian view of animals to human beings in *Tender is the Flesh*. Heads are slightly complex mechanisms, mere numbers in a registry without first and last names. They are gendered, allowed distinctions in age, health and genetic status only because these distinctions determine how and to what extent they can be exploited and their market value. "The existence of *meat* as a mass term naturalizes the eating of animals, so that consumers do not think "I am now interacting with an animal" but instead consider themselves making choices about food" (103). The only people with names who can be eaten are those who volunteer to be for religious reasons or risk their lives to pay off their debts, whose bodies stolen from funeral homes or people abducted off the streets after curfew. Attributing heads unique identities or naming them would render the artificial and enforced boundaries between the consumers and the consumed obsolete. Therefore, it is forbidden.

Differentiation between the consumer and the consumed is as arbitrary as it is with human-animal divide. Animals are different enough from us so we can kill and consume them, but they are similar enough so that we can run scientific experiments on them and later apply the results to humans. Similarly, in the novel, it is illegal to eat anyone with a first and a last name presumably because names signify uniqueness, but once they volunteer themselves to be eaten, the shared kinship disappears and they are transformed into products. On the other hand, the compartmentalization similar to the notion of "doublethink" in George Orwell's *1984* occurs frequently in the novel, and has become an ingrained part of denying heads moral value. When the scavengers attack a truck full of heads in front of the processing plant and start slaughtering them, the only person worthy of grief is the driver of the truck because unlike the heads, he has a name, an identity, and a family. On a visit to a breeding center, Marcos accompanies El Gringo, the head of the center, on a tour with a prospective buyer. They come across the workers doing a barbecue for a celebration.

> The smell of barbecue is in the air. They go to the rest area, where the farmhands are roasting a rack of meat on a cross. El Gringo explains to Egmont that they've been preparing it since eight in the morning, "So it melts in your mouth," and that the guys are actually about to eat a kid. 'It's the most tender kind of meat, there's only just a little, because a kid doesn't weigh as much as a calf. We're celebrating because one of the farmhands became a father,' he explains. 'Want a sandwich?' (Bazterrica 24)

The prospective buyer enjoys his sandwich, but because Marcos stopped eating special meat since his own son died, he refuses. Both the head of the center and the visitor are surprised since the tenderest of special meat is extremely expensive. Marcos is the only character in the novel whose cognitive dissonance about the treatment of heads makes uncomfortable enough to refuse doublethink and digress from what is considered normative behavior. He exhibits enough awareness to reject norm internalization but is too exasperated to motivate change in others or explicitly oppose the cannibalistic system in place. The irony naturally stems from the act of killing and eating a child to celebrate the birth of another. Farmhands, as well as the society as a whole, normalize the process through holding onto two conflicting thoughts: humans are sentient beings, worthy of moral consideration and a birthday celebration and that they are devoid of unique human traits, lack morally relevant characteristics and are edible.

Haslam's third process that enables people to commit atrocities is dehumanization. Haslam proposes two types of dehumanization and defines animalistic dehumanization as denying uniquely human attributes to others and mechanistic dehumanization as denying them human nature and treating them like automata (256). It is possible for a group to apply both types of dehumanization to an outgroup. Kelman however defines humanness as related to identity and community. A human with an identity is an individual with agency, a human with a community is perceived as a member of a network of individuals who care for one another. The two constitutes individual worth (48-49). Therefore, his loss would be a personal loss. In other words, dehumanized humans or animals are addressed by mass terms like "cattle" or "gooks" or in the novel, "heads" to erase their identity and exclude them from the community of the perpetrator of violence. Kelman also adds that the victimizer is also gradually dehumanized because he is no longer using his agency to make independent decisions nor is he able to retain his sense of empathy for his community. "As he gradually discards personal responsibility and human empathy, he loses his capacity to act as a moral being" (52).

This distanciation, ensuing alienation, and dehumanization is revealed through Marcos's familial relationships in the novel. After the loss of their infant son, his wife moves back to her mother's and the couple's relationship is limited to stunted dialogues on the phone, both parties are detached and reserved. Marcos's father has been traumatized by the transition from carnism to cannibalism and lives in a nursing home after being diagnosed with senile dementia. Although Marcos claims the only reason he continues to stomach his job is to support his father's care, he hardly ever visits him. Estranged from his sister, Marcos despises her for following societal trends and being obsessed with upward social mobility despite being an integral part of the systematic mass massacre himself. He forms what seems like a genuine relationship on his part with an FPG female who is gifted to him. He names her Jasmine, teaches her to live at home, watch TV, sleep in a bed, use cutlery, dance, take a shower, but once she gives birth to their baby, he instantly kills and slaughters her without hesitation. Despite being highly critical of the head of the laboratory which tested on animals, disgusted with the elite hunting and eating human beings, through his experiences he became a dehumanized machine following orders losing his moral restraints against murder. His wife who cannot have biological children of her own, being a midwife, helps Jasmine give birth to Jasmine and Marcos's son and cannot help but recognize Jasmine as more than a head. "She had the human look of a domesticated animal" she comments, after Marcos kills Jasmine. But Jasmine's loss nonetheless does not register as a personal

loss which would be possible if she was assigned an identity and a connection to a community. Instead, his wife regrets Marcos's decision to kill her, because Jasmine could be used to make more babies for them, used as a breeding stock.

Conclusion

Through textual analysis of *Tender is the Flesh*, a novel about a cannibalistic society, the article revealed the overlapping psychological mechanisms behind violence against humans and oppression of non-human animals. The novel is conveniently structured to introduce to reader to the inner workings of a system by using a grief-stricken processing plant worker called Marcos Tejo as a protagonist who commutes to various establishments such as a slaughterhouse, game reserve, and laboratory where he makes deals to provide the processing plant with heads to kill, hunt or experiment on. Heads, who are humans, some of which are genetically modified to grow faster replaced animals in this new society which went through a transition from carnism to cannibalism. The language used to refer to the new system is closely monitored and censored by the government. Various psychological mechanisms are used by the society to normalize the transition to cannibalism and to reduce the resulting cognitive dissonance the members might experience due to the violent nature of the system, the maintenance of which they contribute by consuming human products.

The binary oppositions which Critical Animal Studies aims to deconstruct is similarly constructed in the society represented in the novel and they are laid bare by exploring the processes through which the human-animal divide assumes the form of human-human divide and how these divides are represented in the novel. After the introduction of terminology used to clarify how human-animal divide is established and justify such as speciesism, carnism, the absent referent, and mass term, the discussion moves on to psychological mechanisms that enable and perpetuate human-human divide and violence against those considered to be outgroup members. The most instrumental model to understand how violence against humans and animals intersect is the Interspecies Model of Prejudice presented by Kimberly Costello to prove the interconnectedness of prejudice against humans and animals. The model helps us explain that the fictional transition from carnism to cannibalism is a much smoother transition than the reader might expect. Among other significant mechanisms exemplified by the characters' behaviors in the novel are the processes defined by Herbert C. Kelman to explain the sanctioning of mass massacres. In addition to mechanistic and animalistic dehumanization, and deindividualization which are amply demonstrated in the novel, Kelman's two

processes of authorization, and routinization are discussed to manifest how the seemingly radical shift in the society is internalized by its members.

Bazterrica's second novel self-professedly, partially but not solely is a critique of the meat industry (*The Irish Times* para. 5) and it shocks the reader into coming to terms with the moral consequences of their actions concerning the victims of their choices. It also is a microcosm of modern society that symbolically devours its members by violence, exploitation, and discrimination. Additionally, it provides ample opportunity for scholars of literature to use Critical Animal Studies and Social Psychology research to apply original frameworks to analyze how socially constructed divides are represented in contemporary fiction.

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Politics of Landscape and National Identity in Hawthorne's Travel Sketches and Notes-Book

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Abstract   As one of the representative writers of the early romantic period in the United States, Hawthorne's travel writing has obvious romantic characteristics. On the aesthetic level, he knows how to grasp the light and shadow effect projected on the characters and change the picturesque favor of ruins, irregularity and nature, creating the rules of the American picturesque landscape. At the political level, his vision not only looks abroad, but also gazes at the homeland, stripping out the political ecology and conception of ethnic integration of the United States through the comparison of the landscape. Finally, with the strategy of landscape writing followed by historical writing, he highly unifies politics and aesthetics, and carves the metaphor of national identity into the picturesque landscape, so as to achieve the purpose of easing national contradictions.
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Introduction

"By the middle of the eighteenth century in England, 'romantic' had become an adjective meaning wild or strange or picturesque, and was applied more to painting and to scenery than to poetry" (Bloom xvi). Hawthorne's romantic approach is

imprinted not only in Hester Prynne's immortal love affair with Dimmesdale, but also in the shadow that casts over them, exerting its influence on all of it. As in *The Scarlet Letter*, "the wooden jail was already marked with weather-stains and other indications of age, which gave a yet darker aspect to its beetle-browed and gloomy front. The rust on the ponderous iron-work of its oaken door looked more antique than anything else in the New World. Like all that pertains to crime, it seemed never to have known a youthful era" (Hawthorne, *The Scarlet Letter* 39). The dark and depressing tone of the whole novel begin to prevail throughout. Leo Marx said in the prologue of *The Scarlet Letter* that published in 1959, "landscapes ... is inseparable from policy and action and meaning.... [Hawthorne] turns the whole landscape into a metaphor" (qtd.in Levy 377). Edward H. Davidson viewed landscape as "a symbolic abbreviation which is capable of an infinite extension beyond the mere spatio-temporal limitations of characters in a scene; they are in it, but it is never permissively subservient to them" (Davidson 493). "Throwing his eyes anxiously in the direction of the voice, he indistinctly beheld a form under the trees, clad in garments so sombre, and so little relieved from the gray twilight into which the clouded sky and the heavy foliage had darkened the noontide, that he knew not whether it were a woman or a shadow" (*The Scarlet Letter* 148), in *The Scarlet Letter*，Leo B. Levy subtly captured and analyzed the environmental description of Hester's encounter with Dimmesdale in the woods: The Hudson River painter's practice of depicting shrunken or unrecognizable figures in the surrounding wilderness is similar to Hawthorne's description here, but Hawthorne's motivation is partly psychological, he wants to show a ghostly state, which makes Hester's image like "a specter that had stolen out from among his thoughts"(148), "flickering light and shadow emanating from a vast forest and reflecting every nuance of thought and mood of the characters" (Levy 378).

Travel Writing: The Shaping and Correction of National View

The flourishing development of travelogue themes during the Romanticism period was mainly influenced by two factors. First, rationality was questioned by writers as the standard for thinking about everything, and imagination and sensibility became the synonyms and weapons of Romanticism. The second is industry and war. The development of industry has brought about the innovation of transportation for the people, while war is the stimulant injected into the body to make people's eyes open. In the international environment, after the end of the Napoleonic Wars in 1815, the European continent faced rebirth and light from the dust, becoming the first choice for tourists from all over the world. As Thomas Nugent put it, the Grand

Tour tended "to enrich the mind with knowledge, to rectify the judgment, to remove the prejudices of education, to compose the outward manners, and in a word form the complete gentleman" (Humle and Youngs 41).

Throughout the American writers of the Romantic period, almost all the well-known novelists are masters of travel writing, such as Washington Irving, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Herman Melville and Nathaniel Hawthorne. Some American romantic writers also perfectly followed the continental travel lines and mainly visited three countries, England, France and Italy. In line with the purpose of the continental travel proposed by Nugent, they visited the literary giants such as Wordsworth, Burns, Scott and Shakespeare or visited their former homes, which can be regarded as a typical pilgrimage. Unlike Melville's adventures from maritime island, Irving and Emerson focused on Britain, the absolute hegemon of the nineteenth century world. Although Britain has been the political reference of development for the United States, there is another reason that gazes at Britain, namely the culture and blood ties. In *The Sketch Book of Geoffrey Crayon*, Irving faces the fallacies of the British people about the United States. His identification and defense of national identity is the opposite of his Rip Van Winkle. Despite the pressure of publication, Irving still criticized hypocritical and discredited Britain. Emerson's *English Traits*, on the other hand, is more like a guide book, dissecting Britain in every detail. "Great traveler is a kind of introspective: as she covers the ground outwardly, so she advances inwardly" (Morris 9). The subject and perspective of Emerson's evaluation are grand and careful, showing as much of a nation as possible. His praise of Britain shows a certain fairness, because behind the praise he gives the warnings for the people of his country, such as "the English delight to indulge, as if to signalize their commanding freedom…The thing done avails, and not what is said about it. An original sentence, a step forward, is worth more than all the censures" (Emerson 15). As a symbol of the American cultural spirit, Emerson was keenly aware of the influence of residual British ideology on the construction of American culture, he stressed "…which English forms are sure to awaken in independent minds" (43). Instead of rejecting it, it is better to "… aid himself, by comparing with it the civilizations of the farthest east and west, the old Greek, the Oriental, and, much more, the ideal standard (42)". The impact of Emerson's travelogue on the United States and its people is both profound and realistic.

In mainland of American, a journey was presented by the Knickerbocker group of writers, such as Washington Irving and James Cooper. The Hudson River School, led by Thomas Cole, and landscape designer, horticulturist, and author

Andrew Downing marked the northern part of the map as the "Northern Tour" or "Fashion Tour" also known to some as the Grand Tour of America, including the Hudson Valley and Catskills, the White Mountains, the Erie Canal, Lake George, the Connecticut Valley, and Niagara Falls. By the 1830s, travelers who wanted to go to the North could benefit from infrastructure including stagecoach and steamboat. It helped bourgeois travelers from Northeastern cities enjoy picturesque landscapes. Then tour routes expanded westward to include trips to the Great Lakes, eventually opening up the border areas of Michigan, Illinois, and Ohio to tourists. From Thoreau's *A Walk to Wachusett* and *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers to* Irving's *The Sketch Book*，they both applied the aesthetics of the picturesque to the landscapes they passed through, from myths to folk tales, reflecting on the relationship between national history and time. As Irving said, Americans "never need an American look beyond his own country for the sublime and beautiful of natural scenery" (Irving 17).

In 1832, Hawthorne published a large number of travel notes written during his travels to the North in the *New England Journal*, as will be mentioned below: *The Canal-Boat*, *A Night Scene*, *An Ontario Steam-boat*, *Old Ticonderoga: A Picture of the Past*. In 1853, Hawthorne accepted one of the most well-paid appointments, as the American consul in Liverpool, England, wandering through the towns and countryside, enjoying local customs and practices. *Our Old Home* was first published. On The eve of the outbreak of the Civil War, he published his last Italian romance, *The Marble Faun*. With the outbreak of the Civil War, Hawthorne traveled to Washington, D.C., with his close editorial friend William Dickner, where he met Abraham Lincoln and other prominent figures, and in 1862 *The Atlantic Monthly* published his article *Chiefly About War Matters*. In 1870 and 1871, His friend, who was an editor, compiled and published *Passages from the English Notebooks* and *Passages from the French and Italian Notebooks*. In 1879, *Passages from the American Note-Books* was published.

Politics of Landscape: Competition and Integration of National Identity

The nineteenth century was an era of global competition. The decay Napoleon brought about had not yet dissipated on the European continent, the Crimean War had risen again and the American continent was not peaceful too. Britain was still unwilling to loosen its chains on the American continent and fought with the United States again. President James Monroe first proposed the Monroe Doctrine in his seventh annual State of the Union address to Congress on December 2, 1823. Monroe asserted that the New World and the Old World would remain dominant in

the distinctly separate spheres, and further efforts by European powers to control or influence sovereign states in the region would be seen as a threat to American security. In return, the United States would recognize and not interfere in existing European colonies or in the internal affairs of European countries. "Monroe Doctrine's geographic construction of a Western Hemisphere and its relative locations of Europe and North and South America were crucial to the formation of an ideology of American exceptionalism that both claimed a radical separation from European colonialism and enabled cultural, military, and economic dominance" (Murphy 6). The "separation" between the United States and Britain is particularly evident in Hawthorne's short story *Legends of The Province House*. Esther Dudley as the last Englishman in the province house, she "firm in the belief that had fasten its roots about her heart, beheld only the principal personage, and never doubted that this was the long-looked-for Governor, to whom she was to surrender up her charge. As he approached, she involuntary sank down on her knees and tremblingly held forth the heavy key"(*The Complete Novels and Selected Tales of Nathaniel Hawthorne* 988). The representative of subverting "a symbol of the past" is "chosen Governor of Massachusetts" Hancock. He made grand statements: "we represent a new race of men-living no longer in the past, scarcely in the present-but projecting our lives forward into future" (989).

Our Old Home was written during Hawthorne's tenure as U.S. Consul General in Liverpool from 1853 to 1857. In *Our Old Home*, the acute problem of Hawthorne's narrative of self and other is the reappearance of Mrs. Dudley and Hancock. He claims that he "Sitting, as it were, in the gateway between the Old World and the New" (*Our Old Home* 10). It separated the United States from Britain, as Monroe claimed. Before comparing the two countries, Hawthorne made clear his firm national position: "my patriotism forbade me to take down either the bust or the pictures, both because it seemed no more than right that an American Consulate (being a little patch of our nationality imbedded into the soil and institutions of England) should fairly represent the American taste in the fine arts" (5). This was the political influence of the American exceptionalism behind the foreign consuls and gave him a great sense of superiority, but he found that there exited a striking contrast between his strong sense of superiority and the colonial nostalgia of his own people, such as the American grocery store owner who imagined himself as some kind of English nobleman and the two women who claimed to have ties of kinship with Queen Elizabeth. Hawthorne blames it all on that "English character would have been too ponderous a dead-weight upon our progress" (23). "Since the Revolutionary War, the other side of the Atlantic has always been a lingering

cultural shadow and an 'otherness' at the core of American culture and national character" (Fang Cheng 83).

From the time that groups of explorers such as Columbus set sail and opened Pandora's Box, the imperial path of colonization provided ample conditions for adventurers and travelers to "Putting the world on paper" (Hulme and Youngs 17), Making it "a symbolic carrier for shaping and expanding one's own spatial imagination and gazing at the world of others with 'imperialist eyes' to satisfy his impulse for adventure, his desire to make a fortune, his enthusiasm for preaching and his fantasy of utopia" (Zhang Chaoming 109). In *The Canal Boat*, Hawthorne observes on board:

> Perceiving that the Englishman was taking notes in a memorandum-book, with occasional glances round the cabin, I presumed that we were all to figure in a future volume of travels, and amused my ill-humor by falling into the probable vein of his remarks. He would hold up an imaginary mirror, wherein our reflected faces would appear ugly and ridiculous, yet still retain an undeniable likeness to the originals. Then, with more sweeping malice, he would make these caricatures the representatives of great classes of my countrymen. (*Hawthorne's American Travel Sketches* 39)

Homi Bhabha compared every nation to two pairs of eyes, which always "gaze" inward or outward at the same time as they define themselves. On the one hand, they seek the "pleasures of the hearth"; on the other hand, they confront or deny the "unheimlich terror of the space or race of the Other" (Bhabha 2). By comparing the knowledge of other peoples and cultures they met, those "backward", "underdeveloped" and "uncivilized" nations and countries, as a mirror allow Europeans redefined their natural and cultural position in the world and imagined European civilization as the most advanced civilization in world history.[1] Hawthorne used "imaginary" to describe the mirror. The hidden discourse behind it constituted the mutual gaze of the two, that was, the act of "fancy of national image" to maintain the colonial position. The English traveler portrayed "a Virginia schoolmaster as a scholar of America, but compared his erudition to a schoolboy's Latin theme, with scraps, ill-selected and worse put together" (*Travel Sketches* 39). Farmers' tirades against dogma were also recorded by him boasting about

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1   See Chen Xiaolan and Zhou Lingyi. "Travel, Masculinity and Femininity: The Gender Perspective on 'Studies of Travel Writing' in Britain and America." *Journal of East China Normal University*, vol. 54, no. 5, 2022, pp. 80-89+190.

congressional debates, newspaper stories, and caucuses. For British travelers in the former colonies, the American landscape evoked mixed feelings. "The American landscape that was different from Britain's also inspired their imperialist 'sublimity'. When they described this sense of 'dislocation' as 'sublime', they actually included the United States in the categories of 'disorder' and 'chaos' and sought to reinterpret 'Englishness' " (He Chang 162), transforming and controlling former colonies.

Regarding the mutual gaze behind the mirror, British traveler was to reclaim their "Englishness" by depicting the "chaos" and "backwardness" of the United States. The traveler explored himself while exploring the other, and wrote his self-image while describing the image of the other. Explorers, colonists, and other visitors often set out in their own country's travel literature, carrying their own national ideology with them. At the same time, identity independence and the national competition reached a climax when Hawthorne described the modern flat glass used in the shop in *Our Old Home*. Under Hawthorne's brush, the United States was associated with "modern" and "new enough". Britain was associated with "old fashioned" and "Gothic", "The street is an emblem of England itself. What seems new in it is chiefly a skillful and fortunate adaptation of what such a people as ourselves would destroy" (*Our Old Home* 111). Through understanding the customs of Britain, Hawthorne has completely become "the other", expressing the statement of "shoe is on the other foot" and becoming the "representative" of the United States.

With the consent of the Fugitive Slave Act by the United States Congress on September 18, 1850, growing tensions between the North and the South made Hawthorne to begin to generate national anxiety and envision the possibility of African American integration with white Americans. As Henry James put it: "I have alluded to the absence in Hawthorne of that quality of realism which is now so much in fashion, an absence in regard to which there will of course be more to say" (James 4). But Hawthorne, as a white American in New England who had written his autobiography for his friend Franklin Pierce's presidential campaign, was unable to stay out of the country's sharp conflicts. *The Marble Faun* was written by Hawthorne while he was living in Italy on the eve of the American Civil War. This travelogue combines allegorical, pastoral, gothic and travel elements. In the preface, compared with America where "no shadow, no antiquity, no mystery, no picturesque and gloomy wrong" (*The Marble Faun* 4)，Hawthorne said Italy could "affording a sort of poetic or fairy precinct" (4)，but the origin of the story clearly points to the United States，"It will be very long, I trust, before romance-writers may find congenial and easily handled themes, either in the annals of our stalwart republic, or

in any characteristic…" (4), so Italy is the perfect place to accommodate stories and avoid contradictions. When he saw the statue in the center of the square, Kenyon said," possibly they would give me a commission to carve the one-and-thirty (is that the number?) sister States, each pouring a silver stream from a separate can into one vast basin, which should represent the grand reservoir of national prosperity" (184).

Kenyon's self-doubt about the nation is the common national awareness under the self-government of the states, that is, the loose federation. Then the irony of the British artist directly leads to the fact that the prosperity of the country cannot be separated from the original sin committed, he said "you could set those same one-and-thirty States to cleansing the national flag of any stains that it may have incurred" (124). Then he immediately mentioned that Corine and Lord Neville's "temporary estrangement" could hardly be separated from the rivalry between the North and the South, and that the source of the discord was slavery, that is, "the stain on the flag". Here, Hawthorne portrays two types of people: the white Americans represented by Kenyon and Hilda, and the racially marginalized groups represented by Donatello and Miriam. Miriam's "African blood" was clearly marks in this novel, while Donatello, Hawthorne, repeatedly emphasized his similarity to Faun, his "inhuman" nature and "inexact character", which makes him unrestrained. In *Chiefly About War Matters*, Hawthorne's description of the runaway black soldiers was almost identical to Donatello's: "so picturesquely natural in manners, and wearing such a crust of primeval simplicity, (which is quite polished away from the Northern black man,) that they seemed a kind of creature by themselves, not altogether human, but perhaps quite as good, and akin to the fauns and rustic deities of olden times" (*Chiefly About War Matters* 50). It depicted a pair of sharp antagonism of race.

In the face of Donatello's crimes, Hawthorne gives two solutions, one is Kenyon's utterance: "Has there been an unutterable evil in your young life? Then crowd it out with good, or it will lie corrupting there forever, and cause your capacity for better things to partake its noisome corruption!" (59). Hawthorne was trying to explore the means of national integration, and guiding Donatello to rebirth. The other one is Hilda's psychological commitment. The result is that Donatello, like Dimmesdale, found wrongs in tragedy. Miriam is morally responsible for the crime, and she is doomed to be haunted by it forever. Kenyon and Hilda returned to the United States and responded only to Donatello and Miriam: "But when the kneeling figure, beneath the open eye of the Pantheon arose, she looked towards the pair, and extended her hands with a gesture of benediction. Then they knew that it was Miriam. They suffered her to glide out of the portal, however, without a

greeting; for those ex- tended hands, even while they blessed, seemed to repel, as if Miriam stood on the other side of a fathomless abyss, and warned them from its verge" (*The Marble Faun* 282). It also meant that Hawthorne has not yet found a way to reconcile and integrate blacks and whites.

Picturesque Landscape: National Identity and Community Shaping

The travelogue genre has been largely neglected in the study of literary criticism. Even in its heyday in the mid-19th century, America's picturesque travel sketches have languished, with many Europeans, Britons, and even some domestic critics claim that the American landscape lacks historical connections and ruins, which makes it uninteresting and essentially unsuited to picturesque travel. But like Theodore Dwight, Gideon Miner Davidson, and Nathaniel Parker Willis put the American landscape on stage, bringing the benefits of travel into homes. The new American middle class turned to the picturesque "…to win traditional sanctions for [their] new experience, finding new ways to imagine and construct the American landscape from within the inherited aesthetic of the picturesque" (qtd. in Evelev 4).

Hawthorne's broad concept of "picturesque" was first proposed by Henry James, James noted that "Hawthorne is perpetually looking for images which shall place themselves in picturesque correspondence with the spiritual facts with which he is concerned" (James 119). Within the aesthetic framework established by numerous artists, Hawthorne's travel sketches used picturesque visual frameworks and spatio-temporal variations to comment on social issues in American history.

Hawthorne wrote to Horatio Bridge in 1857, "in the sense in which an Englishman has a country. I never conceived, in reality, what a true and warm love of country is, till I witnessed it in the breasts of Englishmen. The States are too various and too extended to form really one country. New England is quite as large a lump of earth as my heart can really take in" (*The Letters 1857-1864* 8). Literary nationalism, like the early formation of American nationalism, remains a site of perpetual struggle. As David Waldstreicher underscores, "local, regional, and national identities existed simultaneously, complementing or contesting one another" (qtd. In Levine 4). John D. Kerkering also believes that from Hawthorne's early local writing, he "treating local traditions as productive of shared identity, but for Hawthorne the identity they construct is local – specific to a town – rather than regional or national" (Kerkering 77).

Despite the regional character of the landscape, the religious and political roots are solid. The influx of Irish immigrants had always been a great threat to America's Puritanic-based religious culture, threatening to dilute American unique political

and racial identity. From Hawthorne's description of the Irish group, it is difficult to define the national identity of the group from the perspective of him. In *A Night Scene*, the dark hues seem to pull people back to the wilderness they once were, and the rough Irish were "imperfect creatures" and "shadow-like" who wandered around the edge of darkness. In the end of the narrative, Hawthorne created supernatural images and deflected contradictions to the least imaginative spectators, likening them to "devils" (*Travel Sketches* 49), further refusing to humanize them.

In *An Ontario Steam-Boat*, they were mob, exiles of another climate and the scum which every wind blows off the Irish shores. The atmosphere was a kind of fear for the future of America. When he saw an Irish family sitting around a fire, the light of the fire made them feel pleasant, like a comfortable family. Hawthorne began to think about the possibility of including the Irish community into the picturesque painting, and he began "meditating on the varied congregation of human life that was beneath me," pitied "what was to become of them all, when not a single one had the certainty of food or shelter?" (54). Because immigrants posed a threat to the future landscape, Hawthorne reconstructed the landscape through "strong light and deep shade" (48). The previous descriptions often focused on the supernatural environment. But at that time the focus of image was projected into the "home" to achieve the effect of shining light into the darkness, a picture of the future. The Irish here have changed their decaying image to a picturesque one.

Hawthorne was careful enough to know that the picturesque effect was not an Irish invention, he emphasized that "with all these homely items, the repose and sanctity of the old wood do not seem to be destroyed or profaned. It overshadows these poor people, and assimilates them somehow or other to the character of its natural inhabitants. Their presence did not shock me any more than if I had merely discovered a squirrel's nest in a tree" (*American Note-Books* 140), "a sure prophecy of better days to come" (*Travel Sketches* 53), the land of miracles in the United States brought them benefits. Hawthorne fundamentally denied its legitimate identity and compromised that they acquire citizenship rather than become members of the nation. Twenty-eight years later, when *The Marble Faun* was published, the natural divide between Catholics and Puritans reconciled in Hilda, an American painter. When she witnessed the model's murder, she repeatedly sought solace in the Catholic faith:

If she knelt, if she prayed, if her oppressed heart besought the sympathy of divine womanhood afar in bliss, but not remote, because forever humanized by the memory of mortal griefs, was Hilda to be blamed? It was not a Catholic

kneeling at an idolatrous shrine, but a child lifting its tear-stained face to seek comfort from a mother. (*The Marble Faun* 128)

Even as she was being blessed by the priest, she reaffirmed her identity as the "daughter of the Puritans". Although Hilda and Kenyon continued to debate the merits of the Catholic faith and then Hilda was kidnapped by a priest and imprisoned in a nunnery, the threat of Catholicism was more or less neutralized in the final resistance. The moment represented a cautious reconciliation between Catholics and Protestants.

The federal system in the United States have made the concept of nation very weak to the public. The concept of region is more stable than that of country. As Wordsworth has even said, "what seemed a paradox, that they needed a civil war in America, to teach the necessity of knitting the social ties stronger" (Emerson 25). Unlike the local identity in Salem emphasized in Hawthorne's earlier works, the history of Franklin Pierce's home state of New Hampshire forced him to distance himself from the region toward Washington D.C, several aging survivors of the revolution "at the first tap of the shrouded drum, to move and join their beloved Washington" (*Life of Franklin Pierce* 19). This scene gave "Pierce's a stronger sense, than most of us can attain, of the value of that Union which these old heroes had risked so much to consolidate — of that common country which they had sacrificed everything to create" (20). It can also be seen from Hawthorne's later writing style that history writing became writing strategies he usually used. Angela Miller asserted "landscape as a form of symbolic action". Nineteenth-century landscape painters struggled to find "visual or narrative resolution to unresolved problems of cultural identity or to test alternative futures. Conflicts between freedom and order, change and continuity, growth and stability could be rehearsed through spatial scenarios" (Miller 14).

In *Chiefly About War Matters*, Hawthorne met American painters Leutze in Washington, D.C. Two paintings *Westward the Course of Empire Takes Its Way* and *Washington Crossing the Delaware* made the artist famous. Hawthorne saw *Westward the Course of Empire Takes Its Way* that displayed inside the White House and depicted a group of settlers and explorers crossing the Golden Gate Strait. This work represented an affirmation of history and a commitment to American exceptionalism, "link between aesthetics and politics is the 'central, explicit subject' of Hawthorne's essay, he invokes aesthetics, in fact, to stress the social immobility that has characterized their lives in the South and will continue to do so should they succeed in getting to the North" (Baker 435). The picturesque became Hawthorne's

new way of understanding history. Although the cracks in the dome suggested that the country was on the verge of division, he praised when he saw such a magnificent fresco "so rich in thought and suggestiveness, shall glow with a fire of their own, — a fire which, I truly believe, will consume every other pictorial decoration of the Capitol, or, at least, will compel us to banish those stiff and respectable productions to some less conspicuous gallery" (*Chiefly About War Matters* 46).

The politics of land and land ownership work through picturesque aesthetics. "…producing new forms of artistic beauty from the natural features of the Rocky-Mountain region, which Leutze seems to have studied broadly and minutely" (46). Like the early depictions of the Western landscape, the emphasis on landscapes with American characteristics was exhilarating at a time when the country was Mired in conflict. The idea of shaping national identity based on national history is particularly important in this painting, as Cole mentioned in a polemic, American scenes are not destitute of historical and legendary associations, the great struggle for freedom has made many places sacred, and many mountains, streams, and rocks have their legends. [1] Cole identified the Revolution and American nature and colonial "legends" as viable sources that could rival European "antiquity" to identify American picturesque landscapes.

Although Fort Ticonderoga reflected the residual violence of America's past on the landscape, it exemplified the picturesque American past as a resource for travelers and writers. Hawthorne imagined "a process of Americanization in which the historical time and spaces of European colonial conflict lapse into 'natural' ruins" (Evelev 39). By engrave America's past in the landscape, the landscape metaphor became a powerful force in building unity. According to Anderson's theory of nationalism, one of the preconditions for the establishment of national identity is the existence of nation "glide into a limitless future" (Anderson 11-12).

In the key stage of the Civil War, the historical background of the painting is the two major historical events: the independence revolution and the westward movement. It represented the common cultural memory of the American people. The hunters in wilderness with western characteristics and vagrants are embedded in the painting with picturesque costumes, so that such a common cultural identity brings the United States into the painting, which was original and had obvious American characteristics. Under this circumstance, the United States can be perfectly represented and interpreted, which can awaken national emotions and

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1   See Cole, Thomas. "Essay on American Scenery." American Monthly Magazine, 1 January 1836, pp. 1-12. Available at: <https://thomascole.org/wp-content/uploads/Essay-on-American-Scenery.pdf>（accessed July 26, 2023）

alleviate conflicts, and is of great significance to shaping a federal country with political and cultural unity.

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Overview of the Parallel Forum on Japanese Literature Studies in the 11th Convention of the International Association for Ethical Literary Criticism

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Abstract   Ethical Literary Criticism, as a scientific and interdisciplinary research system, provides a wealth of academic resources for international academic studies, including those of Japanese literature. By comprehensively grasping the ethical characteristics of Japanese literature, and relying on the theories of Ethical Literary Criticism to re-read Japanese literary classics, a bidirectional interaction between Ethical Literary Criticism and Japanese literature research can be formed. Through cross-disciplinary research that involves Japanese literature and areas such as translation studies, ecology, and history, the interdisciplinary nature of Ethical Literary Criticism is further demonstrated.
Keywords   Ethical Literary Criticism; interdisciplinary; Japanese literature

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标题：文学伦理学批评与跨学科研究：第十一届国际文学伦理学批评研究会年会日本文学研究平行论坛综述

内容摘要：文学伦理学批评作为一种科学的、跨学科的研究体系，为包括日本文学在内的国际学术研究提供丰富的学术资源。在对日本文学的伦理性表征进行整体性把握的基础上，依托文学伦理学批评理论对日本文学经典进行重读，能够形成文学伦理学批评和日本文学研究的双向互动。通过对日本文

学与翻译学、生态学、历史学等多学科的交叉研究，进一步证明了文学伦理学批评的跨学科特性。

关键词：文学伦理学批评；跨学科；日本文学

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　　文学伦理学批评深受中国"文以载道"批评传统和西方伦理批评的影响，强调回归历史的伦理现场，具有与生俱来的多元性、实践性与跨学科性。正如其倡导者聂珍钊教授所指出：文学伦理学批评是科学的理论，是跨学科的研究体系，始终致力于在伦理层面消除人文和科学的隔阂，为国际学术研究提供学术资源。[1]

　　2022 年 11 月 5 日至 6 日，"第十一届国际文学伦理学批评研究会年会"在广东外语外贸大学召开，与会专家学者共同围绕"文学伦理学批评与跨学科研究"展开探讨，涵盖英语、俄语、法语、德语、日语、韩语、越南语等多个语种。大会平行论坛暨日本文学文化研究平行论坛由广东外语外贸大学东方学研究院、日语语言文化学院、中日比较生态文学研究所、教育部日语专业虚拟教研室、中国日语教学研究会华南分会承办，来自中国社会科学院、南京大学、吉林大学、厦门大学、同济大学、上海外国语大学、东北师范大学、日本京都女子大学、北京语言大学以及广东外语外贸大学等国内外院校及科研机构的 14 名专家学者聚集一堂，举行系列专题报告，开展与会者间的互动交流。会议吸引 300 余名专家学者在线参与，取得丰硕成果。

一、日本文学伦理性的整体性表征

　　文学伦理学批评认为，文学在本质上是伦理的艺术，而客观的伦理环境或历史环境则是文学批评的基础。[2] 纵观日本文学发展史，不同时期的文学在伦理环境、伦理思想、伦理内涵等方面呈现出不同的特点。因此，有必要对不同时期日本文学的"伦理"特征及其与日本文学发展整体脉络的相关性问题予以考察。

　　中国社会科学院外国文学研究所研究员邱雅芬教授将坪内逍遥（Shoyo Tsubouchi）《小说神髓》（『小説神髄』，1885-1886）刊发的明治 20 年代

1　参见 聂珍钊教授 2022 年 11 月 5 日在"第十一届国际文学伦理学批评研究会年会"上的讲话。本文下述行文中所引述的相关学说、见解皆为相关学者在本次大会上所作的口头发言或书面摘要中所涉及的内容。

2　参见 聂珍钊、王松林：《文学伦理学批评理论研究》，北京：北京大学出版社，2010 年，第 8 页。

前后视为一个重要时间节点，将此后较长一段时期内的日本文学统称为"日本现代文学"，从更加敞开的历史维度基于文学伦理学批评视角对日本现代文学的伦理性问题进行了考察。邱教授认为，文学是记忆和塑造价值的重要利器，从"文学者战争责任"问题最终不了了之这一象征性事件可知，"伦理缺失"是长期以来存在于日本文学研究领域的问题之一，日本现代文学中根深蒂固的"死亡"气息和深刻的"颓废"色彩亦无不与此密切相关。作为中国学者立足民族立场，运用文学伦理学批评方法开展研究具有认识论和方法论意义。

二、文学伦理学批评视域下的日本文学经典重读

与会者中有 7 位学者从文学伦理学批评的视角切入，对日本文学经典进行分析，明确了日本文学伦理学批评的重要意义，对现有日本文学研究在内容与理论方法两方面产生补充、创新及示范作用。

文学伦理学批评强调回归文本，认为文字是人类伦理观念的体现，文本则是对生活故事的忠实记录，源于人类对传承伦理规范、进行道德教诲的需要。[1]吉林大学徐明真教授重回村上龙（Ryuu Murakami）的《无限接近透明的蓝色》（『限りなく透明に近いブルー』，1976）的文本现场，对群像人物身上共通性地体现出来的无尽的乡愁与无解的困境进行解读，指出在美军占领下的战后日本，知识人、文化人的生活现状就是压抑、扭曲、无力、落寞、苦闷，找不到出路，揭示了资本主义社会异化人的生活现实。上海外国语大学日本经济文化学院院长高洁教授回归历史的伦理现场，以"高浜虚子上海游记的实证研究"为题，通过对同时代上海历史、日本侨民史等方面资料的考证，从近代国际观光主义的角度考察了高浜虚子（Kyoshi Takahama）惊鸿一瞥的上海体验，以上海城市空间操作为抓手，直观、直接地揭示了近代殖民城市上海的社会图景及民俗风貌，揭示了"黄金十年"[2]期间以上海为舞台，中日之间处于特殊的紧张关系之中的史实，并指出高浜的上海书写眼光总体上看是客观的，但仍然无法摆脱殖民主义者的高傲心态。

文学伦理学批评强调回到历史的伦理现场，站在当时的伦理立场上解读和阐释文学作品，寻找文学作品产生的客观伦理原因并解释其何以成立，分析作品中导致社会事件和影响人物命运的伦理因素，用伦理的观点对事件、人物、文学问题等给以解释，并从历史的角度作出道德评价。[3]广东外语外贸大学东方学研究院院长、日语语言文化学院名誉院长陈多友教授

1 参见 聂珍钊、王松林：《文学伦理学批评理论研究》，北京：北京大学出版社，2010 年，第 7 页。
2 指自 1927 年中华民国国民政府定都南京至 1937 年迁都重庆的十年。这十年间，中华民国在政治、经济、军事等方面取得了一定的成就，被称为"黄金十年"。
3 参见 聂珍钊："文学伦理学批评：基本理论与术语"，《外国文学研究》1（2010）：12-22。

聚焦芥川龙之介（Ryuunosuke Akutagawa）代表作中国唐代同名小说《杜子春》（『杜子春』，1920），援用文学伦理学批评理论展开案例分析，藉此揭橥其文学的审美特质以及厚植于其字里行间的中国传统思想文化内涵。陈教授认为，芥川文学具有浓厚的现实与社会关怀意识，他用语言在现实之外建构了一个乌托邦的世界，象征性地表现自己对现实、社会以及人生的认识、理解，表达自己独特的思想观点。在西方合理主义，实用主义思潮的冲击下，东方传统的精神主义文化走向崩溃，致使日本走上了一条不归路。如何发挥文学的教诲功能，针砭时弊，抑恶扬善，医治日本的现代病成为"芥川龙之介"们必须回应的时代命题。芥川龙之介将主人公杜子春的伦理选择之选项设定为"孝"，其用意十分明确，就是从思想和价值上否定明治路线，呼吁日本回归到以中国儒家为代表的哲学基础上重新思考日本近代思想文化内核建构的问题。广东外语外贸大学日语语言文化学院张秀强教授着眼尾崎红叶（Koyo Ozaki）代表作《金色夜叉》（『金色夜叉』，1897-1902）的创作过程，引入文学伦理学批评的视角，指出了尾崎在小说创作中的伦理两难。

　　寻找和解构文学作品中的伦理线与伦理结，是文学伦理学批评的重要组成。南京师范大学林敏洁教授聚焦野上弥生子（Yuriko Miyamoto）《森》（『森』，1998）的文本书写，以文学伦理学批评为利刃，回归历史伦理现场，从国家伦理、社会伦理及个人伦理三个维度，结合其外文本即近代日本社会及历史文化文本，探究作家笔下所刻画的"特立独行的共同体"与明治社会之间的隐喻关系，藉此展开与文本间的跨时空对话，反思日本近代化进程中国家、社会及个人不同层面的伦理选择问题，厘清了该文本通过战争与和平、正义与使命、感性与理性之冲突等错综复杂的"伦理结"，与作为使命抉择选项的"伦理线"所构筑的具有多元性的伦理结构。厦门大学外国语学院吴光辉教授以"谁在书写历史？——解构井上靖的西域小说《楼兰》"为题，指出井上靖（Yasushi Inoue）采用新历史主义的叙事手法，解构《史记》，将稗史、虚构与正史掺杂，混淆历史真相、塑造新历史，将作为大汉区域的楼兰建构为实体国家，以矮小化大汉，并利用西方殖民主义者的历史话语塑造了所谓的楼兰精神，这种既没有基于正史也并非在场的文学叙事，实际上在腐蚀、误导着读者和受众的历史想象。

三、文学伦理学批评与跨学科研究

　　文学伦理学批评借鉴并吸收了包括伦理学、心理学、语言学、历史学、社会学、脑科学等在内的人文科学、社会科学以及自然科学的精髓，并融合了诸种现当代文学批评理论和方法，形成了独特的批评话语体系，具有与生俱来的跨学科特性。在此次会议上，专家学者围绕文学伦理学批评与翻译学、生态学、历史学、病理学、戏剧学等的跨学科研究展开讨论。

文学伦理学批评与翻译学。翻译文学作为国别文学特殊的重要组成部分，理应纳入文学伦理学批评的讨论范畴，而翻译文学与文学翻译之间的辩证关系，为文学伦理学批评与翻译学的跨学科研究提供了可能。翻译学对"伦理"问题的探讨由来已久。自 1895 年，美国学者 John S. Nollen 发表《翻译的伦理》（*The ethics of translation*）一文以来，贝尔曼（Antoine Berman）[1]、韦努蒂（Lawrence Venuti）[2]、切斯特曼（Chesterman）[3]等学者均对翻译伦理问题有所讨论。在本次会议中，来自京都女子大学的刘小俊教授基于日汉翻译实际，指出贝尔曼翻译伦理理论在讨论日本文学汉译问题时所存在的问题与限度。贝尔曼主张采取直译的方式将原作的文字性传递给读者，否则是对读者和作者的背叛；刘教授则强调文化的再现，认为翻译应尊重源语文本的原有风貌、保留其文化韵味，一味强调发挥中国语言文化优势加以翻译会破坏原作的诗情。山东师范大学外国语学院李光贞教授以"译介学视角下文学的翻译与翻译的文学"为题，着眼文学翻译的审美价值再现及其创造性特质，讨论了影响文学翻译的伦理因素。李教授认为，文学翻译和翻译文学的关系是辩证的，将对翻译文学的讨论置于目的语以及出发语的伦理现场进行讨论便会发现，翻译文学的价值取向既是为译入语读者服务，也是为出发语文化国际传播服务的。我们应有开展跨文化交流的责任感，态度应严肃认真、尽心尽力、积极能动且富于生产性。

文学伦理学批评与生态学。文学伦理学批评在阐释生态文学方面同样具有较强的适用性。广东外语外贸大学日语语言文化学院院长杨晓辉教授作题目为"日本里山的环境伦理及其生态批评意义"的发言，她认为日本里山作为生态系统受到人类影响的地理空间，具有自然、风土人情与本地乡土文化相统一的特色。里山的环境伦理，是把自然看作"人类介入的自然""文化的自然"，可以视为人类价值观问题，而不必局限在生态系统和环境领域审视。将"里山"理念运用于生态批评中，既可以克服人类中心主义，也可以避免自然中心主义。

文学伦理学批评与历史学。从历史、宗教、民俗、思想、哲学、伦理、美学等交叉学科的视野去考察文学，以及国别区域研究与文学文化研究的融合，是今后日本文学、文化研究的重要学术增长点。文学伦理学批评借鉴历史唯物主义的研究方法，强调文学批评回归历史的伦理现场的重要性，因此研究中日文化交流对日本文学发生、发展的影响，要做到知识考古学性质的

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1   参见 Antoine Berman, *The Experience of the Foreign: Culture and Translation in Romantic Germany,* Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992.

2   参见 Lawrence Venuti, *The Translator's Invisibility A History of Translation*, London: Routledge, 1995.

3   参见 Andrew Chesterman, "From 'Is' to 'Ought': Laws, Norms and Strategies in Traditional Studies". *Target* 5 (1997): 1-20.

钩沉探赜。东北师范大学日本研究所所长陈秀武教授以"日本神话与'国体'书写"为题，以文观史，以史观文，文史互证。陈教授认为，从神话形成的背景和思想源流看，记纪神话蕴含了丰富的中国文化元素。在神话与历史结合的过程中，记纪神话不断被复活。

文学伦理学批评与病理学。在文学伦理学批评的理论体系中，自然选择是伦理选择的前提。在适者生存、优胜劣汰的自然选择中，疾病成为不可回避的话题，这为病理学与文学伦理学批评的文理融合提供了可能。同济大学外国语学院刘晓芳教授着重分析了森鸥外（Ougai Mori）、夏目漱石（Soseki Natsume）、田山花袋（Katai Tayama）及芥川龙之介等人的疾病书写，将疾病学、病迹学研究与文学伦理学批评进行融合，使得文学伦理学批评有了更确切的抓手，文学伦理学批评也使得前者的阐释更具思想文化价值与意义。

文学伦理学批评与戏剧学。文学是文本的艺术，戏剧是表演的艺术。中国作为东方戏剧的汇聚中心，中国戏剧是最具"东方性"、最能代表东方的"东方戏剧"。近代日本有不少文化人、知识人对中国戏剧兴趣浓厚，其中有些人对我们的国粹京剧产生了特殊的兴趣。北京语言大学周阅教授以《京剧与日本近代文人》为抓手进行探究，探讨芥川龙之介、谷崎润一郎（Junichirou Tanizaki）、加藤彻（Toru Kato）等近代日本文化人与戏剧之间的关系，不仅探索了近代中日戏剧交流方面的生动事实，亦为近代中日比较文化、比较文学研究拓展了新的空间。

文学伦理学批评与叙事学。文学伦理学批评侧重于对作品内容的分析，将其与叙事学方法相结合，能够有效实现文学批评内容与形式的统一。南京大学外国语学院叶琳教授关注"平成时代日本女性文学的叙事策略"问题，认为资本主义文化是弱肉强食的文化，弱势者的欲望被残酷地去势，女性被加倍地压抑、悲苦，却无法通过正当的途径言说，只有通过个性化的书写，用语言在现实之外构建一个虚拟的世界，才能够代理性地获得满足、释放、解脱，甚至消解男性中心话语体系。

闭幕式上，陈多友教授作总结发言。他以"各呈精彩，各胜擅场"对 14 位专家报告进行了高度概括，指出 14 位专家在各自研究中有着独特的见解和深厚的造诣，在论坛上的报告内容丰富、观点新颖，既有深入的理论探讨，也有生动的实践案例。他们用自己的研究成果，为我们揭示了科学研究的魅力和价值，指明了未来研究的方向和趋势。

第十一届国际文学伦理学批评研究会年会日本文学研究平行论坛紧紧围绕本届大会"文学伦理学批评与跨学科研究"的主题，老中青三代学者从多维度、多学科切入，形成了文学伦理学批评指导下对日本文学进行研究的基本方法论，为开展相关学术研究及教学实践提供了借鉴。相信此次会议将对中日两国乃至世界日本文学研究界的"越界"研究起到重要的推动作用。

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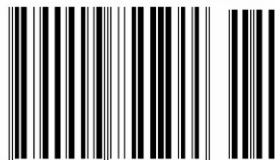Venuti, Lawrence. *The Translator's Invisibility A History of Translation.* London: Routledge, 1995.