PRO&CONTRA

Central European Studies in Humanities

Volume 3
Issue 2

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LÍCEUM KIADÓ

Líceum Publisher
Eger, 2020

PRO&CONTRA

Central European Studies in Humanities

ISSN 2630-8916 (online)

Managing publisher: Rector of Eszterházy Károly University
Published by Líceum Publisher, EKU, Eger
Head of publisher: Andor Nagy
Managing editor: Ágnes Domonkosi
Layout editor: Gergely Molnár
Year of publication: 2020

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The United States Congress and the Japanese 'Problem': Racial Prejudice and the Call for the Exclusion and Internment of Japanese Americans

Pro&Contra 3

No. 2 (2019) 5–25.

https://doi.org/10.33033/pc.2019.2.5

Abstract

In the aftermath of the attack on Pearl Harbor, with the spread of Fifth Column hysteria, persons of Japanese ancestry – both aliens and American citizens – were scapegoated for the unprovoked attack perpetrated by the Empire of Japan and thus faced increased racial prejudice. Japanese Americans were designated as the 'enemy within', based on their racial affinity, and were subjected to forced mass exclusion and incarceration in accordance with Executive Order No. 9066 issued by President Franklin D. Roosevelt on February 19, 1942. The present paper introduces the wartime contribution of the United States Congress, the debate over the Japanese 'problem' and the push by the West Coast delegates for the collective removal of the Japanese community from the Pacific Coast during the early months of the war. On March 21, 1942, President Roosevelt signed into law Public Law No. 503, intended by Congress to facilitate the ability of the Executive to wage war successfully. The Act of March 21 provided the required enforcement machinery requested by the designated Military Commander citing military necessity, making the violation of military orders a federal crime, thereby approving the actions taken under Executive Order No. 9066.

Keywords: exclusion and incarceration of Japanese Americans, Fifth Column, Japanese 'problem', racial prejudice, United States Congress, Public Law No. 503

Introduction

The United States Congress provided immense support for the war effort of the Roosevelt Administration – the forced removal and incarceration of the Japanese American community – by issuing Public Law No. 503 post factum: "To provide a penalty for violation of restrictions or orders with respect to persons entering, remaining in, leaving, or committing any act in military areas or zones."[1] It was signed by Sam Rayburn, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and was ratified by President Franklin D. Roosevelt on March 21, 1942. The Act of Congress essentially made it a federal crime to violate the regulations and restrictions issued by the Military Commander concerning persons of Japanese ancestry living on the West Coast, in accordance with the President's Executive Order. The focus of the present study is on the role of Congress with respect to the

[1] Those who violated the statute could be guilty of a misdemeanor and if convicted be fined $5,000 or sentenced to imprisonment for no more than one year, or both. "Public Law No. 503," March 21, 1942, National Archives Catalog, National Archives and Records Administration, accessed October 2, 2018, https://catalog.archives.gov/id/5730387.

forced removal and imprisonment of persons of Japanese descent, as the lack of congressional oversight in approving the Roosevelt Administration's course of action following Pearl Harbor led to the collective victimization of the Japanese American community based on racial grounds.

This analysis is justified in light of the fact that any violation of the military orders was interpreted as a federal crime, and eventually led to the Japanese American Supreme Court cases[2] which found the exclusion program constitutional, even though it targeted a select minority. It must be remembered that by March 21 President Roosevelt had already assented to the exclusion and incarceration by signing Executive Order No. 9066 on February 19, while Lt. General John L. DeWitt, the designated Military Commander, had issued Public Proclamation No. 1[3] on March 2, 1942. Other proclamations and 108 civilian exclusion orders were to follow the initial military regulations. The Legislative Branch of the Federal Government supported the war measures of the Administration by providing the legislative means to enforce the anti-Japanese provisions in close cooperation with the Department of War, which requested the proper legal means to enforce its restrictions.

On the eve of America's entry into World War II there were approximately 126,947 persons of Japanese lineage living in the United States.[4] The Japanese American community was predominantly concentrated on the Pacific Coast as 70% of the population lived in the States of Washington, Oregon, and California, with Japanese residents representing only 1.6% of California's population in 1940.[5] Population concentration certainly was one of the motivating factors behind the anti-Japanese movement of the era from a national defense perspective, apart from racial prejudice. Nevertheless, the exclusion also had economic aspects considering that Japanese persons were represented in various professional

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[2] In the *Hirabayashi v. United States, 320 U.S. 81* (1943), *Yasui v. United States, 320 U.S. 115* (1943), and *Korematsu v. United States, 323 U.S. 214* (1944) cases the Justices of the Supreme Court found the curfew order, and the exclusion and incarceration of persons of Japanese ancestry constitutional. *Hirabayashi v. United States*, 320 U.S. 81 (1943), accessed September 27, 2018, https://caselaw.findlaw.com/us-supreme-court/320/81.html; *Yasui v. United States*, 320 U.S. 115 (1943), accessed April 5, 2018, https://caselaw.findlaw.com/us-supreme-court/320/115.html; *Korematsu v. United States*, 323 U.S. 214 (1944), accessed April 5, 2018, https://caselaw.findlaw.com/us-supreme-court/323/214.html.

[3] Public Proclamation No. 1 was issued to establish Military Area No. 1 and 2 along the Pacific Coast. Public Proclamation No. 1, March 2, 1942, Box 383, Fred T. Korematsu Folder 2 (4 of 7, Docket Nos 39), Record Group 21, Series Criminal Case Files, 1935-1951, Case No. 27635 Korematsu v. United States 1942-1984, The National Archives at San Francisco.

[4] Harry H. L. Kitano, "Japanese," in *Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups*. Edited by Stephan Thernstrom et al. (Cambridge, MA.: Belknap Press of Harvard UP, 1980), 562.

[5] United States Commission On Wartime Relocation And Internment Of Civilians, ed., *Personal Justice Denied: Report of the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians* (Washington, D.C.: Civil Liberties Public Education Fund, 1997), 31.

sectors, most notably in the field of agriculture. By 1940 one-third of the crops in California were produced by Japanese farmers.[6] In regards to truck crops the Japanese were expected to produce 30% to 40% of the harvest in 1942.[7] Such agricultural productivity and economic competition was achieved even though Japanese Americans were targeted by discriminatory measures such as the Alien Land Law of 1913 and 1920, which restricted ownership and leasing of land based on race, and the ineligibility for citizenship.[8] The war effort was not the only factor behind the end of partisan politics as war hysteria overcame the nation following Pearl Harbor. Anti-Japanese sentiment – the issue of race and citizenship – and racial profiling were also key components in uniting the American public and Members of Congress against the supposed Japanese 'Fifth Column'.

On December 7, 1941, the Imperial Japanese Navy launched a surprise attack against the Pacific Fleet of the United States Navy stationed at Pearl Harbor, on the Island of Oahu. Within a matter of hours the intelligence services, including the Federal Bureau of Investigation, began to detain persons of Japanese ancestry on the Hawaiian Islands and the Continental United States as they were deemed a threat to the national security and defense of America. Following the "Day of Infamy" members of the Japanese American community became the 'Fifth Column' due to fear of espionage and sabotage along the Pacific Coast. Residents of the West Coast states and their representatives in Congress began to call for the mass exclusion and detention of Japanese persons for the duration of the war without any regard to their citizenship, constitutional rights, or civil liberties. On February 19, 1942, President Roosevelt signed Executive Order No. 9066[9] authorizing the Secretary of War and the designated Military Commander to establish military areas and to exclude any or all persons citing military necessity, "[…], and with respect to which, the right of any person to enter, remain in, or leave shall be subject to whatever restrictions the Secretary of War or the appropriate Military Commander may impose in his discretion." This military regulation was later collectively applied to the West Coast Japanese without any due process. The forced removal and incarceration of approximately 120,000 persons of Japanese parentage – around 86% of the Japanese population –, ⅔ of them

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[6] Thomas Sowell, "The Japanese," in *Ethnic America: A History* (New York: Basic Books, 1981), 167.

[7] Commission On Wartime Relocation And Internment Of Civilians, *Personal Justice Denied*, 43.

[8] Clifford I. Uyeda, ed., *Due Process: Americans of Japanese Ancestry and the United States Constitution 1787-1994* (San Francisco: National Japanese American Historical Society, 1995), 21, 22; United States War Relocation Authority, *Wartime Exile: The Exclusion of the Japanese Americans from the West Coast*, ed. Ruth E. McKee (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1946), 15.

[9] Exec. Order. No. 9066, 7 Fed. Reg. 1407 (February 25, 1942), accessed May 24, 2017, https://catalog.archives.gov/id/5730250; John L. DeWitt, *Final Report: Japanese Evacuation From The West Coast, 1942* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1943), 26-27.

American citizens, was seen by the Roosevelt Administration and the Department of War as a wartime military necessity due to the Japanese 'problem'. It has to be noted that the treatment of Japanese Americans was not a singular event in American history – rather it fits into a pattern of victimizing individuals and communities based on their political ideology, ethnicity, national origin, or race. In the event of war or national emergency the United States Federal Government and the American people have proven to be susceptible to scapegoating certain groups, not neglecting the persecution and exploitation of such ethnic groups as Native Americans and African Americans. This tendency has left a distinct mark on the history of civil liberty[10] in the United States, as in the case of the Alien Sedition Acts of 1798, the Espionage Act of 1917, and the Sedition Act of 1918, as well as the Nativist movement of the late 19th and early 20th century.

The Pearl Harbor Debacle and Members of Congress

The United States Congress swiftly responded to the passionate "Day of Infamy" Speech delivered by President Franklin D. Roosevelt on December 8, 1941, to a joint session of Congress, declaring war on the Empire of Japan by adopting S. J. Res. 116[11] and H. J. Res. 254[12] with a 82 *Yeas* to 0 *Nays* and 388 *Yeas* to 1 *Nays* ratio in the Senate and the House of Representatives respectively. The attack on Pearl Harbor was a devastating shock to the United States Navy and the American people. Representative Stephen M. Young went as far as to state to the Speaker of the House on December 9, 1941, that "[…] in the entire history of our Republic no naval defeat equals the magnitude of the disaster suffered by us on December 7 at Pearl Harbor."[13] It seems it was inevitable that Congress would call for inquiries into the events and possible negligence, dereliction of duty, and unpreparedness leading to that fateful day. The American political leadership was looking for scapegoats and initially they investigated amongst the circle of the Army and Navy Command

[10] In his analysis of civil liberty in wartime Geoffrey R. Stone concludes that in national emergencies the Federal Government and Courts are quick to judge suspected acts of dissent and opposition: "While the nation is at war, 'serious, abrasive criticism' was 'beyond constitutional protection.'" Geoffrey R. Stone, *War and Liberty. An American Dilemma: 1790 to the Present* (New York and London: W. W. Norton and Company, 2007), 62.

[11] Address by the President, S. J. Res. 116, on December 8, 1941, 77th Cong., 1st sess., *Congressional Record* 87, pt. 9: 9506.

[12] War Resolution, H. J. Res. 254, on December 8, 1941, 77th Cong., 1st sess., *Congressional Record* 87, pt. 9: 9536.

[13] Representative Stephen M. Young, speaking on Pearl Harbor, on December 9, 1941, 77th Cong., 1st sess., *Congressional Record* 87, pt. 14: A5500 (hereafter cited as Representative Young, speaking on Pearl Harbor, 87, pt. 14).

on the Hawaiian Islands. A frequent question concerning Pearl Harbor was: "Where was our vaunted Navy?"[14]

"Future generations of Americans will recall Pearl Harbor and December 7, 1941 and say that was our black Sunday. Hundreds of years from now, will this disaster be cited as a flagrant example of inattention, carelessness, and failure?"[15], philosophized Mr. Young only two days after the assault on the Island of Oahu. In a sense the Representative was right as the Pearl Harbor disaster is still a topic of heated debate, however this statement can also be applied to the forced removal and incarceration of Japanese Americans. In the search for scapegoats, Japanese persons were the ones to be named next on the list of suspects to be held accountable for potential subversive activities, espionage and sabotage. This philosophical question can thus be also applied to the role of Congress, the suffering of the Japanese American community and how it is interpreted today after more than half a century.

The United States Congress and the Japanese 'Menace'

Before introducing the debate leading to Public Law No. 503 it is vital to highlight the political atmosphere prior to March of 1942, the approval of the aforementioned public law. Members of Congress were deeply affected by the assault on Pearl Harbor, expressing their allegiance and loyalty to the Roosevelt Administration in its campaign to defend the nation against the Empire of Japan. The remarks and speeches delivered on the floor of the Senate and the House of Representatives – chronicled in the *Congressional Records*[16] – paint an ominous picture of the Japanese 'enemy aliens' and subversives, the Japanese 'Fifth Column' menace. A frequent subject is the lack of assimilation, Americanization, the issue of dual citizenship, and the Japanese 'problem' on the West Coast. The debates in Congress and the political discourse were dominated by anti-Japanese statements and racial stereotypes – racial prejudice –, which echoed the debates over the exclusion of Asian immigrants, the ineligibility of Japanese aliens to become naturalized citizens, leading up to the Immigration Act of 1924.

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[14] Representative Young, speaking on Pearl Harbor, 87, pt. 14: A5500.

[15] Representative Young, speaking on Pearl Harbor, 87, pt. 14: A5500.

[16] For the present paper the author examines the remarks raised and views expressed by Members of Congress during the initial months of the war and the 'evacuation' program, included in the *Congressional Records* of the House of Representatives and the Senate, 1st sess. and 2nd sess. of the 77th Cong., Volume 87, 1941, and Volume 88, 1942.

Over the succeeding weeks members of the House and Senate shared their views on the Japanese ethnic community, only a few making a distinction between Japanese nationals (aliens) and Japanese Americans (American citizens of Japanese parentage) living in the United States. Representative Harry L. Haines went as far as to state on December 9, 1941, that someone is either an American or not. Mr. Haines firmly stated, that "[a]ny man who says he is an American and something else also is no American at all."[17] He called for allegiance in order to make the sacrifices needed for victory, to eliminate the enemies within and to avenge the loss of American lives. Representative Haines voted for the declaration of war because it was a war for the defense of liberty. It was not a war of conquest, but rather a call to "take up arms in defense of our own national security."[18] At this point no one could have foreseen that the sacrifice demanded of the Japanese would entail their collective removal from the Pacific Coast, interpreted as the contribution of the community to the war effort. From January of 1942 onwards there were voices of concern raised over the Japanese 'problem' resulting in mounting political pressure on Congress and the Roosevelt Administration.

The West Coast residents felt the urgent need to handle the Japanese population and pressured their representatives to raise this issue in Congress. On February 9, 1942, Representative John M. Costello addressed the House and stated that a West Coast Committee[19] was established by the delegates of the three western states, with members from the House and Senate, in order to examine the Japanese 'problem' and to publish its findings and recommendations. The Committee felt that the Federal Government had to consider the removal of Japanese persons from defense areas, and their relocation to the interior. To make his assessment more profound his remarks included the radio address of Fletcher Bowron[20], the Mayor of Los Angeles, from February 5, 1942. The address served to illustrate the menace of the disloyal Japanese populace. It seems that by February the people and the state administration of California were looking for an actual federal policy and action. There was clear evidence of war hysteria, considering that California was arguing for the 'evacuation' of Japanese residents because of their 'overwhelming' numbers, their

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[17] Representative Harry L. Haines, speaking on War Resolution, on December 9, 1941, 77th Cong., 1st sess., *Congressional Record* 87, pt. 14: A5490 (hereafter cited as Representative Haines, speaking on War Resolution, 87, pt. 14).

[18] Representative Haines, speaking on War Resolution, 87, pt. 14: A5490.

[19] Representative John M. Costello, speaking on The Japanese Problem in California, on February 9, 1942, 77th Cong., 2nd sess., *Congressional Record* 88, pt. 8: A457 (hereafter cited as Representative Costello, speaking on The Japanese Problem in California, 88, pt. 8).

[20] Representative Costello, speaking on The Japanese Problem in California, 88, pt. 8: A457.

concentration and distribution in the State. According to the data[21] provided by Mayor Bowron, the Los Angeles Japanese accounted for about 1/5 of all the Japanese in America, and ¼ of California's Japanese lived within the city limits of Los Angeles. Altogether, there were approximately 126,000 Japanese residents in the Continental United States and 93,000 of them lived in the state, with 39% residing in Los Angeles County and 23,321 in Los Angeles. Los Angeles was portrayed as the center of Japanese subversive activities, of sleeping agents waiting to betray Angelenos in case of an invasion, going as far as to refer to L.A. as the "human sacrifice"[22] if attacked by invading Japanese forces. His prejudice towards Japanese people was based on racial antagonism, the belief that the Japanese race could not be assimilated on account of its different physical appearance, training, and philosophy. It should be added at this point that according to the Office of War Information (O.W.I.) Japanese Intelligence depended on non-Japanese agents living in the U.S. as they believed that Japanese Americans were untrustworthy, and were regarded as cultural traitors.[23] Furthermore, not one Japanese American was convicted of sabotage or espionage on the Hawaiian Islands or the Mainland based on an O.W.I. report from June 14, 1943.[24] We might also refer to the findings of the Munson intelligence reports[25] on the Hawaiian and West Coast Japanese residents, prepared by Curtis B. Munson in 1941 at the request of the White House, which found that the large majority of the Issei and approximately 90% to 98% of the Nisei were loyal to America.

The Mayor called for the wholesale exclusion of Japanese nationals from the coastal areas, or their detention in "concentration camps".[26] Needless to say, no evidence was provided to support the claims made on Japanese disloyalty and subversive activities. The lack of subversive activity was in fact construed by many, including the designated Military Commander, as proof of the disloyalty of the Japanese Americans. "The Japanese

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[21] Representative Costello, speaking on The Japanese Problem in California, 88, pt. 8: A458.

[22] Representative Costello, speaking on The Japanese Problem in California, 88, pt. 8: A458.

[23] Eric J. Sundquist, "The Japanese-American Internment: A Reappraisal," *The American Scholar* 57, no. 4 (1988), 542.

[24] Carey McWilliams, *What About Our Japanese-Americans?* (New York: Public Affairs Committee, 1944), 8.

[25] Curtis B. Munson, December 8, 1941, Report On Hawaiian Islands, Box 1, Folder Roosevelt Lib. Materials, 1941-1942, Series 1, JACL Redress Collection, Japanese American National Library, San Francisco; John Franklin Carter to President Franklin D. Roosevelt, December 8, 1941, Box 1, Folder Roosevelt Lib. Materials, 1941-1942, Series 1, JACL Redress Collection, Japanese American National Library, San Francisco; Curtis B. Munson, Japanese On The West Coast Report, November 7, 1941, *President Franklin D. Roosevelt's Office Files, 1933-1945. Part 3: Departmental Correspondence Files*, microfilm, Roosevelt Study Center, Middelburg, Netherlands, Reel 33.

[26] Representative Costello, speaking on The Japanese Problem in California, 88, pt. 8: A458.

race is an enemy race, and while many second and third generation Japanese born on United States soil, possessed of United States citizenship, have become 'Americanized,' the racial strains are undiluted,"[27] reasoned Lt. General DeWitt.

A great majority of the American public felt that Japanese persons should voluntarily accept their removal and incarceration, believing that they should sacrifice their freedoms and liberties at the altar of national defense and military necessity, even though other 'enemy aliens' were not forced to face the same choice. The separate treatment of the German and Italian community[28] – treated on an individual basis – reflects the selective discriminatory treatment of the Japanese, the victims of racial profiling. This notion of voluntary relocation as proof of allegiance to America was shared by certain Members of Congress, for example Representative Leland M. Ford. Mr. Ford was of the firm conviction that if the Japanese relocated of their free will, their sacrifice would be a worthy contribution to the war effort. Representative Ford regarded it as the responsibility of the loyal Japanese residents: "How better could they prove their loyalty?"[29], he pondered.

The Japanese 'menace' arose on numerous occasions as the delegates of the Pacific Coast states met four times by February 23, 1942. The West Coast delegates were in contact with the Executive, exchanged correspondence with the Secretary of War, Secretary of Navy, Secretary of State, and the Attorney General, including the F.B.I.[30] According to Representative Ford, the conclusion of their investigation was that all Japanese persons, aliens and loyal American citizens, should be removed from defense areas.[31] It would be considered a dereliction of duty if Congress did not do everything in its power to prevent a Japanese attack. The delegates reasoned that the defense of America was paramount. In the meantime, Mr. Ford insisted that the relocation of the Japanese populace should be handled in a democratic way, with consideration, justice, and humanity. "Is it not evi-

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[27] Peter Irons, "A Jap's a Jap," in *A People's History of the Supreme Court: The Men and Women Whose Cases and Decisions Have Shaped Our Constitution* (New York: Penguin Books, 2000), 350.

[28] Attorney General Francis Biddle insisted in his memorandum to President Franklin D. Roosevelt on April 17, 1943, that Executive Order No. 9066 was drafted to authorize the exclusion of persons of Japanese ancestry from the West Coast, and was not intended to apply to Germans and Italians. Francis Biddle to President Franklin D. Roosevelt, April 17, 1943, Box 1, Folder Documents: Francis Biddle, 1942-1944, Series 1, JACL Redress Collection, Japanese American National Library, San Francisco.

[29] Representative Leland M. Ford, speaking on Defense of the West Coast Area, on February 23, 1942, 77th Cong., 2nd sess., *Congressional Record* 88, pt. 8: A661 (hereafter cited as Representative Ford, speaking on Defense of the West Coast Area, 88, pt. 8).

[30] Representative Ford, speaking on Defense of the West Coast Area, 88, pt. 8: A661.

[31] Representative Ford, speaking on Defense of the West Coast Area, 88, pt. 8: A661.

dent, therefore, that removal of all Japanese is a very humanitarian way to treat this whole problem?"[32], he remarked.

The representatives of the Pacific Coast states placed significant political pressure on the Roosevelt Administration and the Federal Government, demanding immediate action. The West Coast delegation[33] met on February 13, 1942, in the office of Senator Hiram Johnson. It was decided that they would recommend to the President the 'evacuation' of Japanese persons from the Pacific Coast. If the Japanese 'question' was not handled appropriately, then the West Coast states would take direct action, which might result in race tension and violence. Representative Ford called the attention of Congress to this possibility in his remarks on February 23, 1942, "[…] if the departments will act quickly and do this promptly, any cause for the people of California, either individually or collectively, to take direct action, will be removed, and there will be no disorder, no riots, and no violations of race against race."[34] This statement contrasts with his earlier remarks on the humanitarian treatment of the Japanese community, and it can be interpreted as a warning to the Government and Japanese Americans, or maybe even as a threat. If the Federal Government did not respond to the political pressure, race tension, or violence, could have been a possible alternative.

Members of Congress summarized their findings in a recommendation prepared for President Roosevelt. The *Recommendation*[35] of the West Coast delegation was quoted on the floor of the House of Representatives by Richard J. Welch on February 23, 1942. The document cited the need to defend strategic industrial and military areas by relocating all Japanese persons into the interior across the Sierra Nevada and Sierra Madre Mountains. In this way the West Coast states certainly made a case for the removal of the Japanese aliens and citizens. Notwithstanding, some felt that the Federal Government had not taken to heart their warnings and recommendations. On March 7th Representative Carl Hinshaw accused the Government of "diddling around with this Japanese problem on the West Coast."[36] Nonetheless, following the initiation of the exclusion program Representative Martin F.

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[32] Representative Ford, speaking on Defense of the West Coast Area, 88, pt. 8: A661.

[33] McWilliams, *What About Our Japanese-Americans?*, 6.

[34] Representative Ford, speaking on Defense of the West Coast Area, 88, pt. 8: A662.

[35] Representative Richard J. Welch, speaking on The Alien Transfer Problem, on February 23, 1942, 77th Cong., 2nd sess., *Congressional Record* 88, pt. 8: A663.

[36] Representative Carl Hinshaw, speaking on The Japanese Situation on the West Coast, on March 7, 1942, 77th Cong., 2nd sess., *Congressional* Record 88, pt. 2: A2032.

Smith[37] firmly declared on July 27, 1942, that the President acted on the recommendations of the West Coast committee by authorizing the removal of all persons of Japanese descent from strategic defense areas on the Pacific Coast, implying that it was the result of continued pressure on the Roosevelt Administration. The exclusion, incarceration, and resettlement of Japanese persons "were expedited by our efforts"[38], stated the Representative.

Anti-Japanese Sentiments on the Floor of the United States Congress

The pressure to relocate Japanese persons and to detain them in 'concentration camps' only intensified, going as far as accusing civil liberty organizations with un-American activities for opposing the 'evacuation' program. John E. Rankin accused the Civil Liberties Union of being a Communist and un-American organization – the charges were made in the House of Representatives on February 23, 1942, in response to their protest against the removal order.[39] Mr. Rankin was in favor of placing the "treacherous Japs" in "concentration camps" in the Territory of Alaska and Hawaii, and in the Continental United States. In support of his arguments the Representative cited false rumors from the sensationalized articles and headlines that filled newspapers in the aftermath of Pearl Harbor. The Representative's remarks showed evidence of racial prejudice towards the Japanese, who according to his opinion could not be assimilated and threatened the Government, as well as the American way of life and civilization: "[…] these treacherous Japs, who have sponged on our generosity for their very existence, are now driving the dagger in our backs."[40] Further elaborating that they could not be assimilated: "Once a Jap, always a Jap. We cannot afford to trust any of them. The leopard cannot change his spots."[41] This view of the Japanese was shared by military officials. Lt. General DeWitt later made a similar declaration before a congressional committee, arguing that citizenship did not change the status or loyalty of Japanese Americans, nor their ties to the Empire of Japan.[42] Mr. Rankin did not recognize the citizenship of the Nisei, because the practice of

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[37] Representative Martin F. Smith, speaking on Defense of the Pacific Coast – Work of Congressional Committees, on July 27, 1942, 77th Cong., 2nd sess., *Congressional Record* 88, pt. 5: 6669 (hereafter cited as Representative Smith, speaking on Defense of the Pacific Coast, 88, pt. 5).

[38] Representative Smith, speaking on Defense of the Pacific Coast, 88, pt. 5: 6669.

[39] Representative John E. Rankin, speaking on Concentration Camps for Japanese, on February 23, 1942, 77th Cong., 2nd sess., *Congressional Record* 88, pt. 8: A768 (hereafter cited as Representative Rankin, speaking on Concentration Camps for Japanese, 88, pt. 8).

[40] Representative Rankin, speaking on Concentration Camps for Japanese, 88, pt. 8: A768.

[41] Representative Rankin, speaking on Concentration Camps for Japanese, 88, pt. 8: A768-769.

[42] Irons, "A Jap's a Jap," 350.

dual citizenship[43] within the Japanese community raised certain constitutional questions. The Representative maintained that "[w]hile born in the United States, they did not become citizens because they were not subject to the jurisdiction thereof, but were subjects of Japan."[44] He did not believe that the children of Japanese aliens were covered by the provisions of the 14th Amendment of the Constitution, since they were Japanese citizens. This demonstrated a complete disregard of the Supreme Court's decision in the *United States v. Wong Kim Ark, 169 U.S. 649* (1898)[45] case on the citizenship clause of the 14th Amendment. The question of citizenship was not only a constitutional issue, but also a racial one with Mr. Rankin proclaiming that "America [is] for Americans", and the Japanese should be deported since they can never become citizens or Americans because of their racial and religious differences.[46]

The fear of a Japanese invasion was firmly entrenched in the conscience of the Representatives and Senators who were responsible for their constituents. There were three notable incidents[47] that reinforced the call for swift and firm action in countering the Japanese 'menace'. One of these incidents was the shelling of the West Coast near Santa Barbara, California, on the night of February 23, 1942, by a Japanese submarine. It was the district of Representative Alfred J. Elliott[48], who addressed the House on February 24 in response to the Japanese attack. Mr. Elliott believed that the Japanese presented a national security threat to the "defense infrastructure", which consisted of ideal targets for the Japanese 'Fifth Column':[49] oil fields, hydroelectric and steam plants, forests, and airfields within the proximity of Japanese communities. He demanded the removal of all Japanese on the grounds that "[i]t is known that many of the American-born Japanese put

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[43] Representative Rankin, speaking on Concentration Camps for Japanese, 88, pt. 8: A769.

[44] Representative Rankin, speaking on Concentration Camps for Japanese, 88, pt. 8: A769.

[45] *United States v. Wong Kim Ark*, 169 U.S. 649 (1898), accessed April 19, 2019, https://supreme.justia.com/cases/federal/us/169/649/.

[46] Representative Rankin, speaking on Concentration Camps for Japanese, 88, pt. 8: A769.

[47] These incidents, direct attacks upon the Continental United States, were also cited by Lt. General John L. DeWitt in his *Final Report*, in his call for the mass exclusion of the West Coast Japanese populace. The Ellwood Oil Field and refinery at Goleta, near Santa Barbara, was attacked at 7:10 p.m., on February 23, 1942, by a Japanese submarine. On September 9, 1942, an enemy airplane launched from a submarine off the coast at Cape Blanco dropped 132-pound incendiary bombs on Mount Emily, near Brookings, with the objective of starting a forest fire. The third attack targeted the coastal battery guns near Astoria, Oregon, on June 21, 1942. Fort Stevens was shelled between 11:30 p.m. and 11:45 p.m. by an enemy submarine. DeWitt, *Final Report*, 18.

[48] Representative Alfred J. Elliott, speaking on Permission to address the House, on February 24, 1942, 77th Cong., 2nd sess., *Congressional Record* 88, pt. 2: A1565 (hereafter cited as Representative Elliott, speaking on Permission to address the House, 88, pt. 2).

[49] Representative Elliott, speaking on Permission to address the House, 88, pt. 2: A1565.

loyalty to Japan above loyalty to America."[50] For Representative Elliott the West Coast was a potential war zone and he believed that the Japanese should not be permitted to stay on the "front line", since the Japanese were ready "to strike a dagger at the heart of America."[51] America was at war, but he had the impression that the Federal Government had not comprehended the seriousness of the situation. Such anti-Japanese rhetoric and the fervent support for the war effort explains the lack of congressional oversight in regard to the military necessity justification of Public Law No. 503. Members of Congress were not inclined to question the requests and judgment of the officers of the War Department, accepting the paramount importance of national defense in wartime.

The Senate and House Debates over Public Law No. 503

One of the controversial laws passed by the Senate and the House of Representatives was Public Law No. 503, which provided the necessary legal enforcement requested by the War Department to proceed with the exclusion of persons of Japanese descent from the Pacific Coast military zones. The debate over Senate bill 2352[52] was held on March 19, 1942. The analysis of the *Congressional Record of Proceedings and Debates of the 77th Congress*, 2nd Session, allows for investigation of the issues that defined the discussion, and the role of Congress in restricting the freedom of aliens and citizens in military areas.

Based on the *Congressional Records* it cannot be disputed that there was a symbiosis between Congress and the Department of War in providing an adequate means of enforcement of the military regulations to be issued later by the Western Defense Command. It was Henry L. Stimson, the Secretary of War, who requested of Senator Robert Reynolds, Chairman of the Committee on Military Affairs, on March 9, 1942, to introduce Senate bill 2352.[53] In his letter the Secretary of War sent a draft of the bill and described it as the following: "A bill to provide a penalty for violation of restrictions or orders with respect to persons entering, remaining in, or leaving military areas or zones, which the War Department recommends to be enacted into law."[54] Secretary Stimson wished to have a

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[50] Representative Elliott, speaking on Permission to address the House, 88, pt. 2: A1565.

[51] Representative Elliott, speaking on Permission to address the House, 88, pt. 2: A1565.

[52] Control of Aliens and Others in Military Zones, S. 2352, on March 19, 1942, 77th Cong., 2nd sess., *Congressional Record* 88, pt. 2: 2722-2726 (hereafter cited as Control of Aliens and Others in Military Zones, S. 2352, 88, pt. 2).

[53] Senator Robert Reynolds, speaking on S. 2352, on March 19, 1942, 77th Cong., 2nd sess., *Congressional Record* 88, pt. 2: 2722, 2725 (hereafter cited as Senator Reynolds, speaking on S. 2352, 88, pt. 2).

[54] Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson's letter of March 9, 1942, S. 2352, on March 19, 1942, 77th Cong., 2nd sess., *Congressional Record* 88, pt. 2: 2722.

means of legal enforcement of the military orders in the Federal Criminal Courts. The bill was referred to the Senate Committee on Military Affairs, which was assembled on March 13, 1942, to discuss and review the bill with Col. B. M. Bryan representing the War Department. On the floor of the Senate Mr. Reynolds addressed the circumstances and the reasons for introducing bill 2352, painting an image of the enemy alien menace on the West Coast and fostering a need for the protection of the American people and the defense industry on the Home Front.

The bill requested by the War Department provided extensive powers to defend the military zones. This authority applied collectively to 'enemy aliens' and also American citizens of Japanese ancestry. Senator Reynolds quoted Colonel Bryan who stated before the Committee that "[t]he purpose of this bill is to provide for enforcement in the Federal courts of orders issued under the authority of this proclamation."[55] At the time there was no penalty provided for violating the military regulations. Lt. General DeWitt informed Colonel Bryan the day before the Committee convened that the passage of the bill was necessary in order to duly execute the provisions of the Executive Order issued by President Roosevelt. The report of the Committee was favorable and recommended that the Senate confirm S. 2352.[56] Members of the Committee felt that the passage of the bill was a "military necessity".

Senator Reynolds was also contacted by Robert Patterson, Acting Secretary of War, on March 13, 1942. The letter[57] was attached to the proceedings on bill S. 2352. It provides grounds for further analysis of the military necessity argumentation of the Department of War. Acting Secretary Patterson informed Mr. Reynolds of his telephone conversation with Lt. General DeWitt on March 12, 1942. The Commanding General appealed for an acceleration of the legislative process with regards to S. 2352 and H. R. 6758. Furthermore, he desired a bill which would be broad enough to enforce restrictions within the designated military areas, such as a curfew order, in the interest of national defense. The Lt. General did not want to act without proper legal basis. "General De Witt indicated that he was prepared to enforce certain restrictions at once for the purpose of protecting certain vital national defense interests, but did not desire to proceed until enforcement machinery had been set up,"[58] wrote Mr. Patterson. This letter is a further indication of

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[55] Senator Reynolds, speaking on S. 2352, 88, pt. 2: 2724.

[56] Committee on Military Affairs Report, S. 2352, on March 19, 1942, 77th Cong., 2nd sess., *Congressional Record* 88, pt. 2: 2725.

[57] Acting Secretary of War Robert Patterson's letter of March 13, 1942, S. 2352, on March 19, 1942, 77th Cong., 2nd sess., *Congressional Record* 88, pt. 2: 2725 (hereafter cited as Robert Patterson's letter of March 13, 1942, 88, pt. 2).

[58] Robert Patterson's letter of March 13, 1942, 88, pt. 2: 2725.

the close cooperation between Congress and the Department of War. No evidence is provided that the Committee, or Members of Congress, investigated the military necessity justification, or extensively scrutinized the arguments listed by the Executive or the Military Commander.

S. 2352 passed in the Senate on March 19, 1942; an identical bill to H. R. 6758 approved by the House of Representatives the same day.[59] The bill was introduced in the House at the request of the Secretary of War on March 10, 1942. Secretary Stimson had exchanged correspondence and the draft of the proposed legislation simultaneously with the Chairman of the Senate Committee on Military Affairs and also with the Speaker of the House of Representatives.[60] The Department of Justice concurred with the content of the bill and was included in the drafting of the legislation, just as in the drafting of Executive Order No. 9066. The tools for enforcing the restrictive regulations were realized in Public Law No. 503 and were provided legal enforcement in the Federal Criminal Courts. The War Department and the Commanding General received the statute – the means to enforce the military regulations –, which they had requested from Congress. The draft prepared by the War Department was approved, thereby Public Law No. 503 became the symbol of a united Congress. Only two days after it was approved by Members of Congress the bill awaited for President Franklin D. Roosevelt's signature, and was eventually signed into law on March 21, 1942.

Conclusion

The wartime prejudice experienced by the West Coast Japanese had a history of precedent which centered on the tradition of anti-Asian sentiments, the anti-Japanese movement, since the late 19th century. The anti-Asian phase of the Nativist movement had a significant impact on the Oriental community, one of its manifestations being the Chinese Exclusion Act[61] of 1882 and the subsequent anti-Japanese provisions. By 1924 the United States Congress had accepted the concept of selective immigration on grounds of "racial

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[59] Control of Aliens and Others in Military Zones, S. 2352, 88, pt. 2: 2726.

[60] *Hirabayashi v. United States*, 320 U.S. 81 (1943), accessed September 27, 2018, https://caselaw.findlaw.com/us-supreme-court/320/81.html; DeWitt, *Final Report*, 29.

[61] The Chinese Exclusion Act proved to be a defining moment in federal immigration policy as it ended the "open door" ideology, henceforth immigration was restricted based on national origin and racial discrimination. This precedent is exemplified by the series of restrictive measures to prohibit the entry of undesired immigrants, eventually excluding Asians. Éva Eszter Szabó, "Bevándorlás és Faji Diszkrimináció az Egyesült Államokban (1880-1925)," *Századok* 133, no. 5 (1999): 988, 993.

and national origin".[62] The Native Sons of the Golden West, established in 1875, was one of the most prominent anti-Japanese organizations[63], which declared in its monthly publication *The Grizzly Bear* that California was "Japanized".[64] This long held prejudice was reinforced by the events of December 7, 1941, and by the war hysteria that swept America.

There were no partisan politics when it came to the Japanese question in 1942. "Partisan differences perished in the fires of Pearl Harbor. All became Americans dedicated to a common and an assured victory,"[65] declared Senator Ralph Brewster at the Maine Republican State Convention in 1942. The Imperial Japanese Navy not only sunk the battleships of the United States Navy, but the "Day of Infamy" also brought an end to partisan politics. Members of Congress were united by national security interests, the common effort to wage war successfully. From this perspective the approval of Public Law No. 503 was the war contribution of Congress in support of the Federal Government's war effort, expressing its loyalty and patriotism, although at the expense of civil liberty and tainted by expressions of racial antagonism. Such an influential bill passed in Congress in only twelve days in direct cooperation with the Roosevelt Administration. An evidence of the lack of any comprehensive debate or legal scrutiny over Public Law No. 503 is the fact that it amounted to only seven pages in the *Congressional Records*, despite its immense impact on the lives of an ethnic minority. Public Law No. 503 sealed the fate of the Japanese American community despite being, in the words of Senator Robert A. Taft, an "indefinite" and "uncertain" bill, the "'sloppiest' criminal law" he had ever seen.[66] The Statute of March 21, 1942, greatly restricted the civil liberties and rights of persons of Japanese ancestry citing military necessity, entailing their wartime incarceration on the grounds of their racial affinity to the enemy.

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[62] Szabó, "Bevándorlás és Faji Diszkrimináció az Egyesült Államokban (1880-1925)," 996.

[63] Various other anti-Japanese groups were founded over the decades, such as the Japanese and Korean Exclusion League, the California Oriental Exclusion League, California Joint Immigration Committee, and the Japanese Exclusion League. These organizations acted as pressure groups – via their anti-Japanese platform – seeking to exclude the Japanese, with the Native Sons declaring that "California was given by God to a white people." Roger Daniels, *The Politics of Prejudice: The Anti-Japanese Movement in California and the Struggle for Japanese Exclusion* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), 79.

[64] Daniels, *The Politics of Prejudice*, 85.

[65] Senator White, speaking on Address by Senator Brewster to Maine Republican State Convention, on April 6, 1942, 77th Cong., 2nd sess., *Congressional Record* 88, pt. 3: 3333.

[66] Senator Robert A. Taft, speaking on S. 2352, on March 19, 1942, 77th Cong., 2nd sess., *Congressional Record* 88, pt. 2: 2725-2726.

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Hermeneutical Uncertainty in Postmodern Detective Novels

Pro&Contra 3

No. 2 (2019) 27–46.

https://doi.org/10.33033/pc.2019.2.27

Abstract

The search for some form of absolute truth has long been regarded as one of the chief tasks of philosophy, even if there seems to be more validity in maintaining that we inhabit a world devoid of definitiveness, a world lacking a fixed centre where meaning becomes elusive and ambiguous. From the basis that this epistemological plurality is well reflected by textual hermeneutics, I wish to demonstrate how literature provides a means for testing radical (some might say untenable) philosophical positions, in this case uncertainty pushed to its extremes: due to their inherently polysemic nature, texts resist interpretation in the absolute sense and showcase the futility of seeking a definitive meaning. Since truth cannot be said to exist independently of language, it follows that what truth is also varies from subject to subject; truth is a made-up concept of the human mind with linguistic ambiguity playing a crucial role in constructing, interpreting and transmitting such truth.

The fictional equivalent of this approach can be found in the metadetective novels of Paul Auster and Thomas Pynchon: in both *City of Glass* and *The Crying of Lot 49* the protagonists are at pains to unearth a rational and all-encompassing pattern governing reality, with the texts suggesting that such patterns are rather imposed on the outside world than extracted from it. Meaning and truth are revealed to be the mental constructions of a subject reaching arbitrary decisions as to what facts to base their interpretation upon, rendering it nigh impossible to come to a collective and definitive conclusion.

Key words: detective novel, hermeneutics, language, uncertainty

The search for some form of absolute truth has long been regarded as one of the chief tasks of philosophy, even if the existence of such truth has repeatedly and more increasingly been called into question. Although when applied to real-life scenarios and the practical nature of day-to-day reality, the principle of absolute randomness is untenable without descending into chaos, literature offers a platform for philosophical experimentations which can yield insights that would otherwise be very difficult, if not impossible, to obtain. In the present case, the uncertainty and chance coincidences that form the backbone of Thomas Pynchon's *The Crying of Lot 49* and Paul Auster's *City of Glass* are on a level that one cannot plausibly encounter anywhere but in fictive circumstances. The characters are placed in unusual situations to test their skills of interpretation and tolerance of ambiguity – ultimately pushing them beyond breaking point. Readers, in turn, occupy a position analogous to that of the characters: they are expected to navigate the most perplexing of events and engage cognitive capabilities ("detective skills") that would be rarely required in reality.

Oedipa Maas and Daniel Quinn, the protagonists of *The Crying of Lot 49* and *City of Glass*, respectively, are forced to face a radically destabilised reality: they find themselves in

a world devoid of definitiveness, a world lacking a fixed centre, where meaning becomes elusive and ambiguous: Oedipa is tasked with executing the will of Pierce Inverarity, an immensely wealthy businessman, but (potentially) gets involved in a conspiracy mysteriously referred to as the Tristero; while Quinn is (mistakenly) hired to follow a man named Stillman who purportedly presents a threat to his son. As required of them by their initially straightforward job, the two amateur detectives attempt to unearth a rational and all-encompassing pattern governing reality, but the texts suggest that such patterns are rather imposed on the outside world than extracted from it. Additionally, through the allegory of the maze that manifests itself in the spatial structure of the city, the process of interpretation is shown to be a potentially infinite affair which, as the confused reader will be quick to discover, is strikingly similar to the reading process.

The Crying of Lot 49 and *City of Glass* are conventionally cast into the category of the metadetective novel. Paralleling the epistemological uncertainty of postmodern reality, the logical and lucid detective stories of the Holmesian type have been replaced by metadetective narratives where attempts at ratiocination, at trying to 'make sense of the world' invariably reveal the futility of such exercises. Through the failure of their detective-characters these texts reject the idea that reality is governed by a hidden but discoverable pattern and highlight the subjective and constructed nature of knowledge. This revelation often culminates in an ontological crisis for the detective as the absence of meaning calls into question and ultimately destroys their reason-based identity, leading to incurable scepticism, self-doubt or outright insanity, where the logicality missing from real life is contortedly restored by fleeing into solipsism. In this manner, what the eponymous "city of glass" promises is not "transparency, but reflection: a city of mirrors that displays its own impenetrability".[1]

Both texts are grounded on a perception of reality that is tacitly understood to be stable and meaningful, even if this meaning is a form of transcendental truth that is not evident at first sight: Quinn denotes this "generalised condition of things as they were" and "the ground on which the happenings of the world took place" with the word *fate*,[2] while Oedipa is of the view that "something fast enough, God or a digital machine, might have computed in advance the complex web" of the trajectory of an exploding hair spray can,[3] and associates the "true" Pacific with a kind of melting pot that "integrated or as-

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[1] Antoine Dechene, *Detective Fiction and the Problem of Knowledge: Perspectives on the Metacognitive Mystery Tale* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), 160.

[2] Paul Auster, *City of Glass* (London: Faber and Faber, 2011), 111.

[3] Thomas Pynchon, *The Crying of Lot 49* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2006), 25.

sumed the ugliness at any edge into some more general truth".[4] The crucial point here is that there is a hidden network whose knotty interconnections the perseverant, rational and open-minded inquirer can disentangle and arrive at what would best be termed truth. The initial perception of truth becomes more and more convincing with each subsequent discovery that fits the pattern, as can be seen in Oedipa's case: the more developed the linkage she discovers regarding the Tristero, the more convinced she becomes of its actual existence. But signs, clues and correlations follow all too neatly for unconditionally accepting that the surface faithfully corresponds to the underlying meaning (if there is such a meaning). To put it bluntly, 'it is too good to be true', and both *City of Glass* and *The Crying of Lot 49* indicate that their respective characters might wander too far into the hermeneutical swamps and warn the readers against committing the same mistake. Quinn, when drawing maps of Stillman's daily excursions, is aware of "ransacking the chaos of Stillman's movements for some glimmer of cogency" in order to find a "sense to them, no matter how obscure", admitting that "[p]erhaps he was looking for pictures in the clouds", but then he quickly dismisses his doubts and decides that "the coincidence was too striking" not to be true, thereby pushing him towards an existential crisis[5]. Likewise, in *The Crying of Lot 49* the boy band The Paranoids reappears at every twist and turn of the text, with the band's name serving as a convenient warning sign. Moreover, in the second half of the novel there is an allusion to the so-called Scurvhamite sect, who believed that life was "a brute automatism that led to eternal death", but the sect eventually disintegrated "into the gaudy clockwork of the doomed".[6]

That reality does not have an all-explaining reason or purpose to it is illustrated by the contrast between the tightly-knit mystery novel plots conceived by Quinn and his actual foray into the detective business. References to his surprise at how events unfold accompany Quinn's investigation: when Virginia Stillman answers the door for the first time, it is remarked that "[f]or some reason, Quinn had not been expecting this, and it threw him off track";[7] Stillman Sr's disappearance wrecks his "elaborate and meticulous plans" and it annoys him that "he had not taken this contingency into account";[8] or when the undercover Quinn meets one of the readers of his books (a scenario that he had often imagined), he finds that he "did not like the girl sitting next to him, and it offended him that she should be casually skimming the pages" of his novel.[9] As opposed

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4 Pynchon, *The Crying of Lot 49*, 41.
5 Auster, *City of Glass*, 68-70.
6 Pynchon, *The Crying of Lot 49*, 128.
7 Auster, *City of Glass*, 13.
8 Auster, *City of Glass*, 87.
9 Auster, *City of Glass*, 53.

to the well-plotted narratives Quinn has been writing, his (and, by extension, the reader's) continuously shattered expectations imply that the dominating factor in organising and comprehending reality is not rationality but chance. The leading role chance plays in *City of Glass* is foregrounded in the opening paragraph when Quinn's purely accidental recruitment is disclosed:

> It was a wrong number that started it, the telephone ringing three times in the dead of night, and the voice on the other end asking for someone he was not. Much later, when he was able to think about the things that happened to him, he would conclude that nothing was real except chance. But that was much later. In the beginning, there was simply the event and its consequences.[10]

The fact that Quinn eventually realises the unpredictability of reality is in contrast to what one would expect from a detective novel where, come the dénouement, the superficially disconnected facts and clues are pierced together by the reasoning mind of the detective, offering a holistic explanation of the events and restoring order into chaos. But *City of Glass* shows that "an event that is pure chance can neither be predicted by prior events nor prefigure subsequent events. Retrospection, which establishes causal connections from a perspective outside or beyond the events themselves, stumbles over a chance event".[11] A fitting example for the incalculability of reality, for "the contingent occurrence" which in Auster's novels is "a constant and intrusive presence in human existence",[12] is when Quinn is waiting for Stillman to arrive at the railway station so that he can start following him. No sooner had he caught sight of a man he reckoned to be Stillman than he spotted another Stillman, whose "face was the exact twin" but whose "actions were clearly independent" of the first man, compelling Quinn to an immediate decision as to how to proceed. He instantly realises that

> [t]here was nothing he could do now that would not be a mistake. Whatever choice he made—and he had to make a choice—would be arbitrary, a submission to chance. Uncertainty would haunt him to the end. At that moment, the two Stillmans started on their way again. The first turned right, the second turned left. Quinn craved an amoeba's body, wanting to cut himself in half and run off in two directions at once.[13]

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[10] Auster, *City of Glass*, 3.

[11] Madeleine Sorapure, "The Detective and the Author: *City of Glass*," in *Beyond the Red Notebook: Essays on Paul Auster*, ed. Dennis Barone (Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1996), 74.

[12] Brendan Martin, *Paul Auster's Postmodernity* (London and New York: Routledge, 2008), 103.

[13] Auster, *City of Glass*, 55-56.

Although by the end of the book Quinn has become practically insane by both attempting to find connections where there are none and by his propensity to overanalyse, in the initial stages he seems to doubt even the existence of a case to be solved: when all Stillman appears to be doing is wandering aimlessly and picking up random, discarded items from the ground, the thought creeps into Quinn's mind that "Stillman was a crazy old man who had forgotten his son. He could be followed to the end of time, and still nothing would happen".[14] Yet, fuelled by his belief "that human behaviour could be understood, that beneath the infinite facade of gestures, tics and silences, there was finally a coherence, an order, a source of motivation",[15] he presses on and coerces himself into inventing and accepting ever more strained theories concerning Stillman's motives and purposes. But little by little he is forced to capitulate and acknowledge the incorrectness of his perception of a rational, rule-obeying reality: "Quinn was nowhere now. He had nothing, he knew nothing, he knew that he knew nothing [...] This is New York, and tomorrow will be June third. If all goes well, the following day will be the fourth. But nothing is certain".[16]

Questioning even the orderly succession of days is a long way off from the original premise of a stable reality and this in turn suggests that the ideal of a form of absolute knowledge is unattainable; upon losing Stillman, it dawns on Quinn that he "could walk through the streets every day for the rest of his life, and still he would not find him. Everything had been reduced to chance, a nightmare of numbers and probabilities".[17] *The Crying of Lot 49* also frequently resonates with the ideas proposed in *City of Glass* that behind the "clues" and appearances there might be nothing to discover: Oedipa is hunting in public toilets for the muted post horn symbol with the aim of confirming the hypothesis she has established about the Tristero, but "all the walls, surprisingly, were blank. She could not say why, exactly, but felt threatened by this absence of even the marginal try at communication latrines are known for".[18]

Both Quinn and Oedipa go to extremes to "create a teleological narration", stubbornly suppressing their doubts that reality might be "determined by chance, that is, by the absence of signification".[19] They hold the traditional view that a) there is always a one-to-one correspondence between signified and signifier, and that b) signs are created for the purposes of communication and that they have inherent meaning. Oedipa

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[14] Auster, *City of Glass*, 64.
[15] Auster, *City of Glass*, 67.
[16] Auster, *City of Glass*, 104.
[17] Auster, *City of Glass*, 91.
[18] Pynchon, *The Crying of Lot 49*, 53.
[19] Dechene, *Detective Fiction and the Problem of Knowledge*, 162.

believes that things possess "a hieroglyphic sense of concealed meaning, of an intent to communicate",[20] and the text's abundant allusions to couriers, messengers and secret channels of communication seemingly reinforce this aspect. However, the ironic name of the underground mailing system—WASTE—and the method of posting letters by dropping them into designated trash cans indicate it may be a waste of time and effort to ascribe to them any definitive meaning or objective existence. Indeed, the playful subversion of well-known acronyms highlights the arbitrary nature of signs: in *The Crying of Lot 49*, CIA stands for Conjuration de los Insurgentes Anarquistas,[21] ACDC is short for Alameda County Death Cult,[22] and NADA, the name of a car dealership and Spanish for 'nothing', concentrates the text's infinite ambiguity into a paradox that is both a symbol and an antisymbol. Pynchon's use of such "shifting metaphors – typical of the novel's discourse – destabilise [Oedipa's] terrain while simultaneously tantalising her (and the reader) with its interconnections".[23] The names of characters function along the same line, a rather obvious one being our heroine, Oedipa, whose name immediately recalls the story of Oedipus and thus links Oedipa to that family of characters who 'specialise' in solving puzzles and crimes.[24] But perhaps the prime example for the proliferation of meanings and references is the muted post horn symbol, which "break[s] with every given context and engender[s] infinitely new contexts in an absolutely nonsaturable fashion"[25] to such an extent that it essentially loses its signifying capacity.

If it cannot be proved that a given sign exclusively corresponds to a given meaning, there can be no fixed ground for interpretation either. The ever-increasing number of signs that according to Oedipa are all linked to the Tristero are never definitively classified as really meaningful, pretending to be meaningful or not being meaningful at all, leaving Oedipa (and the helpless reader) with essentially three options—the Tristero really exists, the Tristero is a hoax or prank orchestrated by Inverarity at Oedipa's expense, or Oedipa is hallucinating everything—the validity of all of which could credibly be argued for. Oedipa's task is then made significantly harder by the fact that not only the evidence related to this supposed conspiracy and the role of the people she meets require interpretation, but

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[20] Pynchon, *The Crying of Lot 49*, 14.

[21] Pynchon, *The Crying of Lot 49*, 96.

[22] Pynchon, *The Crying of Lot 49*, 99.

[23] David Seed, "Media Systems in *The Crying of Lot 49*," in *American Postmodernity: Essays on the Recent Fiction of Thomas Pynchon*, ed. Ian D. Copestake (Bern: Peter Lang, 2003), 23.

[24] Seed, "Media Systems in *The Crying of Lot 49*," 29.

[25] Jacques Derrida, "Signature Event Context," in *Margins of Philosophy*, trans. Alan Bass (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1982), 320.

the nature and even the existence of the conspiracy cannot be verified either.[26] By refusing to play the arbiter, the text allows for and encourages hermeneutical undecidability where even the most contradictory oppositions can coexist, an experience familiar to Quinn as well who cannot decide once and for all whether Stillman is a cunning criminal to be kept an eye on or just a harmless old philosopher collecting junk. Oedipa and Quinn are "confronted with the impossibility of finding physical evidence or reliable truths to support their hypotheses and explain what, in fact, appears to be merely arbitrary or subject to endless doubt",[27] and neither of them can endure this state of indeterminacy with cheerful nonchalance for long. Quinn opts for self-delusion rather than admitting he might be a fool, and persuades himself "[h]ow much better it was to believe that all [Stillman's] steps were actually to some purpose";[28] promptly, just when he most needed it, he 'discovers' that Stillman's daily wanderings spell out the words 'the tower of Babel'.[29] Oedipa, on the other hand, flirts with the idea of self-induced solipsism ("Shall I project a world?") or even hopes she has gone "mentally ill" in order to fend off the "revelations which now seemed to come crowding in exponentially" and to escape the chilling fact that "[t]here was nobody who could help her. Nobody in the world. They were all on something, mad, possible enemies, dead".[30]

The word "possible" with its disquieting consequences is perhaps the most important concept of the texts, both of which make liberal use of modals, conditionals and hypothetical expressions. The characters' attempts at getting rid of the 'un-' in 'uncertainty' drive the plots forward: in *City of Glass*, whether Stillman is a criminal, or whether Quinn started to follow the right Stillman in the first place, and in *The Crying of Lot 49*, whether the Tristero really exists or Oedipa is merely pursuing hallucinations. The latter text, for instance, offers a carefully devised array of genuine, potential and invented clues as to the existence of the Tristero system, with references to the historical Thurn und Taxis post service at one end of the spectrum, and the allegation that the Tristero's wish to abolish postal monopoly was the cause of the French Revolution at the other. The texts, however, by opposing the linear narration of detective fictions and "mak[ing] lateral moves where resemblances proliferate",[31] cruelly cheat those readers who expect a final solution: similarly to the main characters, they will be left in a continual state of uncertainty, haunted by a multitude of possibilities that,

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[26] Brian McHale, *Postmodernist Fiction* (London and New York: Routledge, 1987), 22.

[27] Dechene, *Detective Fiction and the Problem of Knowledge*, 28.

[28] Auster, *City of Glass*, 61.

[29] Auster, *City of Glass*, 70.

[30] Pynchon, *The Crying of Lot 49*, 64, 141.

[31] Seed, "Media Systems in *The Crying of Lot 49*," 25.

because any "revelation it would imply would also entail a collapse or mutation of the novel's fundamental structure of doubt and deferral",[32] will never solidify into actualities. Their experience will reflect that of Oedipa, who founds her investigation on an idiosyncratic performance of a revenge tragedy and especially on its last two lines which later turn out to come from the "doubtful Whitechapel version" that "abounds in such corrupt and spurious lines" that makes it "hardly to be trusted".[33] Furthermore, the reaction of the readers to the prospect that the text intentionally 'makes no sense' may parallel Oedipa's. When she is confronted with the question if it ever crossed her mind that everything might be a hoax, the text says: "It had occurred to her. But like the thought that someday she would have to die, Oedipa had been steadfastly refusing to look at that possibility directly, or in any but the most accidental of lights. 'No,' she said, 'that's ridiculous.'".[34] But she will always harbour doubts as to the veracity of any interpretation, knowing well that "[b]ehind the hieroglyphic streets there would either be a transcendent meaning or only the earth [...] another mode of meaning behind the obvious, or none. Either Oedipa in the orbiting ecstasy of a true paranoia, or a real Tristero".[35] She is aware that all her efforts might only yield "compiled memories of clues, announcements, intimations, but never the central truth itself"[36] and she recognises the dangerous seduction of meaning-hunting because of "the way it fitted, logically, together".[37] Yet there is always a *what if*, and this *what if* motivates Oedipa to continue her investigation, and the same *what if* propels Oedipa to attend the auction of the forged stamp collection at the end of *The Crying of Lot 49*.

In many respects, *City of Glass* operates alongside the same principles of ambiguity as *The Crying of Lot 49*, but here there is another layer of uncertainty of a more narratological kind. With approximately 20 pages left, we are met with a curious passage:

> A long time passed. Exactly how long it is impossible to say. Weeks certainly, but perhaps even months. The account of this period is less full than the author would have liked. But information is scarce, and he has preferred to pass over in silence what could not be definitely confirmed. Since this story is based entirely on facts, the author feels it his duty not to overstep the bounds of the verifiable, to resist at all costs the perils of invention. Even

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[32] John Johnston, "Toward the Schizo-Text: Paranoia as Semiotic Regime in *The Crying of Lot 49*," in *New Essays on* The Crying of Lot 49, ed. Patrick O'Donnell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 68.

[33] Pynchon, *The Crying of Lot 49*, 81-82.

[34] Pynchon, *The Crying of Lot 49*, 138.

[35] Pynchon, *The Crying of Lot 49*, 150-151.

[36] Pynchon, *The Crying of Lot 49*, 76.

[37] Pynchon, *The Crying of Lot 49*, 33.

> the red notebook, which until now has provided a detailed account of Quinn's experiences, is suspect.[38]

And a little later:

> It was some time in mid-August when Quinn discovered that he no longer could hold out. The author has confirmed this date through diligent research. It is possible, however, that this moment occurred as early as late July, or as late as early September, since all investigations of this sort must make allowances for a certain margin of error. But, to the best of his knowledge, having considered the evidence carefully and sifted through all apparent contradictions, the author places the following events in August, somewhere between the twelfth and twenty-fifth of the month.[39]

As if things have not been complicated enough, the so-far conventional omniscient narration is revealed to be epistemologically doubtful. The very last pages of the novel show that the entire preceding story has been a speculation of an unnamed friend of the fictional Auster on the basis of Quinn's red notebook and Auster's conversation with him. Since he does not possess any first-hand experience of the events, it becomes impossible to decide which pieces of information can be trusted, which are the hard facts originating from Quinn's records and which issue merely from the narrator's imagination, and this obscurity pertains not only to "tying up loose ends and resolving marginal issues", but also to "decisive questions" and "crucial matters in the context of the detective story he writes".[40] The narrator seems at pains to retrospectively justify his chosen method of narration as a form of recompense for deceiving the readers for so long: he declares that following Quinn's disappearance it "would be foolish even to hazard a guess" as to what might have happened to him[41] and appeals to the reader's empathy and intellectual pride: "There were moments when the text was difficult to decipher, but I have done my best with it and have refrained from any interpretation. The red notebook, of course, is only half the story, as any sensitive reader will understand".[42] With this last statement, he implicitly acknowledges that he has filled in the numerous blanks left by Quinn's notebook with his own ideas and imaginary scenarios, in hindsight bestowing a distinctly different quality on earlier remarks such as this one near the beginning of the text: "Like so many

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[38] Auster, *City of Glass*, 114.
[39] Auster, *City of Glass*, 119.
[40] Sorapure, "The Detective and the Author," 75.
[41] Auster, *City of Glass*, 132.
[42] Auster, *City of Glass*, 133.

of the things that happened to him over the days and weeks that followed, Quinn could not be sure of any of it",[43] where the name of Quinn could easily be substituted for the "I" of the narrator.

A similar situation arises in *The Crying of Lot 49* if we recall that the reader is not granted access to the text of *The Courier's Tragedy*, the revenge tragedy that forms the basis of Oedipa's investigation, but only hears about it through the mediation of other characters who, for all we know, might misremember or misquote the play.[44] We furthermore have to question Oedipa's reliability who, despite being the novel's main focaliser, often displays unreliability and a "dangerous capacity for solipsism, her tendency to believe that the external world has been fabricated by her own mind".[45] The inherent and inevitable uncertainty present in all acts of narration exposes the subjective element in truth and implies that truth, as opposed to something passive waiting to be discovered by anyone caring enough for such matters, is a mental concept produced by human consciousness. Randolph Driblette, the director responsible for staging *The Courier's Tragedy*, seems to adhere to these principles when he lectures Oedipa on the 'meaning' of his stage representation while taking a shower:

> If I were to dissolve in here – speculated the voice out of the drifting stream –, be washed down the drain into the Pacific, what you saw tonight would vanish too [...] You can put together clues, develop a thesis, or several, about why characters reacted to the Trystero possibility the way they did, why the assassins came on, why the black costumes. You could waste your life that way and never touch the truth. Wharfinger supplied words and a yarn. I gave them life. That's it.[46]

It is evident in her later reflections upon her encounter with a homeless sailor that Oedipa internalised Driblette's message ("It astonished her to think that so much could be lost, even the quantity of hallucination belonging just to the sailor that the world would bear no further trace of"), but she takes a further step and links this invisible truth to language: "She knew, because she had held him, that he suffered DT's. Behind the initials was a metaphor [... which] was a thrust at truth and a lie, depending where you were [...] She knew that the sailor had seen worlds no other man had seen if only because there was that high magic to low puns...".[47] Oedipa realises that there is an intimate connection

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[43] Auster, *City of Glass*, 30.
[44] Seed, "Media Systems in *The Crying of Lot 49*," 30.
[45] McHale, *Postmodernist Fiction*, 23.
[46] Pynchon, *The Crying of Lot 49*, 62-63.
[47] Pynchon, *The Crying of Lot 49*, 104-5.

between linguistic and external meaning, between language and knowledge, a revelation which is also shared by Quinn in *City of Glass*. Since he is an author of mystery novels, his penchant for writing can safely be presupposed, but that he attributes a substantial amount of importance to writing and language becomes manifest when he buys the notorious red notebook for the Stillman case, with the narrator remarking that "[i]t would be helpful to have a separate place to records his thoughts, his observations, and his questions. In that way, perhaps, things might not get out of control".[48] Writing as a means of organising and solidifying knowledge appears again when Quinn, in one of his bouts of despair on account of not progressing with the case, briefly entertains the thought of stealing Stillman's own notebook and thus of securing invaluable and otherwise unattainable knowledge. But the firmest indication of how much words mean to Quinn comes at the end when, in his self-inflicted exile in an empty room, he spends all his waking days with trying to jot down all the epiphanies crossing his mind, with his identification of life with language evolving to such an extreme level that his last sentence is "[w]hat will happen when there are no more pages in the red notebook?".[49] Bearing in mind Quinn's eventual fate, however, writing was not the answer to the question of how to organise knowledge and arrive at the final truth.

The connection between language and reality becomes a central topic in *City of Glass* chiefly through Stillman's elaborately explained philosophical theory, according to which not only the failures of Quinn and his detective kindred, but also all the indeterminacy and arbitrariness in life may be encoded in the semantic structure of language itself. Stillman's main tenet is the representational incapability of linguistic signs, the cause of which he locates in the Fall of Man: he claims that whereas the original language of Paradise directly referred to the objects in themselves and thus carried truth value, after the Fall Satan's language, which he characterises as ambiguous and misleading, replaced this original language and has remained in use ever since. Polysemy has become an intrinsic part of linguistic signs, and since language is our quasi-exclusive means of conveying truth and knowledge, it is subject to incessant and infinite misunderstandings, promoting uncertainty and hindering our apprehension of reality *per se*. Stillman holds the view that the "clue to our salvation" and to truth is "to become masters of the words we speak, to make language answer our needs",[50] i.e. without restoring the referential potential of God's language, we have no chance of obtaining genuine truth and "we will continue to

[48] Auster, *City of Glass*, 38.
[49] Auster, *City of Glass*, 132.
[50] Auster, *City of Glass*, 81.

be lost".[51] Language as essentially a fossilised tool; this might remind one of a well-known forerunner, Friedrich Nietzsche, who defines truth in linguistic terms as well. For him, truth is a "movable host of metaphors, metonymies and anthropomorphisms [...] truths are illusions which we have forgotten are illusions; they are metaphors that have become worn out and have been drained of sensuous force [... telling truths] is the duty to lie according to a fixed convention".[52]

Apparently, there is a strong connection between language and truth, and indeed the ways and methods of understanding texts are not too dissimilar to comprehending reality. For the reading process, Wolfgang Iser developed the concept of the 'blank', a gap in the text that provides the stimulus for forming hypotheses regarding the underlying meaning of the text, the latent potential that, because it entirely depends on the reader's hermeneutical capacities, is responsible for the emergence of individual interpretations.[53] It is important to note that since blanks are invisible on the textual surface, the reader's active participation is indispensable to the construction of meaning; the "text's intention" cannot be located in the printed words alone, but "[o]ne has to decide to 'see' it. Thus it is possible to speak of the text's intention only as the result of a conjecture on the part of the reader".[54] A consequence of the unique predispositions and capacities of readers coupled with the linguistic polysemy inherent in all texts is that texts resist definitive interpretation, i.e. there is no absolute truth that can be extracted from them. This model of reading and meaning-generation resembles the process by which humans approach the world: we tend to approach reality as possessing, deep down, some hidden truth—some blanks waiting to be actualised—when in fact the 'meaning of life' is purely our projection, our idiosyncratic attempts at comprehending reality. Just as we expect texts to be coherent, unified wholes whose "message" can be understood, we refuse to look at the world as an essentially meaningless place whose main governing principle is randomness. But metadetective novels confront us with exactly this possibility, with a world where "detectives cannot detect, where investigation brings only questions, where reason brings absurdity and where end is no closure".[55]

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[51] Auster, *City of Glass*, 78.

[52] Friedrich Nietzsche, "On the Truth and Lies in a Nonmoral Sense," in *Philosophy and Truth: Selections from Nietzsche's Notebooks of the early 1870s*, ed. and trans. Daniel Breazeale (New Jersey: Humanities Press International, 1992), 84.

[53] Wolfgang Iser, *The Act of Reading: A Theory of Aesthetic Response* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980), 167.

[54] Umberto Eco, "Overinterpreting Texts," in *Interpretation and Overinterpretation*, ed. Stefan Collini (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 64.

[55] Michael Cook, *Narratives of Enclosure in Detective Fiction: The Locked Room Mystery* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 151.

It may be no coincidence, then, that Jorge Luis Borges, whom some consider an early forerunner of the postmodern detective stories, imagines humanity's quest for the final truth to take place in a labyrinthine library, where all books refer to other books in an infinite and potentially circular chain. The labyrinth as a hermeneutical symbol is rather apt as it can, and in metadetective novels it frequently does, represent both the text and the city where the investigation occurs, firmly linking together language and reality. Both *The Crying of Lot 49* and *City of Glass* are concerned with "urban hieroglyphics" where mental activities like interpretation and puzzle-solving acquire a spatial dimension by their association with walking and travelling:[56] Oedipa collects more and more evidence for the existence of a secret communicational network while visiting the late Inverarity's properties spread throughout California, whereas Quinn tries to understand Stillman's motives by following him through the streets of New York and 'reading' the maps of his excursions. The city thus represents the human mind in its externalised form where connections are drawn and signs are interpreted but, if we stick to the maze metaphor, it is also a space where getting lost is easier than locating the centre or attaining a holistic overview of the system. The postmodern notion of the rhizome may be an even more fitting metaphor here: a rhizome is a neverending network where everything is inter-connected with everything else and where "every local description tends to be a mere hypothesis about the network as a whole. Within the rhizome, thinking means feeling one's way, in other words, by conjecture".[57] For Quinn, New York (and ultimately his own mind) becomes a rhizome of infinite possibilities and consequently with no escape, a prospect that is already foreshadowed in the very first pages of the novel: "New York was an inexhaustible space, a labyrinth of endless steps [... which] always left him with the feeling of being lost [...] New York was the nowhere he had built around himself, and he realised that he had no intention of ever leaving it again".[58] Indeed, during the course of his investigation Quinn soon finds out that New York is a "labyrinthine city of words in which signifiers can only refer to other signifiers", never touching the essence of things.[59] Perhaps it is no wonder that Stillman chose this gigantic mess of a metropolis, this "inexhaustible storehouse of shattered things" where the "disarray is universal",[60] as a starting point for his mission of repairing the broken relationship between language and reality. *The Crying of Lot 49* also thematises infrastructure systems and the urban environment as

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[56] Dechene, *Detective Fiction and the Problem of Knowledge*, 162.

[57] Umberto Eco, *From the Tree to the Labyrinth: Historical Studies on the Sign and Interpretation*, trans. Anthony Oldcorn (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2014), 54-55.

[58] Auster, *City of Glass*, 3-4.

[59] Dechene, *Detective Fiction and the Problem of Knowledge*, 163.

60 Auster, *City of Glass*, 78.

a metaphor for communication and interpretation: Oedipa once associates the layout of a city with the printed circuit of a radio, while the "freeways described in the novel are abstracted into information highways" and provide Oedipa with enough stimulus to forge new theories and expand previous ones.[61]

Since reading bears a striking similarity to investigation, detective novels can be considered allegories for the reading process, with the reader assuming the role of the detective. (Another interesting point is that both our detectives have literary affiliations: Quinn is a mystery writer and Oedipa has a degree in literature, which may render them predestined to deciphering signs.) The reading and detecting processes presuppose a similar mental attitude or disposition insofar as readers and detectives regard each hint and allusion as possibly "pregnant with potential purpose, haloed with a heightened, even hallucinatory, intensity of meaning".[62] What should not be forgotten, however, is that "[f]acts can acquire meaning only as a function of someone's subjectivity",[63] i.e. it is the interpreter's sole discretion how they decide to manage a certain piece of information and to what purposes; meaning emerges from subjective powers applied to facts, not from the facts in themselves. Furthermore, usually only those facts are singled out by the interpreter as significant that seem to corroborate their existing beliefs, as attested to by Oedipa:

> She had caught sight of the historical marker only because she'd gone back, deliberately, to Lake Inverarity one day, owing to this, what you might have to call, growing obsession, with "bringing something of herself"—even if that something was just her presence—to the scatter of business interests that had survived Inverarity. She would give them order, she would create constellations.[64]

Oedipa's urge to create parallels the "delight of [...] drawing together what seems disparate and disconnected into a satisfying pattern" exhibited by readers and detectives, with the caveat that meaning-construction is "not an arid analytical exercise but an inspired blend of intuition and imagination",[65] in other words the product of nearly untraceable cognitive processes. What makes a difference is to what degree a certain interpretation relies on strenuous leaps of faith, with Eco demonstrating the risks of transgressing beyond the limits of the acceptable with the accidental occurrence of the words 'crocodile' and 'while' within the same sentence:

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61 Seed, "Media Systems in *The Crying of Lot 49*," 22.
62 Rita Felski, *The Limits of Critique* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2015), 99.
63 David Bleich, *Subjective Criticism* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981), 28.
64 Pynchon, *The Crying of Lot 49*, 72.
65 Felski, *The Limits of Critique*, 108.

> [T]he difference between the sane interpretation and paranoiac interpretation lies in recognising that this relationship is minimal and not, on the contrary, deducing from this minimal relationship the maximum possible [...] the paranoiac is the person who begins to wonder about the mysterious motives that induced me to bring these to particular words together. The paranoiac sees beneath my example a secret, to which I allude. In order to read both the world and texts suspiciously one must have elaborated some kind of obsessive method.[66]

These imaginative games, therefore, can easily and quickly spiral out of control and lead to all sorts of mental disruptions and breakdowns. In *City of Glass*, Quinn's investigation slowly develops into an obsession, and to the realisation that reality, despite his best efforts to rationalise and regulate it, stubbornly deviates from the traditional, epistemologically-governed model, he responds by pursuing extremely idiosyncratic associations and interconnections, becoming a grotesque version of his fictional detective characters and eventually going insane. In *The Crying of Lot 49*, the overabundance and especially the radical indeterminacy of signs stretch Oedipa's coping skills to the limit, which brings her latent solipsistic-paranoiac predisposition to the surface. On the one hand, she is aware that she is risking madness if she oversteps certain boundaries ("[She felt] anxious that her revelation not expand beyond a certain point. Lest, possibly, it grow larger than she and assume her to itself"[67]), which she nevertheless seems to have done several times already (e.g. "She grew so to expect [the post horn] that perhaps she did not see it quite as often as she later was to remember seeing it"[68]). On the other hand, she is willing to and even prefers to embrace insanity ("she wanted it all to be fantasy—some clear result of her several wounds, needs, dark doubles. She wanted Hilarius to tell her she was some kind of a nut and needed a rest, and that there was no Trystero"[69]) if that entails the eradication of or at least a substantial reduction in the state of uncertainty she is in, which she finds so unbearable that she contemplates suicide, as she confesses to one of the supposed accomplices in the supposed conspiracy: "[I]t may be a practical joke for you, but it stopped being one for me a few hours ago. I got drunk and went driving on these freeways. Next time I may be more deliberate"[70].

Fittingly, Oedipa receives a rather cryptic reply which nevertheless does not discourage her from attending the auction of lot 49, the 'Tristero stamps'. In sharp contrast to Quinn who disappears without a trace, Oedipa at least seems to come to terms with cold

66 Eco, "Overinterpreting Texts," 48.
67 Pynchon, *The Crying of Lot 49*, 137.
68 Pynchon, *The Crying of Lot 49*, 100.
69 Pynchon, *The Crying of Lot 49*, 107.
70 Pynchon, *The Crying of Lot 49*, 146.

reality: that as opposed to being something ready-made waiting to be discovered, truth is a made-up concept of the human mind and linguistic ambiguity plays a crucial role in constructing, interpreting and transmitting it. While the familiar reasoning methodology of Sherlock Holmes "implies a perfect convergence of language and reality, in which signifiers and signifieds connect clearly and deliver a transparent, empirically verifiable narrative",[71] the "inadequacy of language to make sense of the world", a common theme in metadetective novels, subverts the rationalising tendencies prevalent in detective stories, "reveal[ing] the extent of the artifice involved in maintaining its narrative form".[72] As demonstrated within *The Crying of Lot 49* and *City of Glass*, literature provides an excellent platform for radical thought experiments, especially of the hermeneutic type: due to their inherently polysemic nature, texts resist interpretation in the absolute sense and showcase the futility of searching for definitive meaning. This becomes even more emphatic if we take a look at the conclusions of the texts, which could hardly be called the resolution that readers expect from a narrative: the plot of *The Crying of Lot 49* is abruptly cut off exactly at the point when the existence of the Tristero would finally be either affirmed or debunked, leaving the reader with their own personal projections; whereas in *City of Glass* the sudden appearance of another ontological layer in the form of an unreliable narrator means that the reader finishes the book with more unanswered questions than the more-or-less conventional beginning of the story would have predicted. Besides these possibly underwhelming, unresolved endings, in both novels the epistemological uncertainties and the labyrinths of real or imagined signs cause the protagonists (and perhaps even some readers) to experience episodes of paranoia, as if the multitude of interpretive options lying before them were a dangerous and maddening prospect, and the slippery fabric of the texts does nothing to clarify the result or indeed the rationale of their mission.

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[71] Dechene, *Detective Fiction and the Problem of Knowledge*, 163.

[72] Cook, *Narratives of Enclosure in Detective Fiction*, 144.

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Visual Narratives of Disability in Projective Drawing Test

Pro&Contra 3

No. 2 (2019) 47–67.

https://doi.org/10.33033/pc.2019.2.47

Abstract

Encountering someone with a disability may evoke anxiety but engaging in discourse about emotional disturbance is against the unwritten rules of acceptable behaviour in most Western societies. Attitudes toward disabilities are highly complex mental reactions which stem from a wide range of interacting factors. The aim of this pilot study was to uncover the various components of Hungarian adolescent students' attitudes through projective drawing tests. The test instruction was to 'draw a person with disabilities.' One hundred and sixteen drawings by Hungarian 7th- and 10th-grade students and thirty drawings by 11th-grade students were examined by six independent professionals.

The first and most noticeable aspect of the drawings was the personal engagement of the participants. Different patterns were identified as possible indicators of the drawer's inner representations of disabilities referring to social status, active or passive social roles, social isolation, inclusion, personal- or problem-centered point-of-view, or the emotional aspect of the drawer's attitude. The projective drawing test is a promising practice in education and research when planning or evaluating disability awareness projects.

Key words: DAP test, attitude, projective drawing test, disability, disability awareness.

1.1 Attitudes towards Disabilities

A central focus of social psychology is the study and measurement of attitudes, which are viewed as evaluative statements that predispose the individual to respond in a preferential way – in other words, predispositions to react positively or negatively to a person, object, or event. Attitudes consist of cognitive, affective, and behavioral components.[1]

In the context of disability, the attitude towards people with disabilities can be influenced by many contradictory factors.[2] Encountering someone with a disability may cause anxiety or even emotional disturbance. In most Western cultures, treating someone with a disability as an equal person is part of the societal and cultural norms; nevertheless, negative emotional responses upon perceiving a person with disabilities are normal human reactions. As Oaten et al. wrote, 'perceptions of difference and deviance are sufficient to

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[1] Michael A. Hogg and Graham M. Vaughan, *Social Psychology* (4th ed.) (London: Prentice-Hall, 2005); Richard M. Perloff, *The dynamics of persuasion: Communication and attitudes in the twenty-first century,* (4th ed.) (New York: Routledge, 2010).

[2] Susan Baglieri and Arthur Shapiro, *Disability Studies and the Inclusive Classroom: Critical Practices for Creating Least Restrictive Attitudes* (New York: Routledge, 2012); Mónika Kovács, "Az előítéletek okai és mérséklésük lehetőségei: a szociálpszichológiai nézőpont," *Alkalmazott Pszichológia* 12, no. 1–2 (2010): 7–27.

arouse existential anxiety; however, it is especially likely to occur when such differences generate concerns in people about their own vulnerability, such as when faced with physical disability and disfigurement'.[3] Visible signs of human fragility may evoke feelings of repulsion and discomfort. These unspoken and often shameful negative reactions or disturbing emotions and memories can cause deep and stable components of one's attitude. This potentially results in withdrawal from further interaction with people with disabilities and resistance to any programs or strategies aimed at positive change.

1.2 Discover the Unspoken: Projective Drawing Tests

When it is difficult to express thoughts or emotions, symbolization can improve communication. Visual expressions can open up space for self-disclosure and self-expression.[4] Drawings are widely used with children, because they reflect their inner worlds and express their emotions.[5] While drawing is a natural expression for children, drawing tests can be used for people of all ages: children, adolescents, and adults. Pre-adolescence is a critical period because verbal expressions become more important. Moreover, due to different developmental processes, there is a decline in drawing performance.[6] In this developmental state, young people are unsatisfied with their drawings; thus, pre-adolescents and adolescents constitute the most problematic age group for projective drawings tests. Nonetheless, as Kárpáti wrote, when adolescents are motivated by the topic and have a strong narrative intention, they are also inspired to draw.[7]

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[3] Megan Oaten, Richard I. Stevenson, and Trevor I. Case, "Disease avoidance as a functional basis for stigmatization," *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society Biological Sciences* 366 (2011): 3433-3452, doi: 10.1098/rstb.2011.0095, https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3189356/.

[4] Andrea Kárpáti and Lisa Kay, "Visual expression of beauty and ugliness in adolescent art," *International Journal of Education Through Art* 9, no.2 (2013): 155-171, https://doi: 10.1386/eta.9.2.155_1; Laurie Wilson, "Symbolism in art therapy", in *Approaches to art therapy*, ed. Judith A. Rubin, (2nd ed.), (New York: Brunner-Routledge, 2010) 40–53.

[5] Cathy A. Malchiodi, *The art therapy sourcebook* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2007); Sai P. Pala, Sivakumar Nuvvula, and Rekhalaskmi Kamatham, "Expression of pain and distress in children during dental extractions through drawings as a projective measure: A clinical study," *World Journal of Clinical Pediatrics* 5, no. 1 (2016): 102-111.; Maria Papandreu, "Communicating and thinking through drawing activity in early Childhood," *Journal of Research in Childhood Education* 28, no.1 (2012): 85-100, doi: 10.1080/02568543.2013.851131.

[6] Andrea Kárpáti, *A kamaszok vizuális nyelve* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 2005).

[7] Kárpáti, *A kamaszok*.

1.3 Draw-a-Person (DAP) Test

The draw-a-person (DAP) test is widely used in psychology, education, and research. Traditional use of these tests is based on assumptions that drawings serve as a self-representation of the examinee, showing many characteristics of his or her personality.[8] DAP tests are also used to assess children's representations of different themes – for example, social stereotypes and prejudice in inter-ethnic conflicts,[9] friendship,[10] basic emotions,[11] or gender stereotyping.[12]

According to Jolley,[13] visual expression is a developmental process. Until the age of six, facial indicators express feelings (e.g., they depict happiness with a smiling person). Children between the age of six and ten tend to draw more complex emotional scenes, adding contextual indicators or narratives to the drawings to depict the cause of emotions. Vass[14] defines projective drawing as 'an inner structure externalized through drawing movements that consist of [a varying degree of] five elements: learned cognitive schemes; analogue or transformed signs and symbols of pictorial communication; expressive movements; a personal construct of an individual reality; and, in some cases, traces of unconscious projection' (82).

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[8] István Hárdi, *A dinamikus rajzvizsgálat* (DRV. Budapest: Flaccus Kiadó, 2016); Zoltán Vass, *A psychological interpretation of drawings and paintings. The SSCA method: A systems analysis approach* (Pécs: Alexandra Publishing, 2013).

[9] Daniel Bar-Tal, and Yona Teichman, *Stereotypes and prejudice in conflict: Representation of Arabs in Israeli Jewish society* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Yona Teichman, "The development of Israeli children's images of Jews and Arabs and their expression in human figure drawings," *Developmental Psychology* 37 (2001): 749-761.

[10] Anna S. Bombi and Giuliana Pinto, "Making a dyad: Cohesion and distancing in children's pictorial representation of friendship," *British Journal of Developmental Psychology* 12 (1994): 563-575.

[11] Claire Brechet, René Baldy, and Delphine Picard, "How does Sam feel?: Children's labelling and drawing of basic emotions," *British Journal of Developmental Psychology* 27 (2009):587–606.

[12] David W. Chambers, "Stereotypic images of the scientists: The draw-a-scientist test," *Science Education* 67 (1983): 255–265.; Ann Colley, Eryn Berman, and Liz Van Millingen, "Age and gender differences in young people's perceptions of sport participants," *Journal of Applied Social Psychology* 35 (2006): 1440–1454.

[13] Richard P. Jolley, *Children and pictures: Drawing and understanding.* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2010).

[14] Zoltán Vass, "Phenotypes of aggressive psychiatric patients' and delinquents' projective drawings,' *Studia Casuistica* 2*, Supplement* 1. (2012).

2.1 The Research Process

The initial intention of this test was to gain a deeper understanding of a disability awareness program organized by one of the authors of the study and musicians with disabilities. The research hypotheses were:

1. Projective drawing tests could be a powerful tool for discovering the unspoken components of attitude towards disability.
2. It is possible to identify patterns of positive and negative attitudes.
3. While verbal feedback about a disability-awareness project was highly positive, some of the drawings will not reflect such a positive attitudinal change.

2.1.1 Methods: Draw-a-person with Disabilities Test

The model of this method was reported by Magyar and Meggyesné.[15] They instructed Hungarian elementary schools' students to 'draw a person with a disability'[16] in the hope of gaining an impression of their inner representation of disability. They compared these drawings with the selected and published drawings of the DrawDisability Campaign[17] to identify similarities and differences in the drawings. Their qualitative analysis identified different patterns of medical approach to disability, such as a hospitalized figure, loneliness of the disabled character, lack of social situation. The aim of the research was to continue this work and identify more graphical patterns that express positive or negative attitudes.

2.1.2 Data collection

116 drawings by Hungarian 7th- and 10th-grade students were examined. The instruction was to 'draw a person with a disability'. Tools included a set of 12 color pencils and a sheet of A/4-size paper. (The participants were not prohibited from using their own pencils or other tools.) The test was taken in their classrooms in a group overseen by instructors

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[15] Adél Magyar and Hosszú T. Meggyesné, "11-12 éves általános iskolai tanulók fogyatékosságról alkotott vizualizációjának elemzése," in *SJE Nemzetközi Tudományos Konferencia,* ed. György Juhász, Yvette Orsovics, and Melinda Nagy (Komárno, Szlovákia: Selye János Egyetem, 2016).

[16] In Hungarian there is no distinction between "Draw a person with a disability" and "Draw a person with disabilities."

[17] DrawDisability Campaign, a yearlong global campaign on inclusive education 2014, UNESCO. http://www.unesco.org/new/en/gefi/stories-events/recent-stories/2016/draw-disability-campaign-art-book/

and supervised by psychologists. The post-test was to describe in a few words a personal encounter with someone with a disability.

Significant differences were expected between the participants of the project and the control group, such as visual narratives of the event, or signs of emotional involvement. As there was high variability in the appearance of figures, we could not identify such evident signs.

2.1.3 Evaluation

In order to solve this problem two independent psychologists were asked to comment on the drawings. They were instructed to decide on the attitude of the drawer and to name the graphical patterns on which their opinion was based. Surprisingly, their judgments varied widely concerning the attitudes of the drawers, while there was significant agreement in their associations between graphical signs/patterns and their meanings.

After the first round of the research, the second hypothesis was demonstrated to be wrong.

2.2 Action Research - Second Circle:

2.2.1 Theoretical Background: The Seven Steps Configuration Analysis Method

The seven-step configuration analysis (SSCA) is a method of projective drawing analysis elaborated by Zoltán Vass.[18] This complex approach is based on 25 years of the author's research. Vass considers the picture, the drawer, the context, and the process as a multifarious system; thus, the drawing is only a sub-system with incomplete information.[19] He emphasizes the complexity and heterogeneity of drawings. Hence, instead of isolated features, the interrelationships of several features should be examined.

The method of (SSCA) provides detailed information about the drawer and the picture from seven different viewpoints. SSCA consists of the following stages: (1) collecting preliminary information about the examinee, and (2) observation of the drawing process: depiction decisions, production strategies, execution of movements, and latency after the instruction. The following steps assist in describing the picture: (3) phenomenological description, (4) intuitive assessment, (5) global assessment, (6) item analysis of unusual phenomena, and (7) grasping the essence of the drawing. These are consecutive phases, or viewpoints, that help identify interrelated patterns and configurations.

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[18] Vass, *A psychological interpretation*.

[19] Vass, *A psychological interpretation,* "Phenotypes of aggressive".

The complex view of Vass's method (especially the steps of intuitive, global, and item analysis) was employed to describe possible pictorial expressions of a wide range of attitudinal features. Intuitive analysis involves making a list of free impressions, in order to detect the viewer's spontaneous focus of attention, attempting to interpret the drawn figure's body position (kinesthetic empathy) and visualizing the drawing as if it were moving in space. Global analysis is aimed at gaining a complex impression of the emotionally affecting tone of the drawing – taking into consideration integration; harmony; spontaneity; dominance of forms, colors or movements; and the position of the picture or a particular figure in the sheet. Item analysis focuses on formal-structural elements – for example, the choice of viewpoint, symmetry, positioning, size and proportion, and the content and symbols of the drawings. This step consists of enactive analysis of the drawer's expressive movements, iconic analysis, visual expressions of the drawer's experiential world and symbolic level of personal narratives, and the subject's own associations, as well as archetypal, cultural and individual symbols and stereotypes.

Vass used artificial intelligence to establish a scientifically objective system to identify interrelated patterns of graphic features associated with psychological meanings, and the strength of connection among these patterns.[20] He discovered that instead of an unlimited variety of graphic manifestations, there are well defined patterns that occur together, representing meaningful interrelated patterns. He operationalized this method in the ESPD expert system. He used hierarchical cluster analysis to identify this well-defined group of items, the so-called configurations. Configurations are definitive features associated with a list of specific items, and those with certain psychological characteristics (trait, meaning, and interpretation), and a so-called *certainty factor*, which is a scaling system from 0 to 100. In this system it is important to avoid so-called signes-fixes interpretations (when a graphic sign is associated with only one meaning). In contrast, the meaning of a graphic item highly depends on the configuration in which the given item occurs. Moreover, co-occurring item-configurations mutually influence each other.

2.2.2 Adaptation of SSCA and Involvement of Professionals

The aim of Vass's method is the psychological interpretation of drawings and paintings, not the detection of the drawer's inner representation of disability, thus we could use the theoretical background of the method to avoid superficial interpretation, but the method itself could not provide a solution in our case. While it was not possible to collect more information from the drawers, we overcame this by approaching professionals from other

[20] Vass, *A psychological interpretation*, "Phenotypes of aggressive".

fields. In order to represent the complex and professional view of this method, a special-needs educator trained in SSCA method was involved.

Vass (2013) referred to the research of Feldman and Hunt,[21] in which clinicians and visual art teachers were asked about the same drawings. Clinicians detected emotional disturbances associated with different body parts, and art teachers highlighted the same body parts as they are difficult to draw. For example, adolescents frequently draw human figures with hidden hands – because drawing hands is highly challenging.[22] Thus, a visual art teacher and a painter were involved in the research so as to represent this important knowledge.

To emphasise the importance of intuitive and global analysis, such as cultural meaning, spontaneous focus of attention, global impression about the drawings, we involved a non-professional person too.

All judges were asked to find meaningful patterns in each and every drawing of the sample of 116 drawings. All these professionals were encouraged to share not only their professional knowledge, but also their associations about the figure, the thoughts and feelings of the drawer and the graphic features associated with this meaning. Following the steps of the content analysis, the semi-structured interviews were condensed, coded, and categorized. In order to avoid subjectivity, we neglected those interpretations that were not reinforced by other judges or by the modern literature of projective drawing tests.

2.3 Results of the First and Second Circles: Categories - Stereotypes

All of the professionals agreed that the extent of personal involvement was the first and most evident aspect of the drawings. After the long process of coding, we categorized the drawings of four different groups as one sample with the aim of defining patterns of drawings of people with disabilities associated with different components of the drawer's attitude towards disabilities.

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[21] M. Feldman and R.G. Hunt, "A relation of difficulty in drawing and ratings of adjustment based on human figure drawings," *Journal of Consulting Psychology* 22 (1958): 217–220.

[22] Cathy A. Malchiodi, *The art therapy*,

2.3.1 Four levels of Personal Involvement

A. Uninvolved

The first category of drawings included schematic pictures, circle-line schemes, and stick-figures. The stick figure is drawn with single lines, while circle-line schemes feature a trunk that is two-dimensional – whether a circle, an oval, or a rectangle. These kinds of drawings can be associated with evasiveness and non-compliance because they can be drawn fast without involving too much energy.[23] In this case, it is important to compare the drawing with other human figure drawings, to see if it is a specific answer for this test or typical of the person. Drawing schematic pictures is a normal developmental stage for adolescents.

B. Situation or problem

In this category, examinees did not draw a person, but a problem. A person in a wheelchair in front of stairs was a typical depiction. Being ostracized or isolated was also a typical thematic stereotype. The common feature of these pictures was that the environment was more elaborated than the figure itself, which also indicates a problem-oriented approach.

Faceless figures were also typical in the sample of the 116 drawings. The global quality of these figures was highly variable, from stick figures to artistic excellence. In some cases, these drawings are good compositions even without faces; in other cases, they seem to be unfinished. This characteristic rather belongs to the first two categories.

C. Identification

In this category, the person depicted is in the same age-group or older than the drawer by illustrating additional contents, such as accessories, sports gear, or play activities in a familiar environment, or in the situation, which is recognisable (e.g., at school). These drawings are positive because the person with a disability can be interpreted as 'one among us.'

D. Personal or Symbolic Pictures

According to Balázsné-Szűcs,[24] the narrative intention is an important feature of drawings. It indicates that the experience was important, and the drawer wants to express

23 Vass, *A psychological interpretation*; Hárdi, *A dinamikus.*

24 Judit Balázsné-Szűcs, *Rajzelemzés belemagyarázás nélkül* (Budapest: Szort Bt., 2008).

it. Narrative attitude typically appears in detailed pictures with complex scenes. These drawings use the whole paper for drawing. The composition, especially the use of colors, and ornaments increases the global quality of these pictures. In personal narratives, the examinee typically depicts a real person. It is clear from the post-test; or, in many cases, there are significances in the drawing itself (e.g. the name of an existing camp or foundation). Some other drawings were highly symbolic, even non-figurative, with a complex explanation. These drawings are associated with personal engagement and more complex representations of disability.

2.3.2 Other patterns associated with different aspects of disability

A. Inclusion or social isolation?

The subjective experience of the social environment around the person with a disability can be interpreted by analyzing the full, depiction or description of the surroundings in the participant's drawing. It also can represent the drawer's perspective of the depicted person's social situation, the drawer's inner world, and the space made for someone with a disability.[25] The majority of the figures are drawn as small on a blank paper. It can refer to the drawer's view about disability as a socially isolated life, but it may indicate a lack of integration in regard to the participant's personal experience of disability.[26] The global quality of these pictures is typically low, which reinforces the impression that the drawer has nothing to share about disability.

Most of the small figures are located in the top right corner of the paper. In projective tests this is a possible sign of fear of the surrounding world, low self-confidence, depression, lack of social relationships, and dependency, especially when the figure has an unsure, weak, and helpless empathic quality.[27] However, professionals should be cautious with the interpretation because it signifies various meanings at different levels. First, it may symbolize the drawer's own insecurity when encountering those with disabilities. Another interpretation could refer to real life experiences of the marginalized social state associated with people who have disabilities.

Features of some pictures show a natural environment with meaningful emotional connotations (sunshine, green fields) and social relationships (a lonely figure in the rain, two figures embracing, or a tree with a nest hole).

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[25] Vass, *A psychological interpretation*.
[26] Balázsné-Szűcs, *Rajzelemzés*.
[27] Vass, *A psychological interpretation*.

Another sign of social relationships is the gaze of the figure. Some of the figures give the impression of an existence beyond the picture plane, looking at the viewer searching for contact. We were able to identify a pattern of a lonely figure next to an empty chair or bank looking 'out' of the picture, as though waiting for someone. Figures depicted in the frontal view seem more open than those in profile, while arms crossed make the figure more closed.

The handle of the wheelchairs also serves as a 'meeting point', through which we can initiate contact with the person depicted.

B. Active or Passive Social role

Active and passive social roles appear in many aspects of the drawings, and wheelchairs are important symbols. Some of the chairs can be used by the owner, while others – for example, those with four small wheels at the bottom of the chair – can be pushed by another person. In some drawings, there are figures with missing lower limbs sitting in a simple chair. There are figures missing both upper and lower limbs, but in one drawing, one of the figures has an electric chair. In some pictures, a dependent social status is reinforced by a facial expression or open arms, while people talking or making expressive gestures are associated with agency and self-advocacy. Other signs of an active role include emphasis of the wheels, depicting the wheelchair user with fitness gloves. Happy or satisfied facial expressions are also a sign of an active social role. Wheelchairs are associated with security and support. Some of the chairs are depicted as big and comfortable, but the chair is bigger than its user. Extension of the body parts of wheelchair-users (especially the lower limbs) is also typical in the sample. These pictures are associated with security, but also with an unchangeable inactive or dependent status, signifying the ongoing need for help.

In drawings associated with independence, movement is more dominant than form. Quickly drawn lines are characteristics of motion-dominated pictures that create the impression of mobility and activity. In contrast, the dominance of form, which is a more controlled graphic expression, cause the picture to be more static. According to Vass,[28] in form-dominated pictures, intellectual aspects dominate; whereas movement-dominated pictures are more spontaneous and indicate the involvement of emotions, fantasy, and creativity.

[28] Vass, *A psychological interpretation.*

C. Equal or Underprivileged Social Status

Disability as an underprivileged social state is highly dominant throughout the whole sample. Faceless figures, drawings missing important facial features, bizarre non-human body-parts, or asexual depictions cast doubt on the humanity of the figure. In many of the drawings, the contour of the body and the wheelchair run one into the other. Others depict a mythical figure in a bizarre environment. As one of the professionals described these drawings, 'It is not a human with thoughts and emotions, it is *the disabled*.' A lack of hair can also be a sign of humiliation. For example, forced hair shaving is known as a dehumanizing procedure especially in the case of women.[29] Bald figures or child-like renderings may be associated with a childlike social state. Grotesque and caricature-like figures can be indicative of making fun of disabled people or using disability as a comedic trope.

Signs of equal social status are as follows: The figure typically stands and the empathic quality of the depicted person is as strong, healthy, and independent. The disability is visible, but not dominant. The quality of the lines can be firm and unhesitating, without interruptions or hesitant strokes. The optimal use of space, the central position of the drawing, and the stability and balance of the figure and the entire composition is typical in the sample. The emotional aspect of the drawing is happy or playful. Qualities associated with active social states and identification are also prevalent.

D. Disability as Unbearable Burden

Disability depicted as unhappiness, sadness, and ongoing grief was also typical in both the drawings and the post-test narratives. Pictorial signs of unhappiness were small and uncomfortable wheelchairs, in which it would not be possible to remain in for a lifetime and live a quality life. Word clouds with unfulfilled desires, downturned mouths, sad faces, and loneliness were typical in the sample. Frequently, responses have a depressing, empty, or cold emotional quality with dark colors or the use of only lead pencil, which was not officially offered for the test.

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[29] Elanie Webster, "Degradation: A Human Rights Law Perspective," In Humiliation, Degradation, Dehumanization Human Dignity Violated, ed. Paulus Kaufmann, Hannes Kuch, Christian Neuhaeuser, and Elanie Webster (London: Springer, 2011), 67–84.

E. Problem-centered or Person-centered Approach

Some of the drawings are more problem-centered, while others are person-oriented. Interesting features that correspond to the attitude of the drawer are the relation of the wheelchair to the person both in size and quality. There are big or detailed chairs with a simple, faceless individual or a stick figure. In others, the disability is visible, but not the central narrative of the picture. The focus of the viewer's spontaneous attention is also important. In some pictures, the stump of a limb is dominant due its central position or multiple reinforcement of the line usually using another color. By contrast, in other drawings, the wheelchair is behind the person, as a sign of his or her disability, but the figure is standing in front of the chair. In some pictures, there is a harmony between the lines of the chair and the body of its user, creating the impression of wholeness. In the cases where the user can push his or her wheelchair yet it also has a handle, it is interesting to note which these is more dominant in the picture.

2.3.3 The Drawer's Emotions

According to Vass,[30] the overall emotional quality of the drawing reflects the emotional state of the drawer. This includes additional aspects not covered by the global quality. In many of the drawings, the wheelchair is unstable regardless of the emotional quality of the depicted figure or the global quality of the picture. Professionals identified the pattern of unstable or 'rocking' chair in the sample, that could reflect the examinee's insecurity. As previously mentioned, helpless and weak figures are also possible signs of the drawer's emotions. The quality of the lines is also significant. Weak, insecure, interrupted, and hesitating lines with light pressure can be signs of insecurity.[31]

There are aggressive figures with angry or frightening facial expressions and with open or shouting mouths. A few of these figures are drawn with rigid lines and a line created with heavy pressure; while weak, insecure, sketchy lines and light pressure are typical in others. A fearful emotional quality and anxiety are common characteristics of these drawings. In our research professionals agreed that these images are possible signs of negative personal experiences.

Low global quality is also typical of the sample. In addition to the adolescent's possible opposition towards drawing tests, strong emotional involvement can also result in the poor quality of drawings. Di Leo described the so-called 'see-saw effect,' according

[30] Vass, *A psychological interpretation.*
[31] Vass, *A psychological interpretation.*

to which affective involvement frequently interferes with cognitive achievement.[32] Vass added that 'if the examiner requests the subject to draw a single person, he usually gets a quantitatively and qualitatively higher level of drawing than of a single figure in family drawing.'[33] It is also possible that strong emotional influence can cause a decreased level of global quality. In individual cases, a control drawing could help to decide the matter.

Large, head-only figures can be associated with strong emotional involvement; however, the professionals rarely agreed on whether these emotions were positive or negative.

2.4. Action Research - Third Circle:

After the first round of testing, two more questions were added to the post-test for clarification. In this circle, 30 drawings by 11th-grade students were examined. Each participant was asked to choose a title for his or her picture and to describe the feeling of the person who they depicted. Furthermore, the testers requested a control drawing to collect more information on the drawers' visual language. While in this round the previously described categories had not changed, the post-test proved to be of value in so far that it provided information about the emotional involvement of the drawer (in some cases there was a significant difference at the levels of spontaneous and prescriptive drawing). Comparing the narrative information and the drawing was useful in clarifying emotional tone, and/or useful in assisting in the interpretation of the picture. The difference between the impression of visual and narrative information can be beneficial in discovering contradictory thoughts and emotions.

3. 1 Perspectives: Benefits of DAP with a Disability

The main benefit of using projective drawing tests is the opportunity to express multi-dimensional aspects of attitudes, including unspoken difficulties and contradictions. A wide variety of the described patterns can be presented in a single picture. In one of the pictures, friendship and equality provide the central narrative, while many signs of a childlike social state are presented in the disabled figure. It is important to consider both the verbal narrative and the pictorial expression. If possible, it is also important to compare the picture with other drawings, especially drawings produced by the same creator. In the present form, the test's most important advantage is that it assists in exploring the unspoken

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[32] Joseph H. Di Leo, *Interpreting children's drawings (*New York: Brunner and Mazel Gardner & Winner, 1983).

[33] Vass*, A psychological interpretation*, 67.

dimensions of attitudes towards disability, either as a preparation for or an evaluation of disability awareness projects.

3.2 Drawing as an Opportunity for Re-thinking and Changing Attitudes

The most prevalent figure is the so-called circle-double line scheme, which is a primitive level of human figure drawing. The body parts are not differentiated, limbs are depicted with double lines, and the head and trunk are oval, circular, or rectangular.[34] However, at this level, doubling figures, erasing, and crossing out pictures are typical. These reactions are important, because these are signs that the drawer was not satisfied with his or her work or faced something unacceptable from his or her inner world. Vass describes the phenomenon of dynamic interactivity as being:

> *…based on the depiction [which is] considered as a process where the progress is influenced by the part of the picture already completed. The line, as soon as it is marked on the paper, is divorced from the internal world of the individual and becomes a part of the external world. It is transformed from reaction into a stimulus which will influence the subsequent development of the picture'*.[35]

Erasing and crossing out motifs are a sign of ambivalence and conflict with the particular motif, person, or body part.[36] When drawers judge something 'ugly' or 'incorrect' in their own picture and try to correct it, they simultaneously re-structure their inner image of disability. Different reactions are associated with this process of 'beautifying' the original picture by adding ornaments, more elegant clothes such as cuffs and collars, and reinforcing these ornaments with multiple lines, colours, or shading. The phenomenon of paradox smiling, when the smile is not congruent with the overall expression of the figure, was identified by our expert examiners as a sign of pity. Ornamentation undoubtedly requires more time and energy; thus, was associated with a positive approach, benevolence and an openness toward disability.

In its present form, the test could be valuable for educational and therapeutic purposes. Unique and innovative approaches, such as the socially engaged approach of art practice play an important role in understanding others.[37] Using the draw-a-person with a disability test could be particularly beneficial in exploring and changing attitudes towards

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[34] Vass, *A psychological interpretation*; Hárdi, *A dinamikus*.

[35] Vass, *A psychological interpretation,* 799–800.

[36] Vass, *A psychological interpretation*.

[37] Kim Hyungsook, "Socially engaged art practice and character education: Understanding others through visual art," *International Journal of Education through Art* 10, no.1 (2014): 55–69.

disability. Both the drawing tasks and the subsequent interview questions proved helpful in facilitating verbal and non-verbal personal expressions.

3.3 Drawing for Opening a Space for Words

Projective drawings could be utilised in a disability awareness project in Makó, Hungary. We were asked to prepare the 8th grade students of Szent István Ecclesiastical Grammar and Elementary School. This was the first step in a month-long disability awareness project.

The one-and-a-half-hour project commenced with the task outlined above, that is 'draw a person with disabilities.' We asked each student to work alone and to remain silent throughout the task. When all the students had finished the task, the students were given a short break. The break, gave the students an opportunity to share their feelings, and, allowed us, the researchers, to prepare an exhibition of the drawings. The second step, was to invite the students to view the drawings of their peers .While they perused the images, the students were invited to select one image which they felt they could work with.

When all had chosen a drawing, they were instructed to do something to the image that would make the figure happy. After this task, we set up another exhibition. In the first drawings, most of the figures were rather small, without any natural or social context. In the following stage, many of the students added symbols that added depth to their selected image. Computers, as well as television proved popular additions. There were also students who drew the natural environment, pets or close relationships: friendship and/or love. Interestingly, alcohol and cigarettes also appeared in the final images.

The students were asked to contemplate the drawings in silence. For the final task, they were instructed to devise a title for both of the drawings they were working with. The workshop appeared to be beneficial in helping students to progress, and provided unusual, but sharable experiences for the participants.

In conclusion, a free and open conversation was instigated prior to which the students prepared questions about their feelings, impressions and experiences during the different steps of the process, and the pictures and the meaning of happiness. Although the students were not forced to talk about disability, they shared their personal experiences, questions, reflections about this topic as well.

4.1 Drawing test and research

When using the drawing test as a tool for research, the categories, patterns, and signs would require reinforcement and refinement by way of a larger sample. The above-men-

tioned method of configuration analysis for projective drawings is based on the heuristic analysis of identified patterns in drawings with the use of artificial intelligence. The SSCA method represents the strategies of professional thinking by creating meaning through concurrent consideration of the whole configuration and the pertinent details at the same time. The heuristic analysis 'increases psychological certainty using the heuristic combinations of uncertain knowledge items'.[38] Although the SSCA model is based on the detailed analysis of more than 35000 drawings, in more specific topics configuration analysis provided to be effective in establishing valid categories associated with different meanings. For example, Vass used configuration analysis to discover the graphic expressions of aggression in projective drawings.[39] Antos and Vass described the same process with the 'draw a monster' test. Involving more drawings and artificial intelligence, DAP with disability appears to be a valid research tool providing a promising way to develop a scientifically objective measure of attitudes.[40] In its present form, the described categories and meaningful patterns could prove a strong foundation from which to derive configurations of relationships between individual components.

5 Conclusion

The draw-a-person with disability test was examined in two samples – first in 116 drawings by 7th- and 10th-grade students, then in 30 drawings by 11th-grade students. Both the drawing tasks and the subsequent interview questions are beneficial in uncovering hidden dimensions of participants' attitudes towards disability. Moreover, this task was helpful in expressing uncomfortable emotional states and verbalizing them through visual metaphors associated with different stereotypes. While these tests reveal some of the unspoken dimensions of attitude, it is essential to consider and comprehend the drawers' interpretations without forcing them to confront difficult or shameful aspects of their attitude.

Significant patterns could be extrapolated from the simple stick-figures to complex symbolic and personal narratives. Moreover, different patterns emerged related to different stereotypes of disability such as social status, active or passive social role, and social isolation or inclusion. The test also provided us with the possibility to reveal the personal- or problem-centered approach of the drawer, the emotional aspect of his or her attitude.

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[38] Vass, *A psychological interpretation*, 805.

[39] Vass, *A psychological interpretation*.

[40] Zsolt Antos and Zoltán Vass, 'Szörnypszichológia a projektív rajzok tükrében,' *Magyar Tudomány* 172, no. 10 (2011): 1154-1163, http://epa.oszk.hu/00600/00691/00094/pdf/mtud_2011_10_1154-1163.pdf.

In order to develop the test for measuring attitudes, more research is needed involving larger samples and configuration analysis in order to establish the test's validity and reliability. For use of the method in educational settings, we would recommend cooperating with an art therapist. It can be helpful to support and encourage students to reflect upon their visual narratives, even those not considered acceptable according to unspoken social norms. The test maybe used as a preparation or evaluation of disability awareness projects. Students might collaborate on the same drawing, a task which could help establish a deeper conversation on the topic.

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Shaimaa Alobaidi

On Indigenous Literatures.
Review on *Why Indigenous Literatures Matter* by Daniel Heath Justice. Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfred Laurier University Press, 2018. 284 pages.

Pro&Contra 3

No. 2 (2019) 69–74.

https://doi.org/10.33033/pc.2019.2.69

Why Indigenous Literatures Matter refutes the idea of "Indigenous deficiency" which is identified as the Indigenous "state of constant lack in morals, laws, culture, restraint, language, ambition, hygiene, desire, love" (2). It is the second major book by the author after *Our Fire Survives the Storm: A Cherokee Literary History* (2007). The plural word "literatures" used in the title indicates the great diversity of what Indigenous people produce as an art of narration. It is not irony but a common belief, which the book is a polemic against, "that aboriginal people … would never have a *real* literature until there was an aboriginal Shakespeare" (19). Justice points out aspects of strength and diversity in selected literary works through the analysis of some prevailing ideas of Indigenous writers. His references to the previous idea of Aboriginals' inhumanity shows a massive intellectual void in Indigenous studies and the need for more investigation and discussion; otherwise, the mainstream of scholars, as well as decision-makers will remain submissive to accept the other's idea and believe in considering the untruthful stereotypes in the management of aboriginal society's affairs.

Justice succeeds in relating the literary works under examination to the actual world; he never feels reluctant to signify what may be challenging or how the stories are "expressed or repressed, shared or isolated, recognized or dismissed" (xvii). He paraphrases his title as "A Few Reasons Why I Believe Indigenous Literatures Matter Based on My Own Subject Position and Idiosyncratic History and Relationships" (xx). His arguments are logically based on two facts: his ancestors practiced the principle of transferring civilization through orally narrated stories, and his job as a faculty member and the Chair in Indigenous Literature and Expressive Culture at UBC who admits that "[indigenous] literatures are the storied archives" (186). Nevertheless, as he clarifies in his concluding chapter, "Keeping the Fire," the experience with deceivingly Indigenous claiming narrations like Karl May's or Disney's enforces his desire to discuss some real ethnographic works.

In his first chapter, "How Do We Learn to Be Human?", the author defends his idea about the vital role of stories, although I will call them *narrations* since the author uses different literary genres in constructing Indigenous existential humanity. Justice argues with some exaggeration that "only through stories" (34) can aboriginal people know themselves. He is sure that "the unstoried life is a terrible thing to comprehend, a soul-deep desolation" (34). *Books and Islands in Ojibwe Country* is examined as a source of inspiration for all Indigenous people to look for the reason behind their existence as humans. Louise Erdrich, the author of that book, narrates her journey to explore the history of writing in the Ojibwe land. Justice sees Erdrich's discovery of books and inscriptions as "a remarkable alchemy, this storied transformation of self to other, and back again" (36). Throughout these findings, the ideology of "singular stories about all kinds of peoples" (37) will be shattered and scholars, like Justice, will make reference to the story of colonization as

a special case for each Indigenous tribe. Diversity and multiplicity of human experiences must be acknowledged.

After clarifying the idea of humanity as a training process developing from the depth of civilization, the chapter turns to explain the importance of maintaining the permanence of the link between people and the tribe. This link indicates supremacy provided by the tribe and its reflection on human education. Therefore, the question—"who are your relatives?" —is of great importance to Indigenous people. "To be human is to practice humanness," (42) while proximity to relatives is one form of these practices. To demonstrate his statement, Justice analyzes *Waterlily* by Ella Cara Deloria. The story of this novel has a complex plot of family obligations, social accountability, hospitality, and discipline in contrast with mobility, familial fragmentation, and lack of discipline. Justice suggests that "for readers steeped in the individualist ethos of contemporary capitalist consumer culture, Waterlily's world is a bewildering place" (44).

To sum up the idea of this chapter, perhaps all chapters, Indigenous identity becomes inextricably entangled with dominant presumptions about what makes us human. Many Indigenous people nowadays live in urban areas far from their homelands as a result of economic displacement, as well as legalized dispossession, such as the Termination and Relocation policies of the post-WWII era. For this, the persistent conviction that blood is what makes the individual becomes an irrational explanation as presented by the author: "We learn to be human from everything around us, as the worlds we inhabit help to define both the limits and possibilities of our humanity" (34).

Conventionally, Indigenous people from different tribes have commitments and obligations toward their relatives in an "active and meaningful engagement" (73) as Kyote represents in *This is a Story* by Jeannette Armstrong. Kinship is not easy to be maintained; it is a "learned process" (74) just like humanity. This perspective dominates the second chapter, "How Do We Behave as Good Relatives?". Biological, genetic, cultural, and community relationships are identified as equals in importance. Narration, in this aspect, "highlights what we lose when those relationships are broken or denied to us, and what might gain even from partial remembrance" (75). Kinship among Indigenous tribes and the representation of the relations with the other- than- human world and queer/ two-spirit Indigenous folks are emphasized. Shakabatina, in LeAnne Howe's *Shell Shaker*, offers her life to save her daughter, who is unjustly accused of murder, and to preserve peace and kinship networks among the Choctaws and the Red Fox people. Further, Justice reflects on some queer literary works within the call for the necessity to be good relatives. Among others, he selects "We Exist" by Janice Gould (queer Konyangk'auwi) as a joyful celebration of their role in the kinship context. The Indigenous Nations, all different autonomous tribes, all over the Americas were dehumanized as early as the settler's

era. In this sense, homosexuals became unable to represent themselves as an entity and their works deserve attention.

Chapter Three, "How Do We Become Good Ancestors?", argues that Indigenous people think of themselves as future ancestors in an answer to the "cataclysmic impacts of colonialism" (115) in which everything is taken including the early death of their ancestors. Nevertheless, the surviving nations are "the embodiment of the fierce, desperate hope and relentless insistence of our ancestors to continue on whatever way they could" (115). In this sense, writing is an example of continuing what the ancestors started. Justice explores his idea in some works that are not publicly identified as "creative" (116), and each of them is chosen to show a different dimension of interest in ancestors. The Kanaka Maoli (Hawaiian Natives) and their Queen Liliuokalani (1838-1917) come first. The Queen wrote works that remained as a valuable inheritance from the ancestors. Her song "Aloha Oe" became the anthem for the Hawaiians. Moreover, her autobiography, *Hawaii's story by Hawaii's Queen*, ends by asking if she has done anything for her people. Certainly, the answer in the book is yes, as it "offers fuel for the continuing fire of Hawaiian nationhood" (122). The Kanaka Maoli writer Haunani-Kay Trask is given as an example of an activist calling for Hawaiian sovereignty in her work, *We Are Not Happy Natives*. From a different perspective, the poet and anthropologist Wendy Rose (Hopi/Miwok) worked to protect her ancestors' bodies in the United States and Canada from being exposed to the public in museums or medical schools. Such debates ended with the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) as legislation in 1990. Sherman Alexie's (Spokane/Coeur d'Alene) *The Sin-Eaters* is another literary example used to reflect on the idea of Native Americans' pure blood being used to cure disease among the settlers. "Here, ancestry matters more than ancestors, who are significant only in their blood quantum, not their relations" (133). To conclude the idea, Justice calls everyone to respect the ancestor's heritage and pursuit to walk in their footsteps to set an example for future generations as their forefathers exemplified them.

In his fourth chapter, Justice brings about the previous ideas of being humans, preserving kinship, and acting as an ancestor to discuss the conditions and possibilities of "living together within the context of autonomous identities in relationship" (158). Among the texts used here are Richard Wagamese's *A Quality of Light* (1997) and Leslie Marmon Silko's *Almanac of the Dead*. Within the different plots of these novels lies the fact that the authors want every Indigenous to believe in hope. Living the apocalypse theme should not be interesting anymore; the Indigenous Nations should start marching towards the post-apocalypse world of survival. This way, Justice makes his argument a significant realization not only to produce such literary works but also for understanding the interconnectedness of the Indigenous population. "If relationship is the central ethos

of Indigenous literature," argues the author, "then we must consider how these works articulate existing relational concerns and offer new possibilities, fresh perspectives on existing conflicts and struggles" (158). Living together is a strategy for survival, and, for its sake, it is necessary to encounter the ability to confront and challenge neo-colonialism.

Chapter five, "Reading the Ruptures," may seem inconsistent with the book in terms of structure, but it is important to understand the idea behind the intense focus on literary texts in Justice's work. The chapter indicates the epoch behind an allotment map he found in his father's pocket. He argues: "I see these plate maps as something akin to our literature" (195). The maps are "family histories" (197). Like most Indigenous writings in all forms and genres, Justice points to a small portion of a traumatic history that his grandparents went through and ended by their parting to become "scattered across the continent" (194). He starts from the election of Andrew Jackson (1828), then moves to the Treaty of New Echota, which was ratified by a single vote in the Senate in 1836, to end up by the Trail of Tears. As a reflection on the Allotment Act, Justice states "allotment remains the great rupture in this history" (193).

Why Indigenous Literatures Matter, in general, is prepared as a platform or a catalogue of Indigenous writings. Instead of offering chronological accuracy, the book provides the examination of many books and authors from different Indigenous Nations. The study does not conclude in a synthesis but rather introduces texts that may not have been permitted in academic expeditions before. This diagnosis may motivate researchers to go further by studying one of them. The book, with its intellectual content, celebrates Indigenous achievements in life throughout its analysis of creative literary works.

Saleh Chaoui

Narrating North Africa in Europe
Review on Cristián Ricci, *New Voices of Muslim North-African Migrants in Europe*. Leiden, Brill: 2019. 200 pages.

Pro&Contra 3

No. 2 (2019) 75–80.

https://doi.org/10.33033/pc.2019.2.75

Cristián H. Ricci's latest book engages with migrant writers and their diasporic status in the era of transnationalism, culture wars, and globalization. It is the outcome of his project on Moroccan literature, which aims at reconceptualizing the "idea of a Moroccan literature with regard to the transnational and plurilingual experiences from which it arises" (7) and broaden the field of postcolonial studies. In recognizing the complexity of Moroccan diaspora in Europe, Ricci's book encompasses a core narrative wherein issues such as gender, religion, language, race, history, and space are thematized. Thus, the book offers an insight into the complex cultural, historical, and political concerns of a cluster of narratives by a fast-growing number of Morocco-based writers belonging to migrant communities in Europe. As he overtly admits, this study targets the often-silenced plurilingualism of literatures from the Maghreb (19), which have not yet been systematically explored in diaspora and postcolonial studies (for instance, Neerlandophone or Gay Muslim literature). By adopting a trans-modern-postcolonial approach, Ricci unravels different narratives of Afro-European literature that aims at developing "key connections along lateral axes with other Moroccan literatures written in Castilian, Catalan, Dutch, and English through a trans-colonial perspective" (163).

As regards the structure of the book, it comprises five major chapters that endeavor to bring theory and analysis together. In the introductory chapter, Ricci lays the ground for what he calls a trans-modern postcolonial approach to reading Afro-European literature, especially, literature of writers in diaspora from Moroccan descent. Such approach is inspired by Ella Shohat's theory of postcolonialism - which investigates the intersection of First/Third worlds - combined with Enrique Dussel's concept of *transmodernity* and the Moroccan philosopher al-Jabri's theory of modernity and tradition. More particularly, he focuses on al-Jabri's contention that "modernity would perhaps consist in going beyond [an] understanding of tradition that is confined within tradition, in order to establish a modern understanding and a contemporary view of tradition" (al-Jabri qtd in Ricci, 13). Hence, Ricci develops this approach to dismantle the conventional center-periphery dichotomy and, in return, to bring about "multiple and interchangeable centers and peripheries, whose cultures interact with one another without the mediation of the European metropolitan centers" (11).

In the first chapter, Ricci recalls memories of al-Andalus and how this historical encounter has contributed to the negotiation of the Afro Iberian identity in Moroccan literature. Exploring contemporary writings of Moroccan diaspora, the author resorts to the scrutiny of contemporary representations and depictions of Muslim Spain - Al-Andalus - in the poetry of Abderrahman El Fathi. Ricci argues that El Fathi's poetry depicts moments in the history of Moroccan-Spanish migration that are juxtaposed: the late twentieth-century emigration from Morocco to Spain and the late fifteenth-century emigration

from the fallen Muslim sultanate of Granada to North Africa (19). Such juxtaposition, as Ricci points out, enables El Fathi to "deconstruct the concepts of purity and religious affiliation that are the basis of Spanish rejection of North African immigrants as well as the North African idealization of Europe" (20). Ricci's reading of El Fathi's poetry comes up with the conclusion that his poetry represents what he describes as "frontierless" literature owing to the belief that his poetry unifies both the subaltern's voice of *pateristas* (Boat people) and *harragas* (undocumented immigrants). Not only do his works mark a yearning for al-Andalus, but they also acknowledge the "modern interpellation toward a shared economic and cultural-religious parameter" (49). Hence, the liminal poetic space penetrates the official borderline set between Spain and Morocco and creates a space where the poetic voice and perhaps the reader can feel at home.

Entitled as "Negotiating Afro-Iberian Identity in Moroccan and Riffian Literature," the second chapter discerns Moroccan literature in Castilian. To discuss the Afro-Iberian dimension of Moroccan diasporic identity(ies) Ricci works on the narratives written by the authors who reject the idea of monolithic identities. Hence, he explores Moroccan literature in Castilian which comprises poetry, fiction, and theatre. Special emphasis is put on the impact of Amazighness and its representation beyond borders through both the Amazigh writers whose cultural identity has been refashioned as Afro-Iberian and through characterization that reflects the diasporic consciousness of migrants. Regarding Amazigh-Moroccan authors as subaltern voices of immigrants, Ricci investigates their subversive potentials to disrupt "the modern canon of the literatures of the Iberian Peninsula, as well as how hybridity discourses are able to dismantle power structures" (20). Therefore, Ricci's commitment to these literary works written in Castilian, allows him to frame Moroccan literature within a broader context of borderland studies which foregrounds their potential to reconfigure an alternative space with European modernity from an exterior perspective.

Along with language and space, gender constitutes one of the key markers in Moroccan diaspora and literature. In this respect, through the third chapter entitled "marginal sexualities in/from Morocco and France," Ricci sheds light on one of the unwelcomed authors in Morocco; that is, Abdullah Taii. His sexual identity and literary writing have forced him to seek solace elsewhere. His two narratives, *Salvation Army* and *An Arab Melancholia* are analyzed in the context of new diasporic voices from North Africa. Ricci problematizes the issue of sexual identity across time and space stating that Taii's novels depict how homosexuality represents the site of a cultural and religious "war" in contemporary MENA region, and more significantly, lays bare the repression of homosexuality by the official *doxa* (83). Through this chapter the author questions binary representations and the image of the foreigner/native, along with homosexual/heterosexual practices

in migration. Ricci highlights that Taii's narratives are deeply personal revelations. He is caught within the predicament of how "North African tradition disallows his homosexuality as Paris disavows his North African/Muslim presence" (84). What makes Abdullah Taia's works peculiar is that he contests colonial readings of his novels rather than accentuates them. Further, his narratives target anxiety and failed desires rather than exploring issues related to race and class. Therefore, Ricci stresses that Taii's *Salvation Army* and *An Arab Melancholia* may not be seen as political manifestos (107); but rather, radical accounts that will be likely cited in political discourse related to gay civil rights and homosexuality.

The fourth chapter shifts the reader's attention to a series of Moroccan novelists who live in diaspora, namely, Abdellakader Benali, Hafid Bouaaza, and Brick Oussaid. Their narratives, *Wedding by the Sea*, *Abdullah's Feet* and *Mountains Forgotten by God*, are studied from the perspective of language, spatiality, temporality, gender, and dislocation. Belonging to the category of Dutch authors of Moroccan descent, these narratives share certain commonalities that make their inclusion in the same chapter possible; meanwhile, they display certain differences that enrich the discussion of diasporic identities. Ricci puts emphasis on the impact of the language of these narratives and the linguistic competency of the novelists to disclose the intricacies of cultural identity formation as they also represent voices of the Moroccan diaspora in the Netherlands and Belgium. Furthermore, Ricci continues to investigate the significant role of memory and space, affirming that these "stories use memory as a space to reflect the predicament accompanying diasporic writers" (125). Deemed as an alternative space, as Ricci points out, memory is deployed to voice a deeply fragmented consciousness and a split sense of identity that induces dynamic negotiations along the borderlines.

In trying to weave the complexities of Moroccan diaspora, the last chapter shifts the reader's attention to Moroccan Anglophone literature and the narratives of Laila Lalami. This chapter aims at tracing the leading thread in her narratives *Hope and Other Dangerous Pursuits, The Turning Tide, Secret Son,* and *The Moor's Account*, which all depict Lalami's perspectives and readings of the border crossings of North African subjects, namely from Morocco, to the North bank of the Mediterranean. The inception of this chapter is marked by the affinities Lalami has with Arab American Literature. Ricci contextualizes her writings within this tradition that encompasses voices outside the Anglo-American literary canon as well as their engagement with the socio-political malaise of their homelands. As he asserts, Lalami's characters, whose identities are in the process of becoming and in eternal quest of home, narrate their stories of in-betweenness. For instance, in *Hope and Other Dangerous Pursuits* Lalami does not depict "home" as space of confinement and obedience, but rather, her female characters symbolically "destabilize this pre-established notion by leaving "home," "the country," "the inside" and transcend geographic,

historical, and cultural boundaries through the act of migration" (141). In fact, through Lalami's creation of a discursive space that disrupts the rigidness of both the Islamic and western worlds, she opens new horizons for her migrant characters. Thus, as Ricci affirms, she is an epitome of those voices that frame an endless negotiation of postcolonial subjectivity.

All in all, Ricci's *New Voices of Muslim North African Migrants in Europe* succeeds in contesting the weaknesses of the francophone literary tradition - which has overshadowed Moroccan literary landscape - to encompass new voices from other European countries (Spain, Holland, Belgium) with different historical and cultural concerns in diaspora vis-à-vis postcolonialism. Adopting a transcolonial perspective efficiently reinforces Ricci's critical reading of diaspora literature, but the book still has its weak points. The title seems broad while the content is limited in the sense that while the title refers to the narratives of the Muslim North African diaspora, the content of the book focuses on Moroccan narratives. North Africa, for instance, stands for at least four countries: Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, and Libya. It is evident that the author is aware of this fact, but the question is whether Moroccan diaspora literature can be considered as an epitome of the other North African countries. All things considered, Ricci's book remains one of the books that enrich critical readings of Moroccan diaspora literature. Thanks to his subtle and comprehensive grasp of the cultural and historical conditions of Moroccan literary production, *New Voices of Muslim North-African Migrants in Europe* has expanded the boundaries of postcolonial literary studies to include Moroccan literature as vital area for critical inquiry. It is then a requisite reading for students and scholars of North African studies, Iberian studies, postcolonial studies, migration and borderland studies.