

Sensory Travels through Global Literature

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Above are some of the gourmet meals I prepare during weekends this semester. When I was standing in the kitchen, sometimes I could not stop thinking about the books I had been reading. I might get upset if the protagonist was experiencing upheavals at a turning point. I might hold a book in one hand and a spatula in another when I had to prepare the food and at the same time, eagerly waiting to know the next

surprise in the book. My heart tightened, my hands shivered, my tears dropped but I was completely drawn to reading. As my understanding of the world I have never experienced deepened, my dishes on the table became diversified and I also started to create new courses on the table. It is tedious to serve the same dishes every day since I cannot step in the same river twice. Different from cooking, I would read every book at least two or three times. One of the reasons is that I do not think I have fully comprehend the meaning if I read it only once. The second reason is that the last page of the book frequently upset me for I do not want to leave the world that I have been created in my mind. I would carefully go back to certain pages and allow myself to soak into the specific lines. A third reason is because I need to write the analysis essays which surely require me to look for evidence and details in the books. I feel very thankful that I have the opportunity to join the course and I appreciate all the efforts my professor has been done, to help me correct my grammars, to give me encouragement, to praise my understanding.

The characteristics of females

In quite a few books, I read about love stories that inspire me to think about feminism and cross culture perspectives of womanhood.

Rachel: (Analysis book 1)

In Crazy Rich Asians, we see a young girl Rachel who bravely fights against the battle to win her love. As a modern and educated woman, she has the ability to make decisions and she can follow her hearts to chase Mr Kwan. She is probably the only woman who takes actions in guarding against her love and being successful in her life. Very interesting, her problems in love is not with Mr. Kwan but his mum. It is quite common nowadays in Asia especially in China that girls are having conflicts with mother-in laws and it is a historical problem. Traditionally, a girl needs to take care of her mother-in-law and obeys everything she orders. If not, the girl will be considered as someone who is stubborn and receives very bad reputation. She will also be criticize by neighbors. However, when woman has higher social stand, a girl can become bread-owner of the family and her role is not restricted to household chores. We can see women become powerful in household and sometimes they have been nicknamed “tiger mothers” in families nowadays.

Sister Mary: (Analysis book 2)

Different from Rachel, Sister Mary is afraid of asking Thomas to reveal their relationship publicly. She is timid and nervous, remaining as a shadow of Thomas. If she had asked Thomas to admit their love in hospital, she might have lived and received treatment much earlier. A pregnant nun shall not submit to feel guilty because love should redeem her guilt. Mary is submissive to Stone, compare to Hema, who chooses to adopt the twins, and marries Josh, another doctor; Mary is an irresponsible mother. Love makes people weak and submissive but love shall also make people strong and powerful. I think one should know how to love herself before she understands how to love others.

Genet: (Analysis book 2)

Genet is another interesting figure as she is loved by Marion but makes love with Shiva. Born without a proper father, Genet is not educated. She does not possess proper knowledge of relationship or responsibility or moral insight. While Marion hopes to have sex with her after they get married, she breaks his dream by sleeping with Shiva, enjoying her first taste of sex. Not feeling guilty about the betrayal, she suffers from the genital mutilation but she still acts on her first impulses. She is pictured as a problem creator in Marion’s life and they are not happily being together in the end. A woman who comes from lower social status and not well-educated is not fully qualified to understand the world around her, even though she hopes to lead her life as she wishes.

Daisy Buchanan: (Analysis book 3)

Daisy Buchanan in The Great Gatsby, finally reveals her true personality when we read about Gatsby’s unexpected death. Shallow, selfish and money-orientated, Daisy is beautiful and young. In the aura of beauty and aristocracy, she is the perfection of Gatsby’s dream. From the book, as far as I am concerned, Gatsby is in deep love with her but she only loves the wealth Gatsby owns. She perfectly enjoys being weak and inferior to men and she firmly believes that it is what woman shall look like. As she hopes her daughter to be beautiful and in the end finds a rich man to marry. Short sighted and indifferent, she is an ideal representation of girls who hope to become wealthy without gaining their own knowledge basis. There are some girls who never want to find a job but a man who is powerful and wealthy. My neighbor is a piano teacher who is a mistress of a tycoon from Taiwan, married man. When she had a son, the man bought her an expensive apartment and she moved away.

It is not a unique case but quite prevalent in Shanghai and Shenzhen. In metropolitan cities, people are under great working pressure and they need to continue their studies privately in order to fit in the jobs they are pursuing. Some girls are not willing to work for it seems much easier for them to look for a wealthy man who can take care of them than to compete with others in jobs for a living. They do not care about marriage or love but a short-term enjoyable life. They are short-sighted and very often, they cannot escape from their fates of being dumped by the men. Worse, the men might have more than one or two mistresses and continues to have more, leaving the old ones behind.

Maud: (Analysis poems 4)

Maud is a beautiful actress who is in her best time. She can hardly think of a time when she is faded in the crowds. Her proud is hurt when reading the last stanza since it may not be true. Yeats is overly optimistic on himself, leaving Maud with warning rather than unconditional love. It is probably why Maud does not accept his love. Compare to figures I read in books such as *The Patience Stone*, the female protagonist is obedient and obeys her husband, Maud is audacious to refuse love from Yeats, a well-known poet. Maud follows her heart, not being suppressed by social rules or masculine power.

The Patience Stone woman: (Analysis book 5)

The plight of the woman, taking care of her dying husband on mattress, intertwined with love and hatred. Rahimi portrays the female protagonist, faceless and nameless, succinctly evoking in suffocation. She changed from an obedient housewife who paid all her attention and sincerely prayed for the recovery of her husband to an audacious woman who did not fear of presenting her tormented inner life to her husband. At the first few days, she is such a weak character praying all the time and cleaning him when necessary. Without support and help, she also needs to worry about two children. The only one she can rely on is her aunty, who doesn't live nearby. She hopes to see him recover but ironically, she confesses to him all her past thinkings and experiences, which finally enrage him. I believe she does not confess to wake him up but to release her own tension from caring the living-dead husband. Her nuanced and savage call stimulate the grievances of thousands and hundreds of women.

Egypt Doctor: (Analysis book 6)

She fought against her mother to win her independence and then divorced the man who tried to dominant her by restricting her from going back to her practice as a doctor. Through chronological description, the narrator presents to us how girls are maltreated and are placed social expectations before them. She was self-hatred and ashamed when she was a little girl. Gradually, she determined to study science and became a doctor who can look straight into naked bodies and provided sick people with treatments and advices. As her social stands risen, she gained her self-confidence. She transforms from the little girl who was timid and rebellious to a woman who is dedicative and caring. However, in order to fulfill her dream of finding a proper companion, she marries a wrong man and audaciously, she persuades herself to end the relationship. Her extraordinary journey ended with a loving man who truly appreciated her beauty in mind.

I also read the book *God Dies by the Nile* but I did not write a complete analysis essay on that.

Girls by the Nile:

In *God Dies by the Nile*, the whole family suffer because girls are pretty and they do not have visions of their lives. They only read about *The Koran* and mistakenly believe in "God" who may take them to a bright future. When the mayor has his eyes on the girls, he takes them as his maids and rapes

them. The girls suffocate in the house but they do not find a proper way to fight against maltreatment. One girl disappeared, probably murdered by the mayor, while another lost her way in big city. Education plays an important role in liberating women. In third world countries, women are like animals in men's perspectives. Men enjoy having sex with women and sometimes they are irresponsible enough to leave their children totally behind. However, women will suffer from rape, taking care of babies and households drudgeries. They do not have any social positions and remain at the very bottom of social class.

Detailed Analysis of the books mentioned above:

Crazy Rich Asians (Analysis book 1)

[1] The blue jay zipped into the living room at top speed, heading straight for the massive painting of brightly colored dots against the far wall, where it began pecking mercilessly at one of the bright yellow dots. "Oh my God, the Damien Hirst! It's been attracted to those bright dots all along!" Nick cried in amazement. ... "Here's this tiny bird that's been trying to get through a huge bulletproof glass wall. ... You tell me it's been here every day pecking away persistently for ten minutes. Well, today the glass wall came down."

Symbolism. Does the blue jay really hate the Damien Hirst painting that much? Of course not. But the blue jay here represents perseverance that Nick should possess in order to restore Rachel's love. Furthermore, Nick should be the blue jay who keeps tapping the glass wall that stands in the way of his prey: the Damien Hirst painting. In other words, Nick should sacrifice himself for everything related to Rachel's happiness. Rachel dumped Nick because she felt bonded by Nick's family and his family's cultures, so Nick needed to help her get out of the cage by bringing Rachel's mother to Singapore to give Rachel the comfort she needed.

[2] "Well, Sylvia's a good friend, and she was always trying to set me up. She just thought Nick was cute and a total catch ..." Rachel began, instantly regretting her choice of words.

Metaphor. This is the conversation at a bachelorette party throughout which Rachel was questioned how she met up Nick and other relationship-related issues. Rachel referred Nick to a total catch just out of humor. But picky women like Francesca Shaw smelt the wrong words, and was triggered to nail Rachel down later in the book.

[3] "Where did you take her?" Eleanor looked at her son dubiously. "You're practically a tourist yourself – you don't know all the secret holes-in-the-wall like I do."

Satire. Eleanor was unhappy with both Nick being together with Rachel and his son's long departure of home. She questioned her son's ability to show visitors around since he has been away for too long which means he should not be that familiar with his mother country.

[4] Her bag was filled with a large fish that had been badly mutilated, blood seeping out from its gills. Violently scrawled on the vanity mirror above the chair in fish blood were the words "CATCH THIS, YOU GOLD-DIGGING CUNT!"

Imagery. This was a note left by Francesca Shaw on Rachel's mirror. Rachel then found a dead fish in her bag left in her small house. The dead fish here represents Rachel's inhospitality to the local upper crust in Singapore. This was the first warning received after Rachel erroneously referred Nick to a "total catch" at a bachelorette party. Such humiliation aimed at reminding Rachel to stay away from Nick. Also, Rachel was referred to as a gold digger cunt which were some upper classes' coarse words that undermine the Asian cultures.

[5] "Of course I was. We all had such a glorious time, didn't we, Rachel? Such a beautiful island, and wasn't the food marvelous? I heard you particularly enjoyed the fish course."

Imagery. This situation occurred when Rachel had a reunion party with Nick's family. The dead fish represents Rachel's inhospitality within Singapore's upper crust. Eleanor constantly referred to fish when talking to Rachel was to warn her to leave Nick since she was not welcomed by the elite families in Singapore.

[6] "You know, it's considered to be very auspicious to witness tan huas blooming in the night ... It's a once-in-a-lifetime event for most people, so I'd say you're very lucky to be here tonight."

Symbolism. This is the conversation between Rachel and her college friend, Shang Su Yi. Tan huas are such precious flowers that only bloom once in their lives. For a little background, Shang Su Yi was also born and raised in a rich family. For Rachel who was of low social status, it was really honored to come by a friend from a rich family and saw those precious flowers blooming. The blooming of tan huas were so temporary that represented the temporary happiness between Nick and Rachel, and foreshadowed the forthcoming cruel treatment by Eleanor and other elites.

[7] Suddenly the rabbit-like figure on the moon reminded her of Nick, a little boy stuck up there in that glittering palace all by himself.

Metaphor. Just a little background here: in Chinese folklore, Moon goddess Chang'e was always accompanied by a rabbit while living on the moon. When Rachel looked at the moon, she thought of Nick who was bonded by his mother and destined to a path that he could not choose for himself. When she thought of their relationship, she envisioned herself as an outsider of his world of glamour and money. So definitely the rabbit here represents Nick.

[8] Rachel peered up at the moon, and this time, the rabbit boy didn't look so alone anymore

Metaphor. When Rachel talked to Sophie Khoo and looked at the moon, she soon realized Nick's situation of trying to fit into his family and upper crust was not an exceptional case. Here she realized more that Nick was not the only one who was stuck in the rich family and lost all his right to choose his own preferred lifestyle and destiny. The rabbit boy represents Nick himself.

[9] "Apparently not as well as you know how to gut a fish," Rachel commented.

Simile. This is the conversation at Eleanor's dinner after the rich girls, Francesca Shaw and Rachel, went for swimming. After Francesca put the bloody dead fish in Rachel's bag, Rachel soon realized that Francesca wasn't really her friend. She pretended to be her friend to warn her off Nick. So Rachel attacked back at Francesca to tell her that she was aware of what she did to her by referring Rachel herself to the dead fish.

[10] "Oh, yes, we did. One of the girls even caught a bigger, endangered fish. We tried to convince her to put it back in the water, but she wouldn't, and it ended up biting her very hard. There was blood squirting all over the place," Francesca said. ... "When you're just a tourist, you need to learn to respect the environment you're in."

Simile. Francesco briefly talked about what happened on the day out with those rich girls. She referred Rachel to the dead fish in order to make her step off from Nick. Through the descriptions, we could see that the words and behaviors of these elites are so coarse that mismatched Rachel's westernized cultures and values.

Summary and Analysis

The book author, Kevin Kwan, was born and raised in a wealthy family in Singapore. He sets the plot up in his mother country Singapore. Nick, born in a mysterious, wealthy Singapore family, fell in love with his America-born Asian girlfriend Rachel, an economics professor at NYU. Rachel never got to know about Nick's real background except his position as a history professor at NYU during their two-year date. When they arrived in Singapore and attended Nick's cousin's wedding, Rachel met Nick's mother Eleanor who judged Rachel as a gold digger, and a totally westernized woman who knew nothing about Asian cultures and families. Though they loved each other, they were gapped by their mother and their different cultures and values. Eleanor used all means to separate them and they had even broken up. However, when Rachel finally decided to leave the country, she invited Eleanor to play Mahjong, and threw away her winning piece to Eleanor to tell her that she would sacrifice her happiness for Nick's. Consequently, Rachel gained Eleanor's respect by showing her understanding of her family and her integrity.

At the beginning of the book, the author criticizes the upper social circle for its extravagance, snobbishness, and overemphasis with social status and richness by delineating the wedding scene in which Rachel found herself uncomfortable with. In the final ending, where sets in Rachel and Nick's engagement party held by Eleanor, the author levies more on westernized values, particularly integrity, self-confidence, independence, and insistence on one's passions.

The book author whose name is Kevin Kwan, was born and raised in a wealthy family in Singapore. He sets the plot up in his mother country Singapore and the protagonist Nick, is also born in a mysterious, wealthy Singapore family, falling in love with America-born Asian girl Rachel, an economics professor at NYU. Rachel never got to know about Nick's background except his position as a history professor at NYU during their two-year date. When they arrived in Singapore and attended Nick's cousin's wedding, Rachel met Nick's mother Eleanor who judged Rachel as a gold digger after Nick, and a totally westernized woman who knew nothing about Asian cultures and families. Though they loved each other, they were gapped by Eleanor and their different understandings in cultures and values. Eleanor used all means to separate them and they broke up. However, when Rachel finally decided to leave the country, she invited Eleanor to play Mahjong, and threw away her winning piece to Eleanor to tell her that she would sacrifice her happiness for Nick's. Consequently, Rachel gained Eleanor's respect by showing her understanding of family and her integrity.

The author at the beginning of the book criticizes the upper social circle for its extravagance, snobbishness, and overemphasis with social status and richness by delineating the wedding scene in which Rachel found herself uncomfortable with. Compared with the descriptions in *The Great Gatsby*, people totally enjoy themselves in Gatsby's great mansion. They came from all over the world, interestingly, they did not know each other before hand. At the parties Gatsby held every night, guests are never feeling uncomfortable. Daisy, who is attracted to come for a visit, establishing her recognition nearly immediately. Because of the extravagance Gatsby intentionally presents, Daisy falls in love with Gatsby again, ignoring her own marriage. Compare to Rachel, Daisy looks pathetic and worldly. Holding nothing in hand apart from beauty, she doesn't live with security. Lack of education leaves her short-sighted and immoral. Rachel, on the other hand, a professor at NYU, fully understands what she needs and loves in her life. She is by no means tempted by the wealth of the family Nick comes from. A liberal lady who holds her future firmly in hand, has the right to choose her life.

Rachel reminds me of Sister Mary in *Cutting For Stone*. An educated woman Sister Mary is, gives up her life to love Doctor Thomas. Not being appreciated in the relationship, she needs to remind under-tabled and finally loses her life at the operation desk when giving birth to her twins. Rachel, wisely applied her intelligence, dealing with the complicated relationships between her and her future mother in law, won her happiness in the end. She also reminds me of Maud Gonne, an actress but wise lady. She does not lose herself when Yeats, the great poet openly presents his love to her. She is not moved

by the temptation of love and she refuses to be Yeats's lover. If not a strong willed woman, she might not be clear minded enough to see her own needs and become submissive to a man under social pressure and personal insecurity feelings.

Crazy Rich Asians also reminds me of *The Lover* written by Marguerite Duras. The little girl who is nameless in the whole plot symbolize numerous girls who do not leave their traces in history. She attracts a wealthy Chinese business man, whose family strongly despises her upbringing and western style. It is very pathetic that the man restricts himself from loving her and she cannot grasp his subtleties until very late.

With the final ending of Rachel and Nick's engagement party held by Eleanor herself, the author levies more on Westernized values, particularly integrity, self-confidence, independence, and insistence on one's passions. I think it is culturally different that western families tend to emphasize personal growth and freedom while eastern families prefer "big family" theories. When women gain high social positions, their position in families grow. Additionally, in metropolitan cities such as Shanghai and Beijing, every family can only afford limited room space. Hence, the family size will have to break down or oppositely, more people will be crowded in one very small place. Living in very narrow places, the problems within each household get more sophisticated.

Cutting For Stone (Analysis book 2)

[1] She had loved him, but following his cue—always following his cue—she'd said nothing. Repetition: "following his cue" has been repeated twice to emphasize the love from Mary to Stone is kind of submissive. She has been there for him but there is no clear responses from Stone as if Stone has taken her love for granted. Their relationship is under the table.

[2] But how was she to push away not just her qualms but her confusion? Rhetorical question: She sinks into her own sin because as a nun, she is pregnant. She sees it as "a mortal sin."

[3] "Dr. Stone. You're patient," she said to the man who everyone believed to be my father, putting in his hands not only the life of a woman that he chose to love, but our two lives — mine and my brother's — which he chose to hate. Comparison and Contrast. "Love" is compared to "Hate" here as the conflicting emotions are co-existing on Dr. Stone. It is ambivalent to love a woman without loving the children she bears for him.

[4] Hema spotted the curve in his shin— like bending a green stick, the bone too young to snap clean. Simile. It is the first time Hema held the boy. She feels the weakness of him: the shin looks like a bending green stick. As soon as she gets hold of the boy, she required the parents to leave the boy to her by saying "trust me, I'm a doctor." It is believed that nothing is more important than handing the boy to someone who is a professional doctor.

[5] Surgery is surgery is surgery. Repetition. "Surgery" has been repeated three times in this very short sentence to emphasize what Stone expresses. He does not want anyone to be mythified by simple medical terms, nor he is going to place more importance on a "neurosurgeon" than on a "podiatrist." As long as it is a surgery, everyone is equal and carries same responsibilities and self-importance. Therefore, he does not want anyone to "glorify" surgeons.

[6] Instead, the sight of that skull agitated him. Fear was driven out by anger, and anger had its own perverted reasoning: what cheek this invader had to put Mary's life in jeopardy!

Emotion. Stone is an ambivalent figure who is in love with the nun but hate the children she bears. He feels "agitated" and he "fears" the boys with "anger". The emotional words the author applies vividly presents us a person who is a bit carry away with the fact that the woman he loves dies because of the children they produce. The author then creates an atmosphere of sadness by leaving the readers to image "as if the corpse of a burrowing mole that had attacked Mary's body," which is disgusting and fearful.

[7] If most newborns meet life outside the womb with a shrill, piercing wail, ours was the saddest all songs: the stillborn's songs of silence.

Metaphor. The newborn babies life in sorrow has been described as one saddest song because they are silent due to physical weakness and their survival leads to Mary's death and Stone's enragement.

[8] Which was why he missed the way his words fell on Hema like hot oil; he didn't see the flames of anger shooting out of her eyes.

Simile. His words to Hema is like "hot oil" and Hema's anger towards him is like "flames." They are both in temper. Hema is expecting Stone to act like a man and give new born babies some mercy but Stone is in deep sorrow. Under the circumstance, he does not want to face to the babies who take away Mary's life.

[9] "If faith and grace were meant to balance the sinful nature of all humans, hers had been insufficient, and so what she felt was shame." " Still she must have believed, even with all her imperfections, that God loved her and forgiveness awaited her in His abode, if not on earth."

Emotional response. It is written to describe Sister Mary Joseph Praise which creates strong emotional responses with readers.

Summary and Analysis

Cutting For Stone by Abraham Verghese, presents to me the life stories of twin brothers, orphaned at their mother's death and grew up in the households of two doctors. The protagonist, Marion Stone and his twin brother Shiva are very intimate at the beginning, though their relationships tear apart after they enter puberty. Marion falls for Genet but it is Shiva who takes away her virginity, which directly leads to her submission to female genital mutilation. The twins have experienced the turmoils of political turbulent in Ethiopia. However, they are influenced to learn medicine and work at hospitals and coincidentally, their major of studies brings their biological father Thomas Stone back to their lives and their unit in the end.

Abraham would like to pass a message to readers: words of comfort are important for patients. He extensively uses medical terms in the book to create surprise and tension, which closely draw the readers attentions. Thomas Stone said: " I will not cut for stone, even for patients in whom the disease is manifest. I will leave this operation to be performed by practitioners, specialists in this art." Three male characters are named Stone, which reflects what the author wants to express in the title of the book: Cutting For Stone." It is interesting to note that doctors would not cut "itinerant stone" from the patients even tough they perfectly understand the patients pain. Then believed that "patients usually died of infection the next day." However, it is Thomas Stone who finally did the liver transparent operations on both of his sons, witnessing one is dying of side effects and the other is living after the surgery. We can have the body cut open and seal up but life doesn't work in this way. Love and betrayal, brave and cowardice, sacrifice and forgiveness, life and death are arises

from the book. Thomas and Genet and Shiva are stones in Marion's life, unconsciously. He longs for father's love but is abandoned by Thomas Stone. He hopes to marry Genet and has his first sex experience with her but she betrays him. He loves Shiva and sees him as one part of him, nicknamed them MarionShiva but he takes away the virginity of Genet. If he could choose, he might have cut them as early as possible. However, emotionally attached to every one of them deep inside, he can never cut the STONES. The stones metaphorically means everything we value in our lives but it also implies that we can not possess all the beauties, sometimes it is important that we do understand how to let it go. The story reaches a peak when Shiva sacrifices himself to save Marion's life at the bedside, when they are finally united, never separate from each other anymore. "And because I love this life I know I shall love death as well."

The twin brother reminds me of a film named *The House Of Wax*, which also talks about twin brothers, conjoined at birth time and disfigured after separated by operation. Possessing enraged personalities, one killed another and became a terrible murderers of tens of people. The innate ugliness of the twins' looks brings enagement and hideousness in the movie. Different from Marion and Shiva who are immediately being adopted to Hema and Ghosh, warmed hearted doctors who devote their lifetime to love them, the twins in *The House of Wax* live alone after their parents die. Leaving them to rely on each other, they become estranged from the outside world and finally, lead to their tragedies. Marion and Shiva are very fortunate to be the precious stones that Hema and Ghost will never want to cut off.

Also from doctor's perspective, *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* puts more emphasis the doctor's personal life and philosophically lines up friendship, love, marriage and sacrifice. Interestingly, the male protagonist is also named Thomas, a surgeon. Through his profession, he becomes keen on understanding the motions of female bodies, not only seeing them sedentarily in operations. As a physician, he claims love and sex to be two distinctive entities. However, Marion sees them as one entity. When he falls for Genet, he wants to have sex with her and he refuses other women. Marion remains loyal to Genet and loves her continuously even after she has sex with Shiva. On the other hand, Thomas explores female idiosyncrasies through sex with different women.

"Though my arms were pinned to my side, I could swivel my hands forward. I touched her hips. Her skin was cold. She didn't flinch. She needed my touch, my warmth. I pulled her to me." It is the first time Marion is close to Genet and they nearly have sex but they do not. Though they have very intimate moves and "worked her hands" and "undid my restraint" they are too naive to not move ahead. Marion said "If only she had known to ask, or I to give, we could've done away with the blindfold... thank god for the blindfold." However, we know later in the story, Genet loses her virginity to Shiva, that breaks the intimacy of Marion and Shiva, leaving Marion in forever pain, Rosina's suicide and Genet also experiences tremendous pain. If Marion have had intercourse with Genet at that moment, the whole story might be different. Their desire of each other is a stone they are about to cut but does not. If Shiva were put into that scene, he would have conducted sex with Genet. Interestingly, Marion is being depicted as a man who is loyal to his love yet not mature enough in sex while Shiva is being depicted as a man who is overly mature in sex but never loves any women. In the end, Shiva gives his liver to Marion, risking his own life to save Marion reaches to a climax of the novel.

The scene reminds me of *Lolita*, written by Vladimir Nabokov, in which the narrator, the middle aged professor Humbert, overly obsessed with girls who are 12 year old because his first close touch with the opposite sex is with a 12 year old girl on the beach. The girl dies shortly after and he has never met her again after that summer, which leaves him with eternal regret and pain. Different from Humbert, Marion is very sensible and part of the reasons is because he is brought up by doctors who are themselves logical persons and well-educated. Hema is the one who initially adopts them. As a well-educated female in the novel, her influences toward the twins are vitally important, along with the accompany of Ghosh, another successful doctor. Both of the boys grow up healthily, become doctors as well. Not like Humbert, losing his mother at a young age, without proper

nourishment from parents, he becomes psychologically insane though he is a professor. Family backgrounds and the environments people are grown up with play an important role in children's lifetime.

The Great Gatsby (Analysis book 3)

[1] I hope she'll be a fool— that's the best thing a girl can be in this world, a beautiful little fool.

Repetition.

Fool has been repeated in the sentence as Daisy, the female protagonist speaks when she describes her little girl. It successfully reflects Daisy's character though it is not directly talking about herself. She sees two main qualities in females that are deserved: stupidity and beauty. To a great extent, she does not value the intelligence in women because in that era of America, women do not yet gain social power and recognized positions. As a wife, one needs to be submissive to her husband since men are the bread owner of the families. Daisy casts her opinion by implying that a girl who is pretty can get what she wants, such as a successful man who possesses wealth. It is what she sees in her own marriage and life and it is the reason she chooses Tom over Gatsby. Sardonicly, it is also what Gatsby sees in females. After he generates large sum of money which allows him to throw out parties every day, he still loves Daisy, who is not only simple and beautiful but also a fan of wealth. Her naiveness finally kills him and leaves him in forever sorrow.

[2] It faced, or seemed to face, the whole external world for an instant and then concentrated on you with an irresistible prejudice in your favor. It understood you just as far as you wanted to be understood, believed in you as you would like to believe in yourself.

Atmosphere, repetition and vividly description.

Through Nick's eyes, Gatsby has been presented not by his appearance but his smile and character. It leaves more impression to the readers than if the author simply describes his eyes, hair or height. Immediately, a gentleman who is very understanding and pays attention to people around vividly jumps out of the book. We can feel as if he is talking to us face to face with tender voices. It also encapsulates his mannerism, in comparison to people who are around him. Daisy, a beautiful fool. Tom, a self-centered and snobbish man. More importantly, it is as if Gatsby's romantic character is foreshadowing his tragedy in the end. He tries to please everyone he meets, with a caring heart but people come to his grand house because of his wealth, not his character.

[3] On week-ends his Rolls-Royce became an omnibus, bearing parties to and from the city, between nine in the morning and long past midnight, while his station wagon scampered like a brisk yellow bug to meet all trains.

Simile.

Gatsby's station wagon is vividly described as something looks like a brisk yellow bug. "Scampered" is used here to demonstrate how his wagon is moving and the word implies that people in the wagon is cheerful and probably waving their hands and shaking their heads with music coming from the radio. The sentence is to show how crowded and bustling Gatsby's house is and people are driven madly to come for his extravagant parties. It also reflects the time in 1920s in America, when people are soaked into endless entertainments, squandering wealth, without any concerns about future.

[4] He stretched out his arms toward the dark water... I... distinguished nothing except a single green light, minute and far away.

Implication.

“Green light” has been mentioned several times in the book and it is an important theme the author hopes to express. After committing bootlegging, Gatsby becomes very wealthy and he lives across the dock of Daisy’s house. He is standing there looking at Daisy’s house, thinking about their reunion. The green light is dim but Gatsby sees it clearly and purposely. He hopes to gain the woman who actually only lives in his past with his wealth and love. With passion, he tells Daisy to look at her own house from his dock as well. Though there are distances between their houses, in heart, Gatsby believes that they are never separated. The Green Light is also an implication of American Dream, unrealistic but makes people feel like authentic, since everyone is dreaming and dancing in parties, improvidently.

[5] “Her voice is full of money.” I’d never understood it before. It was full of money—that was the inexhaustible charm that rose and fell in it, the jingle of it, the cymbals’ song of it... High in a white palace the King’s daughter, the golden girl.

Metaphor.

The conversation is carried out when Gatsby pays visit to Daisy and Tom’s house. He remarkably talks to Nick about his feeling and he makes it clear that Daisy’s voice is full of “money” while Nick hesitates and not dare to say it in front of Gatsby. However, Gatsby’s personal revelation of Daisy’s moneyism does not shake his love to her. It is part of the reason Gatsby comes back with his great fortune to chase her. Deep in his heart, he knows the luxurious products he throws at Daisy will win her heart, not necessarily his love, however, he keeps himself in dreams, not concerning about whether the love is worthwhile. Even though he finally speaks it out, “her voice is full of money,” he still loves Daisy deeply. Ironically, the author uses words such as “charm,” “jingle,” “King’s daughter,” and “golden girl” to describe her voices and her. It is as though money has endowed her with a golden sheen and within it, she becomes an angel. Gatsby’s money plays an important role which serves as a foil to reveal Daisy’s characteristics.

[6] For a moment a phrase tried to take shape in my mouth and my lips parted like a dumb man's, as though there was more struggling upon them than a wisp of startled air. But they made no sound and what I had almost remembered was uncommunicable forever.

Metaphor. Personification.

Nick would like to speak out his own feelings but somehow he feels that everything is stuck in his throat and he is incapable of speaking out the words. Therefore, he ironically metaphor the lost phrases in his throat as if he is a dumb man. Additionally, the air is also personified as human to have feelings: startling. Nick already foresees the ending of Gatsby and Daisy and he is suffocating in his own understanding.

[7] He must have looked up at an unfamiliar sky through frightening leaves and shivered as he found what a grotesque thing a rose is and how raw the sunlight was upon the scarcely created grass.

Metaphor. Personification.

Leaves here are personified as human and have feelings—frightening. It is the last moment of Gatsby when he falls into the swimming pool. As he falls, he is forced to look up at the sky, seeing the leaves for the last time. In wind, leaves shiver as if they are scared of the world, the people come and go in Gatsby’s house. A beautiful rose becomes “grotesque” since it shall imply that Daisy, the once and forever beautiful rose in Gatsby’s heart is actually a disfigured silhouette, scratching Gatsby’s innocence. It is very cruel to know that the newly grown grass is now opening their eyes for the

sunlight, welcoming their lives with a brand new breath of the day, when Gatsby is dying by their side.

Written in the 1920s by F. Scott Fitzgerald, *The Great Gatsby* casts the story between a wealthy young lad Jay Gatsby and his lost lover Daisy Buchanan. The book provides us with a historical background of the roaring twenties in the Jazz Age. When new technologies emerge, people are driven for flamboyant lifestyles because economic prosperity is widespread. Generates his personal wealth from bootlegging and other activities, Gatsby lavishly lives in Long Island, throwing extravagant parties and aiming at attracting Daisy, who lives around the bay to come. As Gatsby expects, Daisy is attracted to his wealth and reunites with him. However, Daisy's husband Tom, openly criticizes Gatsby for his criminal behaviors and casts doubts on his social positions and fortunes. Daisy vacillates and decides to stay with Tom. The story reaches to a climax when accidentally, Gatsby's car hits Myrtle, Tom's mistress and leads to her death. Though it is Daisy who is driving the car, Gatsby is suspected by the police and finally murdered by George, Myrtle's husband. Nick, a veteran of the Great War and now works as a bond salesman, witnesses the story and narrates it to the audience.

The Great Gatsby reminds me of *The Sun Also Rises*, written by Ernest Hemingway, who is a friend of Fitzgerald. In *A Moveable Feast*, Hemingway writes about his days in Paris, in which he talks about his friendship with Fitzgerald. *The Sun Also Rises* sets the scene in the 1920s as well and it also talks about the lost generation in the roaring twenties. Similarly, the protagonist Jake Barnes, a soldier back from the war, is also wounded by women, Lady Brett Ashley, a divorced charming lady who continues to have love affairs around. Different from Gatsby, who determines to gain Daisy with all he has, Jack Barnes is more sensible and he remains friendship with Brett. Not like Daisy, who is drawn completely to money, Brett is a woman who is trying to liberate herself. She is audacious enough to divorce twice and engages herself in different relations. As a woman who is liberating herself from household, she embodies the new sexual freedom of the 1920s. Though sharing intimacy with Jack, she seduces a 19-year-old boy Romero. Her attractiveness successfully stirs jealous tension among the men who are chasing after her. Compared to Daisy, she enjoys living as an accessories of men. She is fond of seeing men chasing after her, charmed by her beauty. When she found out Tom's love affairs, she timidly pretended that she did not concern about it. If it were Brett, she would have divorced immediately. Daisy does not know about love, nor understand about the purpose of living. As long as there are men who possess wealth and social positions, she will want to get attached with them.

Compared to the woman in *The Patience Stone*, Daisy and Brett are two American ladies who are chasing for their own dreams, no matter realistic or not. Both of them strive to gain what they dream of in life, men, wealth, sex and love. The Afghan woman suffocates in tradition; she has to take care of the living-dead body of her husband. In comparison, Genet in *Cutting For Stone* shares similar experience with the Afghan woman and both of them have experienced genital mutilation and suffer from the pain. The Afghan woman is trying to liberate herself through the days by her husband's side and retrospect her past experiences. Genet hopes to rebirth after she recovers from the ill-operation conducted by her mum. In *The God Dies by The Nile*, Zakeya changes from a woman who conforms to people around, to God, to supreme powers, to become a woman who has to revenge for her family.

Poems Analysis 4

When You Are Old. BY WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS

When you are old and grey and full of sleep,
And nodding by the fire, take down this book,
And slowly read, and dream of the soft look
Your eyes had once, and of their shadows deep;

How many loved your moments of glad grace,
And loved your beauty with love false or true,
But one man loved the pilgrim soul in you,
And loved the sorrows of your changing face;

And bending down beside the glowing bars,
Murmur, a little sadly, how Love fled
And paced upon the mountains overhead
And hid his face amid a crowd of stars.

Fortuitous

By Zhimo Xu

I am a cloud in the sky,
casting random shadow in your mind;
you need not startle,
nor take delight
for I'd forthwith vanish out of your sight.
You and I met at sea in the darkness of night,
You have your destination, I have mine;
You may remember,
though it'd be best if you could forget,
We glowed as our paths crossed and brightly shined.

Yeats and Zhimo are two of my favorite 20th century poets. Among their poems, I especially adore "When You Are Old and Fortuitousness." Therefore, I would like to write my comparison essay on these two poems. "When You Are Old" is written by Yeats to Maud Gonne, who breaks his heart several times in his life and marries another man. "Fortuitousness" is written by Zhimo Xu in reminiscence of his love to Huiyin Lin, a woman he bumps into in a cafe.

In When You Are Old, the poet invites the lady he is in love with to look forward to a time in the future when she becomes old. No longer a beautiful young girl but a frail old woman, she will still be loved by him deeply. In Fortuitousness, the poet asks the lady he is in love with to forget about their encounter because he is determined to be away like a cloud in the sky. Both of the poems are about love, about men's love towards women, but are in different facets.

The first poem beautifully asks the lady to recount her life, to read the book which is probably full of Yeats's poems for her. He intends to remind her of her former elegance and attractiveness. Narrative Structure is used through out the poem to create the way the author feels about the woman. In Stanza 1, Yeats applies imagery to allow readers to imagine the scene of an old lady "nodding by the fire". He specifically describes her eyes are "shadows deep", which is a simile, to provide us with a vivid picture of her tender looks. As eyes are the windows to our souls, Yeats only chose the lady's eyes to write about in his poem, indicating his full attention on her. In the second stanza, quite a lot of figurative language has been used to denote his connotative meanings. The sentence structure is quite simple and informal, delineating the aesthetics of the woman such as "Glad grace" and "beauty". With a turning point, comes the climax of the poem, when he writes about "But one man loved the pilgrim soul in you, and loved the sorrows of your changing face." Unlike other men, his love for her goes as deep as her soul, since he would ignore her youthness and appearance, can not be resisted to

her “pilgrim soul” and “sorrows” and “changing face.” The lady is unique in his mind and he does not love her because of her transient beauty. The last stanza looks like a summary of the story as Yeats seems to connect it with the first stanza, to create a scene of her sitting there. She “murmur” to herself, lamenting on how fast love has fled. However, at that time, Yeats imagines himself to become as successful as a new star in the sky, while Maud could be fallen and faded since she would be old. Yeats capitalized “Love” as it specifically meant his love to her. He would no longer love her at that time, and he also pictures himself soaring above the mountains, amid “stars” and nebula. Yeats attempts to tell Maud what they would be like when they become old and hopes to arouse Maud’s love towards him. In the whole poem, the level of emotional involvement has brought audience in the atmosphere.

Unfortunately, Maud did not accept his love and married another man, though they have remained friends in all their lives. If the poem intends to another girl who is not as active and political as Maud, who stays at home and works on family drudgeries, she might have accepted his love. But Maud is an actress, a beautiful actress, who is in her best time. She can hardly think of a time when she is faded in the crowds. Her proud is hurt when reading the last stanza since it may not be true. Yeats is overly optimistic on himself, leaving Maud with warning rather than unconditional love. It is probably why Maud does not accept his love.

By comparison, Fortuitous is a very short poem that has only two stanzas. Through first narrative, Zhimo applies quite a lot of metaphor in describing himself, the lady and their encounter. He sees himself as a cloud that is free and floating in the sky. He randomly casts his shadow into the lady’s mind, indicating that they might fall in love with each other at that beautiful moment. However, different from traditional poems that suppose to continue the writing by providing details of the encounter, Zhimo gives a sharp turning, asking the lady to forget about him completely, not to “take delight” nor to “startle” at his quick disappearance. Zhimo did not provide the following stanza as an explanation but to create another atmosphere of people sailing on the sea. This time, extensively metaphorical language has been used again to describe their encounter. Though they are sailing in darkness, they shall still know where they suppose to go. It is better to forget each other, their “glow” and “bright shine.” Compare to Yeats, who boldly expresses his love in the poem, Zhimo is more conservative about love. He is more interested in providing audience with an imaginative scene in which people shall ponder about how fragile human encounters are. Through loosely organized sections, he asks people not to lament on the transient of beauty but to celebrate the ecstasy of each human encounter. Yeats strongly asks the lady to respond to his love, in his poem, he blatantly shows how deep his love can go, penetrating into her soul. However, meanwhile, he also aims to stimulate her fear about losing her beauty. As a tenderer person Zhimo is, he accepts the transformation of life and mystery of love, to keep the beautiful memory indelible.

Close Textual Analysis: The Patience Stone, by Atiq Rahimi (Analysis book 5)

The Patience Stone by Rahimi.

The Patience Stone metaphors a mystical stone “Sang-e Saboor” that according to local folklore takes the pain and suffers from people until it explodes.

Under abhorrent circumstances of Afghan families, the book provides a proxy to an unnamed woman’s stifled facets, through which we empathetically witness her daily lives. The plight of the woman, taking care of her dying husband on mattress, intertwined with her love and hatred. Rahimi portrays the female protagonist, faceless and nameless, succinctly evoking her suffocation. She changed from an obedient housewife who paid all her attention and sincerely prayed for the recovery

of her husband to an audacious woman who did not fear of presenting her tormented inner life to her husband. At the first few days, she pays full attention to take care of her husband, praying all the time and cleaning him when necessary. Without support and help, she also needs to worry about two children. The only one she can rely on is her aunty, who doesn't live nearby. She hopes to see him recover but ironically, she confesses to him all her past thinkings and experiences, which finally enraged him. I believe she does not confess to wake him up but to release her own tension from caring the living-dead husband. Her nuanced and savage call stimulates the grievances of thousands and hundreds of women.

Quite a few themes are expressed in the book by which the women's suppressed life is revealed.

Koran

Koran, the Bible in Islamic culture, guides the woman all the way through. It is as if Koran is her spiritual support and close friend. She keeps Koran by her side, on the pillow, reciting it.

"Within reach, open at the flyleaf and placed on a velvet pillow, is a book, the Koran. "(p15)
When the woman is taking care of her husband, she feels helpless. As a housewife, she doesn't know how to get food, how to maintain her life without a husband. The author describes the pillow "velvet," a very romantic color, which implies that the book is very close to the woman because it is on the pillow, where she sleeps with her husband.

"Confused, she turns around, returns to her spot and glances at the open page of the Koran. "(p17)
However, after repeating the Koran, she expects her husband to recover or at least, to have signs of living. She receives no guidance from the God after reciting the Koran. "glances" are quick looks, indicating that she seeks for help from the book still.

"Her left hand, the one holding the prayer beads, pulls the Koran towards her. "
'Prove that you exist, bring him back to life!' She opens the Koran. (p20)
She "pulls the Koran towards" her and "opens" the book, because she cannot seek help from any people who can assist her to take care of her husband nor anyone who can give her clear supervision on how to lead her life afterwards. The closer she holds the book, the better she feels.

She picks up the little rug, unfolds it and stretches it out on the ground. The morning prayer done, she remains sitting, takes the Koran and opens it at the page marked with a peacock feather, which she removes and holds in her right hand. (p21)
After reading a few verses, she puts back the feather, closes the Koran, and sits thoughtfully for a moment, gazing at the feather peeking out of the sacred book. (p21)

Here, metaphor is applied as "peacock feather" shall indicate authority power because it is kept with the book and its ostentatious beauty is shining above the book. She holds the peacock feather in her right hand and takes it out from the book, suggesting that in her mind, religion separates from authority, and she hopes to hold her independence in hand.
Afterwards, she put the feather and the Koran together. A housewife doesn't know what to do under the circumstances because she does not have friends, does not have family support and she does not have government help.

She sits down between the man and the Koran, which she opens at the flyleaf. She moves her finger over the names of God, one by one. Counts them. Stops at the seventeenth name. Murmurs 'Al-Wahhab, the Bestower'. A bitter smile puckers the edges of her lips. 'I don't need a gift.' She pulls at the peacock feather peeking out of the Koran. (p22)

Her position is very interesting, "between the man and the Koran", as if she is between authority and

religion since men often represent authority especially in Islamic culture. We can denote from the book that women do not have any power or personal freedom in the society. They cannot choose what their lives shall like, or to whom they shall marry. Additionally, they live in strict rules set by her original family and married family. Religion is imposed by the authority to control civilians and she is now breaking herself out from both of them. Later, she starts to “pull at the peacock feather” as she is not enthralled by the beauty of it. The peacock feather here can also imply her husband, the male character who is charming at a young age, attracts her attention and deeply loved by her. As the story goes, we realize that she doesn’t have good relationships with her husband because they rarely communicate and she suffers from unsatisfied sex life. She is isolated in the society, like many other women in Islamic culture.

The man with the torch notices the Koran on the ground, rushes up to it, grabs it, prostrates himself, and kisses the book as he prays behind the strip of his turban. (p30)

Off they go. With the Koran. (p30)

As soon as the man finds the Koran, he “rushes” to get it. He takes it regardless of who it belongs to. We can imagine the eagerness he possesses when he sees the Koran. It might be inferred as men uses religion as a tool to protect their power and control women. However, as we know, the man is also one that suffers from poverty and lower social positions, therefore he may want the book for redemption of his own sin.

‘The Koran!’ Once more her eyes fill with dread. (p32)

The voice of the Mullah reciting burial verses from the Koran is drowned out by the rain. (p40)

He stands up and recites a long verse from the Koran. (p44)

She recites a verse from the Koran, trying to persuade herself of God’s power to protect her girls.(p45)

I am under the demon’s spell . . . this isn’t me . . . where is the Koran?’ (p55)

But this time to accuse me of having stolen the peacock feather he used as a bookmark in his Koran. (p55)

When she finds that the Koran is lost, she is in “dread”. Dread of losing the cerebral of her life because the Koran is her guide. Dread of having no other reliable source to sustain her empty soul. Then, the Koran becomes a weapon for her. She eagerly hopes to protect her children. As a mother, she cares most about her children since her husband is dying and other kinships have abandoned her.

Green Curtain

It is very interesting to note that “green curtain” is repetitively mentions in the book. It first appears when the author is describing the room as “plain green curtain” as if the room is in serene, not to be disturbed by any visitors.

Determined, she snatches the green curtain and pulls it aside. (p41)

The next time, she determined to “snatch” it and we can see what is behind the curtain, a junk room with pillows and mattresses. We might have expected something else like a neat room or vase behind the curtain but the author directs us to feel the atmosphere he creates, a junk room. The woman may hope to liberate herself but since she is not educated or properly guide, opening her “curtain” there is nothing of great value.

She reattaches the drip bag to the wall, inserts the tube back into his mouth, closes the green curtain and conceals the hiding place with the other mattresses and blankets. (p41)

She closes the curtain to maintain a sense of safety because it blocks the way of the outside world. As a widow with two children, she is very afraid of the world outside her window because she is not allowed to get interacted with others. Closing up the curtain provides her with safety needs.

Sitting between the two men, one hidden by a black turban, the other by a green curtain, her eyes flicker with nerves. ‘Allah is with me’, pauses again, and glances at the green curtain.(p42)

The man who later becomes an important character in the book hidden by the curtain, which she also “glares” at because she does not talk to other men apart from her dad, her dad in law and her husband in life. What she does not understand is behind the curtain. She is quite curious about the unknown human.

She falls silent, giving her man, behind the green curtain, the chance to take a few breaths. And herself, too. He sits back down near her man, by the green curtain which she pulls aside in the yellowish lamplight to check that she has not exploded. (p46)

The green curtain is slightly open. The woman, silent, gazes with infinite sadness at the gap in the green curtain.

For the first two curtains, She tries to use the green curtain to hide herself and not allow her husband to see her having sex with the man. Here, green curtain blocks her connection with her husband, the numb and aggressive man who does not know how to love woman but weapon.

For the next two “curtains”, they are opened for the first time in the book, though it is only “half open.” It is as if the woman is opening half of her heart to rebelliously against social rules.

She stays there a long time, without a glance at the green curtain.

She still doesn't raise her eyes to the green curtain. She doesn't dare.(P53)

Here, green curtain seems to represent the authoritative power of her husband. He is behind the curtain, motionless, but still influence and haunt her life. She does not dare to look at it because she is not yet strong enough to confess all her feelings.

Goes straight over to the green curtain and draws it aside so she can see her man.

She sits up and shouts fiercely at the green curtain. (p54)

She draws the green curtain completely aside. (p62)

Now, the woman can go “straight” to the curtain and “draws it aside” to face to her man. She also shouts to the curtain as if it were her husband. Finally, she bravely “draws the curtain completely aside”. She has changed from not daring to look at it to completely opens it, demonstrating to us the changes of this woman, who finally steps forward to fight for her own freedom. She is no longer afraid of the man.

Quite a lot of repetition has been used in the work to emphasize the woman's progress in life. Additionally, I also notice that when she served by his side, “changes his drip,” “puts drops in his eyes,” hoping that he can recover. Afterwards, she confessed her guilt to him and she hated him too much to hold her own breath, she still changes his drip and puts drops. When she got irritated and frustrated as she realized his motionless life may last, she bursts out with wary and anger. Nonetheless, she continued to clean him and put two eye drops in his eyes while she rebelliously talked about her own sin. She has been a very good carer despite her hatred of her own suppressed rules of being a wife. On the other hand, Genet in Cutting For Stone, doesn't understand what independence is. She submits herself to Shiva but in love with Marion. She allows her mother to operate genital mutilation on her, resulted in serious consequences. Afterwards, she thought she had escaped from the fate of being a traditional woman, but she actually escaped from her past, to look for something she is unknown.

Nawal El-Saadawi Memoirs of a Woman Doctor (Analysis Book 6)

[1] Why had God created me a girl and not a bird flying in the air like that pigeon?

Rhetorical questions and metaphor.

The author asks the question and then provides with answers: "God must prefer birds to girls." She explains to readers that girls create by God do not have freedom and are living under quite a lot of restrictions. "A bird flying in the air" indicates freedom. She strongly feels the freedom her bother has, especially when compared with her. He does not need to eat in quietness, no need to braid his hair, can play outside with permission and go home late. This question appears quite early in the memoir. The little girl's thinking roots deep in her heart in childhood, which stimulates her rebellions at teens and later in her marriage.

[2] All that was left for me was to reject, to challenge, to resist!

Parallelism

"Reject," "challenge," and "resist" are synonyms used to repeatedly emphasize the author's hatred to her femininity. After openly and audaciously faces up to her mother's madly slaps, she moves one step forward to personal freedom. She is not afraid of her authority any more. After rejecting her cousin's love and slaps him, she moves further away from the old-self, to become a girl who is not afraid of males. Compare to the experience she describes when she is a little girl, she is vulnerable when the stranger touches her leg, now, she can slap the boy who she also fantasizes about. She forces herself to reject her feelings to him, to challenge the male authority and to resist her inner desire for him. The parallelism arouses our attention on her change.

[3] Who was this society anyway? Wasn't it men like my brother brought up from childhood to think of themselves as gods, and weak, ineffectual women like my mother? How could such people believe that there existed a woman who knew nothing about a man except that he was an assortment of muscles, arteries, nerves and bones?

Rhetorical questions.

In this part of memoir, Saadawi asks quite a lot of questions in the form of providing answers in themselves. She denotes that men like her bother brought up by women like her mother consist of the society. They are simply a bunch of body parts that she has clearly dissect in her medical classes. After studying science, she has viewed human from a completely new aspect. From being slightly ashamed and feared, bold and confident, she understands the people surround her more logically. As a medical student, she inspects human brain, cuts into human body parts, looking at naked men straight in her eyes. Science liberates her.

[4] I realized that nature was a beautiful and mighty god which frail, proud humanity in its brief lifetime had tried to clothe in cheap, ugly garments merely for the sake of pride and a sense of achievement.

Simile. Metaphorical language.

Nature is "beautiful and mighty god" who wears "cheap, ugly garments" to pretend that he has been successful. Interestingly, "beautiful" and "mighty," "cheap, ugly" and "pride, achievement" are antonyms. Saadawi applies seemingly words with opposite meanings to convey a picture of mother nature. Her tone is quite sardonic but she reveals a grown-up who is now more sensible and brave in her life. She is now away from all the people she previously knows, to live in a desolate village. Enjoying the warmth of the sun and estrange herself from the outside world, she can now clear her mind and think more logically. Everyone has his own weakness though we have frequently see his bright side. Those who that take proud and success in life also wears inexpensive and hideous outfits.

[5] Had I forgotten...? I don't know... But I had forgotten...

Repetitive.

She does not mention what she actually forgets in the memoir but from previous paragraph we can infer that she has been looking for the man of her life, someone she loves. She longs for love from family members because she has been away from them for a while. Additionally, as a grown up woman, she also desires to be loved by a man. She hopes to have her mind acknowledged by another, to experience the happiness of sharing her life and to love without fear. When she is a little girl, she once has close interact with her cousin but she slaps him and their relationship never extends further. When she indulges herself in studies, she never has any opportunities to take a breath and thinks about spiritual pursuits. Now, she deeply hopes to find her love but does not know where he is.

[6] The battle between a man and a woman: that odd, artificial contest in which the woman faces the man alone, but the man stands barricaded by tradition, laws and creeds, backed up by generations and axons of history, and row upon row of men, women and children, all with sharp tongues extended like the blades of a sword, eyes aimed like gun-barrels and mouths blazing away like machine-guns.

Metaphorical language.

She vividly describes the relationship between men and women. When women need to face the men without any support from anyone in any aspects, men receive full support. They are protected by regulations and laws. They have been historically privileged by having more power, strength and authority over women. As inferior members of the society, women have to be very strong in order to fight against their nature fate. "Blades," "gun-barrels," and "machine guns" are weapons used to hurt and destroy, but the author applies the simile to "tongues," "eyes," and "mouths", to indicate how fierce people can be when they are suppressing women.

Though as Saadawi mentioned, the book was censored and she had lost the complete version of it, I was deeply moved while I was reading the book. It is a first person narrative with informative contents about her life experience in Egypt. She fought against her mother to win her independence and then divorced the man who tried to dominant her by restricting her from going back to her practice as a doctor. Through chronological description, the narrator presents to us how girls are maltreated and being placed social expectations before them. She was self-hatred and ashamed when she was a little girl. Gradually, she determined to study science and became a doctor who can look straight into naked bodies and provided sick people with treatments and advices. As her social stands risen, she gained her self-confidence. She transformed from the little girl who was timid and rebellious to a woman who is dedicative and caring. However, in order to fulfill her dream of finding a proper companion, she married a wrong man and audaciously, she persuaded herself to end the relationship. Her extraordinary journey ended with a loving man who truly appreciated her beauty in mind. Compared with girls in *God Dies by the Nile*, she is very lucky because she overcame all the difficulties and found her true love. In *God Dies by the Nile*, the whole family suffer because girls are pretty and they do not have visions of their lives. They only read about The Koran and mistakenly believe in "God" who may take them to a bright future. When the mayor has his eyes on the girls, he takes them as his maids and rapes them. The girls suffocate in the house but they do not find a proper way to fight against maltreatment. One girl disappeared, probably murdered by the mayor, while another lost her way in big city. Education plays an important role in liberating women.

Different from the other books we read, *Memoir Of A Female Doctor* is more gentle and touching which presents to readers a story to follow up rather than strong determinations to ask readers to take actions. Compare to Coats and Baldwin, who are male authors, writing with straight facts, both of them stimulate readers to take awareness of how black people are suppressed. Compare to *The Color Purple* that also talks about feminism, *Memoir of A Female Doctor* is not as harsh and the language

is more beautiful since *The Color Purple* is written in slangs. Recently, I also read a book named *The Diver*, written by female author Yokoshama. It is written as a memoir of a girl who is brave enough to become the first group of Japanese divers while previously most people who work in the field are males. However, because she accidentally catches hives, she is isolated and then sent to an island and she stays there until she is over 65. As a very strong willed female character, she also presents herself as confident and audacious, not afraid of challenging the male authorities. However, the language in the book is quite simple and terse, not as rich imagery as *Memoir of a Female Doctor*. If girls in *The God Dies By The Nile* are also as brave as her, they might have escaped from their destinies.

I am a female figure who is quite different from all the characters I have analyzed above. I may not chase after a man like Rachel to smooth out the culture differences and misunderstandings between mother-in-law and me because I am tired of difficult issues. For me, I would prefer to have established understanding in mutual agreement without too much complicated explanations. I would certainly not become Daisy and Sister Mary, both of whom I do not fully approve of. I feel sorry about girls by the Nile and I think it is one of the reasons that we should strongly emphasis the importance of allowing all women to receive education.

Below is a love letter written by me.

A letter to a loved one:

Dear Louis,

Last year, I visited Hong Kong three times, keeping in mind that I would not see you but your house by the sea.

I booked a seat at the restaurant you opened one week before my arrival. In order to catch up with the time, I took the underground at the rush hour. It was chaos as people were crashing each other like waves. I tightly held my bag, standing by the entrance gate of the subway, wondering if I would see a familiar face suddenly jumping into my vision. I ran out of breath to arrive on time even though I deeply understood that no restaurant would refuse a customer who was only five minutes late. Sitting by the table at a corner, I pretended to place every order calmly, but my heart was beaten so fast that it was as if you were standing at my back and watching me. You would not be there. I perfectly know. But I sensed the air you took in at every corner of the lounge. When I was not here, how many times had you invited friends to have dinner? What had you been talking with them? Have you been very tolerant or being very hospitable? I could not witness that with my own eyes even though it had repeated been played in my mind.

I went to the park by your house. I took photos of the sea and the sky every time I went there. I looked at every tree and grass, hoping to leave part of my soul on them. I smiled at every passing by for they might be your neighbors and friends. Standing in shades, I looked at your window, it never opened. Once I greeted a dog and he was happy to take a photo with me. He quickly kissed my cheek when I was adjusting the camera. I kept the snapshot as my mobile phone's screen photo and looked at it every day. I talked to the waves, asking about when you would return. I glared at the clouds in the sky, asking about when they last saw you walk pass by. I asked myself, why would I care so much about you?

With laugh, with tears, I engraved your name on my bones.

Renee

Apart from themes mentioned above, a major concern is on liberalism. It is about how our human race has been fighting to have our own voices heard. Roger in *The Dream Of The Celt*, a gentleman, audaciously reveal the dark side of the ruling parties.

The Dream of the Celt — Mario Vargas Llosa

[1] "... but because of your perversions." The sheriff made a noise with his tongue as if he were going to spit. "A traitor and pervert at the same time. What garbage! It will be a pleasure to see you dancing at the end of a rope, ex—Sir Roger."

Contempt. Exclamation. Simile. When Roger is in the cell room, the conversation is initiated by the Sheriff. He believes that Roger deserves to be hung because he is charged of treason. Though personally possessing no knowledge of Roger, the Sheriff mistakenly puts Roger as a murderer of his own son. He puts all the blame on Roger, waiting for his death penalty. Roger is working continuously and carefully on writing the dairies to reveal the colonial subjugation and enslavement in Congo and Amazon but the sheriff sees him as a traitor. He also metaphorically implies that Roger is a "pervert" hence he shall live in "garbage." Mario vividly describes the sheriff's behavior and talks in the article but never specifically mentions about his name. We can interpret it as a political figure who is also a common citizen who suffers under the regime but cannot comprehensively picture the whole political economy. As a father and a common citizen, the sheriff is not accessed to the truth even though he is the closest person to Roger in the book. The sheriff also sees Roger as a clown dancing at the end of the a rope, to perform for the audience. Such a clown does not live with dignity. More importantly, the sheriff uses "ex" to taunt him by emphasizing that he is no more Sir Roger but a prisoner. It is very ironical that the general public is appreciating Roger's effort but the Sheriff, standing next to Roger, placed his cold eyes on him.

[2] Missionaries will come to lead them out of paganism and teach them that a christian shouldn't eat his neighbor. Physicians will vaccinate them against epidemics and cure them better than their witch doctors. Companies will give them work. Schools will teach them civilized languages. They'll taught how to dress, how to pray to the true God, how to speak like a Christian and not use those monkey dialect. Parallelism. Metaphor.

[3] If they knew what we're doing for them, they'd kiss our feet. But mentally they are closer to the crocodile and the hippopotamus than to you or me.

Metaphor. Roger presents his view by saying that European comes to Africa to make a change and to bring the local people welfare but according to his understanding, African people are suffering under the so called missionaries. Dismissive, Roger greatly admires Stanley when he is a child. After " a long silence" Stanley provides details of the work European are working with to improve the local community with "mocks." "Shouldn't eat his neighbor", "better than their witch doctors," and "monkey dialect" are dictions strongly demonstrate that Stanley sniffs at the local people. Shrouding in grand title of "missionaries," Europeans are looking down at local people and act like God. "Kiss our feet" extensively shows Stanley's arrogance. "Closer to the crocodile and hippopotamus" is a satire too. Crocodile and hippopotamus are wild animals but then he believes that African people are closer to wild animals than to human.

[4] But how could he deny he was one of those mythical, legendary beings who, by means of daring, scorn for death, and ambition, seem to have shattered the limits of the human? [5] Who had this champion of the British empire and the ambitions of Leopold II actually been? [6] How did he survive the trek through virgin forests, like someone searching for a needle in a haystack and succeed in finding in Ujiji, on November 10, 1981, the man he stupefied, according to his boastful confession, with?"

Rhetorical question. Simile. Stanley has made great accomplishment and his characters have been vividly described. As one person who writes poems and cares about how he looks, he greatly arouses Roger's "contradictory feelings" because he "shattered his limits of the human" by audaciously carrying children with deformed faces and bodies, "offer water to natives dying of cholera" as if "no one could infect him." However, he is also the one who allows the "tough hide of the hippopotamus" "fashioned into a whip" that can directly produce more "burning, blood, scars and pain than any other scourge" to be used by foremen. Women, children and men's eyes grew large and "the whites of their eyes gleamed with terror" when they saw it because they could imagine the pain the whips will bring. My heart tightened when I was reading the book and I held my breathe all the time until I strongly needed to intake more air.

[7] A beast more bloodthirsty than the lion and the cobra. Aren't there chiclets in Boma and Matadi? Metaphor. Rhetorical question.

[8] They lie, deceive, lack feelings and principles. Parallelism.

Because ammunition can only be used in self-defense, sometimes soldiers would like to hunt wild animals and they cut off the hand or penis of the man every time they fire in order to confirm that their bullets are not wasted on hunting. It is a "sensible" way to avoid wasting bullets but it is so crucial that Roger can not understand. However, Captain Massard looks for excuses himself by adding that African people are "stupid, and savages and falsifiers." Because they "lie, deceive, lack feelings and principles" so it is okay to shot them and cut their body parties for the soldiers own benefits.

[9] He listened to some movements, the priest's prayers, and finally, again, a whisper from Mr. Ellis asking him to lower his head and bend down a little, please, sir. [10] He did, and then he felt him place the rope around his neck. He could still hear Mr. Ellis's last whisper. "If you hold your breath, it will be faster, sir." He obeyed.

Atmosphere. Vivid description. The last paragraph of the book is very emotional and touching. I have been expecting him to escape from the death penalty though I understand the theme of Dream of The Celt is to reveal the tragedy of his life and experience. The ending reminds me of Charles Dicken's A Tale of Two Cities in which Carton hears the execution and he is pushed towards the slot where the blade would fall. Roger is called Sir again in the end. Compare to "ex-Sir" he is called at the early part of the book, being called Sir at his last moment seems to remind us that his life and actions are dignified.

Dream of The Celt is written in chronological flashbacks, which Roger Casement vividly tells us his voyage and trips to African countries from prison cell. Roger's observations of crucial enslavement and subjugation is encyclopedically recapitulates. Those who he interviewed conducted a series of systematic tortures on the inhabitants of Amazon and Congo and left them in permanent terror and injuries. European commercials indifferently driven by greed perform unlawful actions and the consequences shall never be compensated. However, as an Irish nationalist, Roger dedicated his life to reveal the predicaments of oppressed people, died of under the charge of treason but horned by the

public. The book has more than once mentions Roger's mother, an echo and ghost character in the book. She seems to influence him even though there's no exchange of conversations or pass through of messages. Roger believes that his trip is made because he lacks support and love from mother when he needs them the most. He is forced to leave his country in memory of his past life experience. During the book, his mother sometimes appears in his dream, sometimes she seems to be around and other times she lives in his memory. This figure catches similarity with the father in *The Positionwood Bible* even though they share completely different characteristics. Roger's mother is the light at the end of the tunnel but Conrad is more like a coward shrouding his family. Both under the mission to enlighten local people, reading these two books clear the mysteries of Congo and provides us with clear and vivid pictures of how inhabitants are living. In *God Dies by The Nile*, Zakeya takes her revenge in the end because she is the mother of three children, all of them are killed or imprisoned. Roger's mother would have tried to save him as well if she is alive. She is the last hope of Roger and Roger understands she can't have been there for him. As a male character, Conrad never enlighten his family but his wife is finally liberated because of her own independence development.

Through torture and killings, the Europeans convince themselves and others that local inhabitants deserve to be violently treated because they are savages and live closer to wild animals. In the course, we have encountered passages written about how black people are ill-treated and how the inferior nations are exploited and how women are suppressed around the world but not a book is as blood written as this one. I read repeated descriptions of emasculation and people are rendered helpless, living in terror all their lives. Women and children may starve to death or being raped by other inhabitants but the Europeans are not even care to have black women as prostitute because they think those women are dirty and savages. Sex is a theme that is essential in many books we have read so far. In *The Patience Stone*, the woman has to masturbate herself for pleasure. She takes happiness with the rape from a stranger who is too young to understand life. Her human desire is suppressed and she never enjoys it with her husband because he is rough and never pays attention to her feelings. In *Dream of the Celt*, Roger is in love with his cousin but he also conducts homosexual behaviors during his trip. As an Irishman, he may have been affected by other people's views without clearly noticing that himself. He may be afraid of African women and think healthy and young lad more attractive. Roger has been one that is also poisoned on the trip. He tries all his effort to write the diary but put into same situation and circumstances, he could be one of them himself.

I have some friends who previously intern in Congo. They share with me some of their understandings: they believe that local people are rather lazy, not keen on working either for their own life improvements or to fulfill something grand. Their laziness greatly results in their poverty. I do not know if the view is right or wrong but I think it is very controversial because even though they are lazy, others should not have exploited the place.

I cannot escape from thinking about Congo and I will probably book a trip to visit Congo in the summer. The nightmare about Congo continues in *Heart Of Darkness*.

Heart of Darkness

[1] Serve him right. Transgression — punishment — Bang! Pitiless, pitiless, that's the only way. This will prevent all conflagrations for the future. I was just telling the manager..."

Diction and dramatic structure. Transgression leads to punishment. An Onomatopoeia word "Bang" suddenly awakes the reader and it works to arouse their emotional response even though Conrad doesn't clearly describe what happens to who. He applies ambiguity in quite a lot of descriptions, leaving the atmosphere mysterious and ghostliness.

[2] He was there below me, and, upon my word, to look at him was as edifying as seeing a dog in a parody of breeches and a feather hat, walking on his hind-legs.

Metaphor, narrative structure. Marlow describes the black man he encounters as “a dog in a parody”. We can only find dogs with “ breeches and feather hat” in a circus. Seeing a human as a dog in a circus is ironic. It is as if black people are not human enough, they are walking on their “hind legs” rather than foot. Black people are disgraced.

[3] But there was the fact facing me — the fact dazzling, to be seen, like the foam on the depths of the sea, like a ripple on an unfathomable enigma, a mystery greater — when I thought of it — than the curious, inexplicable note of desperate grief in this savage clamor that had swept us on the river—bank, behind the blind whiteness of the fog.

Repetition. Simile. Narrative Structure. Allusion.

We cannot see foam on the depths of the sea therefore the fact is hidden and no one will ever notice it, no matter how important and obvious it could be. A ripple on enigma cannot be solved because there is no clue and it keeps Marlow curious and along with his inquisitiveness, he finds himself shrouding in despair. “Savage clamor” implies black people. The “whiteness” of fog indicates the power of white people are shrouding black people’s community, covering them without a niche. The atmosphere is very suffocating.

[4] Black shapes crouched, lay, sat between the trees, leaning against the trunks, clinging to the earth, half coming out, half effaced within the dim light, in all the attitudes of pain, abandonment, and despair.

Emotional appeal. Narrative structure. Diction. Black people are sitting in the wildness among the trees. They are “leaning” against the trunks, “clinging” to earth and “half” out “half” in the light. The verbs Conrad applies here provide readers with a vivid scene of black people living in the forest. Additionally, Conrad uses black “shapes” to allude black people but with ironic tone. They are living as if they are animals in the wild. In white people’s eyes, black people are only “shapes” at the background, in the forests. They do not have their faces, expressions and dignity. All of them are in “pain, abandonment and despair” but no one pays attention on them. They are completely ignored.

[5] Going up that river was like traveling back to the earliest beginning of the world, when vegetation rioted on the earth and the big trees were kings.

Simile. The river is taking them into a new place, where people are previously isolated from the outside world. They are not as well-developed as the western countries, with mostly agriculture lands. Conrad mentions “big trees were kings” to say that nature plays an important element in determining people’s life standards. “Earliest beginning of the world” indicates that the white people are trying to exploit others as they see themselves are superior power of the world.

[6] I looked around, and I don’t know why, but I assure you that never, never before, did this land, this river, this jungle, the very arch of this blazing sky, appear to me so hopeless and so dark, so impenetrable to human thought, so pitiless to human weakness.

Parallel structure. Emotional appeal. Marlow understands his own situation. After witnessing black people’s lives and understanding his own “work”, he feels pity yet pitiless towards the black people. He is in an ambivalent situation. His conscience prevents him from staying indifferent yet his proud agrees on placing a cold eye on everything. However, though at first the world fascinates him and invites him to explore, he has no remaining courage to judge, to deny ambiguity. His own world is a lie created by Kurtz but he has no way of escaping from the lie. Therefore, he is hopeless but he can do nothing to change the circumstances.

[7] The word “ivory” rang in the air, was whispered, was signed.

Parallel structure. It is Marlow’s first impression of the Central Station. As one of the workers employed, he is to come to exploit the unknown and savage land for ivory. “Ivory” is an indication of wealth, and therefore social advancement and economic development. Those who are possessing ivory are those who are with more power. The elephants and Africans sacrifice their lives for the sake of white people’s greed, hence the word “ivory” is “whispered” and “signed.”

[8] “Girl! What? Did I mention a girl? Oh, she is out of it — completely. They — the women, I mean—are out of it — should be out of it. We must help them to stay in that beautiful world of their own, lest ours gets worse.

Rhetorical question. It is interesting as girls “shall stay in that beautiful world of their own”, “out of” men’s business. On one aspect, it is to say that men are undergoing crucial transactions, which they are not willing to involve women in. On another aspect, women are downplayed as something like toys and they are inferior to men, submissive to their orders. It is as if they are living in a world that is created by men and the world is pure and beautiful enough because men prevent any bloodiness in the world.

Heart of Darkness explores jingoism and colonialism through a traveler named Marlow. He takes voyage to Congo River in order to free the state and civilize local people but the trip turns out to be a trip of darkness that reveals the evil side of human. As a worker who obtains the job through recommendation of his aunt, he doesn’t fully comprehend what the job entitles to until he moves on the trip. He encounters scenes of exploitation, torture and slavery, which shocks him and drives him in continuous horror. He cannot prevent the harshness of the colonial enterprise, yet he feels pitiless to “black shapes” because the hypocrisy also inherent in his blood. The so-called “civilization” of local people is to hunt and force black people to submit to the white. Kurtz, a ruthless man, takes ivory by violence and suppression. He persistently craves for ivory, conducting evil practices in Africa. Africa is not a country for people to visit and honor but an animal for humans to hunt and kill. Black people are not human race for everyone to respect but slaves and savage that are to be exterminated. However, the book also provides readers with hope as it vaguely nominates Kurtz to death by having him “whisper The horror” and died. He is buried as if he is “something” in a muddy hole rather than with dignity. Ironically, apart from releasing the information to journalist, Marlow’s kindness is shown through talking to Kurtz’s fiancée that his final words are her names. After all, it is a very enigmatic story with blend of adventures.

This book reminds me of George Orwell’s Shooting an Elephant. The story sets the scene in Burma, when a young and naive police officer shoots an escaped elephant in the fear of being looking a fool. It is full of sarcasm. The story alludes to British imperialism, which is similar to Heart of Darkness, implies the westerner’s imperialism. “When the white man turns tyrant it is his own freedom that he destroys” remarkably states the theme. Different from Heart of Darkness, the protagonist is a policeman, who shall represent the British Burma government and authority, while Marlow is a common employer, working under guidelines. Therefore, the character in Shooting an elephant has more to be blamed and discussed. The policeman is greatly dishonored by local citizens, under the circumstance, he kills a wild animal to prevent being laughed at, not to save local people from danger. The elephant who suffers from agonizing pain is dying anyway, hence the bullet is not the determinant of his death. Orwell, as a British man, questions the validity of British colonist and he believes a generation of people are ill-educated, hence, in his book, we can see quite a lot of clues of that.

Heart of Darkness also reminds me of Lord of Flies by William Golding. Different from previous two books, this one focuses on a group of young children, commit criminal behaviors when leaving alone on an isolated island. They are aroused to govern themselves, creating authority figures and dominant

power. Ironically, the one who is beautiful and fair treated others named Ralph is in the end hunting by the one who is cruel and indifferent named Jack. They find a conch on the beach and they establish a rule by saying that who holds the conch shall call for gatherings. It is a sign of power and authority. Similar to Heart of Darkness, leaving human to an uninhabited island, people reveal their darkness in hearts. Human impulses toward civilization is vividly revealed.

Further into Congo, The Poisonwood Bible talks about how a western family tries to civilize Congo people. However, their attempts are actually bringing local people further into suppressive lives.

The Poisonwood Bible by Barbara Kingsolver

[1] What is the conqueror's wife, if not a conquest herself?

Rhetorical question. Irony.

It is written by Nathan Price's wife Orleana. After describing the bushes and jungles of Congo she then talks about a local woman who is on the brink of dying. As a mother of four daughters, she came to Congo with her husband on a mission to baptize the local people. She has been very responsible for her children and taken care of her family but she as well suffered from ill-treatment because women are seen as inferior to men. The white people is the conqueror of African people yet as a white woman, she is wakening her soul to become an independent woman, to be a conquest herself.

[2] It was as if a small, befuddled stranger were peering through the imposing mask of my father's features. He looked at me like I was his spanking newborn baby and he did love me so, but feared the world would never be what any of us had hoped for.

Simile. Narrative description.

Leah starts a conversation with Nathan when he gets hold of a wasp. He insists that wasp is not pollinating and in Africa, no insects pollinate the garden. He provides his reasons by saying that God sends creatures to serve African plants yet the wasp has not possessed any knowledge of working under the God's will. Leah suggests that bees shall be brought over to Africa in their pockets when they come. Nathan is utterly shocked as he sees himself as the wasp who doesn't know what exactly to do at the moment. However, suggesting by his daughter, to bring a lot of bees to Africa indirectly indicates that more missionaries should come and he is not completing his jobs. Therefore, he is looking at Leah as if she is a stranger because she accidentally speaks out his concerns. He looks at Leah as if she cannot fully comprehend him, yet seems already sees through him.

[3] Stupid Ghost! Non-person!...I can't stop being embarrassed by the memory of myself and Leah there with her genitals— bear, for all anyone knew— suspended over a woman's orange. A foreign mother and child assuming themselves in charge, suddenly slapped down to nothing by what they all saw us to be.

Emotion. Explanation.

Leah can't get through the oranges and she is parted from her mother. Unfortunately, she experiences the very embarrassing moment in her life — to have her bare genital part seen by strange men lining around drinking. Under extreme anger, she swears "Stupid Ghost and Non Person" but she still can't impede the nightmare. She mentions here "assuming themselves in charge" but become "nothing." It strongly indicates that, because of Nathan's mission, they mistakenly believe in their superiority over African people. At the case, she believes her high social positions but unexpectedly lose her dignity because her daughter's private part is exposed to strange men. She feels as if she and her daughter are both downplayed. From this point, we can interpret that they both see women as inferior to men.

They are not placing men and women on the same balanced weight. If it is a man whose private part is seen by others, they would not see it as a disgrace.

[4]...but the man has such a way of moving a crowd he does not seem to need shoes. ... The crowd loved it so much they rioted and killed twelve people.

Metaphor and statistical figure.

In previous paragraph, it is mentioned that, “ a barefoot post office worker who’s never even been to college,” which is to indicate the low literacy of local people. However, Lumumba replied by saying that, if one has the power to unite people and motivate people, he is not necessarily one that is well-educated. “Bare foot” is to say non-educated. After the speech, “12 people are killed,” which is to mention the strong response from the public. People are stirred by the speech to behave against the colonist. It also implies that, even though most of people in Congo can’t excess to good education sectors, they are nevertheless hoping to free themselves from colonialism. Those who are suppressed most are common people and those common people are united, they can make a change.

[5] He found the signs of stalking, the sign of a pounce, and a smear of fresh blood trailing into the bush. And that is how they knew the little crooked white child, the little girl without kakakaka, had been eaten. ... Yet he looked pleased. ... The rest of her seemed unalive, like a pale wax model of my mother: the woman who could not fight fire with fire, even to save her children.

Repetition. Atmosphere. Simile. Explanation.

Tata Ndu is not pleased because he believes that Nathan brings Christianity. Because of the religion, local people are experiencing moral decline. Against the view, Nathan insists that religion purifies rather than corrupts people. Angry by Nathan’s revelation, Tata Ndu comes to announce the news of Adah’s death, which shocks everyone. Nathan starts to pray while Orleanna is preparing to fight, but not have a clue of what she can do. Tata looks “pleased” as to imply that, when the missionary is not listening to us, we have his daughter eaten alive. His looks disgusts all people. Nathan, orders everyone to pray without deploring. Orleanna is in deep grieve as she seems dead like a wax.

The Poisonwood Bible by Barbara Kingsolver successfully presents to me the life in Congo around the 1960s through narratives of five females. Interestingly, the protagonist Nathan Price, a Baptist minister, is never narrating anything. His character is reflected through the description of others. It reminds me of Rebecca, written by English author Dame Daphne du Maurier. In the book novel, the female character Rebecca never appears, however she is haunting the house, the girl’s married life and she stays in the male protagonist’s memory, as a blemish.

The missionary family, moves from the States to a relatively desolate village Kilanga in Congo. As Congo is fighting for its own independence at the time, Orleanna is inspired by African people’s insidious progress to gain its autonomy. She awakes from her old self, to become a woman who can think for herself, live for herself. Similar to Zakeya in God Dies by The Nile, who tolerates all the tragedies and sorrows and finally rises to kill the mayor for revenge, Orleanna changes her way of living after her beloved daughter Ruth May’s death, though she stays in the feeling of guilt all her life. I feel much relieved when it comes to the end of the book, Ruth May forgives Orleanna. For Ruth, she finally comprehends the concept of unity. It draws my attention to the twin brothers in Cutting for stones. Even though they have experienced quite a lot of unpleasant incidents, in the end, their hearts stay together. Death cannot separate them. In this book, Orleanna and other three girls come to visit Ruth and it is as if Ruth sees everything and she understands everything. Seeing her relatives mature, she feels all life is somehow connected.

The Poisonwood Bible is implying to us that being dogmatic to the bible, citing every sentence and repeating them to others is not helpful. We should not understand the Bible by memorizing and then applying the lines to regulate people's behaviors. Religions shall be understood as a faith to people to plant in their hearts. The book also reminds me of The Patience Stone. The woman keeps her Koran by her side and reciting it every day when her husband is half-dead. She believes that if she follows rules, her husband shall come back to life. In the end, she releases herself from the tension and audaciously talks about her life experiences to her husband, the once dominant figure in her life.

When I can finally think apart from Congo, Of Mice and Men brings me further into a world that is suffocating and leaves me in sorrow for a long time.

Of Mice and Men

[1] A few miles south of Soledad, the Salinas River drops in close to the hillside bank and runs deep and green. The water is warm too, for it has slipped twinkling over the yellow sands in the sunlight before reaching the narrow pool. On one side of the river the golden foothill slopes curve up to the strong and rocky Gabilan Mountains, but on the valley side the water is lined with trees— willows fresh and green with every spring, carrying in their lower leaf junctures the debris of the winter's flooding; and sycamores with mottled, white, recumbent limbs and branches that arch over the pool.

Imagery. Symbolism. In the opening pages of the book, the author Steinbeck delineates vividly about both sides of the Salinas River – the sunlight, the pool, valleys, and mountains all mixed up – leading to natural splendor and creating a sanctuary for Lennie, a place to which he could run back after getting into troubles. The imagery here contrasts with what George and Lennie had to experience later at the ranch where they can no longer relax themselves but endure all impurities occurred there to accumulate enough money for the purchase of a farm ranch themselves.

[2] A water snake glided smoothly up the pool, twisting its periscope head from side to side; and it swam the length of the pool and came to the legs of a motionless heron that stood in the shallows. A silent head and beak lanced down and plucked it out by the head, and the beak swallowed the little snake while its tail waved frantically.

Imagery. This was how the water looked like when Lennie killed his wife and returned to the pool. Instead of the natural splendor viewed as in the opening pages of the book, the scenery at that moment became vicious as indicated by the water snake foreshadows the dead end of Lennie.

[3] The flame cracked up among the twigs and fell to work.

Personification. The flame rather than the brain cannot go to work. Instead, it is the fire that was assigned a personified characteristic here to attain hardworking atmosphere. With the fire falling to work, the author tries to transmit the message that tough things are going to happen for the introductory of the two main characters George and Lennie.

[4] Got no teeth, he's all stiff with rheumatism. He ain't no good to you, Candy. An' he ain't no good to himself. Why'n't you shoot him, Candy?

Metaphor. Candy once got injured in an accident and became a physically ped ranch hand, afraid to be fired by his boss when he completely lost working ability. He owned a sheep dog and the dog serves as a metaphor for Lennie, and anyone useless as Lennie. First of all, the loyalty of the dog to Candy is to that of Lennie to George. Also what happened between Candy and his dog later gives a hint for George taking care of Lennie later when Lennie got into trouble by killing Curley's wife. Specifically, as Candy shot his dog after he got to know that Carlson hated his dog so much, George had to stop Lennie from dragging George himself down. Secondly, the metaphor here unveils one of the themes of the parable that people strong enough can dictate those in lower position. In this case, even if Carlson promised to let the dog die painlessly, still the dog could not survive because Candy became older and less productive than before.

[5] Lennie sat in the hay and looked at a little dead puppy that lay in front of him. Lennie looked at it for a long time, and then he put out his huge hand and stroked it, stroked it clear from one end to the other. And Lennie said softly to the puppy, "Why do you got to get killed? You ain't so little as mice. I didn't bounce you hard."

Metaphor. Lennie killed his puppy because he was unaware of his own strength. Therefore, the dead puppy serves as a metaphor for the fact that the strong can dictate the weak and Lennie's death. As Lennie killed his puppy due to his strength, he would also be killed by the powers surrounding him at the ranch farm. The puppy's death foreshadows what will happen on Lennie and Curley's wife, leading to the death of Lennie and his farm dream shared with George.

[6] "I don't want no fights," said Lennie. He got up from his bunk and sat down at the table, across from George. Almost automatically George shuffled the cards and laid out his solitaire hand. He used a deliberate, thoughtful slowness.

Metaphor. The game "Solitaire" symbolize chance and loneliness. On one hand, cards are randomly drawn throughout the game, and so as the events randomly occurred within the story. For instance, it's unexpected that George was not with Lennie at the moment when Lennie buried his puppy and Curley's wife came in. Chance here means that not everything could be under control by human beings. On the other hand, because not everything is predictable, people could only depend on themselves and would thus feel lonely. This foreshadows the ending that George would eventually get rid of Lennie to get out of misery.

[7] "Oh, I dunno. Hardly none of the guys ever travel together. I hardly never seen two guys travel together. You know how the hands are, they just come in and get their bunk and work a month, and then they quit and go out alone. Never seem to give a damn about nobody. It jus' seems kinda funny a cuckoo like him and a smart little guy like you travelin' together."

Metaphor. Hands symbolize all the ranch workers, with an emphasis on their productivity rather than humanity. In each subsequent description of the hands of all ranch workers, the author uses metaphor to indicate individual characteristics. "Paws" are to indicate Lennie's trouble, missing hand for Candy's worry about losing his job when aging, George's small and strong hand for his role as a decision maker, Curley's one cruel hand for treating Lennie unfairly and the other soft one for dissatisfying his wife's sex demands, and so forth.

[8] "I'm George Milton. This here's Lennie Small." "Glad ta meet ya," Carlson said again. "He ain't very small." He chuckled softly at his joke. "Ain't small at all," he repeated.

Irony. Lennie is not small as his name indicates. Rather he held such strength that he could use it to accidentally kill his puppy and Curley's wife. Yet his mentality is of a child. Specifically, his inability to control his physical strength prevented himself from bearing delicacy of beloved soft things, such as a puppy's coat, a rabbit's fur and a woman's hair. Ironically, Lennie killed his love simply because he loved too hard.

[9] "No—look! I was jus' foolin', Lennie. 'Cause I want you to stay with me. Trouble with mice is you always kill 'em." He paused. "Tell you what I'll do, Lennie. First chance I get I'll give you a pup. Maybe you wouldn't kill *it*. That'd be better than mice. And you could pet it harder."

Symbolism. Mice symbolize misleading hope here. Lennie always kept a dead mouse in his pocket since he liked to touch soft things, and he hoped to pet them. However, these soft things always held unfortunate endings: being accidentally killed by Lennie. In fact, the mice can also symbolize the dead end of George and Lennie's farm dream. Since Lennie unwittingly killed Curley's wife when he touched her velvet hair, their dream of living peacefully went hopeless.

[10] The small man stepped nervously beside him.

Point of view (third person omniscient). Steinbeck used a third person omniscient point of view throughout the passage. This becomes the distinctive trait of this book since it entitles the readers to get to know all feelings and thoughts of all the characters from an objective perspective. When he describes how Lennie behaved in a certain circumstance, he does not tell what to think but give objective cues to allow the readers to have their own interpretations. Instead of saying Lennie was nervous, the author simply gives an objective description of it.

Summary and Analysis:

Plotted in the setting after the Great Depression, two migrant workers George and Lennie sought for jobs from town to town. Lennie was a mental handicap and George makes all decisions for him. They shared a farm dream, in which Lennie dreamed to tend rabbits. The night before they reached the ranch where they ended up working, they camped alongside a river, a place to which George told Lennie to return in times of troubles. Even though they had faith in each other, George was tired of taking care of Lennie. They met all ranch hands, including Curley and his wife, Candy, Carlson, Crooks, and Slim, and had conversations with them. For Curley and his wife, George warned Lennie of staying away from them because Curley would cruelly treat his flirtatious wife if any affair occurred. Candy as a physical handicap worried he would be dead if he completely lost productivity, so he let his old dog killed by Carlson who hated the dog so much. Candy heard George and Lennie's farm dream and wanted to join them. But Lennie unintentionally wrecked Curley's wife's neck when he touched her soft hair, knowing that Curley would kill him, he fled to the pool which George told him to return to when confronting troubles. George comforted Lennie but shot his head and cheated the other men that he accidentally killed Lennie out of self-defense. Only Slim knew what actually occurred and watched him leave.

The story has an array of themes lined up. It introduces male friendship between George and Lennie in the opening pages of the book. But it never denies that the strong can dictate the weak, as foreshadowed by the death of Candy's dog and Lennie's beloved puppy. It unveils the failure of American dream of every single character in the story. Notably, for Curley's wife,

she failed to be a movie star and possess marriage happiness. For George and Lennie, their shared farm dream of peace and safety eventually died after Lennie killed Curley's wife. For the title *Of Mice and Men*, I personally think mice indicate the animal Lennie kept in his pocket. A pest as dirty and disgusting as mouse is still loved by others, Lennie, who only loves the hair of mouse. Mice can also represent people like George, who is calculative and mean, but he possesses a heart that is no bad than any other men.

The book reminds me of *Great Gatsby* in which people's American dream went to bubbles in economic boom. People are painstakingly pursuing their dreams without comprehending that they may not yet possess the ability to do so. Gatsby, wealthy but irrational, cannot win Daisy even though she is infatuated by his money. Daisy, looking for a man of power and wealth, ends up with a man who betrays her. She longs for Gatsby as if she is chasing after a far-away dream that can't and shouldn't be realized. Gatsby and Daisy are like ghosts experiencing human sorrows in wonderland. I think it is very interesting that Lennie is being shaped as an idiot by the author because being physically handicap allows him to escape from the harsh reality. He tenders mouse and keeps it in his pocket without realizing its death. His rough and cruel looks compared with his love of things that are soft are sharp contrast. A man who loses his intelligence to face up with the world still wants a piece of land that is tender.

On the other hand, a man as mean and cunning as George has been taking care of Lennie all the way through even though he occasionally thinks of dumping him and goes for his own life. He supposes to be a villain in the story and yet he acts out as the most generous man. No matter where they go, he always concerned of Lennie and protects him. At the end, when he has to end the tragedy of Lennie he nevertheless tells him a lie and brings him to the future in which their dreams have been realized. In the *Patience Stone*, the woman also takes care of her husband but it is only to reveal her suppressed feelings. She and George are both taking care of others but one is out of a mixed feeling of hatred and obedient and another is out of responsibility and generosity. Both of them finally find the way to their future, satisfactorily.

Different from all other books, Henry is trying to liberate himself from his old and routine lives. His relationships with his wife and children seem harmonious but he never feels safe about his surroundings.

Saturday by Ian McEwan

[1] He stands there, naked by the bed—— he walls sleeps naked —— feeling his full height, aware of his wife's patient breathing and of the wintry bedroom air on his skin.

Atmosphere.

At the beginning of the book, the author describes the protagonist Henry Perowne by mentioning how he looks like at the bedside—— “naked”. McEwan does not describe his appearance by providing details of his looks but his nakedness. It is to create a scene to allow readers to imagine a male figure who is not afraid of exposing his nakedness though it is at home, by his bed side. People who study science are more familiar with their bodies because they tend to understand more about how their physical bodies function. A person who shows his nakedness seems to be logical and reasonable and who would not hide his true feelings. I read a book named “*The Unbearable Lightness Of Being*” by Milan Kundera, in which the author also describes the protagonist at the first few paragraphs. The male character is also standing in his bedroom, by the curtains, thinking about his incorrigible relationships with women. Similarly, these two male characters are both doctors who are professional in their own specialties. Differently, Henry Perowne shows his fidelity to his wife because he cares

about politics as well as his patients; while the Czech doctor is curious about women when they are stimulated, after he believes that he has gained full proficiencies in understanding human bodies.

[2] So despite the apologetic posture, the mild manner and an inclination to occasional daydreaming, it's unlike Perowne to dither as he does now —He's standing at the foot of the bed— unable to decide whether to wake Rosalind.

Emotion. Here, McEwan again puts the scene at bedside. It seems that quite a lot of emotion is going on in Henry's head while he is by the bedside. He thinks about his life, his career and his wife when he is standing there. "Bedside" is a very interesting place because it not only shows his distance with his wife, since he is not on bed with her, but also indicates his closeness with his wife, since he is by her side. It is very delicate. He thinks independently but he eagerly hopes to share the feeling with Rosalind. He does not want to wake her up or disturb her dreams, but it can also indicate that he has not fully prepared of a conversation. Henry is acting like a man, to not reveal everything about himself in front of his wife. He would rather watch her sleep, in peace than disturbing her. When women gain their social positions gradually in 21st century, not like before, being submissive to men, women are becoming more and more powerful. I may interpret the situation as, men would like to hide part of themselves to women, hoping to be respected and admired by women.

[3] Misunderstanding is general all over the world. How can we trust ourselves?

Rhetorical questions. Henry asks a question then answers it by himself. When he witnesses the plane crash, he cannot get rid of the images. He starts to wonder about what might happen after the plane crashes. Since he is politically sensitive, he wonders the reasons and outcomes of the casualties. McEwan writes the book a couple of years before the 911 crash, hence I guess he has sniffed the explosion of political conflicts at that time. He puts his personal awareness of politics in Henry's mind. However, because Henry is not a politician but a doctor, he cannot have a precise picture of how countries are working with each other or when the conflicts between countries would explode.

[4] There is no way out for him. No one can help. But Perowne knows himself to be incapable of pity. Clinical experience wrung that from him long ago.

Repetition and Transition. McEwan repeatedly uses "no" to remind us the danger of the situation. Perowne is about to be robbed when he notices Baxter, the robber, might have caught Huntington's Disease. Through talking to Baxter about it and comforts him by giving out professional advice, he saves himself. Henry is in a predicament because deep inside he knows that there is no good methods to cure him, but at the critical moment he has to save himself by providing fair treatment. Therefore, he asks him to "exercise and take certain drugs." Baxter lets him go but it is not out of respect but out of vacillation. If Baxter has a second think, he might have robbed Henry.

[5] It would be easier for him if her poems weren't so wanton — it isn't only wild sex they celebrate, but restless novelty, the rooms and beds visited once and left dawn, the walk home down wet Parisian streets whose efficient cleaning by the city authorities is the occasion for various metaphors. Is it only fatherly soft headedness that makes him suspect that a girl who sleeps around too earnestly has an improved chance of ending up with a lower grade male, an inadequate, a loser?

Listing. Henry lists out a few things he hopes Daisy would not have done. Additionally, he fears the negative consequences of his daughter's behaviors. At 21st century, as women are free to choose who they love, what they would do with their lovers, without constraints, fathers are growing uneasy. They either worry about whether their daughters will be mistreated or they seriously concern about whether men would take girls behaving audaciously in love seriously. Men are not used to the liberation of women yet. That is why Henry, as a father, worries about Daisy. He is not yet ready to embrace a

modernized daughter. He loves his wife and not seeing any other girls as others around him do. However, interestingly speaking, he sees that not as a virtue but as a defect of himself. That is probably why when it comes to deal with his daughter, he cannot find the right balance in his heart.

The book *Saturday* is about the details of a neurosurgeon Henry's day on Saturday. It seems that the author resembles quite a lot of incidents in the plot and sardonically examines the life of a middle class man. I do not really enjoy reading the book because I spend quite a long time to get myself used to the atmosphere and find my way. It turns out that the middle of the book is actually the beginning of the novel. On the way to visit his mother, he witnesses a plane crash and it might be a terrorist attack. From that, I follow his mind to untangle his relationships with his wife, his son and his daughter. The book establishes quite a few arguments with careful ambiguity. For example, being exposed to potential danger, like robbery, he is by no means protected by the government. Additionally, though a well-educated white collar, he does not enjoy literature nor believe in it. He confuses but patiently follows his daughter Daisy's instructions to read, despite the fact that he personally has never been educated by the books he read. Henry is surrounded by a wife who works in a newspaper, a father in law who writes verse and a daughter who reads novels, but he is somehow isolated from them, in literature understanding. I think Henry is a character who has liberated himself through medical studies and he is continuing to be liberated by people around him. His personal independence is remained and achieved through kinship's encouragement.

Compared to *God Dies by the Nile* and *The Patience Stone*, *Saturday* provides me a male character who enjoys his comforts in hospitals but finds the surrounding dangerous. However, *God Dies by the Nile* sets the scene at a village, with corrupted government, people suffer immensely and become victims without redemption. Saadawi forms a socialist feminist perspective to describe the liberation of females. Religions have been misused by the officials to exploit peasants and un-educated women, leading to their tragedies. The mayor and chiefs of guards are obsessed with power, wealth and women, slaving farmers and their families to death. The protagonist Zakeya, born an ordinary woman, a common peasant's wife, a mother, was driven by demons in the end to fight for justice. My heart tightened when I read about: "He did not feel the hoe land on his head and crush it at one blow. For a moment before he had looked into her eyes, just once. And from that moment, he was destined never to see, or to feel, or know anything more." Ending her life in cell, she finds her peace. Similarly, in *The Patience Stone*, the woman taking care of her husband, liberates herself while she attends her husband. I think for both men and women, they are trying to open their eyes to the world around them, to face with ever-large conflicts in politics and economics than before. It is very interesting to read about how people are experiencing the process of liberation in different parts of the world.

Back to the very beginning of the course, I have read two books about how black people have been fighting to gain their freedom. Written by Baldwin, *The Fire Next Time*, talks about how black people have been segregated in America, but he is not to put blames on the white but to raise attention of all human race to love each other. The book is in two parts. The first part is written as personal letters to nephews on 100 anniversary of the emancipation, the second part is letter from a region in my mind, which mainly criticize the roles of religion and calls for love of all.

The fire next time by Baldwin

CTA:

[1] Well, the black man has functioned in the white man's world as a fixed star, as an immovable pillar: and as he moves out of his place, heaven and earth are shaken to their foundations.

Figurative language. A simile is used here. The black man is like a fixed star and an immovable pillar, without them the world will collapse. Baldwin emphasizes the importance of black people and indicates that they have helped to build America, to do those work that white people do not want to do. Without them painstakingly working at lower paid or unskilled jobs, the America would not be what it looks like today.

[2] The universe, which is not merely the stars and the moon and the planets, flowers, grass, and trees, but other people, has evolved no terms for your existence, has made no room for you, and if love will not swing wide the gates, no other power will or can.

Listing. Figurative language. The planets, flowers, grass, trees and people are listed. The focus is to bring out 'other people', a metaphor here. Other people is the white people, who prevent black people from leading a happy life and indifferently deprecate black people's existence. There shall be universal love, as it is a general term. However, black people are not loved and no one has paid attention on them.

[3] Being in the pulpit was like being in the theatre; I was behind the scenes and knew how the illusion was worked.

Figurative language. Standing on the pulpit in the church is like giving a public presentation that aims at influencing black people, to comfort them, to prevent them from taking revenges, to suppress them further. 'Behind the scenes' indicates that I understand who is pulling the curtain.

[4] The Africans put it another way When the white man came to Africa, the white man had the Bible and the African had the land, but now it is the white man who is being, reluctantly and bloodily, separated from the land, and the African who is still attempting to digest or to vomit up the Bible.

Exaggeration. The white man are pirates, taking away lands from black people. Then, they fool black people with religious beliefs. Black people are disgusted by the way white people attempt since a Bible do not solve the problems. Some black people like 'my father' may have been obedient, as he believes in Christianity, but 'I' shall never take a bite of it.

[5] ...Germany's current role in Europe is to act as a bulwark against the "uncivilized" hordes, since power is what powerless want..

Figurative language. The author put black and christian in debate to argue about the effectiveness of "Christian" since millions of people were murdered for their ancestor's criminal behaviors. What roles should German play and what are the effects of their guarding against the right of black people? Baldwin puts readers in concern about it.

[6] You must consider what happens to this citizen... search, in his shoes, for a job, for a place to live; ride, in his skin, on segregated buses; see, with his eyes, the signs saying "white" and "colored," and especially the signs that say "white ladies" and "colored woman"; look into the eyes of his wife; look into the eyes of his son; listen, with his ears, to political speeches, North and South; imagine yourself being told to "wait."

Atmosphere. Parallelism. Comparison. Through vivid description and parallel sentences, Baldwin invites readers to think about what they can experience in daily life as an American. We have embraced all the changes and become one of the most advanced countries in the world, nevertheless, we do not yet understand how to embrace differentness, to allow black people to gain their own dignity. One American can easily search for a proper job, find his way of living, have a house to live, but he rides on segregated buses. That is an irony Baldwin places. White females are ladies but black

ones are colored women, that is another sardonic indication. People are judged by their races, not their literacy or their social standing. In political terms, America invites different voices, like from the North and the South, even at home, people listen to views of wives and sons. However, when a black person wants to express his opinion, he will be told to stop. In such a liberal and advanced country, it shall not happen.

[7] I love a few people and they love me and some of them are white, and isn't love more important than color?

Rhetorical question. Comparison. Baldwin asks a question and the readers shall expect the answers. Love shall be generous and color has nothing to do with it. I have good relationship with some white people and I treat them with my true hearts. Even though white people have downplayed black people, exploit their lands, ripped their hopes into pieces, black people can still be friends with white. White people shall also recognize the wrongness of segregation and truly love people, regardless of their skin colors.

Begins on a personal perspective, Baldwin did not chronically talks about his life experiences since he was born to his adulthood but to extract important moments to analyze. He warns his nephew not to follow the footsteps of his ancestors. To adopt revengeful attitude to white people will not help him solving problems of segregation, to arouse white people's misunderstanding towards black people and call for general love shall be the motives. Additionally, religion has been extensively talked about in the second half of the book. In Harlem community, he cannot run away from crimes and miseries, the only sanction he can go is the church. Although he attempts to go Christian church for escaping from the oppressive environment around him, as his father has previously advised him. However, as he mentions, no one accepts a black god and people have long assumed the god to be white, the fact disillusioned him. Black people are always inferior and they have been called "colored" by their skin. Through talking about the Nation of Islam Movement, he addresses the view of Elijah Muhammad, whose political view is to form a divided nation for the black. Baldwin categorically deny Elijah's narrow minded thinking and he urges the public to aware that, political power shall not be achieved through racial segregation, only through love and acceptance, can America achieve its greatness in the world.

Different from Coats, who write about many drudgery issues since he is born, Baldwin's perspectives are more academic and analytical. Coats extensively applies personal anecdotes to vividly describe black people's experiences, while Baldwin talks about religious, politics and his personal life experiences together. I also read another book that is talking about how black people are leading their lives in the format of letters, —The Color Purple by Alice Walker. Through letters written by Celie, a 14 years old girl, to God, the literary work brings up the complicated life experience of the young girl, who has been raped by her father. I shed off with tears as the plot goes because it is unimaginable how Celie has to flesh out her story and resist oppression. Different from other books I read, Celie seeks help through her intimacy with Shug, another woman. It is as if the relationship provides her with courage to open her heart to resist unfair treatment.

I wonder if it is because black people have been oppressed until 21 centuries when we have witnessed tremendous civilizations around the world that they favor letters as a writing style. It is interesting for me that white people have voted for a black president Obama but not agree to provide all black people with equal treatment. Religious is not a haven for them because it is created by the powered to control the powerless. Politics cannot provide remedies because it is the government that support those who discriminate black people. When black people have nowhere to pour out their feelings and confusions, they write letters to someone intimate or someone who can be trusted, to express feelings.

Finally, it is a letter written by a father to his son, in order to remind him about the crucial world. More importantly, he tries to remind his son, the world is beautiful and we shall always remember to love no matter how the world becomes.

Between the world and Me by Ta-Nehisi Coates

CTA

[1] When the journalist asked me about my body, it was like she was asking me to awaken her from the most gorgeous dream. I have seen that dream all my life. (p10)

A simile is used here to describe the journalist's reactions when she is interviewing him. As previously denotes in the passage, the host asked him how he would respond to the picture of a black boy 'tearfully hugging a white police officer' under the theme of 'hope,' he has lost all what he wants to express. He understands that no one is able to understand how he has experienced and felt in the society and his sorrow is inexpressive. The journalist idealizes the way black people are living with in the society and she could by no means penetrate the core issue of black people.

[2] "Yo, you was messing with my cousin was neither an earnest accusation nor a misunderstanding of the facts. These were the summonses that you answered with your left foot forward, your right foot back, your hands guarding your face, one slightly lower than the other, cocked like a hammer. (p23)

When he talked about how to survive in the neighborhoods, he was forced to live in fear because he had been accustomed to the "feel of fighting weather." "Messing up with cousin is the conversation to start up with a fight and it is often unavoidable. Then he described how he would stand against the situation, preparing to fight back in order to protect himself. It is sad to read through the lines and feel how a black has to confront with in his daily life.

[3] The black people in these films seemed to love the worst things in life — love the dogs that rent their children apart, the tear gas that clawed at their lungs, the firehoses that tore off their clothes and tumbled them into the streets. They seemed to love the men who raped them, the women who cursed them, love the children who spat on them, the terrorists that bombed them. (P32)

Here, by exemplifying what has been put on film for the public to view, he doubts the motives behind the scenes and wonders why black are pictured as those who are not violent and are in need of the morality. It sharply contrasted with what he experienced in his life, facing with the children who openly bullied him, with the country (U.S) that tamed and murdered the black. He raised up the concerns about why the country was publishing the figures of black and he implied that the government was afraid of seeing the black to take a revenge on the white, therefore working to sooth the pains and angers of the black.

[4] When the Dutch ambassador tried to humiliate her by refusing her a seat, Nzinga had shown her power by ordering one of her advisers to all fours to make a human chair of her body. That was the kind of power I sought, and the story of our own royalty became for me a weapon. (p45)

At university, his understanding of the outside world changes because he was empowered by reading and he had found the remedies to troubles in life. The example he provided can also inspire his son to build up his spirit through academic studies and literatures. Though full of downturns in his life, black people shall never lose confidence and together, they can see their cultures rising from the dust.

[5] What we must never do is willingly hand over our own bodies or the bodies of our friends. We knew we did not lay down the direction for the street, but despite that, we could and must fashion the way of our walk. (p69)

The meaning of his son's name is explained here as he hopes to pass him a message: he shall live the way he wants, not be knuckled down by any others who seem to have power and who feel their skin gives them a privilege. He looks forward to seeing his son finding his own directions confidently, not to worry about how others may respond and not to be afraid of what is ahead of him.

[6] Our world is full of sound
Our world is more lovely than anyone's
thou we suffer, and kill each other
and sometimes fail to walk the air
...
though we sprawl in grey chains in a place
full of winters, when what we want is sun (P73)

It is a beautiful poem from Amiri Baraka where the author quotes to explain what the black has been suffered in history and tried to develop in the future. The black is born as a natural beauty but being slaved under the control of the white. Though the black did not escape from their destiny of murders of each other, suffering painfully from various tragedies, they form a strong connection with each other. The black means to thrive and they deserve the warmth like it is from the sun. It is a metaphor that the author uses here to indicate the future of the blacks will be as bright as the sun, no matter how many struggles they have gone through.

[7] Either I can beat him or the police. (p82)

The author has been repeating this sentence several times in the letter. At first he explained how his father took out the belt to beat him and then followed by other incidents like he was beaten because someone steal away things from him. He personally felt it inexplicably hard to understand why his father beat him up when it was not his mistakes. Gradually, he realized the love from his parents — painfully protected him from danger. As parents, he would rather have his beloved children killed by himself than being tortured by someone else. The black is living in an environment that no one can safely provide them with security.

[8] I am speaking to you as I always have — as the sober and serious man I have always wanted you to be, who does not apologize for his human feelings, who does not make excuses for his height, his long arms, his beautiful smile. (p 107)

As a father, he hopes his son can embrace his uniqueness as a perfect human, not to be influenced by ill-conception by the white. Race, as he previously discussed, judged by skin color, is ripping away our morality. As a black boy, his son shall appreciate his height, arms, and smiles. He shall not 'excuses' for the way he looks because he is beautifully born as everyone else. He leads his own way of living and there is no need to conform to any so called social norms because there is no such things.

[9] You have deduced that you are privileged and yet still different from other privileged children, because you are the bearer of a body more fragile than any other in this country. (p137)

Here, what he means is to raise the boy's awareness of his origins, to grow up from it, not try to avoid it by ignoring his 'fragility'. As a black boy, he had many times been treated unfairly and unjustly but he needed not to lament from it but to grow up with it. Yet, the author applies 'privileged' twice to emphasis his different meanings. The first privilege he uses is to value the boy's nature right as a human. The second privilege he uses is to show that other children are made superior because of their skin color. However, we shall not depreciate ourselves by the skin color.

Analysis:

Coats, vividly describes his life journey as a black to his son in the form of a letter. The writing style is universally appreciated because it penetrates the heart of readers, as if they are visualizing how black people are suffering in the society, being mistreated, and living in terror. Their voices are otherwise not heard, their characters are not correctly interpreted, their destiny is pre-determined by those who think themselves as having privileges over others. Plenty of anecdotes are introduced in the letter, to fully engage the readers. From conversations, detailed descriptions and parallelisms, Coats present us chronically of how he has been living as a timid boy to a proud and confident father, who is willing to unveil the injustice the black is confronted with. He raises the consciousness of readers, asking them to think thoroughly of what race has brought to the public. Most importantly, through cordial expressions, he hopes his son will gain confidence and feel proud of his own nature looks. I hope a similar letter can be written to the lady in *The Patience Stone* and to Zakeya in *God Dies by The Nile*. They shall understand much earlier how to value themselves and love themselves, fighting in order free themselves from unfair treatment. That is why public presentations and books are important because they can reach to a much wider audience. Most people only possess *The Bible* or *The Koran*, and they can recite them because they have read them hundreds of times. Religious belief needs to be weakened and every human needs to be empowered because in the end, it is personal independence they want to achieve.

To summarize, I very much appreciate the opportunity to join the course and to follow the instructions to read the books. I learn about how to approach reading and how to critically analyze the themes of books. My understanding of the outside world is expanded and from then on, I see everything around me from a new prospect.

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