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MA Thesis

Yellow Skin, Strange Masks

A Postcolonial Reading of Fukuzawa Yukichi, Tawada Yōko and Mizumura Minae

Author: Junchuan Liang

Supervisor: Prof. I. B. Smits

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Table of Contents

Introduction

The opening ceremony of the 2020 Tokyo Olympics became a controversy in public discussion soon after it was broadcasted. The *Ankoku Butoh* – for example the dances *Woods* and *Darkness* – has caught extra attention, and people were confused about why such a grotesque form of dance would figure so prominently on such an occasion, and what Japan wanted to express to the world. In theory, *Butoh* is a postcolonial response. Originally, it was created as a form of artistic resistance to the repression of the Allied Occupation in postwar Japan, during which the body was also "occupied". On the one hand, the promotion of American popular culture restriction on local cultural production by the regime of Occupation repressed the space to express the Japan's postwar reality. On the other, transformation into an industrialized capitalist society occupied the body as well – "alienation" in Karl Marx's sense. In this context, *Bu*toh, the art from "darkness" in nature was invented as "a struggle with a mediated social diet of commodity fetishism and exoticized tradition" (Broinowski 2016, 86).

My intention in bringing up the much discussed performance of *Butoh* taking place recently is to suggest that postcolonial response in various forms is a visible cultural phenomenon in contemporary Japan, meaning that this nation also suffers from the colonial aftermath. I would by no means argue that the Allied Occupation was a case of colonization, nor would I wish to ignore Japan's violent imperialist history and place this nation on the victimized side. My point is that it is precisely this complexity of modern Japanese history that makes the phenomenon of postcolonial response interesting. Then one might ask: how does the cultural response of postcolonial nature come into being in the case that Japan has no history of being a colony and was even a colonial power itself?

In recent decades, an intellectual trend known as *taibei juzoku ron*, or the theory of (Japan's) subordination to American, began to appear. Scholars in favor of this idea criticize the ambivalence of Japan's postwar conservative regime for this regime is underpinned by Japan's multi-dimensional dependence on the U.S., which damages Japan's sovereignty and will leave Japan little chance to become truly independent. For example, political scientist Shirai Satoshi in his *Eizoku haisen ron* (2013), or *An Argument of Everlasting Defeat*, argues that political subordination to the U.S. allows

Japan to give up the historical consciousness of its imperialist past and reflection on its failure of war. Although this intellectual trend might be characterized as activist scholarship – with political motives – the message from it must be read as it is more than necessary to examine the impact of the West, represented by the U.S., on modern Japanese history.

The cases above can be considered as both justification and contextualization for my reading of modern and contemporary Japanese literary texts – a crucial aspect of contemporary Japanese culture - from a postcolonial perspective. As Adam Broinowski (93) argues, *Butoh* is a representation of the "darkness" as a resistance against the "whiteness". It is not difficult to understand that "darkness" refers to the marginal and subaltern group, and the "whiteness" refers to the normalized industrial capitalism. However, there is still another layer: the "darkness" refers to the actual skin color and "whiteness" refers to things Western. The famous Japanese film director and photographer Terayama Shūji even identified himself with Afro-Americans, for the resemblance is the state of being "under domination" (Terayama Shūji, cited in Broinowski, 87). That is to say, the Japanese were under repression of the "political and economic system of 'whiteness'", which eventually led to a "fragmented identity" (Broinowski, 87). In other words, the Japanese were in a state of displacement, or alienation, that is (post)colonial[1] in nature and this is the theme I would like to explore in contemporary Japanese literature. While the postcolonial perspective is not chosen very often to discuss Japan, mainly because Japan has itself a problematic history as a colonizing power, I do believe that a postcolonial approach, to rethink Japan's situation as discussed in the novels analyzed here, will provide fresh insights.

For a possible theoretical and also methodological approach, I turn to Frantz Fanon, the psychiatrist and influential postcolonial intellectual – whose theoretical narrative is applicable to the case of *Butoh* as well (see Broinowski, 84-5). In his work *Black Skin, White Masks* (first published in 1952), Fanon made an inquiry into the psychological aftermath that colonialism left on the black population who were the former colonial subject. Based on his own experience as a black man from French Martinique and the cases of his patients, Fanon examined the formation of inferiority complex in the psychology of the black population and their desire to become white.

[1] The expression "(post)colonial" refers to a duality of this situation: colonization was officially ended yet its consequences, especially the cultural and ideological, are still at work.

He also examined the Europeans' construction racist social structure and the discourse/knowledge of "blackness" in which the black identity was always devaluated. Ultimately, he tackled the issue of displaced black identity, or alienation, in such seemingly "decolonized" situation. Fanon's theoretical narrative consists of not only the basic framework of psychoanalysis, but also elements from social linguistics, Marxist and existentialist philosophy, and phenomenology. Therefore, it will help to build up a multi-dimensional view on my case studies.

In this thesis, I introduce Fukuzawa Yukichi, Tawada Yōko and Mizumura Minae as the subjects for case studies. Tawada and Mizumura are two contemporary literary authors who share several similarities. They are both educated in the West – Tawada in Germany and Mizumura in the U.S. and France – and both have the experience of living in the West for decades, which implies that they might experience more direct confrontation with "whiteness", allowing for a stronger sense of cultural hybridity. They are both bilingual writers active since the 1990s: Tawada writes in German and Japanese and Mizumura writes in English and Japanese.[2] More importantly, they both explore the theme of displacement – the experience of a stranger in a foreign land – and fragmented identity in their writing. In other words, Tawada and Mizumura are writers who deal with the issue of alienation. Additionally, approaching Tawada's works from a postcolonial perspective has been proved to be plausible.[3] In examining their works, I hope to reveal how the (post)colonial alienation comes into being in the psyche of (at least a part of) contemporary Japanese.

I also believe that an analogy can be drawn between these two authors back to Fukuzawa, an influential public intellectual active in the Meiji period (1868-1912). Fukuzawa might at first seem to be unconnected to Tawada and Mizumura. Nonetheless, he represents the starting point for Japan's experience of the overwhelming power of the West. Fukuzawa not only witnessed violent colonization of European powers in other parts of Asia – China in particular – but also had the experience of travelling and learning in the West. That is to say, he was fully aware of

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[2] There is a difference in terms of bilingualism between Tawada and Muzumura. Tawada composes literary texts in both German and Japanese. Mizumura instead focuses on writing novel in Japanese; her writings in English are mainly academic texts – *Renunciation* (1985) for example. Interestingly, Mizumura's *An I-Novel*, the text that will be examined in this thesis, is written in Japanese and English. The key issue is that the relationship between the local/national language and the foreign language is a theme that Tawada and Mizumura have been exploring, as I will unfold in following chapters.

[3] See for example, Emanuela Costa 2013.

the material advancement of the West and the threat of colonialism. Therefore, he began to promote the knowledge of the Western civilization, and advocated that Japan should "leave Asia" and "entering Europe". In the sense that he abandoned the old system of cultural reference and embraced the "whiteness" in such situation, he could be considered as an early example of the experience of (post)colonial alienation. Fukuzawa as the start for my case studies thus will offer the thesis a richer historical overview and chronological continuity of the theme as well as its context.

Before the chapter preview, I would like to clarify two things that might affect the validity of this thesis. First, due to the pandemic of COVID-19, my access to sources was restrained. During my research, I was not able to access the major body of relevant scholarly texts in Japanese. As a result, most of the secondary literatures presented in this thesis are scholarships in English and Chinese, or translations in English and Chinese. This means that the local perspective from Japan might be missing more or less. Second, quotations from Japanese and Chinese sources in this thesis are my own translation. They might not be perfect in quality, but I will present the key issues as accurate as possible.

In Chapter I, I will review Fanon's theoretical narrative in *Black Skin, White Masks*, focusing around the idea of alienation. I will first look at the phenomenon of alienation from the perspective of materiality – in a Marxist manner – and culture, to offer an overview of the material and discursive/ideological context. Next I will bring in Homi Bhabha's postcolonial thinking, which arguably starts from his interpretation of Fanon's text. Because in Bhabha's thinking there is no consistent theoretical system, I will focus on several of his notions, including "Otherness", "in-betweenness", "ambivalence" and "mimicry", to offer explanations for Fanon's idea. Further, I will review the foundation of Fanon's narrative: psychoanalysis. I will mainly introduce Jacques Lacan's theory of identification and Alfred Adler's theory of inferiority complex. Finally, I will examine Fanon's reading of Hegel's philosophy about the formation of self-consciousness, to offer an in-depth explanation for the black desire to become white.

In Chapter II, I will examine the case of Fukuzawa Yukichi, with an emphasis on *Datsu-A Ron* and *An Outline of a Theory of Civilization*. This chapter starts from contextulization. I will examine the historical junction that Fukuzawa is situated in. Also, I will examine the historical conceptualization of the idea "Asia" before Fukuzawa's argument for "leaving Asia". Then I will look into his theorization of

"civilization", to reveal his Eurocentric position. In his abandoning Asia and turning to Europe, I will display his alienation.

Chapter III focuses on Tawada Yōko and her short fiction *Persona*. This fiction tells a story of how a Japanese student studying in Germany loses her sense of identity and regains it in a however strange way. To begin with, I will offer a brief overview of Tawada's own thought on language and culture, to introduce the inquiry of the relationship between the East and West as a key theme that she has been exploring. Following this, I will analyze this novel in the topics language, psychology and the body – also crucial topics in Fanon's text – to figure out where and how alienation happens. Notably, I suggest that Kazuo, the heroine's younger brother, is of extra significance for he resembles Fukuzawa in their desire for recognition from the West and their tendency of overcompensation.

In Chapter IV, Mizumura Minae and her semi-autobiography *An I-Novel* will be the subject of discussion. As she acknowledges, it is almost inevitable for the audience to detach the text from the real-life author when it comes to the Japanese literary form of *shishosetsu*, or the "I-novel". Therefore, in discussion, Mizumura the author and Minae the narrator in the novel are often interchangeable. In this chapter, I will place an emphasis on the issue of language, since the text in question is a bilingual one, to reveal the tension between Mizumura's obsession with Japanese as the only connection to her Japanese identity and the overwhelming hegemony of English that tends to cancel the Other. Meanwhile, I will have a look at the socio-cultural condition in Japan during and after the period of Allied Occupation, in which Mizumura – and Minae – was born and raise, to further contextulize her alienation. What is remarkable in Mizumura's case is that it might offer a creative solution for negotiating identity when faced with alienation, making it a distinctive case from what is presented in Fukuzawa's and Tawada's texts.

In the end of this thesis, I will present why and how these cases can be connected together, based on my findings. They are critical pieces for the puzzle of the picture of (post)colonial alienation that modern Japan has been experiencing, as presented in literary – and scholarly in Fukuzawa's case – texts. In my analysis, I hope to expose such alienation as a cultural and psychological phenomenon not limited to those former colonial subjects, but a commonly seen symptom of the modernity constituted by the so-called "whiteness" that is still ongoing in today's world.

Chapter I

Frantz Fanon and (Post)Colonial Psychology

Fanon the Psychiatrist

Frantz Fanon, born in the French colony of Martinique in 1925, was one of the most inspiring figures in the field of postcolonial studies. He was educated in Lyon and started his career as a psychiatrist there. In his own experience as an Afro-French and also in the cases of his patients, Fanon observed the problem of structural racism and its negative psychological effects upon the black population – in many cases including the Creoles and the half-blacks – in the "decolonized" France. Fanon found that in Metropolitan France, and also in French Antilles, the formally colonized population and their descendants were trapped in the feelings of estrangement, displacement, and alienation, as a result of the colonial aftermath. Such situation often came into being when they were troubled by their desire to become "white", which would develop into various forms of mental disorder when they realized that it was by no means possible.

Fanon in his influential work *Black Skin, White Masks* offers a brilliant anatomy of this (post)colonial psyche. Through out this book, the question that is consistently troubling Fanon (1986, 10) is "what does the black man want". "To want" refers to the psychological activity of desire. As a psychiatrist, Fanon approached this issue with the methodology of psychoanalysis. In talking about colonial language, sexuality, material life and the so-called "dependency" relationship, Fanon (1986, 154) observed that when a "black man"[4] encounters the white world, the vulnerability of his "psychic structure" will lead to "a collapse of the ego", turning into a desire to behave like the Other (the white). This black person will at a certain moment realize that "behaving like the Other" is far from satisfactory, and eventually, their desire would

[4] In Fanon's text, the original word is "Negro". This N word consistently appears in his writing, for Fanon himself was a black man from French Martinique, and the use of this word was an accepted, if not common, practice in mid 20th century when he was writing. However, I acknowledge the improperness of using this word in contemporary society. Therefore, except for direct quotations from Fanon, I will avoid the usage of this N word in this thesis.

develop into "becoming the Other", resulting in a strange being with black skin and white mask.

Fanon's attitude towards the cultural violence – or cultural imperialism/cultural hegemony– of the West is distinct from such scholars in postcolonial studies as Edward Said and Gayatri Spivak, whose focus is a more political criticism. [5]Instead of focusing on the Other, his psychoanalysis of the black provides an insightful look at the Self, with interiority at the center of analysis. But not exactly the Self, for Fanon (1986, 38), the alienation of the Self is precisely the key, since he took "the disalienation of the black man" as his mission. Curing the mental disorder is after all is a psychotherapist's job.

Nonetheless, Fanon is not a traditional psychoanalyst. His text is itself a rejection, or revision, of the Eurocentric tradition of psychoanalysis. In the beginning of the chapter "The Negro and Psychopathology," Fanon (1986, 141) questioned the applicability of Freud's and Adler's theories to understanding "the man of color's view of the world". The primary reason is that cases of traditional psychoanalysis are basically all from white people, and the experience of the black is out of consideration. These observations are not specifically about the black. As a humanist, Fanon was considering to include the experience of all people of color, all non-whites. In other words, Fanon offers us a possibility, a good example, to revise Eurocentric theories and apply them to another context. And, the other side of contextualization, is to add to the canon of certain fields more diversified cases.

Fanon was also a Marxist, with a Marxist understanding of base and superstructure. For Fanon (1986, 13), "the effective disalienation of the black man entails an immediate recognition of social and economic realities", and the primary reason for the Negro's mental disorder – majorly inferiority complex – is the economic structure. In this light, Fanon (1986, 149) deconstructed and challenged the essentialist idea that "[T]he Negro makes himself inferior". For instance, Fanon (1986, 85-7) denied psychologist Octave Mannoni's argument that racism is not a reflection of materialistic situation. Further, the since in theory the emergence of inferiority complex is closely linked to the environment, Fanon (1986, 88; 100) pointed out that it is the difficulties that the social structure creates – including economic exclusion as

[5] Of course Fanon is political as well. Nonetheless, Fanon's analysis, or methodology, centers on what might be called "colonialism from within", meaning psychopathology, or the internal mechanism, of how the cultural politics of colonialism works within the "subaltern".

the fundamental issue – that generates the black a sense of inferiority: "it is the racist who creates his inferior" (Fanon 1986, 93). However, it should be noted that Fanon is not a determinist; his view is rather dialectical. In the case of the economy in colonies, Fanon (1963, 40) wrote, "the economic substructure is also a superstructure. The cause is the consequence; you are rich because you are white, you are white because you are rich". In this sense, he acknowledged the counterforce of the superstructure onto the materialistic base.

Fanon's psychoanalytical approach provides the inspirations for my methodological framework in studying the texts by Fukuzawa Yukichi, Tawada Yoko and Mizumura Minae. On the one hand, his focus on interiority allows me to access and examine the texts in terms of an internal/local perspective, to reveal what has happened to the Self – how alienation becomes possible. On the other, as is implied in the most famous quote from *The Wretched of the Earth* - "the last shall be first and the first last" (Fanon 1963, 30), the collapse of colonial governance never means the end of colonialism, and the recovery of colonial mental and cultural disorder has just started. That is to say, colonial culture and mentality do not necessarily rely on physical governance, and modern/contemporary Japan might be in that case.

Yet, before I go into detailed discussion of my analytical framework, I would like to draw brief attention to potentially problematic points in Fanon's approach. Firstly, although a humanist, Fanon advocated collective violence as a mean of resistance, as reflected in *The Wretched of the Earth* – the Algerian resistance against French colonialism is one such example, which was even supported by Sartre. My point is not that activist scholarship is problematic. What I would like to emphasize that my analysis in a Fanonian approach does not mean that I support the idea of violence, nor I insist anything activist. Secondly, Fanon's language is quite gendered, and his point of view concentrates majorly on "Negro", or "black man". Also, his discussion of the gender relations between black and white people, in Chapter II and Chapter III of *Black Skin, White Masks* might at certain point seems sexist. I acknowledge the historical convention of idea and language. However, in the following part of this thesis, in cases other than direct quotation, I will try to neutralize Fanon's words when rephrasing.

Fanon and "Alienation"

As Fanon (1986, 38) claimed, his theme – of the book *Black Skin, White Masks* – is "the disalienation of the black man". It means that, equally, the phenomenon of alienation of black people is the fundamental issue of his analysis. Therefore, it is necessary to clarify the meaning(s) of "alienation" first.

In modern intellectual history, the discussion of "alienation" that is most talked about is perhaps Karl Marx's theorization of the "alienated labor" in capitalist society, whose influence can be seen throughout Fanon's text. In *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1884*, Marx analyzed the phenomenon of workers being objectified into commodities, precisely through the "realization of labor". The logic is that: under the frame of (capitalist) monetary or market economy, (almost) everything can be exchanged at a given price, and the workers' time and effort, or their labor, which is necessary to produce commodities, has a price – the wage - and can be sold and bought as well. "Labor produces not only commodities: it produces itself and the worker as a commodity" (Marx 1977, 68). As a result, the workers find themselves in a state of alienation, or in Marx's word, "estrangement". In other words, alienation, for Marx, is a kind of separation. This is merely a consequence of the system of private ownership. The worker is separated from their life, their labor, and the product of their labor, as an alien object.

Since Fanon in his text did not provide a coherent definition for "alienation", Marx's conceptualization might throw light on examining Fanon's depiction of this phenomenon, although Marx and Fanon built their analysis on seemingly different context: respectively the capitalist and (post)colonial social relations. However, it is not difficult to find common ground between Fanon's analysis and Marx's framework. As Fanon's words on the relation between wealth and "whiteness" quoted before show —to be white means to be rich— Fanon was applying the Marxist class analysis and indeed there is a juxtaposition of the class division in capitalist society and the racial division in European colonies.

Fanon's "alienation" certainly contains the dimension of socio-economic estrangement in Marx's sense. In Marx and Engels'stheory, colonialism is both the cause and effect of European capitalist expansion, especially the expansion of the market, and is "not specifically different from the other processes of the industrial

economy"(Young 2008, 102-3). In colonies, the capital finds the lands, raw materials, potential market, and most importantly, human resources. The colonial racial relations is thus in nature exploitative. Even after slavery has officially ended, the black are still under capitalist exploitation. As Fanon (1986, 230) noted, what the "white master" want from the "black slave" – "slave" in Hegel's sense – is "not recognition but work". Therefore, alienation that happens to Marx's workers also happens to Fanon's black people.

In bringing up the Marxist analysis of alienation, my intention is not to develop a critique on capitalism. Rather, my point is that socio-economic alienation in Marx's sense brings other consequences and problems of alienation. A crucial issue of alienation, for Fanon, is devaluation of people, or sometimes in its extreme form, dehumanization. To quote Fanon and the Martinician poet Aime Cesaire (1986, 98), as a black, "I begin to suffer from not being a white man to the degree that the white man imposes discrimination on me, makes me a colonized native, robs me of all worth, all individuality, tells me that I am a parasite on the world, that I must bring myself I as quickly as possible into step with the white world … 'that I am a brute beast … I have no use in the world'".

The sense of uselessness, or devaluation, has both economic and cultural aspects. Economically, devaluation is concerned with class division, and the black are devalued into the class of the subaltern, and subsequently, into labor. As Marx (1977, 68) argued, "the devaluation of the world of men is in direct proportion to the increasing value of the world of things". This might be the primary reason, for the white bourgeois, to objectify the black. What the white man needed was black labor, as the history of black slavery illustrates.

Nonetheless, the situation – in the case of former French colonies that have been "freed" officially, as Fanon analyzed - turns out a different picture from what Marx hoped: it is not a harmonious scene that the black and white proletarians united together. It is not an issue of class. Devaluation has became a strategy for economic exclusion, which according to Fanon (1986, 88), results from " the fear of competition and the desire both to protect the poor-white class that forms half the European population and to prevent it from sinking any lower". This might be the origin for the (prototype of) racism, and for the black's "inferiority complex" which I will discuss later. Moreover, this points to objectification as an important theme in Fanon's idea on alienation.

There is the cultural aspect of alienation as well. The black's sense of uselessness in the white world is also a sense of cultural inferiority to the extent that the local, or indigenous, culture has collapsed in confrontation with European civilization. In this encounter, the black first face "two frames of reference", yet their culture and its sources are canceled since they are "in conflict with a civilization" the black did not know before and that imposes itself on them (Fanon 1986, 110). Blacks are, thus, forced to examine themselves through the white lens — an imitation, or mimicry, of the white gaze, in which Fanon (1986, 112) discovered his "blackness". Here we can see the influence of Merleau-Ponty, that "for a being who has acquired consciousness of himself and of his body, who has attained to the dialectic of subject and object, the body is no longer a cause of the structure of consciousness, it has become an object of consciousness" (cited in Fanon 1986, 225).

From this bodily consciousness, Fanon (1986, 112) developed the idea of the "triple person": "I occupied space. I moved toward the other . . . and the evanescent other, hostile but not opaque, transparent, not there, disappeared". In this, the "I" exists in the Self, in the move to the Other, and in the (illusion of) the Other. Also in this, Fanon discovered his "ethnic characteristics". From this point, it is no longer only about the body or blackness, it becomes an issue of culture and of self-consciousness. Generally, the Self is no longer fixed at its own place. It is displaced, separated, and therefore estranged.

Blacks are separated from their own culture, Fanon argues. He (1986, 38) gave his own example of alienation in terms of language: "a Senegalese learns Creole in order to pass as an Antilles native". In this case, we see not only the Senegalese and the Antilles black, but also the presence of Europe – white France in this case – within their images. The language known as "Creole" is the illusion of the European. "To speak a language is to take on a world, a culture", Fanon (1986, 38) said. Ironically, the Senegalese is not quite learning proper French. He can never truly take on the culture and world he desires. Yet more ironic is the Antilles black. According to Fanon (1986, 20), the "middle class in Antilles never speak Creole except to their servants". The Antilles blacks look down upon the African blacks because they believe that they are more "civilized", meaning "closer to the white man", since the level of their mastery of the French language is higher (Fanon 1986, 18; 26). The Antilles black is othering the African black in the manner that the white French is othering them. And that is an issue of worldview: the "objective truth" of the white, to

use a Hegelian term, or the "white gaze" appropriated. Under the white gaze —which is a gaze projected from their own eyes, however— the Antilles black feel inferior, which becomes their motive to pursue the 'proper' French language as the symbol of whiteness. In other words, an inferiority complex plays a significant role in the black's pursuit of white culture. In this sense, the Antilles black is alienated.

To summarize briefly, in confrontation with European civilization, the black find their Self not lost, but separated, estranged, and displaced. The black are separated from their live, their labor, their land, their culture, and their ontological Self. In relation to the white, the black becomes distorted: it is in the process of shifting to the illusion of the white that is imposed and that it can never truly reach. But this forced move often leads to mimicry of the white gaze, involving devaluation and objectification of "blackness". Once internalized, it will result in a more perverse psychological state, the state of colonial alienation. In other words, if a black person wants to take up the vision of the white, or to identify with the white, consequently, they will have to othering themselves, entering a state of split.

To further understand this phenomenon, I will examine first Homi Bhabha's notion of "Otherness" in next section, as an interpretation for the in-between state – between the Self and the Other – of the black consciousness.

Fanon and Bhabha: Alienation as Otherness

Being a British scholar of Indian origin, Homi Bhabha's contribution to the field of postcolonial studies and cultural studies is rather significant. His theoretical contributions include the concepts of "hybridity", "ambivalence", "mimicry", and more. For the development of Bhabha's thinking, it can be observed that Fanon plays a crucial role. As displayed in Bhabha's classic *The Location of Culture*, Fanon seems to be the starting point of his cultural analysis on the issue of colonial identity. The first part of the chapter "Interrogating Identity" is an excerpt from his "Foreword" for the English edition of Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks*, which tackles the problem of colonial identity that Fanon raised yet has not answered.

Fanon (1986, 16) once wrote, "what is often called the black soul is a white man's artifact". Bhabha (1994, 44) quotes Fanon's word, and points out the "psychic

uncertainty of the colonial relationship" it reveals. For Bhabha, Fanon's alienation is a problem of "not the Self and Other but the otherness of the Self inscribed in the perverse palimpsest of colonial identity". In other words, within the existence of the black Self, there is the presence of the white Other, and the so-called "blackness" is nothing more than a constructed cultural identity based on white imagination. Conversely, the white Self must exist in relation to the presence of the black Other. "To exist is to be called into being in relation to an otherness, its look or locus" (Bhabha 1994, 44). "Otherness", meaning the state of being different – but in Bhabha's sense the difference is articulated (or imagined) - is thus another crucial perspective in understanding the state of alienation.[6]

It should be noted that Bhabha's conceptualization of "otherness" focuses more on cultural/discursive criticism – a criticism of the white knowledge. First of all, Bhabha's terminology is derived from Jacques Lacan's psychoanalysis. In Lacan's theory, the Other[7] refers to "both another subject […] and the symbolic order which mediates the relationship with that other subject" (Evans 2006, 136). The meaning of the Other as "another subject" must comes after that as the symbolic order. This is because for Lacan, the symbolic is the realm of "law" and "structure", and ultimately the realm of "signifier", "in which elements have positive existence but which are constituted purely by virtue of their mutual differences" (Evans, 203). Therefore, the meaning of the Other as another subject must come secondary as a subject may assume its position and thereby "'embody' the Other for another subject", since the Other is at first place a "locus" constituted by speech (Evans, 136). As Bhabha (1986, xviii) notes, "the Other must be seen as the necessary negation of a primordial identity - cultural or psychic - that introduces the system of differentiation which enables the 'cultural' to be signified as a linguistic, symbolic, historic reality".

Bhabha's employment of the Lacanian terms thus implies that the "otherness" in question is a discursive system, or a set of signifiers, constructed by a certain subject to speak of, or embody, another subject as the Other. Bhabha's interpretation explains Fanon's case that at the moment a black realizes his blackness, they

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[6] A typical example of imposing projecting "otherness" onto the "other" in order to find a position for the Self is the European construction of Orientalism, a set of ideas/ideology – usually concerning stereotypes - to imagine the East, as Edward Said outlined in *Orientalism*, first published in 1978.

[7] Lacan made a difference between the "other", with a small *o*, and the "Other", with a big *O*. In this thesis I deal with only the "Other" since it is directly related to Bhabha's theory.

immediately desires to become white, because the "black soul" is merely a discursive construction. For Bhabha (1983, 19), the otherness is "an object of desire and derision, an articulation of difference contained within the fantasy of origin and identity". In this otherness Bhabha sees ambivalence, again a psychoanalytical term that describes "a continual fluctuation between wanting one thing and its opposite" (Young 1995, 153). The colonizer desires the existence of the (usually inferior) Other – "it is always in relation to the place of the Other that colonial desire is articulated" (Bhabha 1994, 44). On the other hand, in order to fulfill this desire, the colonizer has to tolerate the Other, usually in an unwanted image. As a result, the colonizer's strategy becomes to produce "a reformed, recognizable Other, as a subject of a difference that is almost the same, but not quite" (Bhabha 1994, 86) – known as "mimicry" - and hence the black's desire to become white.

Instead of exploring further into Bhabha's thinking on colonial cultural politics, at this point, I feel it is necessary to go back to Bhabha's theoretical foundation, that is, the notion of "beyond" and "in-between". In the opening sentence of the introduction for *The Location of Culture*, Bhabha (1994, 1) discards the notion of "the realm of the beyond". It refers to the state of being in modern world, for which a fixed position is no longer possible. To take an example from my case studies, Mizumura Minae, a Japanese who had lived in the United States, lives in the traditions and realities from both sides at the same time. She is not completely Japanese, nor American, but she is both. In this sense, she exists somewhere "beyond" Japan and the United States. In this situation, one has to rethink the issue of identity, and "think beyond narratives of originary and initial subjectivities and to focus on those moments or processes that are produced in the articulation of cultural differences" (Bhabha 1994, 1-2).

This realm of beyond is meanwhile a space of "in-between" that provides the opportunity for "elaborating strategies of selfhood … that initiate new signs of identity, and innovative sites of collaboration, and contestation, in the act of defining the idea of society itself" (Bhabha 1994, 1-2). In such space of "in-between", one is able to go beyond conventional categorization, and to redefine identity and the position of the subject within the "overlap and displacement of domains of differences". Consequently, people have to consistently redefine and re-negotiate their positions and identities – all temporary. The subjectivities and identities negotiated in this space are also something in-between.

The value of Bhabha's notion of the realm of "beyond" and "in-between", for the purpose of this thesis, is that it offers a reconsideration of Fanon's idea of colonial alienation. The most crucial point is Bhabha's critique of the concept of "fixity", a concept that Fanon also criticized. Fanon (1986, 109) acknowledged the fact that "blackness", or "black soul" is an idea of fixity that is imposed by the white upon the black: "the movements, the attitudes, the glances of the other fixed me there, in the sense in which a chemical solution is fixed by a dye". Bhabha (1983, 18) then goes further to deconstruct ideologically the colonial action of "fixing" differences onto the Other:

> **Fixity, as the sign of cultural/historical/racial difference in the discourse of colonialism, is a paradoxical mode of representation: it connotes rigidity and an unchanging order as well as disorder, degeneracy and daemonic repetition.**

Bhabha's idea thus offers us a way to think beyond the conventional categorization of the black-white binary, and allows us to consider the issue of identity in a more fluid term. For example, as a psychiatrist, Fanon's identity is never fixed: for his European patients, he is the "Negro doctor" (Fanon 1986, 117); for his patients in Algeria, he is "white" in the sense that he is "a French-educated, upper-middle-class professional who cannot speak the language" (Fuss 1994, 38). In this sense, an identity is always in relation to another one. This also leads to the issue of identification, which I will tackle in next section.

Identification and the (Post)colonial Inferiority Complex

In reading Fanon, Bhabha (1986, xvi-xvii) makes a crucial difference between "personal identity" and the "psychoanalytic problem of identification". According to Bhabha (1994, 45), identification is "always the production of an image of an identity and the transformation of the subject in assuming that image". In this, we see again Bhabha's reference to Lacan, and he uses almost the same definition as Lacan (cited in Evans, 82) did: identification as "the transformation that takes place in the subject when he assumes an image". Evans immediately explains, to "assume" an image, in Lacan's sense, means to "recognize oneself in the image, and to appropriate the image

as oneself", which is a process that takes place in the mirror stage. Briefly speaking, for Lacan, the mirror stage represents the structure of subjectivity: a subject sees their own "specular image" – the reflection of their own body - in the mirror, and identifies with it, resulting in the formation of the ego. As Evans (193) notes, identification in the mirror stage does not necessarily requires a physical mirror. It could also take place in the subject's observation of the imitative gestures of others. In Lacanian psychoanalysis, identification and mirror stage constitute the Imaginary Order.

In Lacan's terminology, Bhabha (1984, 29) further connects the issue of identification with the colonial discourse:

> **Imaginary is the transformation that takes place in the subject at the formative mirror phase, when it assumes a discrete image which allows it to postulate a series of equivalences, samenesses, identities, between the objects of the surrounding world. However, this positioning is itself problematic, for the subject finds or recognizes itself through an image which is simultaneously alienating and hence potentially confrontational. This is the basis of the close relation between the two forms of identification complicit with the Imaginary - narcissism and aggressivity. It is precisely these two forms of 'identification' that constitute the dominant strategy of colonial power exercised in relation to the stereotype which, as a form of multiple and contradictory belief, gives knowledge of difference and simultaneously disavows or masks it.**

In this we can see that for Bhabha (1986, xvii), identification is the "site of an ambivalence". Bhabha then explains that this process works in the principle of differentiation: "The demand of identification – that is, to be for an Other – entails the representation of the subject in the differentiating order of Otherness." In such process, the black and the white identify their "Self" in the differentiated image of each other. Yet although a two-way process, we can still see that it is an unequal one, since the white have forcefully impose certain image(s) on the black and formulated a set of colonial/racist discourse that constitutes the entire societal sphere. Fanon (1986, 147) gave the example of the child magazines in the Antilles and its reception: "The black schoolboy in the Antilles, who in his lessons is forever talking about 'our ancestors, the Gauls,' identifies himself with the explorer, the bringer of civilization, the white man who carries truth to savages" and summarized that "identification" means that "the young Negro subjectively adopts a white man's attitude".

In this identification, the black people find a kind of inferiority complex within themselves, which is another theme in Fanon's text. This term is derived from

Alfred Adler's individual psychology. Inferiority complex refers to an intense sense/belief of one's inferiority, often resulting in overcompensation in various forms. For example, a mulatto women might be extremely submissive in front of the white man she "loves" – certainly not pure romantic love – in order to win recognition, and this recognition brings her to the world of the white, which she believes is superior, and leaves her "blackness" – which she believes inferior - behind (Fanon 1986, 57-8). According to Adler (2001, 7), the feeling of inferiority "must be understood in a relative sense, as the outgrowth of the individual's relation to his environment or to his strivings. He has consistently been drawing comparisons between himself and others, at first with his father…later with every person with whom he comes into contact."

Eventually, in the effort of the person with such complex to raise themselves to the level of the "superior", they have removed themselves "with one mighty bound from reality and is suspended in the meshes of a fiction" (Adler, 7). This idea of "fiction" therefore explains the white dream of the black that Fanon analyzed. In terms of the origin of the black inferiority, Fanon (1986, 93) argued that "the feeling of inferiority of the colonized is the correlative to the European's feeling of superiority" – or, "it is the racist who creates his inferior". This racism, in Fanon's analysis, has two dimensions: the socio-economic, and the cultural.

In his critique on French psychoanalyst Octave Mannoni's book *Prospero and Caliban: Psychology of Colonization* (1956), Fanon developed the idea that racism is first of all a reflection of the economic situation of a society. For example, Mannoni (cited in Fanon 1986, 86) noted that the white proletarians in South Africa are "quite as racist as the employers and managers", and made the point that racism is not an issue related to economic situation. Fanon (1986, 87) nonetheless recalled Sartre's discussion on anti-Semitism: it is a kind of propaganda toward the middle and lower class – who are not in possession of capital - that "by treating the Jew as an inferior and pernicious being, I affirm at the same time that I belong to the elite". Moreover, as I have mentioned in the discussion of the Marxist idea of alienation before, racism serves as a strategy of economic exclusion in order to preserve the interest of the "poor whites". In short, the white proletarians' racism, according to Fanon, is fundamentally an economic issue. Also as I have mentioned before, devaluation becomes both the strategy and outcome of such racism. On the one hand, the black population is described as "less than human" and therefore "useless" - incapable for

participating activities of the white capitalist economy, and therefore excluded economically. On the other, this devaluation might be internalized through the process of identification – adopting the white attitudes - causing psychological disorder and the symptom of self-devaluation.

Racism in its cultural dimension often means rejection of the original culture. As Fanon (1986, 18) noted, the colonized people are the "people in whose soul an inferiority complex has been created by the death and burial of its local cultural originality". The local culture of the black is devaluated and canceled, or as Bhabha (1986, xiv) observes, "mummified". Ultimately, the local culture will be replaced by the white culture. As postcolonial theorist Leela Ghandi (1998, 16) describes, colonialism "marks the historical process whereby the 'West' attempts systematically to cancel or negate the cultural difference and value of the non-West". This often appears in what Bhabha calls "mimicry"[8]. In this sense racism is both a strategy and an outcome: cultural cancellation or devaluation is primarily a strategy of colonial governance, and once it is propagated and internalized, the sense of cultural inferiority will be generated. This process is often accompanied by violence – consider the assumption of white cultural supremacy and the overwhelming force of European civilization. The black population is, in this sense, the victim of cultural imposition (Fanon 1986, 192). The cultural dimension of racism is thus a production of colonial politics.

To summarize, Fanon's Marxist view reveals the role of political and economic factors in the formation of the inferiority complex of the black people, offering partly the explanation for their problematic identification. Yet, the issue of desire and recognition, in Fanon's view two fundamental conditions to be a human, still need examination in light of Hegel's philosophy.

Fanon and Hegel: Desire for Recognition

From Fanon's perspective of psychoanalysis, as reviewed above, it is shown that the racial relation between the black and white is always one between the Self and Other.

[8] I have discussed Bhabha's concept of "mimicry" briefly in the section about "alienation". For more detailed information, see Bhabha 1994, 85-92.

The process of the formation of self-consciousness and subjectivity is, in theory, driven by certain desires and the need for recognition. To find a deeper explanation for this process, Fanon turned to Hegel and his famous master-slave dialectic – also known as the dialectic of mastery and servitude/lordship and bondage - that considers self-consciousness as an outcome of negotiations and struggles for recognition between two encountered subjects.

In the beginning of the section "The Negro and Hegel" in *Black Skin, White Masks*, Fanon (1986, 216) quoted a word from *The Phenomenology of Mind* (also translated as *The Phenomenology of Spirit*): "Self-consciousness exists in itself and for itself, in that and by the fact that it exists for another self-consciousness; that is to say, it is only by being acknowledged or recognized"[9]. This is a crucial conclusion Hegel drew from his discussion of the master-slave dialectic, for his theory on self-consciousness in general.

In Hegel's philosophy, before self-consciousness, there is consciousness. Consciousness refers to a (primary) stage at which the object presents itself as absolute, meaning existing in itself and independent from the subject. Seemingly, the object – the objective world and/or the objects – and the subject are completely independent entities. Nonetheless, this stage is challenged by the fact that knowing the world is indeed an act of consciousness. This means that the assumption that the subject and the object are cut off from each other becomes problematic. Hence the formation of self-consciousness, a stage at which, as Marxist scholar Peter Hudis (2015, 43) summarizes, "external objects loses their claim to independence; they are now objects for me." In this stage, the self becomes aware of itself as a subject, but at the same time as an object, in the eyes of others: as a being for the other. According to Hegel (109),

For self-consciousness, there is another self-consciousness; self- consciousness is outside of itself. This has a twofold meaning. First, it has lost itself, for it is to be found as an other essence. Second, it has thereby sublated that other, for it also does not see the other as the essence but rather sees itself in the other.

[9] See also Hegel 2018 (Translated by Terry Pinkard), on page 108: "Self-consciousness is in and for itself while and as a result of its being in and for itself for an other; i.e., it is only as a recognized being".

At this point, the self is divided, as both the subject and the object. Yet, the desire of unity drives it toward a tendency to negate the other and its otherness. As a result, when two beings encounter each other, they tend to negate each other. This then develops into a struggle to death, in which each being "aims at the cancellation or death and destruction" of the other (Ghandi, 16). As Hegel (111) noted, in this struggle, each being "proves its worth to itself, and that both prove their worth to each other…for each must elevate its self-certainty of existing for itself to truth, both in the other and in itself". In this act of proving, we see the desire for recognition.

The assumption is that recognition makes a human being an actual existence. As Fanon (1986, 216-7) rephrased, "Man is human only to the extent to which he tries to impose his existence on another man in order to be recognized by him…it is on that other being, on recognition by that other being, that his own human worth and reality depend". It can be noted that, in Hegel's and also in Fanon's view, the notion "recognition" specifically refers to that of human worth and dignity of the subject in question. The desire for recognition is therefore that for assurance of existence, worth, and dignity as a human being, which relies on the other.

However, a struggle to death can never lead to such outcome, because if the other disappears, when there is no other being, there is no recognition and no desire, and the subject can never be satisfied. As a result, the other – the side with relatively weak will, "preferring to liberty" (Ghandi, 17) - is not killed, but instead, made into a slave, or a servant. The master is then defined as "consciousness existing for itself", or self-sufficient, which is active and dominant, while the slave is consciousness that is a "being for an other", or inessential, which is passive and submissive (Hegel, 112-3). In this temporary condition, recognition is one-sided and not quite equal: the master requires recognition from the slave but do not consider recognizing the inessential consciousness of the slave as necessary, and consequently, the slave is viewed merely as a "thing".

This is the first half of the story of Hegel's master-slave dialectic, and it vividly captures the colonial relationship. Or, it might be that Hegel's dialectic is completely a Eurocentric construction developed in the context of European imperialism. As Robert Young (2005, 34) argues,

Hegel articulates a philosophical structure of the appropriation of the other as a form of knowledge which uncannily simulates the project of nineteenth-century imperialism; the construction of knowledge which all operate through forms of expropriation and incorporation of the other mimics at a conceptual level the geographic and economic absorption of the non-European world by the West.

In other words, Hegel's master-slave dialectic finds its referential model in European colonialism in the 18th and 19th century: European colonizers configured their Self in relation to the colonized Other, in the process of which the Other is transformed into knowledge – this is a point that Said would like to make as well in *Orientalism*. Meanwhile, Susan Buck-Morss in her essay *Hegel and Haiti* (2000) creatively observes the connection of Hegel's master-slave dialectic and the Haitian Revolution. According to Buck-Morss (844), Hegel was aware of what was happening in another continent at his time: he "knew about real slaves revolting successfully against real masters, and he elaborated his dialectic of lordship and bondage deliberately within this contemporary context". In light of this event, Hegel developed the second half of the master-slave dialectic, which is almost a reversal of the first half.

In the second half of the story, the slave refinds their self-consciousness as a subject. The slave first finds their essence, in their fear of the master, which according to Hegel (115) is the "beginning of wisdom". The slave then achieves their essence, or the state of being in and for themselves, through work. On the one hand, in work the slave figures out their relation with the external world, or the world of the object. On the other, since the master relies on their work to survive, the slave becomes even more independent than the master. Without work and recognition of the slave, the master can no longer sustain their existence. The "inessential consciousness" is "therein for the master the object which constitutes the truth of his certainty of himself" (Hegel, 114). Therefore, Hegel's dialectic places an emphasis on reciprocity. Yet, reciprocity is far from the reality of the age of European colonialism and mutual recognition in Hegel's sense can only resulted from that the slave risks its life – as the Haitian Revolution has illustrated. Regarding this, although criticized for her lack of textual evidences (see Habib 2017, 37), Buck-Morss (864) still makes a powerful argument that Hegel's philosophy has provided justification for Eurocentrism for over two centuries – "Hegel was perhaps always a cultural racist".

It might at first sight seems strange that Fanon, as a radical intellectual advocating decolonization, adopted Hegel's philosophical frame that has been accused of being Eurocentric, racist, and even imperialist. Nonetheless, just as Fanon has revised, or contextualized, European (and sometimes Eurocentric) psychoanalysis by figures such as Freud and Adler, his engagement with Hegel's philosophy is driven by his intention to revise or contextualize it. Fanon and Hegel are on the same ground to the extent that they believed that recognition – that of human worth and dignity – is vital for the being of human. Yet, there are two major differences between Hegel's master-slave relation and the racial relation in former colonies. Firstly, the white master is different from the Hegelian master in the sense that they do not seek for recognition from the black slave - again, "what he wants from the slave is not recognition but work" (Fanon 1986, 220). The premise of the Hegelian desire for recognition failed in this case. Secondly, the black slave – in the case of French Antilles[10] - was suddenly freed by the white master and therefore had no experience of risking life for liberty. That is to say, the black slave only experienced the first half of the Hegelian master-slave dialectic: the process through which they became the other, the object, and knowledge for the white master, without reciprocal recognition taking place.[11] In this situation, work can no longer confirm the slave's essentiality, meaning that they can no longer turn to the object to confirm their existence. The black slave is in this sense less independent than the Hegelian slave. Consequently, they turn to their white masters: they attempt to obtain recognition from the white master by mimic their whiteness. They believed that if they become white, they can sit on the same table with the master and get recognized. As Fanon (1986, 221) noted, "In Hegel the slave turns away from the master and turns toward the object. Here the slave turns toward the master and abandons the object."

The value of Fanon's reference to the Hegelian dialectic is that, first of all, it offers a "dialectical explanation" for the theme of his book, internalization of the inferiority complex, or to be specific, "the tendency of the oppressed to interiorize their oppression, fall victim to an inferiority complex, and seek acceptance from the

[10] It should be noted that Fanon's text should not be arbitrarily applied to the entire black population around the world. The discussion of Fanon's text, at least in this chapter, should be understood only in the context of the French Antilles. For example, as Fanon himself is aware of, the American black people have a different story.

[11] Fanon therefore advocated revolutions in the form of collective violence in former French colonies, for instance, the Algerian Revolution. His position on the issue of violence is majorly expressed in *The Wretched of the Earth*.

oppressor on its terms" (Habib, 47). Moreover, it offers a dialectical view on the state of splitting of the black people: the "blackness" inside them as an artifact by the white and the "whiteness" they desire for recognition as a human being – the narrative of black skin with white masks. In a broader sense, Fanon's text revised "the narrative of Western modernity to include the repressed and marginalized figures of its victims" (Ghandi, 21). In other words, Fanon's revision of Hegel can be considered as an attempt to decolonizing philosophy.

Reworking Hegelian philosophy as such, Fanon's approach provides this thesis a dialectical view on the state of splitting of people who are in an "in-between" space in contemporary world, a situation that the protagonists in my case studies were/are suffering. I do not feel the necessity to elaborate in this chapter how Fanon is connected to the case studies because the connection itself is what I intend to reveal throughout my analysis of those cases. As Fanon reworked Hegel, I will rework Fanon, and contextualize his thinking, in examining the texts from modern and contemporary Japan.

Chapter II

Fukuzawa Yukichi's Imagination of "Asia"

Before "Leaving Asia"

In March 1885, an anonymous essay, with the tittle "Datsu-A Ron" was published in the Japanese newspaper *Jiji Shinpo*, which was later edited in the collected works of Fukuzawa Yukichi by Ishigawa Kanmei, an editor of this newspaper[12]. Fukuzawa, one of the most influential "Enlightenment" intellectuals and reformists in Meiji Japan, in this essay insisted that Japan should follow the trend of "civilization", enlighten itself in a Western manner, and separate itself from "Asia"[13], or specifically, from its "backward" neighbors such as China and Korea. Fukuzawa's argument for "leaving Asia" did not attract much attention when it was first published, but the keynote for Meiji reforms, modernization as Westernization, certainly echoes with the concerns he has expressed in this essay. Also, it has received serious intellectual – and some times political as well – (re)considerations since the 1950s, or the beginning of Japan's postwar period, suggesting that it offers a good sample to examine Japan's unsettled relation to "Asia" and Europe in contemporary time.

Logically speaking, "leaving" implies a premise that Japan was already in "Asia", or was a part of it. Therefore, before examining Fukuzawa's portray of the "Asia" he desired to leave, I would like to first have a look at the "East Asia order" before the mid 19th century and Japan's relation with it. In doing so, I will try to reveal characteristics of the "pre-modern"[14] East Asia world, in relation to modern European civilization.

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12 The newspaper *Jiji Shinpo* was founded by Fukuzawa in 1882, to encourage debates in the public sphere.

13 "Asia" in Fukuzawa's texts is usually interchangeable with "East Asia" since what it refers to is in most cases the Confucian cultural sphere with China as the center, which is supposedly on the opposite side of European civilization.

14 Quotation mark because the notion of "modernity" is itself questionable. Specifically, in this thesis, I use it as a mark of temporality. The beginning of "modern time" in East Asia, in my view, is roughly mid 19th century, for around this time China, Japan and Korea started their reforms of "modernization" that is often equal to Westernization.

First of all, pre-modern East Asia order is in nature a network constituted by the tribute system with China as the "center" – if not the "core" in the paradigm of core and periphery. Contemporary Chinese intellectual Wang Hui in his critique on Japanese historian Hamashita Takeshi's characterization of the East Asian tribute system. As Wang (2011, 45) summarizes, Asia, for Hamashita, is a cultural, economic and political totality forming a trans-state network connected by ties and corresponding practices of tribute and imperial bestowel, which is China-centered[15]. Wang seems to agree with this general idea, but he further points out three major issues in Hamashita's argumentation, arguing that he oversees quite some crucial elements in Asian history. Firstly, according to Wang (46), Hamashita relies on a static "core-periphery" framework that fails to explain "the constant changes in the historical connotations of tribute practice", meaning that the power shifts within East Asia has not been accurately captured by Hamashita. Secondly, because Hamashita sees the tribute system as a network of "maritime trade", he downplays the role of intra-continental interactions within Asia as well as between the continent and "ocean", simplifying Asian history in terms of complexity and diversity (Wang, 48-9). Thirdly, Hamashita's characterization of the Asian tribute system as different from modern treaty (and international law) system is not quite adequate because, for example, in such view of dichotomy, it is difficult to understand Qing China as an entity that has features of both "empire" and "(nation-)state" in their "modern" meanings (Wang, 54-5).

In short, Wang points three major characteristics of pre-modern East Asia order. First, power relation within this system is consistently changing, or, this order is a product of "historical interactions among the agents participating in the system" (Wang, 46), and in nature a network, rather than a structure of core and periphery. Second, Asian history is shaped by both intra-continental and continent-maritime interactions, different from European "maritime age" that "managed to play down continental historical and social relations, subordinating them to maritime hegemonies and economic interaction" (Wang, 49). Third, it has the characteristics that are supposed to be mutually exclusive in modern European knowledge, and is hard to capture in modern European discourses. In Wang's characterization, we can observe

[15] It is necessary to note that the term "China-centered" is not the same as "Sinocentric", for the former refers to the historical condition of the tribute system while the latter carries a geopolitical and ideological connotation.

that pre-modern Asian order is on the one hand quite distinctive from European history, and cannot be interpreted in a European-style narrative.

In this tribute order, Japan was never a de facto subordinate state. Although nominally, rulers of Japan – the emperors or later the shoguns – usually got their tittles bestowed by the Chinese emperor, it was never under any forms of direct control. Meanwhile, the tribute exchange is more like trade that carries certain ritual functions – it is never a one-way process. It was usually the case that when a "tributary state" gave tributes to China – usually various local goods and products – China would give it some other goods or products in return, and this is usually equal. Moreover, there were exchanges between "tributary states", for example, between Ryukyu Kingdom and Japan. Although the Tokugawa Shogunate ended official connection with China, trade and exchange still continued through Ryukyuan traders and limited ports such as Nagasaki. In other words, this China-centered tribute order was in fact largely a network of economic and material exchange in (East) Asia.

Besides active participation in economic activities of this East Asia order, pre-modern Japan was quite enthusiastic about taking part in the East Asian cultural sphere of Confucianism. One of the most profound aspects, according to s Yongjing, historian of political thought trained in Japan, is Japan's internalization of Confucianism and its theory of civilization. Reviewing Japan's history of importing and localizing Chinese Confucianism since the 3rd century, Li (2020, 66) suggests that the "China" Japan desired to absorb, catch up with, and later to "overcome", is not the one we know today. Rather, "China" was, for pre-Meiji Japan, merely a concrete symbol of Confucianism, or the "universalist theoretical frame of Confucianism". In other words, Confucianism, especially Japanese Confucianism, was referring to the "East Asian world order", built upon Confucian universalism that is constituted by its version of "theory of civilization".

According to Li (61), this Confucian "theory of civilization" is developed from the *hua-yi* (*ka*-i in Japanese) dialectic, or the "Sino-barbarian" dialectic[16]. In this dialectic, the *hua*, or the Chinese, represents the "progressed/ civilized", while the *yi* represents the "uncivilized/barbarian". However, it is never a static binary. As Chinese historians Gu Jiegang and Wang Shumin argued, "if the so-called barbarian states have absorbed the culture of the *xia* states, and fulfilled the respective

[16] Also known as the *yi-xia* dialectic, meaning differentiating between the barbarian and the civilized.

conditions, they can enter the list of *xia* state" (cited in Chao 2020, 12-3)[17]. It is therefore clear that instead of turning into the actual "China", Japan's true desire was to become a civilized member in this "East Asian world order", which is constituted by Confucian universalism.

When this idea of civilization was internalized, Japan began to seek a more active role in this order, and assume itself as the only authentic practitioner of Confucianism. As Li (61) puts it, "in the Confucian theory of civilization and world order in Edo period, Japan was constructed as the leader of this universalist civilization". To further explain this development, Li examines different schools of Confucianism in Edo Japan. First is the *shushigaku*, or the school of Zhu Xi studies. This school emerged in Edo Japan when the thought of Zhu Xi, a master of Confucian philosophy living in Song China, was imported. It aimed at a "dialogue with Zhu Xi in the frame of his discourse, and eventually achieving the sharing of Confucian thought and civilization" (Li, 70). This school represents the development of the spirit of universalism in Edo Confucianism. Second is the *kogaku*, or the school of ancient studies. This school developed its critique on Zhu Xi, and referred directly to ancient masters such as Confucius and Mencius. Denying the authenticity of Zhu Xi's thought, this school believed that "Japan is the 'China' and 'Chinese civilization'" (Li, 74). Finally is the *kokugaku*, or the nationalist school. In fact, this school, with a focus on local Shintoism, is a denial, or negation of Confucianism. It denies the supremacy of China and Chinese culture/civilization and considers Japan as the superior. Nonetheless, it is more than apparent that its reference is still Confucianism and "China" as self-consciousness (Li, 78).

To summarize, the "Asia" in pre-Meiji time is a cultural and economic network constituted by the tribute exchange system and Confucianism. And, it was this "Asia" that Fukuzawa desired to leave. Viewing this history, it can be assert now Fukuzawa's idea of "leaving Asia" must be interpreted both materially – meaning from the perspective of political economy – and culturally – also ideologically and psychologically.

[17] In Chao Fulin's discussion, and also in ancient Chinese texts he reviews, *xia* and *hua* share the same meaning, that is, civilized according to the level of culture (with an emphasis on Confucianism).

For a Modern Independent Nation

In briefly reviewing the history pre-modern East Asia order and Japan's relation with it, I have illustrated the distinction between the (East) Asian narrative and the European narrative. The next question is then why would Fukuzawa reject such system entirely.

In *Datsu-A Ron*, Fukuzawa (1997, 352) made the point that the aim of leaving Asia is to "cast aside Japan's old conventions", and create "a new axle toward progress in Asia". Fukuzawa's insisted that Japan should give up the political and cultural traditions of East Asian - meaning throwing away the Confucian political and ideological system - and embrace "civilization" in a Western definition, so that Japan could survive and preserve its independence in the modern world order. Therefore, Fukuzawa's motive for leaving Asia needs to be understood from two dimensions: the material forces that drive Japan into the process of building a modern nation-state, and the cultural psyche that believes in the supremacy of the European model of civilization and denies the legitimacy of Confucianism.

The material dimension consists of two parts: the economic and the political. As Karatani Kojin, one of the most important contemporary Japanese philosophers, argues, the institution of nation-state is a strange outcome of the development of capitalist market. On the one hand, a "nation" is not merely an "imagined community", but has its materialistic foundation. According to Karatani (2017, Preface II: 5-7), a "nation" must be rooted in the "sympathy" of a community, or, the imagination of a "nation" as a community originates from the need, or longing, for the ideal state of "reciprocity" that is lost when the expansion of modern capitalist market destroyed the "ethnic communities". On the other, a modern state is the ideal political form for the development of modern capitalism since the invasion of monetary economy would necessarily lead to the dissolution the state-dominant economy of a feudal or totalitarian regime. Therefore, the combination of "nation" and "state" is rather weird – yet necessary. Or rather, the system of a modern country is "the trinity of capitalist market economy, the state, and the nation" (Karatani,Preface II: 6).

In Japan's case, there was first the invasion of modern capitalist market economy in late Tokugawa period. In 1792, Russia at first time sent an envoy, Adam Laxman, to Japan. Following Laxman, more diplomatic communications were

delivered to Japan, requiring Japan to establish commercial partnership with Russia, which was rejected by the shogunate. Later was the coming of James Biddle from the United States in 1846, also requiring a trade relationship, which was again rejected. In 1853, the famous Black Ships came, led by the American Matthew Perry. Seeing advanced weapons those ships were equipped with, the shogunate was longer able to reject their requirements. In 1854, the Kanagawa Treaty was signed between the shogunate and the U.S. government. From then on, Japan was forced into the globalizing machine of capitalist market economy. In Fukuzawa's words, this is like the irresistible spread of "measles". As a result, in Karatani's logic, Japan had to transform its governmental system in order to be adapted for the expansion of capitalist market economy, which is necessary if Japan wanted to, again in a word from Fukuzawa (1997, 351), "enjoy the fruits… of civilization".

Karatani's Marxist view – with examination on the base of economic relations - seems to hold true in the case of Meiji Japan, but meanwhile, there was a political aspect, which was a more urgent issue concerning Japan's survival as an independent nation. In *Datsu-A Ron,* Fukuzawa (1997, 352-3) quite worried about the ability to survive as an independent nation in the situation of "the onslaught of Western civilization to the East". In Fukuzawa's view, the cost to prevent the entry of European civilization is Japan's national independence. This idea of independence must be considered from two angles. The first is the expansion of the international order constituted by the political form of nation-state and international law/treaty system. In *An Encouragement of Learning*, Fukuzawa (2013, 19-20) explained why it is necessary to adopt the political form of the "nation-state":

> **But if the strong and wealthy powers oppress the poor and weak nations, it would be no different from the sumo wrestler in my previous example who could break the arm of a sick person. By reason of the inherent rights of nations, this cannot be allowed. Modern-day Japan as well cannot compare in wealth and strength with the nations of the West; but by reason of the inherent rights of nations, Japan is not the least inferior.**

By the "inherent rights of nations", Fukuzawa meant the idea of "the equality of nations", a fundamental principle for the international order of the treaty system (international laws) consisting of nation-states, a.k.a. the Westphalian System. Nonetheless, joining this order was never a really voluntary choice. According to

another critical figure in contemporary Japanese intellectual history, Maruyama Masao (1998, 146), Japan " began to develop as a nation-state only after it had been forced into it by international society" that is an "agglomeration of all independent states". In fact, Japan was forced by violence. Anthony Giddens has argued that modern history of international relations are basically underpinned by industrial capitalism and violence, or military power.[18] Giddens (1987, 281-2) notes that

> **[A] state cannot become sovereign except within a system of other sovereign states, its sovereignty being acknowledged by them; in this there is a strong pressure towards mutual recognition as equals… In the European state system the states did not recognize the authentic existence of other political communities in the way they did each other.**

In other words, if Japan was not a nation-state in its European definition, other nation-states would not acknowledge Japan's sovereignty. This leads to the second angle to understand Fukuzawa's anxiety about national independence, that is, the violence of the European powers, which is of colonial nature. In the mid 19th century, Japan witnessed how the Qing Empire was rendered into a "semicolony" in as Lenin once categorized, by the military power of Western nations and their tricks of international treaty and law. The Qing government was not able to preserve its sovereignty when forced to sign unequal treaties with those Western powers. For instance, signing the Treaty of Nanjing after the First Opium War, Qing China lost its sovereignty in terms of deciding its own tariff, as well as the territory of Hong Kong. Since then, Qing China began to lose its "inherent rights of nations" and independence. For Fukuzawa (1997, 353), this is mainly because China was not able to reform its governmental system. In other words, China could not preserve its sovereignty and independence because it could not transform itself into a modern nation-state. Since the political regime of Japan before Meiji Restoration was also a Confucian one similar to China, Fukuzawa (1997, 353) was worrying that the Westerners might "see what is happening in China and Korea and judge Japan accordingly ". This did happened in the second half of the 19th century. Besides the well-know Kanagawa Treaty and other unequal treaties that was signed between the Tokugawa shogunate and Western powers, an other example is that in 1854, 1855 and

[18] This is one of Gidden's basic arguments. For a more detailed discussion, see *The Nation-State and Violence* (Giddens 1987).

1859, the U.S., France and the Netherlands respectively signed treaties with the Ryukyu Kingdom without acknowledge from China and Japan, who both claimed they were to certain degree in control of the Ryukyu Islands. This is rather a good evidence for how the East Asia order was dissolved by the modern international order of nation-states. Having witnessed such moments, Fukuzawa consequently developed his argument for leaving Asia with reforming Japan's political institutions as the key solution to change its destiny.

The failure of China (and Korea), as Fukuzawa (1997, 352) noticed, was also owing to the cultural, as well as ideological traditions of Confucianism. As Maruyama (2018, Preface I: 9-10) interpreted, Fukuzawa's anti-Confucianism was not so much about the actual doctrine, but rather about Confucianism distorted into a kind of "institutional ideology", or Confucianism-ism. In Maruyama's view, the symptoms of Confucianism-ism are internally an absolute hierarchical order and externally the *hua-yi* dialectic, and the combination of political power and this ideology led to the collapse of Qing China. In other words, Fukuzawa's "leaving Asia" was indeed leaving the Qing government and Confucianism-ism. In terms of why Confucianism-ism would necessarily be a failure, Wang (20) again in his review of Fukuzawa and Maruyama, points out that the idea of *hua-yi* dialectic that is strictly hierarchical is in conflict with the principle of "equality among states". In other words, the regime of Confucianism-ism could no longer survive in modern world. Japan's Political reforms in accordance to the Western model thus require replacing this cultural and ideological package with something new. The answer Fukuzawa gave is therefore Western civilization, in its cultural as well as ideological term.

A Japanese with European Glasses

In order to understand how the idea of Western civilization as the only way out was woven into Fukuzawa's thought, it is necessary to first examine the image of the West in his eyes. This image is presented in the collection tittled *Things Western*, or *seiyo jijo*, he edited from 1860 to 1868. This collection is mainly composed of translations of texts that introduce the political and material culture in the West and his own discussions and comments on some of those key issues. It covers topics ranging from

the history of political institutions to the biography of technological pioneers such as James Watt, and aims at providing the Japanese population some general knowledge about the West.

Although in this collection Fukuzawa hardly mentioned the situation in Japan, meaning that there was no direct comparison, we can still observe from his words that he believed in the magic of Western civilization, and that Japan should reform its political institutions to become "civilized". For Fukuzawa, "civilization" is something natural and inevitable. In his comment on the notion of "civilization" in *Things Western*, Fukuzawa (2018, 82) denied the idea that it is something artificial, but rather, "everything presented in in a civilized society are from nature". In his view, a "civilized" society satisfies best the human nature.

However, for Fukuzawa, the only legitimate form of civilization is its Western version. According to Fukuzawa (2018, 12-4), "civilized" politics must involve at least six key elements: 1) freedom and/or liberty; 2) religious freedom; 3) technological innovation; 4) education; 5) stable economic institutions; 6) social welfare. It is not difficult to see that this is a summery - following the inductive logic rather than deductive - for the characteristics of European (and American) governments at Fukuzawa's time – especially the Great Britain, Prussian Germany and the U.S.. Therefore, what Fukuzawa was trying to say is that Asian nations did not have civilization, or at least less advanced – in accordance to the Western standard - and therefore must follow the path to achieve such form civilization.

This single-directional progressivist idea suggests that Fukuzawa was in favor of social Darwinism, which is also expressed in *Datsu-A Ron*. As Fukuzawa (1997, 353) anticipated, in a short period of time, China and Korea "will be wiped out from the world with their lands divided among the civilized nations" simply because they "violate the natural law" of the spread of "civilization" and "enlightenment". Such argument Fukuzawa made denies the entire existence of the East Asian civilization and justifies European (and later Japanese) colonialism/imperialism. Nonetheless, the issue is not how problematic Fukuzawa's idea is – surely the law of the jungle and is questioned today - but his ease to take such narrative as natural and self-evident. Eurocentric ideologies like this were already highly internalized in his head, developing into his "theory of civilization".

In another influential book, *An Outline of a Theory of Civilization*, Fukuzawa systematically explained the development of civilization. In it, human history is

divided into three stages: “In terms of civilization in the modern world, (we) must consider European nations and the U.S. as the most civilized ones, Asian nations like Turkey, China and Japan as half-civilized, while nations in Africa and Oceania as barbarian” (Fukuzawa 1960, 9). Japanese historian of social thought Uemura Kunihiko (2012, 2-4) traces Fukuzawa’s theoretical inspiration to American geographer Samuel A. Mitchell. According to Mitchell, the development of human society is divided into four stages: the savage, the barbarous, the half-civilized, and the civilized/enlightened. By definition,

> **Civilized and enlightened nations are those which have made the greatest progress in morals, justice, and refinement, among whom the arts are constantly being improved and the sciences are diligently cultivated... In this way comforts and luxuries are provided, and the bulk of the people are rendered contented and prosperous. (Mitchell 1865, cited in Uemura, 3)**

In Mitchell’s categorization, we can again see the inductive logic. That is to say, it is not that nation-states such as the U.S., Germany or Great Britain are examples for “civilized/enlightened nations”. Instead, this notion, or the idea of civilization, is derived from the social reality of those Western nations. In *Outline*, Fukuzawa simplified the stages of social development into three, merging the savage and the barbarian together, but the basic structure of categorization remains the same as Mitchell’s. What should be noted is the connotation of the term “half-civilized” that Fukuzawa learned from British philosopher John S. Mill. In Mill’s sense, “half-civilized” refers to a relative state comparing to European civilization. Usually, it is used by Mill to characterize “poor” and “backward” nations (Uemura, 5). Further, Uemura points out that this Eurocentric imagination of Asia as backward is related to the concept of “Asiatic despotism” and the discourse of “stationary and fixed Asia”. Tracing the history of these Eurocentric expressions, from Montesquieu to Hegel and Mill, Uemura (6-9) sorts out the ideological origin for Fukuzawa’s depiction of Japan as a nation of “despotism” and “stagnation” in *Outline*. Consequently, he required a radical social reform to catch up with Western civilization.

At the same time, Fukuzawa’s Eurocentric glasses enabled him also to portray the whole (East) Asia, especially China and Korea, as “backward”, reproducing and at the same time justifying such racist narrative. According to Urs M. Zachmann 2007, 361), the idea of “Asia” in *Datsu-A Ron “*ultimately signifies Western Orientalist

discourse on Asia". Assuming a European attitude, Fukuzawa later in *Datsu-A Ron* insisted that Japan was different from China and Korea, and only Japan was capable to become like the West. In this we can witness the splitting of identity: an Asian nation rejects its identity as Asian – the Self rejects itself and turns to the Other. To borrow a word from Uemura (13), in the argument of "leaving Asia", we see "the self-hatred or self-denial by an Asian who has accepted and internalized the Eurocentric thought".

Desire and Complex in Fukuzawa

On Fukuzawa, we can find the symptom of self-denial and self-devaluation that Fanon saw on the Antilles black. Fukuzawa's claim to leave Asia shares the same pattern with the Antilles black's desire to become white. The Asian cultural origin and traditions were rejected, and the Western narrative was taken as the only one legitimate. Fukuzawa is a Fanonian "triple person", a person that exists in the Self, in the illusion of the Other, and on the endless way to reach the Other. Fukuzawa is therefore a person in splitting, or, an "in-between" person.

Fukuzawa's splitting and in-betweenness is reflected in his attitude towards Confucianism. My argument is that Confucianism for Fukuzawa is the inseparable part of the Self internalized before his knowledge of Western civilization, and his critique towards Confucianism is out of pragmatic reasons. In the preface of *Things Western*, Fukuzawa (2018, 9-10) told an episode that someone asked him to invite a Sinologist/Confucianist to help modify the language of this collection when editing, for "it was not quite accurate nor elegant". This requirement was rejected, because Fukuzawa believed that the prejudice of those stubborn Sinologists/Confucianists would distort what he was trying to express. This episode suggests that Confucianism and Sinology was not something in which Fukuzawa trusted.

However, in *Things Western,* Fukuzawa at many points referred to Confucian classics to help his explanation. For example, in explaining the importance of stable family relationship for society, Fukuzawa (2018, 75) quoted a phrase from Mencius, "That male and female should dwell together, is the greatest of human relations". With this quotation, Fukuzawa's intention was to emphasize the role of family and

human beings' demand for family is something natural and inherent. What this quotation reveals is that the texts and doctrines of Confucianism were already something internalized and naturalized for Fukuzawa - the text he quoted was not the famous pieces that almost every East Asian could recite, meaning that he was more familiar with Confucian classics than other common people. Another example is that when explaining what is a good government, Fukuzawa (2018, 114) referred to the Confucian classic *Doctrine of the Mean*, and its central idea of the "golden middle way" that the ideal middle point between two extremes, one of excess and the other of deficiency. One might argue that Fukuzawa's reference to Confucian classics is for the purpose to make the text easier to understand for Japanese people. Nonetheless, Fukuzawa's rejection of the Sinologist/Confucianist to modify his text tells us it is not the case. Rather, it is more the case that Fukuzawa approached things Western from a Confucian perspective.

Meanwhile, Fukuzawa's negation of Confucianism and turning to the West must be understood in a pragmatic sense, or, it must be understood as a kind of instrument. Maruyama's comment on Fukuzawa – as cited before – suggests that what was wrong was not the doctrine of Confucianism itself, but the institutional problems that came along with it. In other words, Confucianism was rejected only as the constitutive element in "Asiatic despotism". In examining the trend of liberalism in (early) modern Japan, Kiri Paramore (2018, 528) argues that liberalism was "instrumental in embedding ideas of cultural particularism and cultural essentialism", as a mean to reject the narrative of "Asiatic despotism". Fukuzawa employed the strategy of a national narrative to insist that the idea of liberalism, or, "the spirit of freedom", is inherently rooted in Japanese culture/traditions, which is in conflict against the universal value of Confucianism, the constitutive element for the "backward despotism" (Paramore, 533-7). The very reason for Fukuzawa to take up a historical narrative of liberalism in Japan is the intention to culturalize it, and then to distinguish Japan from the Confucian sphere of East Asia in a particularistic and essentialist manner. Fukuzawa and other liberalists in the Meiji period believed that the essentialized "culture" of liberalism could help Japan identify itself with European nations and fulfill "civilization" in the European version. Negating Confucianism by replacing it with liberalism is therefore merely a strategy of instrumentalization.

In *Outline*, Fukuzawa (1960, 98-101) acknowledged that Christianity from the West is not superior over local doctrines of Buddhism, Shintoism and Confucianism,

but the problem is that the level of "wisdom" – meaning the level of sciences, technologies, economics, and academics, etc. – of the believers of these local doctrines is lower than that of the Westerners who believe in Christianity. In Fukuzawa's view, it is an issue more about "civilization" than "culture". Although Fukuzawa (1960, 12-3) placed more priority of the "spirit" over "material forms" in terms of developing "civilization", this concept in his thinking still need to be understood in pragmatic and materialistic term, which further should be divided into the economic and the political. In *Things Western,* it is not difficult to find that the aim of importing the institution of a "civilized government" is to improve people's living standard and provide social welfare. In insisting a "little government" that preserves people's freedom and private property, Fukuzawa (2018, 130-1; 178-82) argued that this would help the people to build their own better life and improve the production of necessities of life. Also, Fukuzawa was concerned with the lower classes in society, and therefore placed emphasis upon equality and welfare[19]. Commerce in a "modern" sense is Fukuzawa's another concern. For him, importing institutions such as the financial system and enterprises would stimulate the development of commerce and trade in Japan. This means participating in modern capitalist market economy.

Before I have already reviewed the political conditions that contributed to Fukuzawa's pursuit for Western civilization: his priori aim is to preserve national independence and sovereignty, as expressed in *Datsu-A Ron* and *Outline*. In *Outline*, Fukuzawa (1960, 195) wrote, "It has not been so long since the foreigners came to Japan, and until today they have not yet bring us serious damage or anything making us not decent". But soon he placed his eyes on the colonial violence of Western powers, listing the colonial stories such as white colonialism over indigenous in American continent and Australia, and over Persia, India, Java, and the like. In this he saw the risk of colonization, slavery and even genocide. The only way out of this destiny is to catch up with the trend of "civilization". In this sense, "civilization" is for Fukuzawa instrumentalized, and hence his insistence of "leaving Asia".

Here, it must be noted that Fukuzawa's conclusion is drawn within the assumption of social Darwinism that the civilized would necessarily repress the under-civilized, which is itself a Eurocentric view. Yet on the other hand, another

[19] See for example his discussion on the public service of providing electricity and water (2018, 140-1).

point of view is that Fukuzawa's acceptance of the Eurocentric view on civilization is the result of internalizing the Confucian theory of civilization. As Li (69; 113) argues, on the one hand, the universalist theory of civilization of Confucianism makes it possible for Japan to reflect upon the universalism of European civilization, and to produce the psychological mechanism that realizes this "civilization" to change the historical reality of itself. On the other, the internalized dialectic of the civilized and the barbarian – the *hua-yi* dialectic – offers the foundation to accept the European version of this division, and further leads to Japan's ambition to establish itself as the civilized while other Asian nations as the under-civilized.[20]

In Fukuzawa's attitude towards Confucianism and Western civilization, a conclusion can be drawn that he is nothing more than an Asian (strategically) denying his own Self – the Confucian civilization - and turning to the Other – Western civilization - in a situation that Fanon (1986, 110) characterized as he suddenly

> **…has been given two frames of reference within which he has had to place himself. His metaphysics, or, less pretentiously, his customs and the sources on which they were based, were wiped out because they were in conflict with a civilization that he did not know and that imposed itself on him.**

In his thought, and especially in his words that confirms the under-civilized state of Japan and other Asian nations, a sense of inferiority can be felt: a half-civilized nation is of course inferior to fully civilized/enlightened nations, in the logic of Eurocentric theory of civilization, and the logic of social Darwinism. In other words, this sense of inferiority is a logical result from Fukuzawa's assuming a Eurocentric attitude. Recalling Fanon's statement, "it is the racist who creates his inferior". As Uemura (13) argues, *Datsu-A Ron* is a translation of "the logic of racism as a basis of the Western imperialism into Japanese". Therefore, rejecting the "Asianness" in Japanese culture defined by Confucianism and "Chineseness" seems to be a necessary outcome for Fukuzawa who assumed the idea of cultural racism and who was a victim of Western cultural imposition in Fanon's sense.

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[20] In previous sections I have discussed the concept of the *hua-yi* dialectic as a dynamic mechanism, not static. The second half of Gu and Wang's argument wrote, "if the *xia* states loses their conditions, they will be regarded as the same as the barbarians" (cited in Chao, 13).

In Fukuzawa's texts concerning Confucian culture in Asia we have seen the cultural dimension of the colonial inferiority complex at work. Meanwhile, the historical context of Japan and East Asia in the 19th century that I have already provided previously, as I believe, is sufficient to explain the economic and political environment that might lead to the sense of inferiority. First of all, there was economic exclusion and discrimination. A pre-modern Japan in an international economy characterized by the tribute system is incapable to participate in modern capitalist market economy, of which the rule was set completely by the West. This does not mean that the West rejected to do business with Japan. Instead, Western nations so enthusiastically demanded Japan to trade with them, as those articles concerning trade and commerce in the treaties that the shogunate signed with them illustrate. The point is that, in this system of economic discrimination, Japan was not able to trade with the West on an equal base if it was not able to successfully "modernize" its economy. In that case, exchange between Japan and the West would not be so much different from colonial trade concerning majorly raw materials and market to dump excessive industrial products, which is in nature exploitative. And that is the meaning of economic discrimination: exclusion from equal competition – a notion both vital for Marx and Fanon, in their characterization of capitalist economy.

Moreover, there was political discrimination and exclusion, which we can trace in my discussion of Maruyama's idea that Fukuzawa's argument was a response to the pressure from international society. If Japan was not "modernizing" its politics – meaning imitating the Western model of nation-state and adopting the international order of law and treaty – it would not be able to participate equally – and safely – in international relations. The West would simply never consider Japan as an equal nor respect properly its sovereignty - at least, that was what Fukuzawa believed. The consequences were not at all acceptable, as what happened to Qing China showed. The "Asiatic despotism" was for the West something legitimate to eliminate, for it was not a part of "civilization" in its Eurocentric definition. Japan was at the critical moment that it was about to become another victim of Western colonial violence. Therefore, Fukuzawa offered a way out, as a response to such context of international politics in the second half of 19th century.[21]

[21] The Meiji government abolished unequal treaties that the Tokugawa regime signed with Western nations and was actively attempting to play a role in the modern international order. This can be considered as a response to Fukuzawa's insistence.

The economic and political situation, involving exclusion and discrimination, in the 19th century formed the soil for a "racist structure" in Fanon's sense, which further created the chance for inferiority complex to grow. Fukuzawa, as I have demonstrated, is a good example of internalizing this racism and inferiority. Fukuzawa's story can in this sense be narrated as a Fanonian one.

In the Fanonian narrative, there was another crucial element: recognition. Pragmatically, Fukuzawa's insistence of "modernization" and "civilization" was a suggestion for Japan to the way to obtain recognition as a modern nation-state and admission to the club of modern capitalist economy and politics. However, there is still a deeper sense of recognition: recognition for one's dignity and being a human, which is crucial for both Fanon and Hegel. Fukuzawa was troubled by the dialectic of the civilized and the barbarian. In such vision, the barbarian is not fully human, and "civilization" is the most significant criteria for humanity. Therefore, Fukuzawa's desire for civilization is also the desire for recognition for personhood and dignity. Uemura (13) quoted Fukuzawa's article written for the opening of Japan's Imperial Diet in 1890, "I wish the intellectuals of foreign countries would study faithfully the many hundred years history of Japan…" This means that Fukuzawa desired the West to take serious the history of Japan, and further to take serious Japan as a proper nation, or a legitimate human community.

Sakamoto Rumi (2001, 147-8) argues similarly argues that what lies in the heart of Fukuzawa's desire for civilization is "the imitation of self-formation", which could be understood as the process to make oneself a recognized human. Further, Sakamoto (151-2) points out that to be "civilized" for Fukuzawa meant "to be accepted by the West as 'one of them' or 'the same kind'". Fukuzawa's intention was therefore "to let the world know…that Japanese people are also people of the civilized world, and their intelligence and virtue do not, even slightly, differ from the people of other nations". In explaining Japan's "national desire", Li (44) referred to Hegelian philosopher Alexandre Kojeve's *Outline of a Phenomenology of Right*, that "all desires tend to get satisfied through the behavior that assimilates a desired object", and "to satisfy the desire is to sublate the object as the Other and render it a thing of the Self".[22] This desire, for human beings, means that for recognition from the

[22] Li's citation of Kojeve is from the Chinese translation of *Outline of a Phenomenology of Right*, published in 2011. Because when writing this thesis I did not have access to the original French

"object". In Kojeve's interpretation of Hegel's idea, recognition refers to the admission of sameness, the sameness of personhood and human dignity. Therefore, Li (45) argues that the evolutionary history of modern East Asia is a history of desiring recognition from Western powers, and a history of struggling for their "equal treatment". In this sense, the Hegelian recognition for personhood and dignity is upgraded to the recognition for nationhood and national dignity and/or sovereignty, but the mechanism remains the same. This desire for recognition and sameness also leads to Japan's problematic identification with the West, in a psychoanalytical sense, resulting in the inferiority complex I have characterized before.

Although in the 19th century Japan's relation with the West is not quite the same as that of the Antilles with France as Fanon characterized it, we can still observe that Fukuzawa placed Japan into a kind of master-slave relationship with the West, at least at an imaginary level – the West became the "awaited master" in Fanon' s sense - in terms of the formation of self-consciousness. However, it is not a purely Hegelian one. Rather, Fukuzawa's Japan was closer to the Fanonian slave: the slave turns to the master instead of the object. In this Fanonian dialectic, the slave attempts to obtain recognition from the master through mimicking instead of working on the object, and dreams to sit on the same table with the master. Also, this is testified by Fukuzawa's later imperialist stance and Japan's warfare throughout the late 19th century and the first half of 20th century. Japan's hostility against the West – not only the war against the Allied in WWII, but also expressed in many of Fukuzawa's later texts - is an expression of its demand for a missing "struggle to death" in the form of violence – which echoed Fanon's position on violence against the former colonial master. In this we see what Homi Bhabha calls "ambivalence". Or, such violence could be interpreted as an action of overcompensation. [23]

To briefly conclude, the Fukuzawa emanating from his texts resembles the "slave" who turns to the "master" for its existence under Fanon's pen. In him, the

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text nor its English translation, I do not guarantee that my translation of this quotation from Chinese to English is perfectly accurate.

[23] Japan's imperialist violence on other Asian nations is also remarkable. Since Japanese imperialism in Asia is a quite complicated topic, I will not elaborate on it in this thesis. What I would like to point out, as an example, is that the Sino-Japanese war in 1894 is an illustration of Fukuzawa's idea that Japan should treat China in the manner of the Westerners. Treaty of Shimonoseki evidenced that Japan was speaking to China in the language of the West: Japan was able to play with the rule of international treaty system and impose this on China. It was in this sense a way for Japan to demonstrate that it was more "Western", or "civilized", than China. To such extent, Japan's relation with China resembles the Antilles black's relation with the African black in Fanon's sense, as Fanon (1986, 17) once saw that black people have two dimensions: one with their fellows and the other with white people.

colonial inferiority complex and the desire for recognition can be found, and all these are related to the historical environment of Western colonialism/imperialism in Asia in the 19th century that Japan was confronted with. I feel it necessary to state again I have no intention to be an apologist for Japan and justify its violence. Indeed, what Fukuzawa reminds us is the often overseen yet profound psychological impact of Western colonialism/imperialism has left in East Asia in a rather indirect way, which winds, I would say, into contemporary world. And this offers us an alternative light to re-examine the history of colonialism and as well transcultural interactions happening everyday and everywhere between East Asia and the West today.

Chapter III

Tawada Yōko and the Estranged Mask

Tawada Yōko and Decolonizing Imagination

Tawada Yōko is one of the most interesting figures of contemporary Japanese literature, for her bilingual writings – in German and Japanese – that touch upon various themes such as the body, language, history, identity, and so on, in the forms of poetry, play, prose and fictions. Born in Tokyo in 1960, Tawada moved to Germany when she was 22, first to Hamburg, where she continued her study in literature, and then to Berlin, where she lives now. Her living experience of traveling across borders and communicating across cultures has offered her the insight into the state of human existence as something characterized by liquidity and in-betweenness. In other words, for Tawada, fixed worldviews no longer make any sense. She is, in Bhabha's sense, a person lives in "the realm of the beyond": beyond the boundaries between nations, languages, histories, and even bodies.

One might find that identity is a vital theme in Tawada's writing, yet this notion seems a little bit vague for her. In an interview with Bettina Brandt in 2006, Tawada expressed an idea similar to Bhabha's, that any fixed answer to the question of identity is meaningless. In her words,

> **Nowadays, human existence is made up of continual, varied interchanges. What I refer to as "I" is made up of what I hear, what I read, what I see, and how I react to it… It is more important to think about existing differences, and to reflect upon how these are perceived and incorporated. (**Brandt 2006, 43)

In Tawada's view, to understand the issue of identity means to deconstruct it into experience and reconfigure the interaction between different factors. This process involves both reality and imagination, referring to respectively the state of being and the possibilities for being. Bringing these together, writing therefore for Tawada becomes a kind of experiment. The body, for example, is a material she frequently

uses to do her experiment. In *Missing Heels* (1991), her first novel published in Japan, Tawada depicts a woman's bodily experience in a foreign land. In this story, when the protagonist, who married a man from another culture, arrived at the train station in the foreign land – hometown of her husband – she suddenly felt that the buildings and the ground were inclined, so she walked shakily like her body had no heel. The "missing heels" is clearly a bodily metaphor referring to the protagonist's state of leaving her own culture yet having not acquired the foreign culture her husband belonged to. For Tawada, as is revealed in this story, what constitutes culture is language, the key to communication. Moreover, the experience of language and culture certainly has a deep impact on bodily experience.

In another interview with Brandt (2008, 19), when Tawada responds to a question concerning the bodily expressions in her poetry, she says, "If I remain silent I can some- times forget the boundary between my body and the tree that is standing next to me. My hair and the leaves of the tree, a bird on its branch, my feet and its roots on which I am standing; all these things together belong to a body". That is to say, language is something that demarcates the boundary between the Self and the world of the object. This boundary is therefore dynamic because language, as well as utterance, is never a static thing. This in turn offers possibilities to the experience and the expression of the body.

The example of theme of the body, or corporeal experience, in Tawada's writing shows how she views the interaction between language/literature and realities. In her words, she lives "in the languages" (Brandt 2008, 19), which implies that space – in both concrete and abstract terms – is also, like the body, something that rejects static boundaries. As Toshiko Ellis (2009, 209) notes, Tawada abandons the "idea of literature as belonging to a certain national or linguistic tradition" and has "strategically chosen to situate herself 'between' two languages". In the commentary for Tawada's book *The Bridegroom Was a Dog*, literary critic Yonaha Keiko (2018, 102) cited Tawada's thought on language(s): her purpose to write in German is to make her own German different from that of those native speakers, and through this process of writing, when she in turn writes in Japanese, she seeks to dismantle the convention of this language. In other words, in writing across German and Japanese, she possesses and at the same time breaks the conventions of these two languages. Tawada (2014, 47-8) calls the conventions she challenges "bourgeois tastes",

meaning a narrow-minded sense of locally produced realities. Clearly, Tawada's idea on language(s) is a statement of an anti-essentialist view of culture.

Nonetheless, it must be noted that Tawada's travelling across dynamic borders between languages/cultures does not necessarily suggest that the issue of origin is of little interest for her. In her writings, she never ceases to trace the origin and history of Japanese language and literature. Like the pioneer of modern Japanese literature, Natsume Sōseki, Tawada seems to be quite interested in exploring the relation between Chinese language/literature and Japanese language/literature. In a lecture on Sōseki, Tawada (2017, 20-2) focuses on the "oscillating and overlapping meanings" behind his use of *ateji* and *furigana* – the former refers to Chinese characters used to note the sound of Japanese words, while the later refers to Japanese alphabets used to note the pronunciation of words in Chinese characters. On the one hand, Tawada's interest could be understood as in the possibility that the dynamic interaction between the phonetic and the ideographic can bring about. Yet on the other, it displays Tawada's awareness of the history of interaction between the languages from these two nations. Or, it represents Tawada's reference to the origin and historical development of his mother tongue, and therefore her reference to her origin of East Asian culture.

Her concern is observable in the novel *Hikon*, or *Flying Souls*, first published in 1998. This novel is an experiment of deconstructing the Chinese language, just as what Tawada has been doing with German and Japanese, but with an emphasis on the ideographic dimension of Chinese characters. There are at least three types of attempts worth noting in this text. First, the *kanji*, or Chinese characters, used for names are given without *furigana*, that is, without any note of their pronunciation. Tawada employs only the ideographic to color the characteristics of people in this story, making them more than visible. Second, she has invented quite a few new words expressed in Chinese characters, which never appeared neither in China nor Japan before, but are comprehensible for people from both nations – at least I, a native Chinese speaker, believe it is the case, and I find these new words literally beautiful. She uses 幽密, the characters for "quietness" and "secret", to express the meaning of "sexual intercourse". 芳情, the characters for "fragrance" and "emotion",

in Tawada's vocabulary in *Hikon* refers to "body".[24] These are just two examples of the newly invented words; there are of course many other interesting words in Chinese characters presented in the text. In this Tawada possesses at the same time Chinese and Japanese and tries to dismantle them. Third, she deconstructs single characters into images and corporeal senses. For example, there is a scene that the protagonist has sex with the spirit of the character for "tiger", 虎. In Tawada's depiction, the protagonist actually feels the strokes of this character sticking into her body. In this scene, the character is materialized into an independent being before it expresses meaning. In this case, the boundary between language and the body is again blurred.

But, as she once said, Tawada's purpose is not to learn a language, she has no interest in acquiring proficiency in Chinese. Tawada (2019, 179) in the postscript for the Chinese translation of *Hikon* explains, she is afraid that if she actually learns Chinese, her relation with it would change. Without acquiring a full knowledge of Chinese, she is able to forget about its phonetic system and enjoy purely the beauty of the images of the characters. In my view, Tawada's ideographic-centrism is another rejection against the static and essentialist idea of borders, represented by the rise of phonocentrism.

In *Nationalism and Écriture* (1995), Karatani Kojin examines the relation between phonocentrism and the formation of Japanese as a "national language". In light of Derrida's and Saussure's critiques on phonocentrism and *écriture*, Karatani reveals the political and ideological motives behind two trends of phonocentrism in Japan in the 18th and 20th century. He concludes that the rise of phonocentrism with in languages such as French and Italian, as against common *écriture*, such as Latin, is closely connected to the emergence of modern nations-state, which "has emerged all over the world without exception" (Karatani 1995, 5).

To give an example, in 18th-century Japan, there was a trend nationalist philology that emphasized phonocentrism to distinguish the Japanese language from Chinese, the *écriture* in East Asia. Karatani (1995, 17) notices that it contains "a political struggle against the domination of Chinese 'culture', or a bourgeois critique

[24] In *Hikon* there is no *furigana* or phonetic notes. Therefore I cannot offer the reading of these words. Or rather, for Tawada, how these words are read does not actually matter. Also, the meaning of each single character is not fixed, so the English translations I provided are nothing more than speculations out of my common sense in Chinese.

of the samurai system since Chinese philosophy was the official ideology of the Tokugawa shogunate". This means that Japanese phonocentrism represents a kind of nationalist ideology that intends to separate Japan from the East Asian cultural sphere constituted by Chinese scripts. This nationalist idea of language was developed into the movement of consolidation of written and spoken language, or *genbun icchi*, which also involved abandoning classical Chinese as *écriture*. In this sense, Tawada's ideographic-centrism is a negation toward phonocentrism, and therefore a rejection against the ideology of essentialist nationalism behind it. At the same time, if Karatani (1995, 5) is right on that Meiji Japan's movement of nationalizing its language was under Western influence – a model Benedict Anderson once observed[25] - Tawada's negation can then be considered as exploration of, or even returning to, the East Asian cultural tradition before Westernization.

This ideographic-centrism is meanwhile an exploration of the cultural history and traditions of East Asia and Japan. Literary scholar Numano Mitsuyoshi (2019, 188) notes that

> **After all, every single word as well as character is preserved in the lengthy history because many people has used it, inherited it, changed it and given it new meanings. In this sense, even Tawada, standing at the very frontier of history – which is now – who has constantly woven out new words, is in fact supported by the long-standing rich history and traditions indirectly.**

In this, the role of East Asian cultural traditions becomes visible in Tawada. Although she insists that her identity cannot be defined according to a single culture, her East Asian origin is still a quite significant part in her though and writings. She is a writer in between, but it must not be forgotten that idea of "in-betweenness" always suggests that she is situated between certain things, and her East Asian or Japanese origin is one of those things. Meanwhile, Europe, or the West, is in this sense another extreme of her in-betweenness, in relation to the East. Consequently, the relation between cultures she is situated in becomes a critical subject of inquiry for her.

Such inquiry is largely an inquiry of the relationship between East and the West. Seemingly, Tawada approaches this her inquiry from a non-binary and anti-

[25] Benedict once observed that the development of nationalism in modern Europe was accompanied by the rise of national languages as against *écriture* of empires, which characterized the rise of capitalist civil society. For detailed discussion, See Anderson's *Imagined Communities* (1983), Chapter 5.

essentialist perspective, but in fact, since the essentialized binary of the East and the West is fixed in the Western knowledge of the world formulated in the colonial age, Tawada's vision is therefore a postcolonial one. In the collection *Where Europe Begins* (1991; English translation in 2002), Tawada creates a fictive memory of travel from Japan to Moscow throughout the Trans-Siberian Railway. In episodes in this collection, landscapes, history, living experience and tales are interwoven with each other. As Christina Kraenzle (2008, 252-3) interprets, the colonial history of Siberia plays a significant role in this fictive travelogue. In reading Siberian folk tales, the narrator finds that the image of the landscape of Siberia is merely a product of European colonial thinking, in which Siberia's own culture and people are absent and Siberia itself is portrayed as something that Europe owns in their narrative. Ironically, the narrator gets to know Siberia not through itself or its people, but from books and other travellers, which are merely carriers of Eurocentric knowledge. Another point in which Tawada questions the perceptions of the geographic landscape is the arbitrary imagination of the border between Asia and Europe: on the train, every traveller the narrator meets holds a different idea about where Europe begins. As Emanuela Costa (2013, 70) notes, here Tawada becomes aware of "the gap between landscape as an actual locality, and mind- scape as the subjective meanings our minds project on landscape itself". In other words, Tawada becomes aware that the social-cultural construction of borders and spaces, in the case of Siberia, according to a Eurocentric vision, is consistently shifting. As Costa (67) argues, Tawada's writing of *Where Europe Begins* aims to "decolonize take-for-granted assumptions about Europe" in spatial/geographical term. This socially constructed idea of the spatial division of the East and the West – if we consider it from the perspective of *Orientalism* – signifies also the distinction between the Self and the Other. The blurred geographical boundaries therefore suggest also the unclear distinction between the Self and the Other – which Bhabha expresses as the idea of in-betweenness and hybridity.

Working toward a kind of anti-dualism, Tawada is then at the same time deconstructing the Eurocentric construction of the dualism in question. To such extent, Tawada can be examined as a postcolonial author aiming at decolonizing the imagination about the East and the West.

***Persona*: the Happening Reality**

In the previous section, I have reviewed some major issues Tawada has been tackling in her writings and meanwhile justified the possibility of a postcolonial reading to her texts. For a close reading, I propose to have her short fiction, *Persona*, or *Perusona* in Japanese, from her book *The Bridegroom Was a Dog*, first published in 1998. This is basically a story about how the protagonist Michiko, a Japanese student in Germany, loses and regains her identity in the "stranger's land". The story happens in Hamburg, where Michiko lives with her younger brother, Kazuo. She is writing a thesis about "some Turkish female writers who live in Germany and write in German", while Kazuo is working on medieval (European) literature. In her experience in Hamburg and interaction with people from different places, Michiko begins to question her own identity as a Japanese; she gradually loses her sense of how a Japanese is supposed to be like while people around her holds different assumptions about what "Asianness" or "Japaneseness" should be like. Eventually, she chooses to hide herself behind a (fake) Noh mask made in Spain to emphasize her Japanese origin. However, when she walks on the street with such a strange mask, people instead ignore the fact that Michiko is a Japanese.

There are not so many scholarly studies dedicated to this particular novella by Tawada, yet most of the pieces on it are concerned with postcolonial cultural politics that involves a Eurocentric discursive environment including prejudices, stereotypes and discrimination. For example, Reiko Tachibana (2007, 160) argues that the central idea of this novel is to problematize the "biases found in the ethnocentric minds of all groups". Also, in discussing foreigners' image in Japanese literature, Kazuo Matsuda (2000, 220-1) in a short section on Tawada notes that in *Persona*, although the narrator "calmly and realistically" narrates and represents the difference between people from the East and the West, without them being stereotyped (by the author), the reality is that there are still prejudices them, or they "co-exist with the prejudices". Additionally, Matsuda (220) sees Japanese prejudices against other Asians in this novel. What Matsuda tells us is that although Tawada as an author successfully avoids stereotyping in her writing, prejudices are still the cruel reality that cannot be avoided, as presented in the story. Yet, what has been studied is only what has happened to the protagonists in *Persona*, and what has happened within them – for example, their

psychological and corporeal experience – remains not fully explored. To offer a complete picture of this story, an internal view is therefore required.

In the following sections, I will try to interpret this fiction in a Fanonian approach, to reveal the postcolonial mess that a Japanese – or any non-Westerner - might still face in contemporary Europe, which Tawada might wants to address. I have to clarify now that my subjects of analysis are the story itself and the characters in it, but not Tawada, the author herself. The conclusions or arguments I will draw, in light of a Fanonian analytical framework, are primarily from and about the story and not about the author – I will never argue that Tawada resembles culturally and psychologically the Antilles black in Fanon's text, just as is the case with Fukuzawa Yukichi. In other words, Tawada exposes phenomena and problems, as well as questions of reality in her writings. My task is then to examine those phenomena and problems presented in the text in question.

Instead of justifying the connection between Tawada and Fanon's analytical framework in length, I feel that it is easier to understand the picture if I present Tawada's text, *Persona*, directly in Fanon's themes – it will then not be difficult to find that Tawada's themes quite overlaps with Fanon's. Firstly, I will examine the issue of language. In the story, there are some episodes of the interaction between languages worth noting, for the protagonist, Michiko, and her brother, Kazuo, frequently switch their mode of thinking between German and Japanese. Secondly, I will explore the body represented in this story. Particularly, like Fanon, I will focus on the relation between the discursive body and the performative body. The body is always a site on which culture and language construct their concrete images. Finally, I will analyze the protagonists' psychological dynamics. The analysis of cultural psychology would reveal how they define what is the Self and what is the Others, and how their view has been constructed in interaction with reality.

"There Is No Such Word in Japanese"

Language is the central theme that Tawada has been exploring in her writings, and *Persona* is not an exception. In this novel, she depicts the situation of travelling, or consistently switching, between two languages in the protagonist Michiko and her

brother Kazuo. As Fanon (1986, 17-8)) once saw, to speak a language means to "assume a culture" and to possess "the world expressed and implied by that language". For Tawada, in switching between Japanese and German, Michiko and Kazuo are therefore travelling between two cultures and two ways of thinking. In most of the occasions in Michiko and Kazuo's life in Hamburg, they speak and use German. They speak Japanese majorly to each other at home, and sometimes to Mrs. Sata, an acquaintance from Japan who hires Michiko as her daughter's tutor. The co-existence of two languages in their mind certainly implies interwoven assumptions of cultures and ways of thinking.

When telling Kazuo the injustice that Seongryong - a Korean nurse, colleague of Michiko's friend Katharina – suffered a few days ago, Michiko uses the word *higashi ajia jin* (literally "East Asia people" to refer to people with East Asian origins (Tawada 1998, 22). This makes Kazuo quite upset, because in his understanding, there is no such expression in Japanese. The exclusion of this expression signifies his demarcation of the boundary of the Japanese language, and therefore the boundary of his culture, because he denies the entire logic behind this expression and the cultural categorization it connotates. From the story, we can easily find that Michiko's *higashi ajia jin* is a translation of a certain German word/phrase meaning "people of East Asia" – I have no idea about what exactly this expression is in German since the entire story is presented in Japanese. In the novel, this expression first appears in a conversation between several employees in the psychiatric center where Katharina works, in the context of Seongryong's being accused for sexual harassment by a patient. In discussing Seonryong's personality, a man called Albert, who studied *tōyōgaku*, or "Oriental studies", in college but eventually dropped out, says that Seonryong does not often have facial expressions because he is from East Asia, and East Asian people (*higashi ajia jin*) do not have facial expressions because they practice the doctrines of Confucianism. "They now still teach *The Analects* in schools", adds Albert (Tawada 1998, 17-8).

In Albert's case, there is clearly a connection between the category, or the idea, of *higashi ajia jin*, or "East Asian people", and the knowledge and discourse of Oriental studies. His image, or imagination, of "East Asian people" is one stereotyped and essentialized; his reduction of East Asian characteristics into Confucianism is certainly inadequate for at least he ignores, or has no idea of, the richness and diversity within the cultural tradition of East Asia. Calling what Albert says racism

might be a too strong statement, but still it exposes the major problem of some forms of Western knowledge about the East: studying and then dropping out, Albert represents a common phenomenon in the West that one might know something about the East, but this knowledge remains superficial, stereotypical and rather entertaining. This problem with the order academic field of Oriental studies has been criticized in detail by Said, so I will not address the specific issue here. My point is that, although Michiko dislikes Albert's argument, and she repeats Albert's argument to Kazuo in order to find support to reject it, in Kazuo's eyes, Michiko's repetition of the idea of *higashi ajia jin* is merely a reproduction – albeit perhaps unconsciously - of this Eurocentric vision and its knowledge and discourse about East Asia that would offend him.

Thus, Kazuo's denial of the expression *higashi ajia jin* also marks his rejection of the Western knowledge and discourse - vague and stereotypical - about East Asia. In this denial, and in this demarcation of the boundary of language – what is in and what is out – Kazuo as well demarcates the boundary of his identity and culture. Kazuo feels unease with this kind of knowledge also because it oversees the diversity within East Asia, and more importantly, the difference between Japan and other nations. For Kazuo, Japan is developed because it has been practicing Confucianism, while Korea remains relatively underdeveloped because it believes in Christianity (Tawada 1998, 22). Kazuo makes a (hierarchical) difference between Japan and Korea, and at the same time denies the legitimacy of what characterizes Western civilization. Another scene where Kazuo appears to be upset again by Michiko's use of *higashi ajia jin* is when they are talking about the history of the Pacific War. Michiko asks him, " Did the Japanese during the war not only killed other *higashi ajia jin* but also the mentally ill in this country?"(Tawada 1998, 47) This is a question actually from Katharina. In this question, "other *higashi ajia jin*" refers to the Chinese and the Koreans. In this sense, Japan is seen as a part of this "East Asian people". What Kazuo feels uncomfortable with is precisely the juxtaposition of Japan and other East Asian nations under the concept of *higashi ajia jin*. Kazuo is not quite willing to sit on the same table with people from nations such as China and Korea; in his view, Japan must be distinctive from other nations and eventually assume a leading position. Such nationalist view reminds me of Japan in late 19th and early 20th century that denounced Asia but assumed the authenticity of "civilization".

Nonetheless, in reality, *higashi ajia jin* is an expression that Japanese speakers

would commonly use. That is to say, Kazuo's definition of what is "Japanese" is not a typical case. What distinguishes Kazuo from most of the native Japanese speakers is that he is exposed to a foreign culture in a more direct way as he lives in the foreign land, and sometimes he chooses intentionally to distance himself from – and even oppose himself against - what is alien to him. This is Kazuo's response to the situation he is in, in which how the surroundings alters his perception of language. His definition of what is in and what is out of Japanese is also a definition of his cultural identity – what is the Self and what is the Other.

But Kazuo's negation is never a complete one: German, the foreign language, sometimes alters his way of thinking as well. In Kazuo's mind, when he is thinking about something, he calls her sister Michiko in his head, because "when speaking German, instead of calling her *ane* [meaning "elder sister"], it is more often to call her *Michiko*" (Tawada 1998, 25). Here, Tawada uses *katakana* spelling for "Michiko", instead of its *kanji*. Conventionally, *katakana* is often used as *furikana* for *kanji*. It therefore can be considered as an annotation for Kazuo's sister. On the other hand, *katakana* is now commonly used to represent imported vocabulary, and to spell foreign names. Therefore, Tawada's use of *katakana* to represent Michiko's name is ambiguous. In other words, Michiko for Kazuo might be a split image, and this has something to do with language and culture: speaking German has already altered Kazuo's way of thinking. In this case, it has altered how he views his sister. Once when he sees a Japanese woman on the street, he is not able to recognize it is Michiko immediately – it is just a "Japanese woman". That is to say, instead of a family connected by kinship, Michiko in Kazuo's eyes is more like a symbol of his cultural connection to Japan. However, since Michiko's image is gradually becoming blurred, his connection with Japan also becomes quite subtle. For Michiko, it is similar: " if Kazuo is not there [at home], Michiko would feel that herself is like an unknown woman from nowhere" (Tawada 1998, 48).

Given that Michiko is not really sure about her identity, it is then reasonable that her Japanese language would sometimes be altered in interaction with another cultural sphere. Yet, a crucial question is that why would Kazuo, with nationalist tendency, would internalize the logic of a foreign language and its culture.

Are They the Other, or the Self?

It starts with why Michiko and Kazuo came to Hamburg. As I have previously mentioned, they are master students working on German literature, but with different specializations. Kazuo's research is about medieval literature. His motive to dedicate himself into this field is rather straightforward: he is not willing to lose any competition, in this case, competition with German. In Kazuo's own words, "if I works on modern [German] literature, I see no chance in winning in surpassing the Germans, but if it is medieval literature, I might not lose" (Tawada 1998, 55). What do win and lose refers to in Kazuo's sense then? As his supervisor during his Bachelor's says, "[if you are] doing well in medieval literature, certainly you will be recognized in the future, because this field still lacks talented people" (Tawada 1998, 55-6). This supervisor further explains that if Kazuo says that his specialization is medieval (German) literature, even when he goes to Germany, people there would respect him; on contrary, if he says he is doing modern and contemporary (German) literature, the Germans would not regard him as a proper researcher. Win and lose therefore for Kazuo refers to a wish of competition and a desire for recognition.

On the one hand, for Kazuo, his research is a battle with German researchers. Tachibana (154-5) refers the connection between Prussian Germany and Japan: "Prussia Germany, in particular, was the region and culture that Meiji Japan looked to as it sought to create a modern nation"[26]. Given this historical episode, Kazuo's research echoes the psychological trajectory of modern Japan before the end of WWII: to catch up with Europe, to get the same position as (and even higher than) Europe, and to overcome Europe. Specializing in the cultural heritage of Germany, Kazuo seems to claim possession over something: it might be the cultural foundation for modernity and the spirit of civilization – as Fukuzawa's reasoning in his texts already illustrated. It is a claim for a kind of legitimacy and authenticity. But on the other hand, in Kazuo we can easily find desire for recognition, and this desire is, in my view, quite similar to that of the Meiji intellectuals such as Fukuzawa. This is also a Fanonian-Hegelian desire: "Black men want to prove to white men, at all costs, the richness of their thought, the equal value of their intellect" (Fanon 1986, 12). For

[26] For example, the Meiji constitution and legal codes show a clear reference to Prussian Germany's Second Reich. It might be also argued that Japan's militarism and expansionism were inspired by Prussian Germany.

Fanon's black people in French Antilles, their means to acquire recognition from their "master" is to simply try to become "white", so they can "compel the white man to acknowledge" that they are humans. In Fanon's view, this perverse desire for recognition has something to do with inferiority complex, which, as I have argued, also appears in Fukuzawa's case.

The image of Kazuo, the fictive figure, then overlaps with Fukuzawa, the leading Japanese intellectual from over one century ago. When Michiko and Kazuo are at first time in a restaurant in Hamburg, because it is crowded there, the service man fails to notice Kazuo's raised hand. Kazuo then feels offended. He believes that the service man ignores them on purpose: "[he is] fooling us because we are *gaijin* [literarily "outsider', or 'foreigner']" (Tawada 1998, 23). In Kazuo's speculation, the service man regards them as someone who is not different from "Vietnamese refugees". This can be linked to his denial of the word *higashi ajia jin*: Kazuo rejects the idea that places Japan together with other East Asian nations, and the expression "refugees" suggests that he holds an assumption of "backwardness" about them. In other words, he is afraid that the Germans would regard the Japanese as people from "backward" regions. Is this not what Fukuzawa wanted to express in *Datsu-A Ron*? This kind of psyche shapes his motive, at least partly, to specialize in medieval German literature. In doing so, he claims possession of the cultural heritage, which, as Kazuo might believe, gives rise to "civilization" or "modernity", and meanwhile demands recognition in a Fanonian-Hegelian sense.

In Fanon's perspective, the black as Hegelian "slave" might require only the basic level of recognition, that is, recognizing them as proper human beings. The desire of this "slave" is no more than to sit on the same table with the "master". But the case of Japan, at least in the case of Fukuzawa and Kazuo, is different: surpassing the "master" has always been the goal. In Fanon's sense, the black desire to become white involves "otherness", something in between of the Self and the Other. To become the Other, to absorb its culture – often it is imposed – also means the process of alienating the Self. Assuming possession of pre-modern German culture is to this extent the otherness within Kazuo, and it is similar to Fukuzawa's assuming the "spirit of civilization" that is of Eurocentric nature as he expressed in his *Outline*. Nonetheless, it is precisely their shared desire to surpass and overcome the "master" that has prevented them from further alienation, from the situation that Fanon's Antilles black once experienced, the void – "He has no culture, no civilization, no

long historical past" (Fanon 1986, 34). This is also revealed in Li Yongjing's analysis of pre-modern Japan, as I have discussed earlier: Japan assumed possession of Confucian universalist theory of civilization, as well as possession of authentic civilization, and surpassing China became its pursuit. Imagine in Fanon's context: a black person assumes ownership and authenticity of "whiteness", and believes that only they can surpass the white and take this white civilization to a higher stage. This is what characterizes Kazuo and Fukuzawa. Yet, it should always be noted that this kind of psyche is related to inferiority complex as I have already shown. In other words, it might represent a kind of symptoms of overcompensation, but in a way different from the case of the Antilles black.

Still, it is difficult for Kazuo to avoid the issue of the Self and the Other. When hearing that Kazuo is studying medieval German literature, a Japanese would be impressed and say, "aah!" A German would also get impressed and say, "ooh!" Although both sides would express admiration, their impression comes from different perspectives. I have no intention to make speculations about those different sources of impression for the two sides. The issue I would like to point out is that Kazuo still faces two questions in terms of his research: for whom, and of whom. Certainly Kazuo would not consider it as something such as cultural heritages for all the human beings since he is neither a universalist nor a "global citizen". The audience of his MA thesis would be the Germans. Then the problem is that it is not written for the sake of the Germans. If he goes back to Japan and teaches in a university there, as is his wish, the problem is that the Germans' recognition is for him much more important than the respect of the Japanese. And who owns the so-called "medieval literature"? Who is able to claim its authenticity? Would the Germans' claim Kazuo's knowledge? Or would the Japanese do so? I personally cannot provide answers for these questions, since it is only Kazuo himself knows where to place his research. The issue is that, Kazuo is already in an "in-between" situation.

It is similar for Michiko in the sense that in terms of her research, she seems to be also in a kind of "in-between" situation. In her own words, "I am writing a thesis about some Turkish female writers who live in Germany and write in German" (Tawada 1998, 57). However, she is having a hard time in writing it, because when she reads the novels by those writers, she feels something dark is pulling her down, making herself difficult to continue writing. This means that in the novels she reads, she feels a kind of negative empathy. It is negative because Michiko tries to void it.

When she walks through a neighborhood where migrants residence, she sees the real Turkish migrant women, in a quite different image from the subjects of her research. In this scene, she feels uncomfortable. Michiko usually avoids walking through such areas, but precisely because she feels certain attraction. Tawada (1998, 41) writes, "She feels that if she walks closer, she will be absorbed into it; she feels so certainly because she has experienced similar things and this memory has already been inside her body". The migrant neighborhood for Michiko, is a foreign land in the foreign land, but it is not completely foreign, because after all Michiko is a migrant as well. In her research, is Michiko studying the Self, or studying the Other? Or it is both? This is also a question that I could not answer. But one thing is sure that the co-existence of anxiety/fear and attraction implies that Michiko is also in an "in-between" situation, and she has trouble in demarcating the boundary between the Self and the Other and defining her own identity. In the next section, I will examine how she comes into this alienated situation from the corporeal perspective.

The Body in Representation

In *Black Skin, White Masks*, Fanon exposed the discursive construction of the black body, or "blackness", by the European whites. Once this discursive set about the body is imposed, the black body becomes in a way as performative. To quickly grasp the idea of the performative body, according to feminist theorist Judith Butler (1993, 13), " a performative is that discursive practice that enacts or produces that which it names". In examining the issue of gender identity in such approach, she argues that

> **"[S]ex" not only functions as a norm, but is part of a regulatory practice that produces the bodies it governs, that is, whose regulatory force is made clear as a kind of productive power, the power to produce—demarcate, circulate, differentiate—the bodies it controls. Thus, "sex" is a regulatory ideal whose materialization is compelled, and this materialization takes place (or fails to take place) through certain highly regulated practices. In other words, "sex" is an ideal construct which is forcibly materialized through time. (Butler, 1)**

So does the issue of the racial identity, as Fanon once revealed. The discursive construction of the racialized body can be forcibly materialized – as performative - as

well for that the discourse can often produce the reality for the body in question. In *Persona*, Tawada also questions the tension between the discursive construction and the corporeal reality. When Michiko and Seongryong meet for the first time, Katharina says that she feels difficult to distinguish the appearances of people of different nations. “Even if it is a fellow East Asian, you can not tell this person’s nationality from the face”, writes Tawada (1998, 11). This is a typical Eurocentric stereotype, yet strangely, Michiko and Seongryong do not show any unease or denial towards such view. “Of course it is so”, Michiko says (Tawada 1998, 11). In Michiko’s view, her own appearance is quite similar to Seongryong’s – “it is cute, but not beautiful”, as her ex-boyfriend’s sister commends. Could this be seen as a kind of internalization of Eurocentric discursive construction of the Asian body? Let me answer this question later. Here on the similarity between East Asian people’s appearance, Kazuo expresses a quite different idea. Just as he insists the differences of religiosity between East Asian nations, Kazuo holds that one can easily distinguish Korean faces from Japanese ones. His argument is that the Koreans have thinner eyes, and are usually shorter than the Japanese, which is indeed a stereotypical view without reliable evidences.

The issue underlying Michiko and Kazuo’s discussion of the East Asian appearance is that the body is a crucial element in the discursive construction – sometimes no more than imagination - of race, ethnicity and nationality. In this case, the bodily characteristics of a certain group are always discursively constructed according to one’s general view on that group. To be specific, it is Kazuo’s view on Korea as a less “successful” or “advanced” nation as well as his wish to separate Japan from the “backward Asia” that decides how he sees the Korean and the Japanese body. The appearance of the body would not necessarily become regulated by such assumption and discourse, but as Michiko’s case shows, one’s perception of his or her own body would be altered. One part of the reason that Michiko in the end of the story chooses to take on that absurd Noh mask is precisely her belief that her appearance is not distinctive from other Asians, which is likely framed by the Eurocentric vision on East Asia that Katharina and Thomas – her ex-boyfriend - hold.

For Michiko, it becomes a kind of obligation that when she goes to Mrs. Sata’s house to tutor her daughter Ayumi, she has to put on makeup first, because when she meets Ayumi for the first time without makeup, Ayumi says that her face does not look like a Japanese. “Sensei [literally “teacher”] looks like a Vietnamese”, says

Ayumi (Tawada 1998, 37). That is to say, in order to look like a Japanese, Michiko needs makeup. This exposes her anxiety about the assumption that her appearance is not quite different from other East Asian people. On the one hand, she accepts this kind of assumption – she does not question the idea that the Japanese and the Koreans look different - but on the other, she feels anxious. This is the interesting point of Michiko's body, because she has not yet formulated a coherent idea about her identity – unlike Kazuo who believes in the uniqueness of his Japanese identity. She is therefore exposed to external discursive construction of her appearance and body. Or rather, it is more likely the case that she has lost the coherent system of reference of her Japanese identity in her life in a foreign land. When looking at Mrs. Sata's face closely, Michiko finds that "the connection of her eyes, nose and mouth is lost", and loses her idea about what a Japanese face is supposed to look like (Tawada 1998, 35).

In Michiko's case, internalizing the discursive construction of the Japanese or East Asian body alters how she views and feels the appearance and body of herself and people around her. There is a scene when she is walking on the street, there are several German men making speculations about her nationality. One says she might be Korean. Other say she might be from South East Asia. When Michiko unwillingly explains that she is Japanese, one of the German men laughs, "So you are Toyota!" When Michiko is thinking that she is not Toyota, she feels that her body is becoming a car (Tawada 1998, 40). This is not necessarily Techno-Orientalism[27], but it is certainly a kind of stereotypes that associate the image of Japanese people with products or commodities made in Japan. At another level, such imagination also involves objectification: objectifying Michiko, a Japanese woman, into a commodity that can be consumed. In this sense, this is typically a colonial/racist imagination. Coincidently, Thomas also uses the metaphor of automobiles to describe a friend. "Somehow that guy's head looks like a Trabant car", says Thomas (Tawada 1998, 40). He uses the image of the automobile brand, Trabant, produced in East Germany, to describe the body of a friend born in East Germany. Michiko immediately recognizes

[27] Techno-Orientalism refers to the Eurocentric discourse that concerns East Asia, especially Japan, as the technologically advanced but intellectually and morally primitive Other. This reflects a kind of anxiety of the West in front of Eastern powers. To quote Morley and Robins's early analysis of Techno-Orientalism, "Japan has come to exist within the Western political and cultural unconscious as a figure of danger, and it has done so because it has destabilized the neat correlation between West/East and modern/premodern" (Morley and Robins 1995, 160). In other words, the West is anxious because it can no longer sustain its presumption of technological/material superiority over the hi-tech East that has been developing unexpectedly.

a kind of hierarchical assumption inside this metaphor – if we compare the image of Trabant with that of Mercedes-Benz. “The Thomas that becomes Benz looks quite shabby”, Michiko thinks (Tawada 1998, 40). However, what is problematic is that Michiko is not able to firmly reject this kind of objectification: she can feel her body becoming a car, which signifies a sense of internalization. That is to say, how people see her becomes at least partly her reality. Or, her body no longer belongs to herself as it can no longer represent itself and relies on external representation. Her body in such way reproduces this gaze and the respective discourse, which therefore becomes a performative in Butler’s sense.

In the end of the story, Michiko suffers from her desire for a consistent identity. Her solution, eventually, is to put on a Noh mask she finds in Mrs. Sata’s house, a typical strong representation of Japanese culture. Wearing the mask, Michiko feels that her body suddenly becomes larger, and that her body is liberated from the repression of her face. She feels that she is walking naked, and it is “a body with powerful language” (Tawada 1998, 74). For Michiko, this Noh mask puts an end to questions about her face and appearance, as well as her identity: it is no doubt Japanese. She finds the ultimate expression and representation of her own identity, and it is a quite strong statement: she chooses to confirm that she is Japanese. Yet, sadly, “on the day when Michiko is most Japanese, people however fails to notice that she is a Japanese” (Tawada 1998, 76).

Reality turns out to be different from what Michiko believes, and this ending brings Michiko, Tawada’s protagonist, closer to Fanon’s experience. Fanon (1986, 112) discovered his blackness and ethnic characteristics at the moment when he subjected himself “to an objective examination”, or, the white gaze. The “black soul” is nothing more than a white artifact. So is Michiko’s mask: it is a souvenir made in Spain. “Of course it’s a fake one”, says Mrs. Sata (Tawada 1998, 59). The reason why Mrs. Sata would hang a fake Noh mask on the wall is rather ironic: it is because a German friend of her is a big fan of Noh opera, and this decoration has received some nice comments. Here, the Noh mask is materialization of Mrs. Sata’s subjecting Japaneseness to a foreign examination. It is a material representation of first of all the European (Orientalist) knowledge of Japan. In other words, through this mask, Japaneseness is objectified. People fail to notice that Michiko is a Japanese precisely because, I would argue, the Japaneseness on her is something European. It is a European artifact that is produced within European knowledge and discourse. It is

something that in the possession of Europe, not Japan. Therefore, although Michiko is alienated, people in Europe would not consider her as strange or foreign. Michiko does nothing other than reproducing their own knowledge and discourse. Moreover, the feeling of security and the stable Japanese identity that the mask brings to Michiko are the dangerous products of fixity, "the sign of cultural/historical/racial difference in the discourse of colonialism", as Bhabha (1983, 18) points out. To quote again a word from Fanon (1986, 109), "the movements, the attitudes, the glances of the other fixed me there, in the sense in which a chemical solution is fixed by a dye". Michiko in the Noh mask is therefore a performative of the Eurocentric/Orientalist knowledge, discourse, and expectation about Japan and Japaneseness. The Noh mask is then the "otherness" within Michiko.

In *Persona*, in the protagonists, Michiko and her brother Kazuo, the theme of alienation can be witnessed. In the sections above, I have examined Michiko's language, body, identity, and explored the theoretical value of this fictional character. However, to conclude this chapter, I would like to place a little bit more emphasis on Kazuo, the character who is less studied. Kazuo's way to preserve his sense of ontological security is rather straightforward: he often appears to be a nationalist and believes in so firmly his Japanese identity. In his view, the Self is defined by Japaneseness, and what is not Japanese is the Other. He refuses to be placed together with people from other East Asian nations, nor to admit European cultural influence on himself. Ironically, his ideas about other East Asian nations are merely racist stereotypes, which can be considered as reproduction of the Eurocentric narrative/discourse about the Orient. His way to prove the value of the Japanese – through gaining recognition - is completely built upon German cultural tradition, and even his mind is altered by the German language. His denial of the Other – in order to define the Self - is in this sense based on precisely what constitutes the Other. In Kazuo's definition of the Self, the Otherness is therefore something more than visible.

Kazuo, as I have argued, is similar to Fukuzawa Yukichi, in terms of his motives and strategies. Kazuo rejects the category of "East Asia" to include Japan because he is worrying about being regarded as a part of the "backward" Asia by the Europeans. So did Fukuzawa: his argument for leaving Asia contains the desire to differentiate Japan from the "backward Asia". Both Kazuo and Fukuzawa fail to realize that the idea of Asia's "backwardness" is itself a problematic Eurocentric

imaginary, and both of them are/were desiring for Europe's recognition based on such standards. Even their methodologies share a pattern: to learn what they believe constitutes the spirit of European civilization/culture, to bring it to a higher level, and to eventually surpass or overcome Europe. Their solutions, in my view, resemble the symptom of overcompensation, resulted from inferiority complex. As Fanon's reference to Adler's theory of inferiority tells us, this complex is often brought about by uneven social structure, and will lead to excessive desire for recognition. Furthermore, in Adler's view, in a male-dominated society, the striving for power and superiority would be the possible form of compensation, resulted from the inferiority complex (Gregory 1987, 5). If Adler's view is correct, it would then be easier for us to explain the aggressiveness in Kazuo's and Fukuzawa's desire for recognition and their respective strategies. In the previous chapter, I have already shown why would Fukuzawa feel a sense of inferiority – Japan at that time was discriminated by and excluded from the "international society" dominated by European colonial powers. More than one century has gone by, yet the anxiety of inferiority can still be observed in Japan's contemporary youth as portrayed in Tawada's novel. This phenomenon suggests that it is now necessary to re-examine the contemporary world that has – seemingly - experienced, or is still in the process of, "decolonization".

Chapter IV

Mizumura Minae and the Novel about "I"

Mizumura and the Bilingual "I-Novel"

Mizumura Minae is another interesting figure in contemporary Japanese literature. Born in Tokyo in 1951, she moved to New York at a very young age. She was educated in the U.S. and France, studying French literature, but Japanese literary tradition is still at the core of her interest. Mizumura, like Tawada, is also a challenger for the conventions of Japanese literature, as well as language. The major body of her works, especially literary works, are written in Japanese. However, this fact never suggests that Mizumura does not think beyond the single language of Japanese. Similar to Tawada's playing with Japanese and German, Mizumura dedicates herself into exploring the relation and interaction between Japanese and English. She is also a bilingual author not only for that she has been publishing writings – usually academic – in English, but also for her experiment in writing a novel in which Japanese co-exists with English.

In 1995, Mizumura published the semi-autobiographic novel, or fictionalized autobiography, *Watakushi Shosetsu: from left to right*[28] - in English translation *An I-Novel: from left to right*. This novel on the one hand inherits the form known as *shishosetsu*, or "I-novel", from modern Japanese literary history. Briefly, *shishosetsu* can be described as a kind of realist writings in the tune of confession or self-exposure, based on the author's own experience, of which the history can be traced back to the late Meiji period.[29] On the other hand, in terms of the form, Mizumura's *An I-Novel* is quite unconventional at least in two ways. First, the text is printed horizontally and reads from left to right, while conventionally, Japanese novels are always printed vertical and reads from right to left. This intentional stylistic change nonetheless

[28] This title in Japanese also reads as *Shishosetsu*, since the character 私 can be read as *watakushi* and *shi*. The difference is that the former is usually used in formal occasions.

[29] For detailed scholarly discussion of this literary genre, see for example, Fowler 1988, Hijiya-Kirschnereit 1996, and Suzuki 1996.

marks a shift of cultural vision because horizontal arrangement of text for a novel is a thing out of Western cultural/literary traditions, and therefore something foreign not really familiar.[30] In this sense, the subtitle *from left to right* might suggests a journey from the left side of the Pacific Ocean, Japan, to its right side, America. Second, this novel is literally a bilingual one: Japanese and English is interlaced in this text.

On Mizumura's personal webpage, the introduction for *An I-Novel* goes as it "questions what it means to write in the Japanese language today". But Mizumura is certainly not the first author to bring foreign languages and cultures into Japanese literature. Especially, for contemporary Japanese literature, American culture and the English language – a core theme that Mizumura deals with – are frequently represented in different ways. For example, in the works of the two Murakamis, Murakami Haruki and Murakami Ryu, two renowned Japanese novelists active since the 1970s, the presence of American culture plays a significant role. Both of them are, or at least used to be, big fans of American pop culture. Consequently, images of American music, films, commercials and commodities become crucial signifiers in their system of reference. I will unfold the signification of American cultural images in the two Murakamis' writings later in discussing the "American dream" presented in Mizumura's novel. For now let us focus on the issue of language.

Murakami Haruki drafted his first novel, *Hear the Wind Sing*, first in English, and later translated it into Japanese. This is majorly because he found his inspirations in American literary traditions, in the works of American writers such Raymond Chandler and Kurt Vonnegut; Japanese literature was nonetheless something unfamiliar to him. As he recalls in the introduction for *Wind/Pinball: Two Novels* (2015, iv-v), the English translation of his *Hearing the Wind Sing* and *Pinball, 1973*, he at that time had no idea about what a Japanese fiction is supposed to look like, nor how to write one by himself. Upset by his own writing in Japanese, he then turned to English for experiment. In his view, the English language freed himself from the constraints of the complexity of Japanese, and translating his own English writing allowed him to create a new unique style of Japanese.

The English language also has a strong presence in Murakami Ryu's works, although he does not write in English. The most significant signifier is the substantial

[30] Discussion of this issue should be carefully limited to the form of printed novels in Japan. For other types of Japanese text, such as journal articles, news and some formal texts, horizontal print is already a common practice.

use of *katakana* in his debut fiction, *Almost Transparent Blue* (1976). The language he created in this novel, according to Stephen Snyder (2003, 234), is a new style of Japanese "in which traditional emphasis on adjectives and adverbs is replaced by sentences heavily larded with nouns, principally loan words written in *katakana*". These loan words presented in the form of *katakana*, are indeed English words and expressions that Murakami Ryu acquired from American soldiers and people related to them. Born in in 1952, Murakami Ryu grew up in a neighborhood where a brothel that provided service for an American military base was located. In describing his hometown, Murakami Ryu writes,

> **This was an army-occupied town. Morning and night, the Stars and Stripes Áuttered in time to the American national anthem ... the strong, yet soft voice of Elvis Presley could be heard echoing out, and there was jiving to the beat of St. Louis' blues...There was Coca-Cola, there were hamburgers. (Cited in Hillenbrand 2007, 116)**

English words referring to things American are in a quite straightforward manner represented in Japanese *kanakana* syllabary on paper based on their pronunciations. It can be imagined that verbal communication in that town, at that time, contains quite a few elements that are non-Japanese. Unlike Haruki's in choice of English on purpose as the language to start his writing with, Ryu's absorption of the linguistic elements from English was more a result of passive acquisition. Being a fictionalized autobiography, *Almost Transparent Blue* presents what the daily reality for Ryu was like in his young age, characterized by such cultural/linguistic hybridity. As Margaret Hillenbrand (116) argues, the "socio-linguistic signifiers" are referring to "a kind of third space" that is neither American nor Japanese, called in to being by *kichi*, the (military) base.

In both Murakamis' cases, a pattern is shown as that the hybridity in language signifies a kind of socio-cultural hybridity. Although Mizumura's personal experience is different from that of the two Murakamis, this pattern is still visible: like them, Mizumura is consistently travelling between two systems of cultural reference. The two Murakamis live in Japan and also in American culture; Mizumura lived in the U.S. – she made her decision to return to Japan after spending decades of her life there - and also in Japanese culture. The place where they live/lived is where Bhabha sees as the space of the "in-between" and "beyond". And Hillenbrand has stated the

term directly: it is the "third space", a postcolonial notion from also Bhabha's terminology, referring to the ambiguous space of enunciation that is created through transcultural interaction. When all these three authors return to the Japanese language, consciously or unconsciously, they have transformed it, but also creatively preserved it. Bhabha (1994, 37) might explain why their creation of new styles of Japanese in writing in the "third space" valuable: "It is the Third Space… which constitutes the discursive conditions of enunciation that ensure that meaning and symbols of culture have no primordial unity or fixity; that even the same signs can be appropriated, translated, rehistoricized and read anew". The Japanese language in seemingly hybrid style created by these authors is hence a product of negotiation in the Third Space,

Nonetheless, Mizumura's writing is not only about hybridity: she is on a journey searching for the meaning of national language and literature in "the Age of English". This concern is expressed in her nonfictional book *The Fall of Language in the Age of English* (*Nihongo ga horobiru toki: Eigo no seiki no naka de*; first published in 2008; English translation in 2015). In this this work, Mizumura develops her arguments around three types of languages: the universal language, the national language, and the local language. Mizumura's definition of the universal language is close to the idea of lingua franca, for she calls it a kind of "external language". Historically, a universal language is often "the language of an older and greater civilization that exerted its influence in the region", such as Latin in medieval Europe and Chinese in premodern East Asia, to reach speakers of different language (Mizumura 2015a, 72;83). It functions as the most economical way to pursue knowledge. Juxtaposed against a universal language is a local language, which Mizumura (2015a, 88) describes as the "mother tongue" that people speak "at home and on the street like everyone else". When both languages are circulating in a society at the same time, there would be necessarily hierarchy: the universal language is usually placed higher than the local language in terms its aesthetic, intellectual and ethical functions – think about the relation between Latin and vernaculars in medieval Europe. A national language is, according to Mizumura (2015a, 89-90), is "an elevated form of a local language", elevated nonetheless through translation. For Mizumura, the essence of translation lies in the transference of knowledge from a universal language to a local language, for example, the transference of the contents of Bible written in Latin into various vernaculars in Europe. It is precisely in the process of repeated transference that a local language started to develop into a system

of written language that is able to carry the same function of the universal language – in its function in pursuing knowledge - which has given birth to the so-called "national language", an elevated language capable for aesthetic, ethical and intellectual functions.

Mizumura is most obsessed with the idea of the national language for that the national language is the idea medium for the literary genre of the novel. With secularization of the European society, as Foucault once observed, in the late 18th century, the Europeans invented the concept of "literature" that gradually became distinctive from academia, of which the language at the same time were becoming highly specialized. This specialization removed academic language from daily life, and as a result "people no longer turned to academic writings for words of wisdom" (Mizumura 2015a, 98). Religious texts were meanwhile also left behind. Therefore, for enlightenment, people turned to literature, particularly the novel, which befitted that age the best. A language that carries aesthetic, ethical and intellectual responsibility yet is able to reach the advantages of the local language is then needed. The national language is in its nature such a medium that can reach both the high and the low. Moreover, there is globality inside the national language. Mizumura (2015a, 101-2) insists that the national language is a product of modernity, belonging to the era in which the citizens of modern nation-states are aware of the fact that "they are surrounded by many other nation- states where other people, different from yet similar to them, are living and using languages of their own". Thus, writing a modern novel in a national language means the process to bring the high – the sacred, the philosophical, the transcendent, and the like – together with daily living experience, with the awareness of globality. In this sense, for Mizumura as a novelist, the national language is the type of medium necessary for exploring and enriching humanity in the modern world.

Nonetheless, the world has witnessed the rise of the hegemony of English language in the past several decades, which becomes too overwhelming a universal language that it has been threatening Japanese as a national language, as Mizumura observes. Then her choice to write *An I-Novel* bilingual becomes even more interesting.

A Returning to Japanese

I would like to put forward my observation first: the bilingual writing of *An I-Novel* does not suggest that the author chooses to embrace the universal language of English; rather, it marks her returning to the national language of Japanese. Speaking from the result, the narrator of this novel – also Mizumura herself – eventually decides to return to Japan from America, and becomes a novelist writing in Japanese instead of English. This returning means to give up the opportunity to pick up the universal language as well as the privilege that comes with it: to directly reach the whole world. In the preface for the Chinese translation of *An I-Novel*, Mizumura asks this question: should the narrator be regret for her choice to return to Japanese not become a novelist writing in English even though she posses both of the two languages? Her own answer is definitely no. She explains,

> **Deep inside, language is culture in its fundamental meaning. After experiencing a long history, the human beings have developed deeper understanding of the reality through various languages. From then on, the human beings are able to access various realities…Dominance of the single language of English means the existence of a danger as such: only the realities that can be understood through the single language of English will have the weight to be considered as the reality. (Mizumura 2015b, v)**

For this reason, it is even more necessary to pay attention to realities beyond the reach of English, and to question realities that the universal language of English imposes on people. Also for this reason, the two Minaes, Mizumura Minae the author and Minae the narrator in the novel, make the choice to return. Mizumura's question and the explanation to it carry at least three more important massages, in terms of making sense of the role of language presented in this novel. First, in contemporary world, one has the opportunity to choose the language, and the choice of language signifies the choice of culture and its respective realities. In the beginning of this novel, Mizumura (2009, 13) writes, "*mondai wa tada hitotsu* [There is only one question]. To return or not to return". Here, the narrator Minae is considering about her future: should she return to Japan after finishing her study, or should she continue her staying in the U.S. and become an American? She does have the opportunity to choose in hands, for her family has been settled in New York already for 20 years,

and especially her elder sister, Nanae, is assimilating herself into an American life. She could have stay, since at one moment she is aware of that the connection between her Japanese blood and the fact that she is a Japanese is becoming quite vulnerable. Her reference to Shakespeare's iconic line also implies that the culture that the tradition of English language literature is a part of is more than reachable for her. Nanae has made her choice to stay – in fact Nanae is forced to stay because she believes that it would be difficult to survive as an artist in Japan, but New York is an ideal place to pursue an artist career. Nanae's speech in conversations on the phone with Minae occupies the major body of English expressions in this novel. She chooses the English language and American culture, as well as the respective realities. In conversations, "Nanae speaks ten time more English in conversations" than Minae does, with "excessive local [New York] accent" (Mizumura 2009), which could partly serve as the evidence for her choice of assimilation into American society – her language represents her realities.

Nonetheless, Minae questions the choice to stay and eventually chooses to return, because she has been troubled by her memory of realities in Japan and imagined memory of Japanese culture. This brings us to the second point, that cultural memory matters in terms of one's sense of ontological security and ultimately the issue of existence, and moreover, this cultural memory could be imagined, through the medium of language. Yet, this chosen cultural memory and the realities it resides upon are not always accessible for an external language; it must be represented and expressed through the medium of the national language. Mizumura's, or Minae's, reference to Hamlet's question of "to be or not to be" clearly shows that the choice of cultural memory and its respective realities contains crucial hints to explore the meaning of life and existence. After throwing this question, Minae talks about her dream, her dream of taking a nap at home in Tokyo, with her grandmother aside. When she wakes up, she realizes that she has been "living in the time in which a return to realities in the past is impossible", or, living in her "own shadow" (Mizumura 2009, 13). Minae never asks herself what it means to be Japanese: "I've been living so long for the purpose to become Japanese" (Mizumura 2009, 441). For Minae, identity seems to be something transcendent. This leads to her obsession for the Japanese language. When realizing the connection between blood and identity can be vulnerable, she turns to language, which is the only medium that sustains her bond

with the cultural memory of Japan. She has been searching for the evidence of her being a Japanese day and night in the Japanese language (Mizumura 2009, 441).

Living outside of Japan for twenty years, the Japanese realities has already become the past for Minae, yet they are still alive in her heart, in the form of what I call the imagined cultural memory. This memory is only accessible through the medium of language. In the past twenty years, Minae has gained her knowledge of Japan and Japanese culture through Japanese literature. After moving to New York at a very young age, she has thrown herself into Japanese literary classics, through which gets to know the world. In the words of giants of modern Japanese literature such as Tanizaki, Mishima, and Kawabata, she finds the cultural memory of her own. In the beginning scene of the novel, seeing the snow in America, what she recalls is *Yuki*, or *Snow*, by the Showa poet, Miyoshi Tatsuji, the only Japanese poem her ex-boyfriend could recite. They break up when her ex-boyfriend decides to return to Japan, after which Minae has lost the physical bond to Japan. Literature, written in Japanese, then comes to fill this void. Also in this snowy scene, she feels the existence of the spirits of her grandmother, grand-grandmother, and other Japanese ancestors, appearing in the shape of Yamauba, a type of Japanese female monsters said to reside in mountains, when she recalls the lyrics of a *shamisen* song from Meiji period, *shiki no yamauba*, or *Yamauba of Four Seasons.* She can hear that the blood flowing in women from the country where the sun rises for thousands of years is calling her (Mizumura 2009, 11). Through those Japanese words, Minae is able to hear, or see, the long-winding history of Japan, and finds the cultural memory of her own. In other words, it is the language, the particular national language, that enables the cultural memory of a people to pass on, and allows its descendants to access it, though remote. As Fanon (1986, 17-8) once put it, "To speak means to be in a position to use a certain syntax, to grasp the morphology of this or that language, but it means above all to assume a culture, to support the weight of a civilization". Nonetheless, it should be noted that the cultural memory she has imagined from modern Japanese literary texts is different from the actual realities in Japan. In other words, in Minae's assumption, she does not belong to America or Japan; she belongs to the "Japan" presented in those literary texts. For this reason, Minae calls her memory "only an illusion of a memory" (Mizumura 2009, 8). Yet, it is precisely this "illusion" that becomes the weapon for Mizumura's resistance to the danger of alienation she faces in the U.S., for she has something of the (imagined) Self to hold,

which helps prevent herself from shifting to the Other and avoid being trapped in the state of the Fanonian "triple person".

Minae makes her choice to turn her back on the English language, partly because it is the universal language - which is external for Minae – that cannot reach the realities of a remote nation and its cultural memory that is in nature untranslatable. But that is far from the whole reason. The third massage from Minae is that English, as the national language for Anglophone people and more importantly the universal language of our age, is paradoxical, in the sense that it involves both inclusion and exclusion. When trying to figure out why she hates English, she recalls the memory with her English teacher, Mr. Keith, in middle school. Once, Minae wrote a composition expressing the sentiments of nostalgia and solitude she felt in scenes in autumn. This composition got an A from Mr.Keith, for it displayed something special, something different from compositions by other students. To be specific, it was the Japaneseness of this composition that caught Mr.Keith's attention. Minae wrote about the sunset glows and about the paddy fields, yet not really about any physical thing. This composition was heavily influenced by Japanese literary traditions. As she realizes, the seasonal sentiments, the immediate association of imageries, they all come from "the spirit [the god] of language that pushes the Waka and Haiku poets, flowing uninterruptedly in Japanese" (Mizumura 2009, 347). As someone who appreciates and encourages cultural diversity, Mr.Keith was interested in the particularity of Japanese literary tradition, but in its form of English translation. He took for granted that English would become Minae's first language, and therefore enthusiastically helped Minae to improve her English. This however brought Minae anxiety, and eventually led to her breaking up with English, because she saw no way that she could become an authentic successor of English as someone from the East.

Minae's experience with Mr. Keith reveals that the tolerance of cultural diversity of English is rather strategic, and seemingly possibility of inclusion is a mere illusion. In other words, in this case inclusion also means cancellation. Mr. Keith could only appreciate the Japanese traditions and cultural memory only when they can be translated into English. To put it another way, what is untranslatable is irrelevant. Making English the first language for immigrants means in this sense to place various realities and cultural memories under the control of this language, and often, this will leads to mummification of cultures in Bhabha's sense. Meanwhile, replacing one's first language with another one would necessarily cancel, or at least

weaken, the connection with the original cultural memory and realities – "children of Italian immigrants educated in the U.S. could only become the successors of Shakespeare's heritage, but not Dante's" (Mizumura 2009, 366). Without Japanese, would Minae still be able to access the memory of Japan? Definitely no. Such process of inclusion and assimilation is thus cancellation and suppression in nature. And there is exclusion of course. Minae found that in middle school that the U.S offers opportunities of education for children of immigrants, but "educate them as immigrants" (Mizumura 2009, 365). That is to say, the Americans, particularly the Anglophone Americans, do not really admit them as fellow Americans.

This exclusion, or rejection, is not so much about language. As Fanon's story has already taught us, black people from the French Antilles believe that the more French they speak, the whiter they are, but it can hardly become true. Nanae, who holds a desire to stay unlike Minae, is nonetheless quite aware of the fact that they, no matter what, will never become the Americans: "We'll only be Japanese-Americans", or "Asian-Americans" (Mizumura 2009, 309). With this awareness, she speaks English with excessive New York accent, precisely because she is "early playing the role of a tough woman by using local slangs that are of low taste" (Mizumura 2009, 26). Why does Nanae want to preserve her image as a tough woman? Because she is having a hard time to get truly involved into the local society, although she might know that it is just an effort in vain. Social exclusion is not something new for immigrants in the U.S., in which the power of racism is at play. Minae maintains that "as an East Asian, it is impossible for me to get assimilated" (Mizumura 2009, 360). Such gap comes into being partly due to the sense of being a "stranger", and the sense of being a "stranger" comes into being partly due to the fact that racial and cultural differences are sometimes hierarchicalized. For English class in middle school, Minae was distributed to the "dumb class", which was unfair, given that her excellent English composition – the one Mr. Keith liked – later proved her ability in doing well in learning English. At one moment, she even felt that she existed as a member of the "inferior race with lower intelligence" (Mizumura 2009, 338). Remember what Fanon said, "It is the racist who creates his inferior". "In fact, an American would be treated the same as the black only for having partly the Japanese blood", thinks Minae (2009, 315). This is how racism works. Once being treated the same as the black, the Japanese-American would develop a sense of belonging to the black group, as Minae concludes when hearing the anecdote about Wendy, a half Japanese girl who finds

African-American men adorable. However, Minae does not consider this understandable, because in her view, it is only the black women who will find the black men in real life sexually attractive. Does not this resemble the case of Michiko in Tawada's *Persona*, who holds ambivalent attitude towards immigrants from other non-European nations?

But what is more important is that Minae sees the impossibility for full assimilation, and therefore refuses to be assimilated. In the preface for the Chinese translation of *An I-Novel*, Mizumura recalls her episode with an Asian boy she met in high school. That boy was an excellent student, and was quite popular among girls, who later went to Harvard. However, an outstanding person like him could still feel the sense of solitude, or at least the empathy to Mizumura's solitude, for that "in the East coast of America, as an East Asian, he would involuntarily consider himself as a 'stranger', so that when another East Asian of the same kind appears in front of him, he would naturally have a sense of solidarity" (Mizumura 2015b, iii). What this episode tells us is that, in a racist social structure, a "stranger" is always excluded, and it is not a matter of personality, ability, or other qualities of this person. It is similar for Nanae: no matter how tough she is trying to be in New York, she can only be a Japanese-American, or an Asian-American – everything but an "authentic" American. Minae then abandons the opportunity of assimilation and English as the channel to speak, for she knows well that in such social structure, any effort would be useless. Writing in Japanese for Minae therefore means her resistance against English as the medium of assimilation and its dominance that suppresses the Other.

Now I might bring this back Bhabha and his idea of mimicry. Education for immigrants children, as Minae once experienced, is a vivid example of this strategy of colonial cultural politics Mr. Keith's fascination with the Japaneseness translated into English and his passion in promoting English as those children's first language clearly signifies the desire to produce a "recognizable Other", or an Other that is "almost the same but not quite". Following this logic, learning English would create a distance between the immigrant children and their original local culture, yet it never means any opportunity to become the same as the "authentic" – Anglophone/white – Americans. Throughout this educational system, the immigrant children are told that "to be different from those that are different makes you the same", to borrow Bhabha's phrase (1986, xvi). This is only an illusion, as both Fanon's and Bhabha's analysis have already revealed. Instead, those children will find themselves becoming

alienated, or a“triple person” in Fanon’s sense. Probably, Mizumura’s rejection of the English language and assimilation through education is thus also a rejection of this fate of alienation.

More about Language

I have brought it far from the issue of language, to that of assimilation and mimicry, and of the racist social structure. Now let me get back to the most fascinating part of the issue of language in Mizumura’s *An I-Novel*: its bilingualism. If Minae, and Mizumura as well, hates English, then why would she include it in her novel?

As a novel written in Japanese, its direct presence of English and its unconventional form seem to cause trouble for Japanese readers. Influential Japanese critics, including Akiyama Shun, Karatani Kojin and Takahashi Hideo, were quite negative about the style of this novel (see Iida 2017, 8). Iida Yuko however interprets the “unreadability” of this novel, created by its bilingualism, as intentional. The first reason Iida (9) gives is Mizumura’s demand for a kind untranslatability. According to Mizumura, the “only language in to which it would be impossible to translate the work would be English”, because an English translation cannot “replicate its bilingual form” (cited in Iida, 9). And more importantly, it is impossible to replicate the reading experience of the readers whose mother tongue is not English. Iida further explains that in resisting English translation, Muzumura wants to highlight the “asymmetrical relationship” between Japanese as a local/national language and English as a universal language. Her intentional choice to cause trouble for Anglophone readers in turn stresses her insistence on national language and national literature, as she expresses in *The Fall of Language*.

The second explanation Iida offers is that the resistance to readability is concerned with the identities of the narrator, Minae, and her sister, Nanae. As I have mentioned before, Minae and Nanae find it impossible to become a “true” American. Nonetheless, although Japanese-Americans would sometimes develop empathy with other Asian-Americans and black Americans, Minae, as well as Nanae, refuses to be “lumped in” with those people – I will elaborate on this issue later. Nor is she a “true” Japanese, for she has spent so long in America since she was young. As Iida (11)

argues, the unreadability of this text is bound up with Mizumura's negation to identification, or categorization: "Unable to identify with anything where she lives, she extends no sympathy and expects none, and her text, accordingly, rejects readability". When sympathies from both the Japanese and the American side are rejected, Mizumura however shows an "intense desire to create her own listeners", for that a novel always requires a reader (Iida, 12).

Given that Iida's theoretical approach is based on the assumption of the plurality of audience/listeners and communication as the site for negotiation, we can then understand that a reader of Mizumura's novel is a product of negotiation through her strategies of representation, instead of a pre-designated addressee. Again I mention Bhabha here: Mizumura's novel is searching for its audience in the Third Space where there is no fixity but negotiation. On the one hand, in such space there are "the unequal and uneven forces of cultural representation involved in the contest for political and social authority" (1994, 171) – the hegemony of the English language and American culture might be the examples in Minae's, and also Mizumura's, case. Yet on the other, negotiation in such space also frees people from the constraints of the idea of binary, or cultural antagonism – as Mizumura's writing seems to present. This therefore allows Mizumura to find an ideal reader who is able to make sense of this in-between situation and listen to her story and who is not constrained by identity, language, or other boundaries.

Meanwhile, Takushi Odagiri offers another dialectical view on the linguistic hybridity in the novel in question, from the perspective of subcultural literary critique. Odagiri first traces the development of the concept "subculture-literature" in literary critics Eto Jun and Otsuka Eji's thoughts. For Eto, a subcultural literary work always reflects the culture of a sub-group in a given society yet with little "conscious reflection on an 'entire culture'" (Odagiri 2013, 235). However, since every literary work is a representation of a particular perspective from a particular culture, the "totality" of the "entire culture" is thus "nothing but 'fictitious'". What Otsuka sees in Eto's criticism is that the concept of "subculture" itself reflects the absence of and yet a desire for totality, that a subculture has to "define itself as a difference from some cultural-totality it conceives as universal and yet necessarily fictitious" (Odagiri, 236). However, Mizumura's totality is a doubled one. Firstly, there is the "totality' of "modern Japanese literature", which is merely a "retrospective reconstruction in itself" that started to take its shape after Mizumura moved to New York. Secondly, there is

English as the universal language, which is also a "fictitious" totality. Following this logic, "the textual hybridity of this novel [*An I-Novel*] represents both her desire for and her resistance to the transcendentality of English as the universal language in the present world" (Odagiri, 239).

Both Iida and Odagiri place an emphasis on the form of *shishosetsu*, in order to reveal Mizumura's central motivation to pick up bilingual writing, through examining her obsession with "modern Japanese literature". Nonetheless, I would suggest that the form, or literary genre, of *shishosetsu* is pointing to something external, rather than internal, that contributes to Mizumura's ambivalence to English and leads to her choice of bilingualism. As Suzuki Tomi defines, the *shishosetsu* is a "mode of reading" that assumes the I-novel as a kind of direct expression of the author's self through "transparent language" (cited in Iida, 11). As a result, the reader usually "reads the real-life author into the text" and brings in "extra-textual information" to fill up the meaning of the novel (Iida, 11-2). Edward Fowler (1988, xxv) also supports this idea of the reader's active encoding of the text, for that the Japanese writer – of *shishosetsu* – is conscious about the "strong tradition of audience participation in the reading" as presented in, for example, pre-modern Japanese literary traditions of classical poetry and drama. The reader would therefore recognize the authorial persona in any story despite of the situation it presents. More importantly, this is also how Mizumura, the author, defines *shishosetsu*:

> **A *shishosetsu* is a work that, regardless of whether the author is actually writing about her life, and regardless of whether it is ultimately a work of fiction, has been conceived in the expectation that the reader will—in some way or other— read the author herself into the work. (Cited in Iida, 12)**

In other words, it is legitimate for the reader to bring in extra information about the author when interpreting a work of *shishosetsu*, or, to understand the world presented in the world in accordance to the actual experience of the author. That is to say, it is even necessary to take into consideration of the external surroundings that formulate the situation where the author is set in. Therefore, in order to explain Minae's – and of course Mizumura's – ambivalence towards language, I will have a look at the socio-historical context in which Mizumura was situated, starting from her childhood.

The American Dream and Postwar Japan

Minae's rejection of the English and America as a whole might be the most impressive part in the novel. However, it should also be noticed that Minae was not born with such hatred or negation. Before arriving in New York, the young Japanese girl Minae also had an "American dream". In the 1950s, the Mizumuras were a family obsessed with America. For young Minae, "the sound of the word *amerika* ['America'] has a magic similar to that of *okashi no ie* ['desert shop']" (Mizumura 2009, 52). In her view, having the chance to go to America was a *kiseki*, or miracle, and it was a miracle beyond her comprehension (Mizumura 2009, 53). The world of the West was so attractive that she even imagined having an American or French father so that she could be born with that blood (Mizumura 2009, 441). The a few months before departing from Japan was the period when Minae's heart was most close to America. At that time, America was her fascination, her desire, her fantasy, and her dream.

Nonetheless, twenty years later, Minae can no longer recall what was in her dream of America. She questions again and again, "What kind of dream of America I saw exactly at that time?" Sometimes she is even uncertain about whether that was a dream of America: "Indeed, at that time what did I see in my dream?" (Mizumura 2009, 53-4) How does Minae then come to forget about her American dream? There are two likely reasons. First, it was not her own dream; as she suggests, it was her family's dream. Second, the foam of her dream evaporated soon after she arrived, because the reality in America is drastically different from what she once imagined.

Let us first have a look at the American dream of Minae's parents. What attracted them first was the richness of material life in America. In Minae's words, "America at that time was still enjoying the remnants that the age of overwhelming wealth had left, so that every guest passing by could taste a little bit of the American dream" (Mizumura 2009, 57). For this reason, as Minae believes, her parents has chosen to stay. Minae recalls the image of her mother standing on the terrace of Lincoln Center, holding a glass of champagne, wearing a coat that she would never imagine that she could afford back in Japan. That was Minae's memory about going to watch ballet performance with her mother. Given that Mizumura moved to New York in 1963, it could be speculated that Minae's memory of her mother's material

life took place in the early and mid 1960s. There was of course a drastic contrast between the situation in Japan and that in the U.S.. At that time, Japan was still recovering from the aftermath of the war, and was in an underdeveloped state. For a Japanese family at that time, moving to America was no doubt an effective way to escape from the backward situation and to seek for a better material life.

However, attractiveness of American material life for Minae's parents, especially for her mother, did not necessarily come from the material conditions. It has something to do with culture, as I would argue. It should be noted that Minae's mother spent her youth in the postwar 1940s, during the period of the Allied Occupation, surrounded by the illusions of American popular culture. When she was young, she was always imagining that she could have a romance with an American man: a soldier in the image of Gary Cooper – a Hollywood legend – would fall from an aircraft with parachute, and land behind her house. Then she would rescue this soldier and fall in love with him, which is a typical plot from romantic films. This fantasy however motived Minae's mother to find a job in an American military base after war. "Perhaps because she was dreaming of a crush with a commander like Gary Cooper", Minae makes her speculation (Mizumura 2009, 251). This was likely the impact that American films had left in a Japanese girl's heart.

Minae's mother experience brings up the issue of cultural politics that the American occupation regime promoted in postwar Japan. Politically, this regime's central agenda was the "democratization" of Japan. However, under this banner, there was the invasion of American culture. As E. Taylor Atkins (2017, 186) notes,

> **It was no accident that democratization meant Americanization. Few if any Japanese thought of it otherwise, and Americans were unapologetic about it. Japanese critiques of the occupation as cultural imperialism continue in public discourse today.**

During the period of Occupation, popular culture was a tool in the control of the occupiers. The spreading of American culture involves two aspects. On the one hand, local cultural production was censored and restricted, especially for the film industry (see Atkins, 184-5; Broinowski, 27-31). Elements concerning Japanese traditions militarism, despotism, and even Shintoism, were expelled from the public's sight. When local cultural production was repressed, the space for American culture in Japanese society was also created. On the other hand, the occupiers actively

promoted American values through popular cultural production. For example, sexualization of public entertainment was encouraged for it was believed "crucial to the creation of an open, democratic society" (Atkins, 185). Baseball was also believed to have similar function of democratizing Japanese society, and was therefore promoted. Nonetheless, under the banner of democracy, it was not allowed to criticize the occupation regime. That is to say, the occupiers must be portrayed as the savior who was carrying the mission of democratization in public image. Does this not resemble those "saviors" with the "mission of civilization"?

Remarkably, beside active promotion of American culture and values, there was also what I call spontaneous promotion. The Americans brought military bases to Japan, which had quite some impact on the local society. American soldiers and businesses that served them spread American books, music, visual images, and even language and lifestyle in metropolitan areas where their military bases were located. This spontaneous promotion continued after official end of the Occupation in 1952 – arguably it is still visible today. This is what Murakami Ryu's *Almost Transparent Blue*, a "base-town" novel, all about. In this novel, he describes the chaotic life of a group of Japanese adolescents living around an American military base, filled up with drug abuse, sexual promiscuity, violence, and significantly, images of American popular culture – in the 1960s. As Glynne Walley (1997, 44) notes, Murakami Ryu holds both a simultaneous fascination with and hatred for America. For him, America has already become part of his life due to the environment of the base-town – all he had at that time was American culture. Yet he is fully aware of the fact that America was an "occupying power" in Japan (Walley, 47). As Hillenbrand (117) points out, the base-town for Murakami Ryu symbolizes the threat to Japanese traditions, "the subversion of 'Japaneseness', and the contamination of indigenous cultural space with Hollywood and hamburgers". Or as Sharalyn Orbaugh (2007, 482) notes, the theme of sexual abuse, shame and self-prostitution presented in Murakami Ryu's novel expresses "a sense of continuing humiliation vis-à-vis America's continuing military presence in Japan in the 1960s and beyond".

There is also the other Murakami, who treats American culture differently in his works. In Murakami Haruki's novels, the presence of American popular culture is usually referring to "a fantasy world devoid of geopolitical complications" that is characterized by a sense of remoteness and alienation (Walley, 41-2). While, for Murakami Haruki, American popular culture has already become a part of Japanese

contemporary culture, it still has a duality: “It is everywhere in Japan, and people experience it naturally, with no resistance, but there is still something unreal about it, something of the fantasy world” (Walley, 44). Although Walley (49-50) suggest that the remoteness, rootless, and alienation are in Murakami Haruki’s view symptoms of advanced capitalist society, the point still maintains that in the cases of both Murakami Ryu and Murakami Haruki, the “inundation of Japan by Western, primarily American, popular culture” is one of the crucial themes. That is to say, if we consider the symptoms that Murakami Haruki presents not as the symptoms of individuals, but of the society, then we might understand what hides behind the “naturalization” of American culture.

In bringing the cases of Murakami Ryu and Murakami Haruki, my point is to reveal the socio-cultural environment that gave rise to the Mizumura family’s American dream in postwar Japan. This might first explain the passion of Minae’s mother for American culture and material life, for on the one hand, local Japanese culture was repressed, and on the other, the promotion of American culture and values created a world of fantasy for her. In this sense, this situation resembles the colonial cultural politics through which the culture and values of the colonizer is promoted and the indigenous culture devaluated and cancelled. Despotism, Shintoism, and the spirit of the samurai becomes no longer valuable, and American culture and the spirit of “democracy” it represents becomes the only thing desired. It therefore can be paralleled to the process in Fanon’s narrative in which the Antilles black people turns to the overwhelming European culture when their local system of reference is in danger. Also, this historical background might help to interpret Minae’s blurred American dream. In the two Murakamis’ cases at least, the psyche of ambivalence in Bhabha’s sense can be observed. Familiar yet remote, desired yet hated, these ambivalent feelings would eventually developed into alienation. Hence, Minae’s amnesia of her American dream might be interpreted as a resistance to this alienation, even though arguably she desires the English language for certain reasons as well.

"Minae" as A Postcolonial Response

Earlier, I have mentioned the ambivalent emotions that some Asian-Americans hold towards the Afro-American group, as presented in Mizumura's novel. There are at the same time the sense of belonging and the sense of distance. The sense of belonging, comes from the fact that as the "outsiders", they are treated the same in American society. However, in Minae's case, it is remarkable that the tendency to distance herself from other groups of "outsiders" also results from the fact that they are treated the same.

> **On this planet, there is a thing called the "cultural sphere of Chinese characters". No need to mention China; Japan, too, a member of this cultural sphere, just like nations such as Korea and Vietnam […] Of course, my awareness of a connection with the Chinese is not formed spontaneously. The fact that I eat the same food and use the same script as them – that is, the awareness of cultural similarity with them – before bringing me the sense of connection, only made me feel a kind of unspeakable unease. Plus the cruel fact that it is difficult to distinguish my appearance from theirs, I feel not only uncomfortable, but also unacceptable […] But my sense of connection with them, is merely a forced product of the American society. (Mizumura 2009, 220-1)**

In this quotation, there is a clear ambivalence: Minae acknowledges her connection with of the Sino-sphere, yet this sense connection is not something she desires. It is never the case that Minae, like Fukuzawa Yukichi or Kazuo in *Persona*, discriminates people from other "backward" East Asian nations, so that she feels unease when placed into the same category with them. Her unease has nothing to do with the idea of "backwardness". Rather, the unease, or shock, comes from the experience that Minae and also Nanae, in the Americans' view, are first of all nothing but the "Orientals" (Mizumura 2009, 252-4). In the Americans' view, the Chinese, the Koreans, and the Japanese are all the same; there is no difference between them, and they are all the "Orientals". When arranging a blind date in school, they would assign a Korean boy to Nanae. When a Japanese couple in America decide to adopt a child, the agency would recommend them a Chinese child (Mizumura 2009, 253). Either it is the Americans' arrogance that makes them believe that there is no need to have any in-depth knowledge of what a real Chinese, Korean, or Japanese is like, or they feel no need to differentiate people with different origins. The discourse of Orientalism is

at work. The Americans treat the East Asians according to their arrogant imagination, which is usually full of stereotypes – the Chinese, Koreans, and Japanese, they all use Chinese characters, they all use chopsticks, they all have thin eyes, *etcetera*.

This phenomenon is not only limited to Asian-Americans. In Minae's memory of a speech given by an Afro-American revolutionary group, when talking about the Vietnam War, the speaker expressed their support for the Vietnamese "because those people are colored, too" (Mizumura 2009, 262). This speech could be interpreted as an expression of the sense of the comradeship among the "subaltern". Nonetheless, it is problematic. For Minae, that the Asians and the Africans belong to the same category of the "colored" is something that "only exists in ideas, and it cannot be judge from the physical perspective" (Mizumura 2009, 263) – because there is no similarity in appearance, nor in culture. She further realizes that this is because when entering the modern world, the Westerners call themselves, who are the subject of Western languages as "white", and who are different from them as "colored".

There is no need to recall again Said's explanation in *Orientalism* of the construction of the imagination about the Self and the Other. What I would like to point out that Minae gradually becomes aware of this problematic structure of idea, and more importantly, her rejection to being considered and treated the same as other outsiders in America is a resistance to the Americans' arrogant knowledge, discourse, or imagination, about the Other.

There are of course other aspects in Mizumura's *I-Novel* that worthy of attention, including the ambivalence of the third and fourth generation of Asian immigrants and the consequences of racism, which touch upon the central themes of the colonial desire, the sense of inferiority, the racist social structure, and the like. However, I will not elaborate on these issues here for first, if I do so, my analysis of Mizumura would become a mere repetition of the previous chapters, and second, my intention is to make Mizumura a relevant yet distinctive case.

To conclude this chapter, my argument is that Minae in *An I-Novel* – and Mizumura the author as well – is not the same as the Fanonian colonial subjects that I have presented in Fukuzawa's and Tawada's cases. Rather, set in similar situation – the situation of invisible colonization – Minae is aware of the danger of alienation that has been imposed on her, and is actively searching for ways of resistance, ways to decolonize herself. Minae's story displays a possible solution to regain the identity of the Self in the age of hybridity, and that is to embrace a pre-fixed position, which is

nonetheless imagined. In Fanon's narrative, there was a pre-existing black culture as well as identity before the invasion of the Europeans, and to decolonize for him means to revise the situation of displacement. This is certainly an idea that Bhabha would not agree with, since he argues against the idea of fixity, or any pre-fixed position of culture. Yet, what if the "original place" is an instrumentally imagined one? Minae's story reveals that also inevitable, hybridity is not something that everyone wants, and a sense of fixity, although fictional, might be more helpful for one's ontological security. Her obsession with a "pre-fixed" Japanese identity and the Japanese language as the only medium to confirm this identity proves that the reconstruction of cultural memory – Minae's imagination of Japanese culture from modern Japanese literature for example – is effective in preserving her sense of ontological security, and also in resisting the system of reference imposed by a stronger power. In other words, this imagined fixity frees Minae from both the imposed image of the "Orientals" and the desire for a "white mask".

Conclusion

By far I have examined the presence of (post)colonial alienation in contemporary Japanese literature as well as the logic of its formation and its possible consequences, based on interpretations of Frantz Fanon's narrative in *Black Skin, White Masks*. In his analysis, Fanon defined alienation as displacement. In a seemingly decolonized society, Europeans have constructed a discourse of the "black identity" and imposed it on the black population – the former colonial subjects and their descendants – which would be devaluated. Finding their imposed identity unwanted, the black people therefore turned to the white recognition – the "authentic" Europeans – to figure out who they were. In other words, the black people were separated from the Self, and went on an impossible journey to the Other. This is what Fanon meant to be displaced: a displaced, and thus alienated, person is a triple person existing here, there, and in-between.

Explored from different theoretical perspectives – Marxism, psychoanalysis, and Homi Bhabha's poststructuralist postcolonial thinking – the overarching theme of alienation in this context covers a range of issues, including the inferiority complex of the former colonial subjects and their descendants, their ambivalence to the former colonizers, and the loss of their ontological "home" and identity, and so on. What has contributed to this situation is as Fanon pointed out, the racist social structure.

In analyzing these issues displayed or reflected in the texts of three modern and contemporary Japanese authors, Fukuzawa Yukichi, Tawada Yōko and Mizumura Minae, I argue that the psyche of (post)colonial alienation has been troubling Japan – or at least a visible part of the Japanese population, to avoid overgeneralization – since its encounter with Western colonial powers in the mid 19th century.

First of all, throughout chronological line from Fukuzawa to Tawada and Mizumura, we can observe that for Japan the context of repression has come into being for more than one and a half century, manipulated by the West. In Fukuzawa's case, Japan in the second half of 19th century was faced with direct threats of violence from Western colonial powers in Asia. Moreover, the Western powers excluded the populations who did not share the same political and economic forms from the international order they had established. The excluded populations, including the Japanese, were considered as a foreign body and not worth preserving. Also, in

Fukuzawa's era, the Eurocentric discourse and knowledge of the "Orient" – the Other – was already developed, in which "Asia" was portrayed as "backward" or even "uncivilized", in relation to European "civilization". This set of idea was reinforced by the West's colonial activities in Asia, and reproduced in Japan through the translation of reformist intellectuals such as Fukuzawa. Therefore, as Maruyama Masao has noted – again – Japan was forced into the project of "modernization" by such international social structure, and Fukuzawa's argument of "leaving Asia" and "entering Europe" was a response to this situation. In Tawada's case, the threats in material term that Fukuzawa once faced no longer exist. However, the Eurocentric discourse and knowledge of racist nature is still rooted in European society. The Noh mask in Tawada's *Persona* is a concentrated representation of such Orientalist imaginary. Additionally, the case of the character Kazuo in this novel might suggest that the psyche of Fukuzawa's generation, the desire to surpass the West and leave Asia, is passed on. Mizumura's novel portrays another picture of racist social structure in contemporary West. On the one hand, Mizumura places an emphasis on the hegemony of the English language and the American educational system for immigrant children, resembling the strategy of colonial cultural politics exposed in Fanon's and Bhabha's analysis. On the other, there is the cliché of the fact that the colored people are economically and socially excluded in the U.S. – an issue I have mentioned but not brought into details.[31]

On the surface, there seems to be a one-century gap between the case of Fukuzawa and the case of Tawada and Mizumura, and the chronological continuity might be questioned. However, there are two historical junctions that might bridge this gap. The first is Japan's imperialist expansion from late 19th century to the end of WWII, which, as I have discussed, is related to the desire to become (like) the West. The second is the Allied Occupation and its aftermath in postwar Japan, which is of repressive nature at least in terms of culture and ideology. These two junctions connect Fukuzawa's era with postwar Japan, the era when Tawada and Mizumura's generation were born and raised, providing historical continuity for the context (of repression).

Some common symptoms of (post)colonial alienation are presented in the texts of the three authors in question. There is first the sense of inferiority, a necessary

[31] For detailed depictions of the racist social structure in the U.S., see for example Mizumura 2009, 254-61.

psychological effect of racism as Fanon taught us. This is most apparent in the two male cases, namely, the author Fukuzawa and the fictional character Kazuo, for their tendency of overcompensation – their desire for superiority. Accompanying the inferiority complex is the desire for recognition from the West. In Fanon's revision of Hegel's master-slave dialectic, the "slave" turns to the "master" for recognition to ensure its existence and ontological security. In this sense, Fukuzawa's insistence to imitate the West and Kazuo's desire for acknowledgement in the academic field of medieval European literature are not so different from the black people's desire to become white: their own value being denied, they have to turn to the "master" for recognition. The choice of Michiko, the heroine in Tawada's novel, to put on the fake Noh mask made in Spain – a stereotypical image – as well implies her desire to be recognized, by fulfilling the Eurocentric imaginary of "Japaneseness".

More of the symptoms of (post)colonial alienation are examined in this thesis, and I will not go exhaustive here. What I would like to point out is that each of the authors and characters represents a strategy or pattern of identification in the state of displacement, the ultimate symptom of alienation. In the case of Fukuzawa and Kazuo, they abandon the East and turn to the West, which fits into the Fanonian model the best. They distance themselves from other Asian nations because they believe that "Asia", except for Japan, is "backward" – an idea derived from Eurocentric narrative – and deny the identity as an "East Asian", or as an "Oriental" in Mizumura's word. The East Asian cultural sphere as a crucial source for Japan's cultural tradition is then denied. Neither East Asian nor European, the Japanese identity in the case of Fukuzawa and Kazuo becomes awkward, and as Fanon revealed, this path is a dead one. In Michiko's case, she turns to the wrong reference to Japaneseness, to the European artifact of the "Japanese soul". Mizumura's case is however quite different. Having experienced symptoms of alienation, Mizumura – and Minae of course – chooses to identify with neither the West nor the image of the East/Japan articulated by the West. Instead, she returns to the "Japan" in her own imagination through constructing the national cultural memory of modern Japan from literary texts, and at the same time mobilizes the borrowed medium of the English language to underpin her indelible experience in the West. This is a strategy that Bhabha might support, for it does not seek for any pre-fixed position, and more importantly, it is precisely this unique hybridity that helps resist the overwhelming power of the West's cultural politics. The development of the strategy of identification can be outlined when

connecting the texts of Fukuzawa, Tawada and Mizumura together. Arguably, Mizumura (Minae) marks a breaking from the state of the Fanonian "slave" presented in the other authors texts.

My intention in presenting this thesis is to introduce Japan to the field of postcolonial studies as a possible colonial subject. In the major body of scholarly discussion, the default position for Japan is a former colonial power in Asia, and the focus is placed on the postcolonial response of its former colonies, such as Taiwan, Korea and China, to Japanese imperialism.[32] On the other hand, however, there are also scholarly discussions that focus on Japan as the repressed, especially during the period of Occupation.[33] Recently, postcolonial thinking in contemporary Japanese literature as well starts to grasp attention.[34] The image of Japan in postcolonial studies thus becomes complicated. It is even more necessary to provide an all-round view on Japan, to present the narrative from different angles. Therefore, a look into modern Japanese history from the perspective of literature with explicitly a postcolonial approach would add a crucial piece to the puzzle.

My analysis presented in this thesis, at least as I believe, has illustrated that examining Japan and Japanese literature from the perspective as such is a plausible project, in terms of both the phenomenon and the context. It has also proved that Fanon's theoretical narrative derived from the experience of the French black population is applicable to the case of Japan. Fanon's universalist humanism should be appreciated, but the pervasiveness of the (post)colonial cultural – and psychological as well – aftermath in the contemporary world must be noticed. This aftermath does not necessarily require the subject to have the history of being colonized in strict definition. The problem is that the West considers all the non-West part as inferior Other that can be treated in a racist manner, as I have noted in the discussion of Mizumura's novel. We might turn again to Said for an explanation, but we have to be aware of the complexity of reality. This complexity is not only about Japan's imperialist history or the Occupation, but also about its "economic miracle" in postwar period and the power shift in contemporary global order. As Fanon insisted,

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[32] See for example, Nayoung Aimee Kwon 2010; Leo Ching 2000 and 2019. These scholarly texts examine the cultural and ideological aftermath that Japan's imperialist history has left in East Asia and the former colonial subjects' responses and reflections to it.

[33] Orbaugh 2007 and Broinowski 2016, two texts I have cited in previous chapters, are examples of scholarly examination of culture in Japan during and after the Occupation.

[34] For example, Emanuela Costa 2013, again.

the superstructure of (post)colonial cultural politics requires its base. Therefore, the complexity of contemporary Japan's reality still needs very careful examination.

In the end, I hope my research would contribute a little bit to the following issues in academic debates. Firstly, it might be helpful in clarifying Japan's relation with colonial modernity, to figure out the role of colonialism in modern Japanese history – for example, to make sense of the phenomenon that Yoshioka Hiroshi identifies as "self-colonization" in Japan. Second, it might offer some hints for the intellectual movement of decolonization across East Asia, to inquire into the "duality" of the colonial modernity that other East Asian nations have being experiencing – the West as the imaginary source of colonization and Japan as the colonial practitioner. Next, I hope to contribute to scholarly examinations of transcultural writings and contemporary Japanese literature in the age of hybridity – Ian Hideo Levy and Kazuo Ishiguro are two well-known examples. Finally, I hope to add some information to the broader field of contemporary Japanese culture, in terms of the issue of hybridity – a phenomenon that the two Murakamis have exposed that cannot be ignored.

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