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Why Did Nolan Fall?

The Experience of Reading *Beren and Lúthien*

The Façade and Structure of the Ancient Greek Theaters

Teaching in an Academic Perspective



Lantern

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RAZI UNIVERSITY OF KERMANSHAH
SUPERVISOR: DR. JAFAR MIRZAEI
DIRECTOR-IN-CHIEF: ARMIN AMIRIAN
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF: SHAHIN GHAZZAEE
GRAPHIC & LAYOUT DESIGNER: DANYIAL
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Editorial

Shahin Ghazzaee

Thanks to the endeavors and cooperation of our sponsors and supporters, professors, partners, writers, and of course, our readers who encouraged us to keep what we do going, you are holding the second issue of Lantern. The publication of the first issue made a great memory for every individual in our team and we hope that our readers have enjoyed reading it as much as we enjoyed publishing it.

Literature, and art in general, belongs to all humanity. It beautifies our world, as Nietzsche in his *The Birth of Tragedy* argues that "[...] arts as a whole ... make life possible and worth living."¹ But the way students of literature deal with art must be different. We must not be merely consumers of literature, only reading for pleasure. We

need to use literature to make ourselves better people and at least try to make the world a better place by reading and promoting good literature and, of course, use it to make ourselves and others think. In our path, we aim to encourage students of literature to hold a critical viewpoint by giving them passion to read voraciously and the confidence to think independently. Lantern attempts to provide the ground for us to become productive readers. We hope all people in our department, from our professors to the B.A. Freshmen, help us promote this discourse in the department, with hope and confidence.

1.Nietzsche, Friedrich, and Douglas Smith. *The Birth of Tragedy*. Oxford Univ. Press, 2000.

History Adventures with Lantern Vol. 2: The Dawn of Renaissance

Masoud Karimian

The Transition from Medieval to Renaissance

The 15th century was a major period of growth in lay literacy, a process powerfully expedited by the introduction of printing into England by William Caxton in 1476. Caxton published Sir Thomas Malory's *Le Morte Darthur* in the same year (1485) that Henry Tudor acceded to the throne as Henry VII, and the period from this time to the mid-16th century has been called the transition from medieval to Renaissance in English literature. The crowning of King Henry VII in 1485 and his marriage to Elizabeth of York, thus ending the Wars of the Roses between the House of Lancaster (associated with a red rose), and the House of York (associated with a white rose), marks the start of the Tudor dynasty and this literary period. During this period, English evolved from a language that did not enjoy international prestige, into a language enriched by writers including Shakespeare, Marlowe, and translators of the Bible.

The Reformation



Martin Luther, oil on panel by Lucas Cranach, 1529; in the Uffizi, Florence.



Martin Luther burning the papal bull that excommunicated him from the Roman Catholic Church in 1520, with other scenes from Luther's life and portraits of other Reformation figures; lithograph by H. Breul, c. 1874

In the early sixteenth century, England's single official religion was Catholicism, and the head of the Church was the pope in Rome. Catholic liturgy and the Bible were in Latin, which few lay people understood. In Germany in November 1517, Martin Luther protested against corruption in the Catholic Church and began the Protestant movement that became known as the Reformation. The European Reformation promoted two central ideas: 1) *sola scriptura*: only the Scriptures have religious authority and not Church clerics or traditions; and 2) *sola fide*: only the faith of the individual (not good works or rituals) can affect his or her salvation.

For the purpose of this article, I will skip some crucial historical events involving King Henry VIII, Catherine of Aragon, Anne Boleyn, and the pope.

England's official faith underwent rapid, radical shifts during this period: from Roman Catholicism under the pope, to Catholicism under the English king, to Protestantism, to Roman Catholicism, and back to Protestantism.

Renaissance Humanism

English travelers to Italy had glimpsed the Renaissance, an artistic and literary movement based on recently discovered classical texts and artifacts from ancient Greece and Rome. For Renaissance thinkers, man was the measure of all things; yet man was also capable of changing and fashioning himself. Humanists like Erasmus changed outmoded school curricula to reflect the kind of learning they felt best prepared young men for public service. Young aristocratic and genteel men were educated by private tutors or in grammar schools. Education included the medieval trivium (grammar, logic, rhetoric) and quadrivium subjects (arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, music), but devoted an increased attention to Latin—the language of diplomacy, the professions, and higher learning—as much for its moral, philosophical, and political truths as for its elegance and rhetorical force. Young aristocratic women were educated in modern languages, religion, music, and needlework, at home or in other noble houses. Women were increasingly taught to read; however, they were not necessarily taught to write. Humanist admiration of classical authors and increasing national pride in the expressive power of vernacular English led to many English translations of classical texts during this period.

A Female Monarch in a Male World



Elizabeth I knighting Francis Drake, 1580. Jean-Leon Huens—National Geographic/Heritage-Images

Because she was Anne Boleyn's daughter (Boleyn was never recognized as legitimate by Catholics and was beheaded by Henry VIII) Elizabeth's claim to the throne was precarious. Queen Elizabeth I's reign was more remarkable when one considers that contemporary social expectations equated rational thought with masculinity, and irrational passions with femininity. Elizabeth, who had received a rigorous humanist education, positioned herself as ruler by appealing to historical precedent (other female rulers, such as the biblical Deborah), to legal theory (dividing her person into a mortal "body natural" and an immortal "body politic"), and to the love of her courtiers and people. Opposition to her absolute rule was regarded as treasonous and impious. The queen and her spymaster, Walsingham, controlled a massive spy network to enforce her authority. Poets and painters represented the "Virgin Queen" Elizabeth as comparable to the mythological goddesses Diana, Astraea, and Cynthia, and the biblical heroine, Deborah. Elizabeth also cannily exploited her unmarried state to pit various political factions against one another.

Elizabethan Poetry and Prose

English poetry and prose burst into sudden glory in the late 1570s. A decisive shift of taste toward a fluent artistry, self-consciously displaying its own grace and sophistication, appeared in the works of Spenser and Sidney. It was accompanied by an upsurge in literary production that came to fruition in the 1590s and 1600s, two decades of astonishing productivity by writers of every persuasion and caliber.

The groundwork was laid in the 30 years from 1550, a period of slowly increasing

confidence in the literary competence of the language and tremendous advances in education, which for the first time produced a substantial English readership, keen for literature and possessing cultivated tastes. This development was underpinned by the technological maturity and accelerating output) of Elizabethan printing. The Stationers' Company, which controlled the publication of books, was incorporated in 1557, and Richard Tottel's *Miscellany* (1557) revolutionized the relationship of poet and audience by making lyric poetry publicly available, which hitherto had circulated only among a courtly inner circle. Spenser was the first significant English poet to use print, deliberately, to advertise his talents.

Development of the English Language

The prevailing opinion of the language's inadequacy, its lack of "terms" and innate inferiority to the eloquent Classical tongues, was combated in the work of the humanists Thomas Wilson, Roger Ascham, and Sir John Cheke, whose treatises on rhetoric, education, and even archery argued in favor of an unaffected vernacular prose and a judicious attitude toward linguistic borrowings. Their stylistic ideals are attractively embodied in Ascham's educational tract *The Schoolmaster* (1570), and their tonic effect on that particularly Elizabethan art, translation, can be felt in the earliest important examples, Sir Thomas Hoby's *Castiglione* (1561) and Sir Thomas North's *Plutarch* (1579). A further stimulus was the religious upheaval that took place in the middle of the century. The desire of reformers to address as comprehensive an audience as possible. The reformed Anglican Book of Common Prayer (1549, 1552, 1559); John Foxe's *Acts and Monuments* (1563), which celebrates the martyrs, great and small, of English Protestantism; and the various English versions of the Bible, from Tyndale's *New Testament* (1525), Miles Coverdale's Bible (1535), and the Geneva Bible (1560) to the syncretic Authorized Version (or King James's Version, 1611). The latter's combination of grandeur and plainness is justly celebrated, even if it represents an idiom never spoken in heaven or on earth. Nationalism inspired by the Reformation motivated the historical chronicles of the capable and stylish Edward Hall (1548), who bequeathed to Shakespeare the tendentious Tudor interpretation of the 15th century, and of Raphael Holinshed (1577).

Sir Philip Sidney and Edmund Spenser



Left: Edmund Spenser./Right: Sir Philip Sidney, engraving by H. Robinson.

With the work of Sir Philip Sidney and Edmund Spenser, Tottel's contributors suddenly began to look old-fashioned. Sidney epitomized the new Renaissance "universal man": a courtier, diplomat, soldier, and poet whose *Defence of Poesie* includes the first considered account of the state of English letters. Sidney's treatise defends literature on the ground of its unique power to teach (didacticism), but his real emphasis is on its delight, its ability to depict the world not as it is but as it ought to be. This quality of "forcibleness or energia" he himself demonstrated in his sonnet sequence of unrequited desire, *Astrophel and Stella* (written 1582, published 1591). His *Arcadia*, in its first version (written c. 1577–80), is a pastoral romance in which courtiers disguised as Amazons and shepherds make love and sing delicate experimental verses. The revised version, vastly expanded, added sprawling plots of heroism in love and war, philosophical and political discourses, and set pieces of aristocratic etiquette. Sidney was a dazzling and assured innovator whose pioneering of new forms and stylistic melody was seminal for his generation. His public fame was as an aristocratic champion of an aggressively Protestant foreign policy, but Elizabeth had no time for idealistic warmongering, and the unresolved conflicts in his poetry—desire against restraint, heroism against patience, rebellion against submission—mirror his own discomfort with his situation as an unsuccessful courtier.



Britomart Redeems Faire Amoret (From *The Faerie Queene*), by William Etty (1787–1849)

Protestantism also loomed large in Spenser's life. He enjoyed the patronage of the Earl of Leicester, who sought to advance militant Protestantism at court, and his poetic manifesto, *The Shepheardes Calendar* (1579), covertly praised Archbishop Edmund Grindal, who had been suspended by Elizabeth for his Puritan sympathies. Spenser's masterpiece, *The Faerie Queene* (1590–96), is an epic of Protestant nationalism in which the villains are infidels or papists, the hero is King Arthur, and the central value is married chastity.

Spenser was one of the humanistically trained breed of public servants, and the *Calendar*, an expertly crafted collection of pastoral eclogues, both advertised his talents and announced his epic ambitions. The exquisite lyric gift that it reveals was

voiced again in the marriage poems *Epithalamion* (1595) and *Prothalamion* (1596). The *Faerie Queene* became the central poem of the Elizabethan period. Its form fuses the medieval allegory with the Italian romantic epic; its purpose was "to fashion a gentleman or noble person in virtuous and gentle discipline." The plan was for 12 books (6 were completed), focusing on 12 virtues exemplified in the quests of 12 knights from the court of Gloriana, the *Faerie Queene*, a symbol for Elizabeth herself. Arthur, in quest of Gloriana's love, would appear in each book and come to exemplify Magnificence, the complete man. Spenser took the decorative chivalry of the Elizabethan court festivals and reworked it through a constantly shifting veil of allegory, so that the knights' adventures and loves build into a complex, multi-leveled portrayal of the moral life. The verse, a spacious and slow-moving nine-lined stanza, and archaic language frequently rise to an unrivaled sensuousness.

The *Faerie Queene* was a public poem, addressed to the queen, and politically it echoed the hopes of the Leicester circle for government motivated by godliness and militancy. Spenser's increasing disillusion with the court and with the active life, a disillusion noticeable in the poem's later books and in his bitter satire *Colin Clouts Come Home Again* (1591), voiced the fading of these expectations in the last decade of Elizabeth's reign, the beginning of that remarkable failure of political and cultural confidence in the monarchy. In the *Mutability Cantos*, melancholy fragments of a projected seventh book (published posthumously in 1609), Spenser turned away from the public world altogether, toward the ambiguous consolations of eternity.

The lessons taught by Sidney and Spenser in the cultivation of melodic smoothness and graceful refinement appear to good effect in the subsequent virtuoso outpouring of lyrics and sonnets. These are among the most engaging achievements of the age, though the outpouring was itself partly a product of frustration, as a generation trained to expect office or preferment but faced with courtly parsimony channeled its energies in new directions in search of patronage. For Sidney's fellow courtiers, pastoral and love lyric were also a means of obliquely expressing one's relationship with the queen, of advancing a proposal or an appeal.

The Sonnet Sequence

The publication of Sidney's *Astrophel and Stella* in 1591 generated an equally extraordinary vogue for the sonnet sequence, Sidney's principal imitators being Samuel Daniel, Michael Drayton, Fulke Greville, Spenser, and Shakespeare; his lesser imitators were Henry Constable, Barnabe Barnes, Giles Fletcher the Elder, Lodge, Richard Barnfield, and many more. *Astrophel* had re-created the Petrarchan world of proud beauty and despairing lover in a single, brilliant stroke, though in English hands the preferred division of the sonnet into three quatrains and a couplet gave Petrarch's contemplative form a more forensic turn, investing it with an argumentative terseness and epigrammatic sting. Within the common ground shared by the sequences, there is much diversity. Only Sidney's sequence endeavors to tell a story, the others being more loosely organized as variations focusing on a central (usually fictional) relationship. Daniel's *Delia* (1592) is eloquent and elegant, dignified and high-minded; Drayton's *Idea's Mirror* (1594; much revised by 1619) rises to a strongly imagined, passionate intensity; Spenser's *Amoretti* (1595) celebrates, unusually, fulfilled sexual love achieved within marriage. Shakespeare's sonnets (published 1609) present a different world altogether, the conventions upside down, the lady no beauty but dark and treacherous, the loved one beyond considerations of sexual possession because he is male. The sonnet tended to gravitate toward correctness or politeness, and for most readers its chief pleasure must have been rhetorical, in its forceful pleading and consciously exhibited artifice, but, under the pressure of Shakespeare's urgent metaphysical concerns, dramatic toughness, and shifting and highly charged ironies, the form's conventional limits were exploded.

Rainbow Life: The Story of Maya Angelou

Marjan Heirati

Personal Life

Maya Angelou is an American poet, singer and civil rights activist. Born Marguerite Annie Johnson in 1928, she is an outstanding figure in African American literature. Her life story is particularly an interesting one because Angelou experienced a variety of jobs including a cooking, journalism and even sex worker before turning to literature. She served as a journalist in Ghana and Egypt during the decolonization of Africa and even acted in plays and television programs.

Angelou gained international recognition after she published her first autobiography, titled "I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings", the first of seven autobiographies each of which covers a period of her rainbow life. Angelou actively participated in the Civil Rights Movement and worked with Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X. She was also a friend of Nelson Mandela. She is a key figure in defending black culture and identity as well as post-colonialism and freedom and addresses such issues in the majority of her works. Angelou spoke a number of languages, including French, Italian, Spanish, Arabic and the West African language Fanti.

Angelou's Poetry

Angelou explores many of the same themes throughout all her writings, in both her autobiographies and poetry. These themes include love, painful loss, music, discrimination and racism, and struggle. Her poetry cannot easily be placed in categories of themes or techniques. It has been compared with music and musical forms, especially the blues. Critic Harold Bloom compares "Times-Square-Shoeshine-Composition" in Diine to Langston Hughes' blues/protest poetry. He suggests that the best way to analyze the subjects, style, themes, and use of vernacular in this and most of Angelou's poems is to use "a blues-based model", since like the blues singer, Angelou uses laughter or ridicule instead of tears to cope with minor irritations, sadness, and great suffering. Blundell, in her review of Angelou's third volume *And Still I Rise* (1978) in *Library Journal*, finds Angelou's poems which mimic speech patterns and songs the most effective. However, she finds Angelou's other poems "mired in hackneyed metaphor and forced rhyme".

Many of her poems are about love, relationships, or overcoming hardships, as expressed in poems of hers such as "Still I Rise", "I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings", and "Million Man March Poem." The metaphors in her poetry serve as "coding", or litotes, for meanings understood by other Blacks, but her themes and topics apply universally to all races. Angelou uses everyday language, the Black vernacular, Black music and forms, and rhetorical techniques such as shocking language, the occasional use of profanity, and traditionally unacceptable subjects. As she does throughout her autobiographies, Angelou speaks not only for herself, but for her entire gender and race. Her poems continue the themes of mild protest and survival also found in her autobiographies, and inject hope through humor. Tied with Angelou's theme of racism is her treatment of the struggle and hardships experienced by her race.

Angelou's Autobiographies

An acclaimed writer of poetry, she is perhaps more famous for her autobiographies. The themes encompassing her seven autobiographies include racism, identity, family, and travel. Angelou is best known for her first autobiography, the critically well-recognized *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* (1969). The rest of the books in her series are *Gather Together in My Name* (1974), *Singin' and Swingin'*

and *Gettin' Mer-ry Like Christmas* (1976), *The Heart of a Woman* (1981), *All God's Children Need Traveling Shoes* (1986), *A Song Flung Up to Heaven* (2002), and *Mom & Me & Mom* (2013). Beginning with *Caged Bird* and



ending with her final autobiography, Angelou used the metaphor of a bird, which represented Angelou's confinement resulting from racism and depression, struggling to escape its cage, as described in the Paul Laurence Dunbar poem "Sympathy". Angelou's autobiographies can be placed in the African-American literature tradition of political protest. Linguist John McWhorter, seeing Angelou's works, which he called "tracts", as "apologetic writing", placed Angelou in the tradition of African-American literature as a defense of black culture, which he called "a literary manifestation of the imperative that reigned in the black scholarship of the period". Their unity underscored one of Angelou's central themes: the injustice of racism and how to fight it. According to scholar Pierre A. Walker, all of Angelou's books described "a sequence of lessons about resisting racist oppression".

In the course of her autobiographies, her views about Black-white relationships changed and she learned to accept different points of view. Angelou's theme of identity was established from the beginning of her autobiographies, with the opening lines in *Caged Bird*, and like other female writers in the late 1960s and early 1970s, she used the autobiography to reimagine ways of writing about women's lives and identities in a male-dominated society. Her original goal was to write about the lives of Black women in America, but it evolved in her later volumes to document the ups and downs of her life.

The theme of family and family relationships—from the character-defining experience of Angelou's parents' abandonment in *Caged Bird* to her relationships with her son, husbands, friends, and lovers—are important in all of her books. As in American autobiography generally and in African-American autobiography specifically, which has its roots in the slave narrative, travel is another important theme in Angelou's autobiographies. Scholar Yolanda M. Manora called the travel motif in Angelou's autobiographies, beginning in *Caged Bird*, "a central metaphor for a psychic mobility". Angelou's autobiographies take place all over the world, from Arkansas to Africa and back to the US, and span almost forty years, beginning from the start of World War II to the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr.

"All my work, my life, everything I do is about survival, not just bare, awful, plodding survival, but survival with grace and faith. While one may encounter many defeats, one must not be defeated."

-Maya Angelou

The Experience of Reading Beren and Lúthien: the Beam of Light that Shapes the Middle-earth's Fate

Ali Ghaderi

If we take Tolkien's canon a stream of light emitting from the source of his imagined mythology and introverted, speculative philosophy, then this love story would be the primordial narrative of adventure, passion and struggle shaping all the history of the Middle-earth. For the spectral hues that make themselves appear to us in this story will return many times in different apparitions and forms in the history of the Middle-earth.

The first spark of light that was born in Tolkien's imagination was to give England a system of her own myths. As typical of almost all Celtic, Nordic, Greco-Roman and Abrahamic narratives and myths, the idea of good versus evil is a quintessential element in fairy stories. On the other hand, to reduce all the narratives and poems in Tolkien's canon to the mere matter of black and white struggles would be fallacy unmatched in kind and intensity.

The tender love and exhilarating adventures of Beren and Lúthien is a poetic narrative in Tolkien's legendarium that can bear witness to the complexities of fairy stories that move beyond the simple good and evil confrontation. Although the enchanting story of Beren and Lúthien had been presented in *The Silmarillion*, a more interesting version of this tale was published in 2017 posthumously with Christopher Tolkien's editing. Attending to the discrepancies between the two versions is a matter of long analyses centered on narrative elements and Tolkien's stylistics. On the other hand, the story itself represented in an independent complete volume offers literary and critical delights. One of which is set forth in the following lines.

The idea of this fairy story is a simple one at the beginning; Beren a mortal; a Gnome (Noldo), the son of Egnor bo-Rimion, falls in love with Lúthien. The heritage of Beren switches between that of elves and men depending on what aspect of the story is being told or what characteristic of his personality is highlighted which adds to the complexity of the tale. Moreover, an astute reader of Tolkien will realize that in *The Silmarillion*, Beren is a son of Barahir who led a group of Men in Dorthonion to stand as the last resisting band against the ever growing threat of Morgoth, the Dark Enemy. This Dark Enemy, after the Battle of Sudden Flame, had conquered much of northern regions of the Middle-earth. This shows the deciding role played by Beren and Lúthien's tale in the history of the Middle-earth. Nonetheless, with all the differences with *The Silmarillion* version, the stand-alone version of Lúthien and Beren's undertakings prove to be providing a rarely matched reading engagement.

The thrill and excitement in the reading experience of this volume spring from two main sources. First, the complicated yet enchanting quality of the language, style and narrative elements makes the readers veer in many directions to apprehend the story and its mysteries. According to Royle, when we read a novel, as we become involved, we veer. We come to realize that we start moving into the depths of the text in many paths and then we return to the surface and our own world. In the case of high fantasy and particularly in Tolkien's case, since the world of the story is completely sub-created by the author, emergence into the narrative and suspension of disbelief is much more intensified comparing to other works of fiction.

As an instance, on pages 65-66, Tinúviel is narrating his encounter with Huan, also known as the Hound of Valinor, in the forest; which is an elaborate lie designed by Huan. In this segment of the story, since the reader has already encountered Lúthien's beauty and the gorgeousness of her song before, the softness and musical enchantment of her voice is juxtaposed to the brutality and harshness of Huan's situation. Prior to this encounter, Lúthien's encounter with males of other races was a musical and romantic one. In fact, the most crucial of these musical encounters was with Beren. That encounter made Beren fall in love with her, and thus made him willing to go on the quest to find the sacred jewels of Silmarils. But in this last encounter, romance, beauty and enchantment of sounds are replaced by a savageness assigned to Huan, his past and the current conundrum amidst which lovers are caught. Moreover, Huan has a rich back-

ground in the history of Middle-earth. This makes the encounter between these two even richer and with more significant narrative value related to the History and culture of Arda.

Tolkien's world is another world completely independent from our reality. However, we do relate to this story, and something mysterious about it always makes us oscillate between our world and the world of Tolkien's making. "It is not simply a separate world, a utopic place. Falling in love with a novel, letting yourself be seduced, drifting into its strange expanse that is really neither surface nor depth, you are certainly a pervert of sorts, a reader pleasurably submitting to that experience of disavowal that Roland Barthes describes so well and so relishes: 'I know these are only words, but all the same ...'" (Royle 2011: 13).

The second characteristic that makes reading Beren and Lúthien a singular experience is the fact that this story is connected to a very large cosmos entirely sub-created by Tolkien. Although he is not the only author of speculative fiction to sub-create his own world, he is the most influential and prolific of them. What Tolkien does with a tremendous variety of myths, legends, and histories has survived many years into the years after his death. Like words that Gandalf utters, "yet it is not our part to master all the tides of the world, but to do what is in us for the succour of those years wherein we are set, uprooting the evil in the fields that we know, so that those who live after may have clean earth to till" (*The Return of the King* 2012: 160), his doing indeed has a vision connecting the past history of his sub-creation to the future of his cosmos. These, and more, together shape Tolkien's Middle-earth as an autonomous world of mysteries and histories. However, it cannot be forgotten or ignored that his complete and interesting sub-creation still upholds principles and possesses characteristics that are either connected or similar to our material reality. Such connections and resemblance could be identified through contemplating on the texts themselves or observing Tolkien's words on his interest in Celtic, Christian, Nordic and other ancient mythologies. On his zest, Tolkien says "But an equally basic passion of mine ab initio was for myth (not allegory!) and for fairy-story, and above all for heroic legend on the brink of fairytale and history, of which there is far too little in the world (accessible to me) for my appetite" (Tolkien, Letter 131, to Milton Waldman of Collins, c. 1951).

The internal connections in the world Tolkien had held sub-created is developed regarding both a rich historical heritage and literary convention. Thus, having stories of the Legendarium edited and published independently as stand-alone volumes help the readers apprehend and appreciate the depths and majesty of Tolkien's art more not to mention giving the critics more materials to be studied philosophically and critically to find more intellectual insights in the universe Men, Hobbits, Dwarves and Elves. This tale and other tales serve as beams of light having their origins in the author's imagination and literary creation. These beams together shed light upon the history and fate of the Middle-earth. A Fate and history that have the capacity to be read and analyzed many times over. Yet, every time they are revisited by the readers, they maintain giving birth to fresh insights that are buried deep in them.



The Façade and Structure of the Ancient Greek Theaters

Yazdan Mahmoudi

There exist constant struggles regarding the birth of theater in ancient Greece. The Greek theater originated from the ritual ceremonies and never completely separated from it. In fact, the starting points of the Greek theater are ambiguous, but according to Aristotle, its roots lie in lyric poetry or old dithyramb. Dithyrambs were the songs that were dedicated to the glorification of deities such as Dionysus (the god of nature associated with spring, fertility, revitalization, and especially wine in ancient Greece). These ancient songs were sung by the chorus, non-individualized commentators of lays, which adorned themselves as semi-human and semi-animal creatures.

Some primitive theaters in Greece were so huge that they had a capacity of six thousand spectators. The outdoor auditorium building was next to a half-circle hill, with spectators sitting on stairs up the hillside, and actors standing playing their roles. Among the first rows of the steps was a throne dedicated to Dionysus whose front scene was an open ground with an altar.

This building usually resembled to a castle or temple. Sometimes, if another scene was required, among the pillars, moving frames with paintings of landscape were used. Moreover, the building greatly contributed to the sound reinforcement, because if an actor used to speak in front of a wall which impedes sound, and the audience sitting in rows in front of them, the sound would be well released.

The actors used to wear masks so that they were able to transfer their key features to the farthest distance from the scene. Therefore, the actor might have used masks covered only by some lines on them that would represent their personality such as those of the king, the old man, or the servant. Their clothes were colorful and probably wore thick so as to appear taller on the stage. Among famous ancient Greek theaters are Ephesos and Epidauros. For further information, the most important parts of a Greek theater will be introduced.

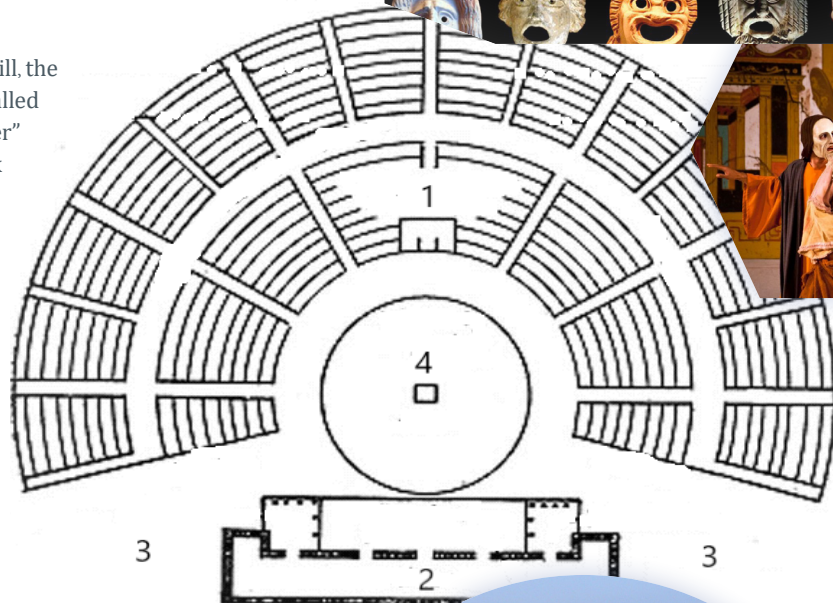
1.Theatron: Using the words of N.S. Gill, the viewing area of the Greek theater is called the theatron, whence our word "theater" (theatre). Theater comes from a Greek word for viewing (the ceremonies). Besides a design to allow crowds to see the performers, Greek theaters excelled in acoustics. The people up high on the hill could hear the words spoken far below. The word 'audience' refers to the property of hearing. The earliest Greeks who attended performances probably sat on the grass or stood on the hillside to watch the goings-on. Soon there were wooden benches. Later, the audience sat on benches cut from the rock of the hillside or made of stone. Some prestigious benches towards the bottom might be covered with marble or otherwise enhanced for priests and officials.

2.Skene: The back-stage of the ancient Greek theaters was called skene which was grounded behind the orchestra. It can be considered a moveable building whose primary function was as a dressing room in which the actors changed their costumes. Since there was no actress, all performers were male. Therefore, they had to play more than one role sometimes.

3.Parodos: The side-entrance to the theater of ancient Greece is called Parodos through which the actors as well as the chorus enter the stage or the orchestra. It was through entering this choral passage that the chorus sang the play's prologue.

4.Orchestra: Performances occurred in a circular place called the orchestra. Orchestra originally means a dancing space which is situated in front of the stage where the chorus usually sing and dance for the purpose of the play.

Chorus: The Greek word chorus was originally the name of a group of singers who used to wear masks in ancient Greek rituals and religious festivals while singing, dancing and commenting on the subject matter of the ceremony performed. Accordingly, they were the "collective voice on the dramatic action." Later in the Greek tragedies, the chorus played the same role. In the tragedies of Aeschylus and Sophocles, the chorus was more concerned with explaining and interpreting the acts that somehow took into account the ethical, religious, and social



Nocturnal Animals: A Space of Nightmare and Literary Revenge

Pouria Torkamaneh

Nocturnal Animals (2016) is written and directed by fashion designer Tom Ford, and it stars Amy Adams, Jake Gyllenhaal and featuring the great supporting performances by Michael Shannon and Aaron Taylor-Johnson. The basic plot summary of *Nocturnal Animals* is a mid-forties artist who receives a manuscript of a novel from her estranged ex-husband and her visualization of what it means and the memories it invokes in her. I first saw this movie a year ago and when the movie was over I remember it made me feel incredibly uncomfortable, but the way it made me feel was good, like it was a good experience feeling like that. This personal feeling about this movie is, of course, an affect that the film director had probably intended. One could claim that it was indeed done intentionally, which partly owes its great power to the great method acting and performance in this movie that is done in a very subtle and minute way, making one wonder why it never was nominated for any major academy awards ceremony.

When I first watched the movie I thought that the story was being visualized by the character of Amy Adams, and not just necessarily being shown to us simultaneously as she is reading a narrative and at the same time mixing her thoughts as well. These personal projections that we tend to translate in the world of literature as the stream of consciousness is, in a bizarre way, put into cinematic form probably to make the viewer think constantly about whose thoughts are these and what is going on in the film. It also strangely invokes the feeling of how each and every person who views a form of artistic expression tries to understand the narrative by bringing their own previous life experiences to the table as well. This can also be true about our interpretation of literary works, which can be affected by our previous personal experiences, which is a good support of those who claim that for every reading of any text, there is always one unique interpretation. It gives the reader the chance to supplant themselves into the text. That is why this movie is very popular among theatre-goers for it begs for the viewer's attention and power of sympathy.

This movie, however, plays on a very important and especial level that can interest those who care to read literary works and value literature. The movie boldly focuses on how the world of fiction and nonfiction can actually connect and what will be the unpredictable mental results of when one is deeply engrossed by the power of fiction and storytelling. The power of a story-within-a-story in this movie brings indeed violent results and terribly sad moments for two people who are heartbroken and devastated by a past relationship. But, what makes this narrative technique even more bizarre is the use of literature and stories to take revenge. Once asked about the use and value of literature, the great Leo Tolstoy said that literature is important because it tells us who we are and how we shall live. But I suppose, in the case of *Nocturnal Animals*, we need to add one more use to the long list of the various uses of literature, and that is taking revenge. This is exactly what makes this movie startling for in the end everything centers on the manuscript that Amy Adams receives in the first place. The story moves on and the sense of horror the viewer feels is intensified by more close-up shots. The audience feels more uncomfortable as their patience grows thin and they know that nothing good will probably come out of all these tragic incidents. And although the viewer desperately tries to associate everything to a verifiable metaphor, the best one, in the end, seems to be the most obvious one: revenge.

The mastery of this film, and obviously the genius of its director, draws the attention of a more astute audience to a subtle point; the mysterious space that is provided by literature so as to enable Ed-



ward Sheffield (played by Jake Gyllenhaal) to exact probably the most horrible sort of revenge on his former spouse. What exactly happens in this unique and abstract space of literature that feels so powerful? What characteristic(s) of literary composition, in this case a novel, can give rise to so immense a power that actually serves as an instrument of retribution in this film? Edward, deranged and disappointed in life because of a deathloss of the infant of him and his wife—tries to make peace between that great trauma of his past, his art and the present he is living and suffering in.

Amidst all the pains and feelings of betrayal that he is stormed by, it seems like a sense of revenge and retribution start to grow stronger than disappointment and regret. While he is unable to make a valid and tangible connection between his existence and death of a beloved one, he focusses all his attention to create a hybrid existence; the novel dubbed *Nocturnal Animals*, and pours all his hatred and anger into it. That novel is a hybrid or even paradoxical existence of a complicated metaphor. On one level, the novel does not exist for the audience. This makes a huge gap between the audience and the alleged text of the novel. On another level, this novel never ceased to exist in the world Susan and Edward live in, for the world of these two former lovers the existence of *Nocturnal Animals* is very much real. Even the name is an allusion to Susan's nickname bestowed on her by Edward. Moreover, the story itself bears connections to Susan and Edward's lives, their struggles for existence both as different kinds of artists and the experience of their unborn child.

For Edward, the abortion of their unborn child is like the abduction and murder of the mother and daughter characters in his novel; abrupt, unwanted and most brutal. While Susan probably has the chance to make her peace with the loss, Edward was never given the same courtesy. Out of nowhere, just like Tony's family in his novel, he is struck down by the most unknown phenomenon of a human's life. However, the cancer-ridden Detective Bobby shows us that paradoxically Edward manifests a strange understanding of death. When at the end the culprits are punished by Tony and Bobby in a bloody act of revenge and Tony dies in a tragic way, Susan feels the pain of loss and death felt by Edward before. In the non-existent space of Edward's novel, the true pains and sufferings of Edward are rendered and conveyed to both audience and Susan. Edward accomplishes to exact the most violent form of revenge through his novel, which is in fact a fictional account of death, existence and pain. The space of literature because of its strong potency to reveal and represent the most intensified of human's thoughts, feelings and pains enables Tom Ford to create a touching and beautiful feature film and Edward to take his revenge.

Why Did Nolan Fall?

On Christopher Nolan's *Dunkirk* ★★★★★

Shahin Ghazzaee



Looking at Christopher Nolan's oeuvre, we notice how he is concerned with the issues of time and memory. For Nolan, time and memory are not merely two phenomena; they together are life itself. It is through time that we exist and through memory that we define our lives, the truest epitome of our existence. What Nolan brings up in *Dunkirk* (2017) is far away from what he has always been mesmerized with. In this film, time and memory are neither the main issues nor even the marginal ones. It is just a sense of superficiality that is touched by his treatment of time. Here, Nolan appears to have forgotten what he knows and does best. It also seems that he has forgotten what medium he is working in; a medium of pictures, not words. Nolan's latest film has a lot to "say", but nothing much to "show".

Dunkirk tells the story of English and French soldiers in WWII getting surrounded by enemy troops in Dunkirk, a harbor in northern France, from which they are finally rescued by the civilians. The plot looks great on paper, with quite a lot of potential. Actually, most plots are great on paper; only that the most important thing that matters is in whose hands they are.

The film starts by narrating three separate stories; first, that of the infantry soldiers (land); second, that of the airborne pilots (air); and third, that of the civilians who launch their boats to rescue the soldiers (water). Finally, they all meet on the land-water boundary. The pattern Nolan creates here seems interesting since it covers the three geographic features. Nolan's decision to narrate the three stories simultaneously –starting, peaking and ending at the same time–, is absolutely logical, but his illogical intercuts and cross-cuts makes the story a little bit hard to pursue. This by itself might not be considered a fault in modern filmmaking as lots of films these days adopt nonlinear narration and combine separate stories, but there is a condition: as long as the heart of the audience is following the story, it does not really matter if their mind falls behind. And this is where *Dunkirk* fails. This stems from Nolan's negligence in characterization. There are many films –e.g. *Synecdoche, New York* (2008)– whose intricate plots do not intercept the interaction between the audience and the film due to their immaculate characterization.

Lack of characterization in a film makes the story undramatic, and the audience loses interest in what goes on and how it ends while remaining indifferent to the fate of the people in the film. When a filmmaker avoids giving the audience any characterization, and thus avoids organizing character arc and psychology, all may be lost. Maybe a film can do without a plot (in the traditional sense) –as *Boyhood* (2014) did–, but without well-developed characters it would look only like a TV commercial.

What *Dunkirk* lacks comparing to other battlefield epics such as *Apocalypse Now* (1979), *The Thin Red Line* (1998), *Saving Private Ryan* (1998) and many others which excel *Dunkirk* is soul. *Dunkirk* suffers from numbness, a lack of soul which prevents the audience

from getting engaged in the film. This soul is how the filmmaker follows, bends or breaks the conventions of the genre and toys with the audience's expectations.

Probably, the primary way to look at films is through the lens of genre and its conventions. There are two important traditional aspects in battlefield epics: 1) how the film depicts home and 2) how it depicts the enemy. When there is a front, there must be a line of enemies as well, and also there must be a home (over which typically the war is fought). When we do not see the latter two, the front would be rendered meaningless automatically. The problem with *Dunkirk* is that Nolan disregards these two vital elements.

Home? What home?

Admiral: I mean you can practically see it from here.

Officer: What?

Admiral: Home!



In war films, the concept of home is extraordinarily devastating since it is everything missing on the battlefield. Home is family, friends, safety, comfort, sleep, joy, and love. Of course, it is a great idea to reminisce home on the battlefield to create an opposing image of the current situation in order to intensify the harshness of war. One of the most frequently uttered words in *Dunkirk* is "home". Characters mention this word many times, but the film does not give us any visual or even auditory image of it. What is home? What kind of a place is home? Why should the characters yearn for it? Remember Spielberg's *Saving Private Ryan* where we get two vivid images of home and mother; one, a scene of Ryan's home and mother; and the other, a retelling of the young medic's memory of his home and mother. As the film goes on and the characters miss and call for their mothers and homes, we identify with them because now we know what home is and how their relationships with their mothers were.



A frame of mother and home in *Saving Private Ryan*. The camera does not leave the house, warm colors are dominant, pictures on right highlight the sense of family and love, which following the mother's collapse immediately turns into a sense of loss.

Good and Evil

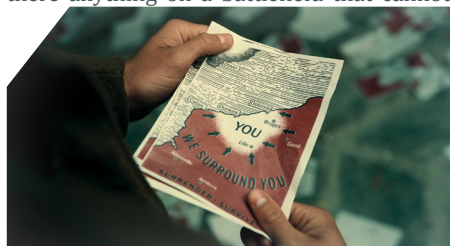
In a film of this genre, the filmmaker should clarify her/his position toward war (not necessarily explicitly); whether she/he is all for or against war. In war films, when the protagonists do battle with a faceless army (as we see spectacularly in *Apocalypse Now*), it typically implies that they are actually fighting themselves; they are their own enemies and their own casualties. Thus, the

filmmaker takes side against the war and depicts war's futility. According to this tradition, *Dunkirk* is "apparently" an anti-war film because the German army is faceless. The film does not develop any Nazi characters or even show us any Nazi soldiers clearly. But is *Dunkirk* really an anti-war film? Definitely not. You just need to review the dialogues in the last ten minutes of the film which emphasize "going on to the end" and fighting "with growing confidence and growing strength..." This lack of harmony between what the style of the film implies and what the film really says strikes the film a blow to the spine.

But this does not end here. The explanations above make clear that Nolan is not impartial and believes in good and evil in this war. But why does he not bother to show them? Why does he not develop at least one character of the opposing army as an antagonist? When we do not see the opposing army, we cannot tell which side of the war is right or wrong. Why should we believe the English are on the right side and Nazis are on the evil side when we do not "see" their immorality? In *Saving Private Ryan*, Spielberg shows the wickedness of the German army and differentiates the two sides when the German soldier who is saved and set free by Captain Miller, shoots him fatally at the final battle of the film.

Showing and Telling

We hear a lot that "seeing is believing" and cinema is probably the best medium to prove it. Nolan tries to convey the scope and the epicness of events through words. Is there anything on a battlefield that cannot



be filmed? It is definitely more cinematic to "show" a shot of the enemy troops surrounding the area than to "write" it on a paper so the audience can "read" the area is under siege.

Another example—which is a critical moment in the film—is when the shivering soldier (Cillian Murphy) tries to stop the boat from going to Dunkirk. Again here instead of showing us the frightening hell of Dunkirk, Nolan conveys the idea through the "words" of a terrorized soldier. In *Dunkirk*, although some shots are fired and we see a couple of explosions, they are not enough to make the area qualify as a "hell" to escape from; that

is what all battlefields look like. I personally cannot remember a cinematic battlefield less explosive and lethal. You just need to compare it to the hell depicted in the opening scene of *Saving Private Ryan*. Hence, the result is when the audience sees all the terror in the characters, they just wonder what hell the characters are talking about because they have not "seen" anything that horrific.



Perhaps, the only formal and dramatic function we can imagine for this shivering soldier is to "say" what Nolan is unable to "show": to create a horrific image of *Dunkirk* and to kill poor George so he can make us weep with his last words. He is a mediator to make the film emotional and epic.

The sense of epicness in a film is usually conveyed through the valorous acts of the characters and their highly dramatic and memorable deaths. Just remember the scene where George gets hit in the head, loses his eyesight, and finally dies. Remember his last words which are both sentimental and "epic" ("... I would do something one day. Maybe get in the local paper). Along creating a sentimental scene by his words, George has to create out of dialogue the sense of epic Nolan is unable to show. At least, if the character was developed well, his last words would not seem so artificial. He thinks he dies a glorious death, but if you replay his death scene in your mind, you see that he actually dies for nothing. Vain deaths in war movies, especially in the greatest ones, are not few, but they have dramatic functions. Just remember Sgt. Keck's death in *The Thin Red Line*; a ridiculous death because of a foolish mistake. That ridiculous death summarizes the whole film and vividly depicts the futility of war. But surprisingly, in Nolan's *Dunkirk*, this kind of death is supposed to dramatize the film.

Techniques and Logic

Also in terms of cinematic techniques, to

a large extent, *Dunkirk* fails. The failure in the editing of the film does not end in untimely intercuts. Most of the POVs of the



film are incomplete and thus, leave out the emotion caused by the middle shot (the following set of shots is an example). Perhaps this technique seems simple and "apparently" not worthy to take into account, but it is one of the most important techniques in cinema known as the Kuleshov effect (which states that the juxtaposition of shots alters the meanings of those shots) and at least conveys the feelings of the characters. Even Hitchcock creates one of his most significant masterpieces, *Rear Window* (1954), only using this technique.

Zimmer's score dominates almost the whole film and floats the camera in an ocean of musical instruments. Even musicals or music films do not drown in this much score. This degrades the film to the level of a music video.

The film leaves many important questions unanswered as well. What is the logic behind Tom Hardy's surrender? Why are there so few German bombers while there could be more? Why do they not simply bombard the English troops and blow all of them up when they are "in the Nazi's artillery range"? Much of these holes in the plot come from the weaknesses of the script in covering the actual events of Dunkirk, but to avoid overlength, I skip them. Still, you can find plenty of information in this regard online if you are interested. Perhaps Nolan simply took too much for granted on the part of the audi-

ence and thinks we know the details of the history of WWII by heart.

Field of Expertise

"Bad filmmakers have no ideas and good filmmakers have too many, while the greatest have but one."

- (Serge Daney, Cahiers du cinema, August 1983)

The final output of Nolan's latest adventure is not much of an artistic achievement. Although the way Nolan uses technology in this film is outstanding, particularly in cinematography, what you eventually may say is: what a waste of technology. This is because this film is not in his field of expertise. Still Nolan's earliest films (*Following* (1998) and *Memento* (2000)) plus *Inception* are (at least in my viewpoint) his best films because they reflect his concerns –time and memory– in the best way; they are in his field of expertise. In *Dunkirk*, Nolan deviates from his main concerns. History has proved that when artists turn their back on their concerns, they put their career at stake. Real artists rarely work out of their fields of expertise because they know if they do, they may create not-better-than-mediocre works. Much of faults in *Dunkirk* stem from his previous experiences and his naiveness in this genre. For instance, in his previous films, the role of the mind was unquestionable; therefore, he had to explain many abstract concepts through dialogues, like the nature of dreams in *Inception* and the concepts related to black holes in *Interstellar*. It seems to be just a matter of this habit to tell, not to show, what happens on the battlefield.

The Half-Star

The half-star goes to the image Nolan succeeds to create of the horrific side of water. However, he cannot create a terrifying image of water as an absolute being and the only moments he manages to create hydrophobia in both the characters and the audience is when the characters are enclosed in a space surrounded by water. In other words, only by combining hydrophobia with claustrophobia can he successfully show the dark side of water. Maybe this is not much of an advantage to be given a half-star, or even it is a normality in a good film, but in this case, for a film from a good filmmaker that leaves none to praise, it becomes a merit; a "memento" of the talent he used to (or hopefully still does) have.



Why Did Nolan Fall?

Nolan's previous film, *Interstellar*, was a little bit too sentimental, with too much emphasis on feelings, discussing complex scientific problems for 140 minutes while surprisingly finding the ultimate solution in love at the end! It was predictable that Nolan would not make the same mistake in his next film. But he made another mistake which is probably a worse one. The sentimentality of *Interstellar* was replaced with numbness in *Dunkirk*. It seems that Nolan is losing his control over the emotions flowing in his films and this can easily imperil his career. In works of art, emotions are not just to be aroused, manipulated or left out; they are to be disciplined unless there is a formal or dramatic function.

Now we get to the main question: why did Nolan fall? We hope the answer is the answer he gives to the question "Why do we fall?" in his *Batman Begins* (2005): "So that we can learn to pick ourselves up." We hope Nolan picks himself up and once again we enjoy his films. Daren Aronofsky, another contemporary talent, had a great comeback with *Mother!* (2017) after a failure like *Noah* (2014). All we can hope for is the same thing happens to Nolan after his *Dunkirk*.

Top Cut

The Truth Behind the Goggles/ Tears, Blood and Oil in A Most Violent Year

Roxana Nejati

The Truth Behind the Goggles

Lawrence of Arabia (1962) is undoubtedly one of the best cinematic achievements of all time. Apart from unforgettable features of this amazing film, there is an arresting formal use of prop in the opening scene of this movie. In his *Film Art: An Introduction*, David Bordwell defines prop as:

"... short for property. This is another term borrowed from theatrical mise-en-scene. When an object in the setting has a function within the ongoing action, we can call it a prop."

One of the astonishing props in the first scene is the goggles on Lawrence's eyes. Director David Lean tries to cover up the face and generally the identity of the character (Lawrence) by using those big goggles in order to make us more eager to catch on to the character's identification.

While Lawrence is riding the motorcycle with high speed, he loses control, gets out of the way and crashes his motorcycle into shrubbery and disappears off screen. Then the camera takes a close-up of his goggles hanging lifelessly from a branch. David Lean starts his movie by a rip-snorting prop (the goggles) that actually symbolizes secrecy. When the goggles are taken off of Lawrence's face, Lean implies that he wants to give us a portrait of T.E Lawrence as we have seen nowhere before and tells us that now we are authorized to know about the character throughout the rest of his film. Thus, Lean creates one of the best opening scenes in the history of cinema.



Tears, Blood and Oil in A Most Violent Year

The whole infrastructure of capitalism has been built on fossil fuel.

(Amy Leather-climateandcapitalism.com)

It is the most dangerous year in the history of NYC and Abel Morales, a prosperous businessman, is trying to enlarge and detoxify his oil business from violence and predatory gangster competitors' brutal attacks.

Wherever there is oil, there is exploitation; i.e. a person (or group) is taking advantage of another person (or group).

While the film leads the viewers to follow Abel's life and identify with him as a respectable man protecting his family and his business, director J. C. Chandor covertly unveils another significant aspect of this story: the intolerable truth about Abel's real character and the nature of his business; that he is actually building his empire on the blood of his workers.

The final scene is the tipping point of the movie that Chandor depicts it with flair through a touch of sentimental melodrama and skillful symbolism. When after a long game of cat and mouse Abel finally manages to pay the promised money back and is able to broaden his business, Julian, his dedicated worker, comes in with a gun in hands. Although it seems to be a danger to Abel and his wife, as he is crying and asking Abel to take care of his family, Julian shoots himself in the head. The gunshot causes three different liquids to flow simultaneously: tears, blood, and oil. Here, Julian's share (as a symbol of the working class or the proletariat) is the tears and the blood and the oil, the black gold, is Abel's portion (as a symbol of the capitalists or the bourgeoisie).

Now let's get back to Abel when he tells Julian he takes care of his family. After the gunshot, Abel first stops the oil leakage in cold blood to preserve his capital and then calls for an ambulance for Julian. Will such a leech take care of a poor worker's family?



Top Cut

Matches or Lighters? Fate of the WWII in the Hands of Churchill/ *The Square*: A Pretentious Approach to Defend Poverty

Younes Poorghorban

Matches or Lighters? Fate of the WWII in the Hands of Churchill

"A prop formally known as (theatrical) property is an object used on stage or on screen by actors during a performance or screen production. In practical terms, a prop is considered to be anything movable or portable on a stage or a set, distinct from the actors, scenery, costumes, and electrical equipment."

Nesfield-Cookson

In *Darkest Hour* (2017), we witness many different scenes with many different props, but the usage of one of them is by far more important than the others. In this film, Winston Churchill smokes a lot of cigars and he lights them all by his own golden lighter, except one.

Churchill is doubtful about the war. The parliament pushes him to make peace with the Nazis since Paris has fallen and England is about to lose all his army, but Churchill believes making peace with these brutes is pointless and as long as they live, they should fight them. He is fully hesitant about this till the King himself comes to Churchill advising him: "Go to the people, let them instruct you". He obeys and takes the subway and goes among the people. There, he takes out another cigar but as he is searching for his lighter, he realizes that he cannot find it. He starts with: "Does anyone have a match?"

He takes matches from someone and he forgets to return it. That's how Churchill starts a conversation with the people in the train. He talks to the people and finds out they would not surrender under no circumstance. Winston is so much moved by this that he asks those people's names.

Later on, in another scene we witness that Churchill makes a great speech in front of the MPs and he takes out the matches and reads those people's names on the matchbox where he has written them down before. Those names and the speech move the MPs and they become convinced to fight on and not to surrender.

Now we see how props in films, and consequently objects in real life, can have a deciding role in someone's life. Matches or lighters can have actual roles in the fate of a nation, or at least in a film such as *Darkest Hour*.



The Square: A Pretentious Approach to Defend Poverty

The Square (2017) is supposed to deliver a satirical image of European countries in a way to defend the poor and find poverty as an enormous problem in modern society which needs to be solved. But is this what really goes on in the unconscious of the director?

There is a scene in this film where Christine is in need of help. He wants to ask someone to keep his stuff until his daughters get there, but he fails to find someone to help him. He looks around and finds a beggar, he takes the opportunity and asks him for help. The beggar agrees to take care of his stuff and he simply trusts the beggar and leaves. After that we see that Christine and his daughters are at home with their stuff.

On the surface, everything may seem ok and we witness that Christine is an open-minded person who trusts beggars and does not judge them for what they are and also the director turns the beggar into a hero. It even seems that the director wants to say that the beggar is a better person than the others. But a sharper look into this specific scene is needed to enlighten what goes on beyond this simplicity.

Christine leaves the beggar no choice by asking him and taking his arm to help him while he had not taken anyone else's arms before. We notice that Christine finds this beggar as if it is his duty to help him, and as if Christine is doing the beggar a big favor by asking him to keep his stuff, so that in this way the beggar does something useful once in his life and can finally feel useful for the first time. Worse than that, we never see Christine get

back to the beggar. It seems even for the director the stuff was way more important than the beggar and the favor he did.

Unlike what he tries to pretend, director Ruben Ostlund knows neither what poverty is nor what film art is. But it is obvious he has watched many films and has just picked up the techniques without knowing what their functions are since in cinema, this strategy of not showing the result of something someone does is actually what leftist filmmakers do to disparage their bourgeoisie characters and ridicule their futility.



Akira Kurosawa's Stylistics

Aida Hasani

Introduction by Shahin Ghazzaee

Steven Spielberg called Kurosawa "the pictorial Shakespeare of our time," and Martin Scorsese remarked, "His influence on filmmakers throughout the entire world is so profound as to be almost incomparable. His passing is a unique loss — there is no one else like him."

(Prince, Stephen. The Warriors Cinema: the Cinema of Akira Kurosawa. Princeton Univ. P, 1999.)

We have always heard that a film is not as great as the novel it was adapted from and we have always wondered why. This could be because most of the time what the novelist is concerned with is really not an actual concern for the filmmaker. The creative act, in the viewpoint of Gilles Deleuze, rises from a need; a necessity to express something which the creator is preoccupied with. Deleuze once said a filmmaker cannot make a great adaptation unless his ideas in cinema "resound with the novel." When a filmmaker can find a commonality between himself/herself and a novelist, the adaptation is difficult to be of a lower level than the novel. But unfortunately, most filmmakers ignore this unwritten law, bring any popular novel they can get their hands on and make adaptations which only damages the original works in the eye of the audience. Master-filmmaker Akira Kurosawa was one of those few adapters that was (probably unconsciously) aware of this. He adapted works from Shakespeare and Dostoyevsky and they were successful because he inherently shared their preoccupations; it is evident from the characters of his original screenplays – such as *Seven Samurai* (1954) – that are much similar to Shakespeare and Dostoyevsky's agitated characters.

Biography and Career

Akira Kurosawa, one of the most legendary directors of all time, was born in Tokyo in 1910. Kurosawa was exposed to cinema from an early age. He started his career in cinema as director's assistant. He made his first film, *Sanshiro Sugata (Judo Saga)* in 1943 and began to change the landscape of the Japanese cinema. Kurosawa was introduced to the western audience by his dramatic and thrilling *Saga, Rashomon* (1950). When talking about successful cinematic adaptations, probably Stanley Kubrick comes to the mind of any cinephile as the icon of the art of adaptation, but he was not the only master of adaptation. Influenced by William Shakespeare, Fyodor Dostoyevsky and Edgar Allan Poe, Kurosawa added a lot to the art of cinematic adaptation.

Style

Kurosawa was a big fan of Shakespeare and Russian literature, not to mention his love for the works of Sergei Mikhailovich Eisenstein, the Soviet film director and film theorist. Although his films are strictly based on Japanese culture, his sources from western literature make his films unique. Kurosawa's films occupy this odd space between theatrical and realistic, which is what makes them so unique and special. His characters also always seem extremely emotional, even in his realistic modern-day film *One Wonderful Sunday* (1947). In many ways, his films tend to strain suspension of disbelief, but still his characters can be very human in their actions and motivations. Kikuchiyo's outburst in *Seven Samurai* is sudden and heated, but it reveals what festered in his mind over the course of the movie. Similarly, *Rashomon's* focus is on the pettiness of humans, so in many ways, Kurosawa takes very mundane human emotions and problems and then makes them seem incredibly intense.

Film critics and journalists were quite interested in Kurosawa after *Rashomon*. However, critics at that time focused on Japanese customs as from an exotic and alien culture. Even though film research has existed at university level since the 50s, it has been influenced by social issues and political purposes at film marketing. 1950s criticism of Kurosawa's films exhibited little theoretical or critical sophistication and, generally, showed no sense of the decisive influence of Japanese cultural forms.



Adaptations

Hakuchi (1951) is a direct adaptation of Dostoyevsky's novel *The Idiot* (1869). This film was not as well received as his other works. Some believe that Kurosawa's blind worship of Dostoyevsky restricted his film creative potential. The Japanese critiques were also pretty harsh, but the reception from the Russians was warm and enthusiastic. Kurosawa's *Hakuchi* invites a discussion of intertextuality in its most narrow sense as well since it is as outright adaptation of Dostoyevsky's novel to the extent that the title remains unchanged and Dostoyevsky is mentioned in the first intertitle that summarizes the character of the hero, a clear indication of the film's indebtedness to the original.

Throne of Blood (1957) is another startling adaptation by Kurosawa. This successful Shakespearean film is inspired by *Macbeth*. The American literary critic Harold Bloom called it the most successful film version of *Macbeth*, the poet T. S. Elliot stated it was his favorite

film and Time magazine cited it as the most brilliant and original attempt ever made to put Shakespeare in pictures. Some critics do not regard this adaptation as comparable with other Shakespearean films in English and try to categorize this film as a Japanese samurai version of the play. In Kurosawa's films, words are not directly translated from Shakespeare, but are slightly old-fashioned, refined, written Japanese. The language in his films sound, to the Japanese viewer, like that of period plays or legendary stories, or old literature.

Red Beard (1965) is another masterpiece by this filmmaker. Although the film was based on Shūgorō Yamamoto's short story collection, *Akahige shinryotan*, Fyodor Dostoevsky's novel *Humiliated and Insulted* provided the source for a subplot about a young girl, Otoyo, who is rescued from a brothel. Toshiro Mifune plays the character of Dr. Kyojō Akahige Niide (which means red beard). *Red Beard* inspires a younger doctor who never considered working in a public hospital and suffered under his strict rules. Finally, the younger doctor gives up his desires and devotes himself to follow into service in the public hospital. Many of Kurosawa's films are filled with the humanist concerns of benevolence, wisdom and courage via the sequences of deeply learning and teaching the Confucian philosophy (this philosophy revolves around issues related to the family, morals and the roles of the great ruler).

Many teachers in his films take the responsibility to teach their followers as Confucius did. They all follow the mission of Confucius teaching to pass the constant virtues to the following generations.

Ran is a 1985 epic by Kurosawa, inspired by Shakespeare's tragedy, *King Lear*. Kurosawa takes all of the important elements out of *King Lear* and uses them in the same way in *Ran*, making the importance more obvious. The themes of loyalty, betrayal, family, selfishness and overall the human conditions are all present in both *King Lear*, and *Ran*. The characters of the film are also very similar; Lord Hidetora Ichimonji is inspired by *King Lear*; Regan, Cordelia, and Goneril are represented by Jiro, Saburo and Taro. *Ran*, Kurosawa's last work of art is truly the greatest adaptation of Shakespeare's *King Lear*.

Kurosawa wrote a screenplay based on Edgar Allan Poe's *The Masque of the Black Death* before his death in 1998. The story deals with versions of reality, raising serious questions about what is real and what is not. The film was never made but a Chinese film studio announced that they will produce a movie based on this script. This is not the first time that Kurosawa's scripts have been filmed posthumously. *After the Rain* (1999), *Alley Cat* (2000) and *The Sea Is Watching* (2002) are other examples.



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Pop Corn

Mohammad Amin Khadem Hojati

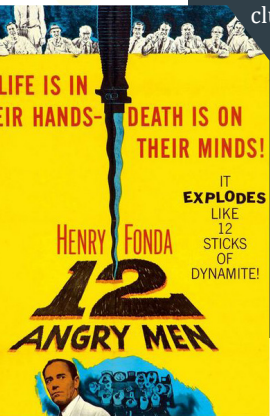
12 Angry Men
(1957)
Sidney Lumet
United Artists
The United States

12 Angry Men is a courtroom drama film adapted from a teleplay of the same name by Reginald Rose.

Following the closing arguments in a murder trial, the 12 members of the jury must deliberate, with a guilty verdict meaning death for the accused, an inner-city teen. As the dozen men try to reach a unanimous decision, one juror (Henry Fonda) casts considerable doubt on elements of the case. Personal issues soon rise to the surface, and conflict threatens to derail the delicate process that will decide one boy's fate.

The film is notable for its almost exclusive use of one set. No names are used in the film; the jury members are identified by number until two members exchange names at the end.

Far-fetchedness aside, not a bum note can be detected. No action, no effects, no whizzy camera-work, just powerful dialogue, finely-etched characters and a beautifully-worked plot.



Amélie
(2001)

Jean-Pierre Jeunet
Canal+, France 3 Cinéma
France, Germany

Amélie is a capricious depiction of contemporary Parisian life. It tells the story of a shy waitress, played by Audrey Tautou, who decides to



change the lives of those around her for the better, while struggling with her own isolation. The film is one of the biggest international successes for a French movie. Paris or metaphorically city of light, city for lovers swept up by the air of romance, is the perfect setting for Jean-Pierre Jeunet's wonderful *Amélie*, a film with a golden, glowing mind. It is the very dictionary definition of 'feel-good' — its irresistible charms will dispel the heaviest clouds hanging over the head of the

gloomiest misanthrope. Jeunet has created one of the most joyous films of recent years. With its gallery of affectionately drawn grotesques and eccentrics, *Amélie* is filled with sunshine.

Amélie is one the films that you will see it thousand times and it will not be boring due to its charming storyline.



Mother
(2009)
Bong Joon-ho
CJ Entertainment
South Korea

A mother (Kim Hye-ja) lives with her mentally disabled son (Won Bin) in a small South Korean town, where she scrapes out a living selling medicinal herbs. Mother and son are gotten into trouble when the body of a murdered girl is discovered.

Evidence indicates the boy's involvement, and he becomes the main suspect during the police investigation. Betrayed by the filthy legal system, the mother takes the law into her own hands to get him out.

Mother has a good chemistry to qualify as a perfect film while other films of this type are none. The mother carries her role dauntingly and the screenplay is so immaculate that encourages you to follow the story despite its dark theme.

Mother has a solid structure and it must be seen for its difference and uniqueness.



Princess Mononoke (1997)

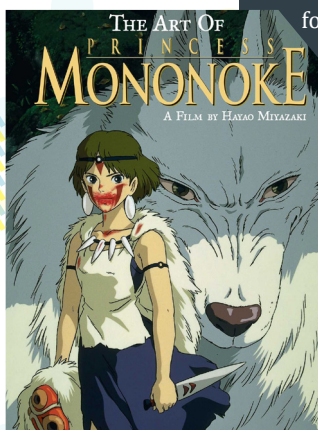
Hayao Miyazaki
Ghibli
Japan

Ashitaka, a young prince, is cursed by a boar (god of the forest). His journey to the source takes him to Iron Town. Ashitaka is drawn to San, a girl raised by giant wolves. Together they work to stop Lady Eboshi and the corrupt monk Jigo from waging war on the animals.

Charting an epic battle of humans versus gods in old Japan, this film is filled with adventure and beauty. It boasts the scope and grandeur of a live-action historical epic yet also has the fantastic elements of animation. These elements, in the form of talking animals and a magical

forest spirit, are treated with utmost realism. The animals debate their plight with dead seriousness and attack humans in murderous rage. They're nothing like the talking animals in Disney features.

Again one of the finest works of Mr. Miyazaki. Although a bit violent, this movie conveys extremely high regards for nature through Miyazaki's exhilarating imagination and epic story.



Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri (2017)

Martin McDonagh
Fox Searchlight Pictures
The United States

In the town of Ebbing, Missouri, Mildred Hayes (Frances McDormand) is grieving the rape and murder of her teenage daughter, Angela, seven months earlier. Angry over the lack of progress in the investigation, Mildred rents three billboards near her home, and posts on them: "Raped While Dying", "Still No Arrests?", and "How Come, Chief Willoughby?" The billboards upset the townspeople, including Chief Bill Willoughby (Woody Harrelson) and officer Jason Dixon (Sam Rockwell).

Sharply, cleverly and wittily written, Martin McDonagh's third movie is a dramedy that opens up into something truthfully human beneath the sparkling verbiage and genuine, complex emotions. It is not a movie about suspense or solutions; things are deliberately messy in this world, even if McDonagh presents them in a pin-neat manner.

Rape, murder, suicide, cancer, revenge, hatred, and bigotry are part and parcel of the United States. This film deserves to be commended for its great ambiguity in what it portrays (often with great black humor).



Teaching in an Academic Perspective

Ali Raygan, Fatemeh Bakhtiari

As mentioned before, a lot has been devoted to the whatness of teaching to know about the areas to cover and the resources to follow, and the how of teaching which gets the teachers to learn to manage a class, structure a lesson, and assess for learning-for-learning. In addition to those challenges, this wide and varied, endless word we talked about in the previous issue, has been defined for years by the experts and anytime they think about it in a meticulous way, a new concept and therefore, a new meaning emerges out of it. In an era, known as the golden age, shifts and paradigms happened time to time to language teaching. Some were absorbed as the adherents and some were opposed as the critics. In this era, numerous new teaching methodologies have surfaced in the traditionally conservative area and as these new methods and shifts were injected to this simple, rudimentary, and primary category, they turned it, over decades, to this infinite, omniscient major which we now consider as an academic field of study.

Over the academic lens, Language teaching is mostly praised and respected because of its laborious adherents and academics, and this is where the Students and instructors play an important role. This is where you can find those who have dedicated their lives to have a chance to help teaching step a little forward and after three decades of awareness, we are still engaged in an unending research process, and there are still mysteries to be uncovered and accomplishments to possess. On the other side, teachers work in increasingly complex and diverse settings and they have very different and changing professional learning needs. These learning needs may be very specific to teachers or to the context in which they work. This means that teachers need professional learning opportunities that are tailored to their own needs and they need teacher educators who have different knowledge, skills and expertise to support and challenge them at different times in their career.

Motivated by this, a large number of reasons behind it, and the fact that teaching properly has been neglected and as Min, Chan Kyoo (2008) maintains the feeling of the teachers about being engaged in a proper teaching program which makes it even more necessary, the attempts for designing teaching and education programs or engaging the teachers in internships are still something pretty mouthful and according to what Wallace K. Ewing claims in his article in 2014, There are three reasons for engaging them and creating successful teachers

The first and the most important reason are to create experiences. A teaching internship or all other well-designed teaching programs can provide the prospective teacher with valuable experience, structured and guided, before he is placed in the classroom alone. The second reason for this engagement is that the teachers' work and study needs to be integrated and as they raise their awareness, it needs to be unified with their work inside the class to let them prove themselves as a good performer inside the class, and the last reason for this is, teachers who have been supervised complained that their academic training did not prepared them to teach and it was not

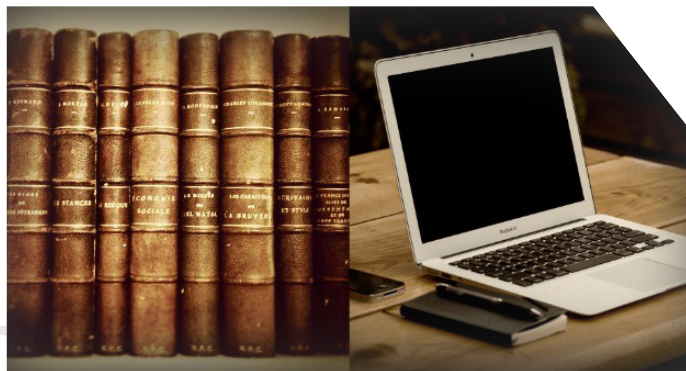
relevant to the real world classroom situation. In other words, what they learn is completely theoretical and nothing emerges in their performance inside the class. These issues and a number of others are what the academics inside this field of study concern, and all they do is an attempt to recover the problems teachers observe and deal with inside their classes.

Practical Teaching

The complexity of the material and the wide range of input in this field of study have proven that, nowadays teaching is not just having the perseverance to head a class, but something much more complex. Teaching now calls on knowledge as well as a perfect performance- and the key element to all these attempts to be made as Kay Livingston offers in 2017, is reaching an educational standard.

Reaching this educational standard is getting more complex and that is because the teaching and its sub-categories are expanding. Up to the few years before the awareness of language teaching, it was just as simple as controlling a group of learners and being pleased for what they have learned, but now it is something unpredictably vast and unimaginably hard to understand. Years of research by the academics in the field had turned the meaning of teaching and the teacher is now the one who is able to grasp the errors of the students and should benefit from a good range of inter and intra lingual knowledge, should be able to bring into practice some sort of extrinsic, and intrinsic motivation by his specific techniques, and more importantly, to let out the students out of their absent-mindedness and push them toward concentrating on the materials that are transmitted inside the class. In addition to that, a good teacher is now expected to make proper use of the instruments (e.g., tools, computers, devices...) and to bring them into use inside the atmosphere of the class, to be able to prepare a clear and to the point package which can increase the students' positive reactions and learning, and needs to let them engaged into extensive practices and tasks. All the features above and their addition to the teaching package are indebted to the endless efforts of the researchers and academics inside the field that are in direct touch with these issues and are counted as the main finders of these features.

Another sub-category which we face in language teaching and is worthy to be mentioned is testing. Testing was mostly known as a course which just dealt with the measurement and testing, which is the first overview about testing everybody knows, but as a professional teacher, we must know all usage of testing. Testing is a widespread issue to which every aspect of a successful teaching and learning is related, and consist of test making, evaluation and grading the students based on their general knowledge or particular teaching courses they have passed, and also a group of other concepts and function. The world of teaching methodologies and techniques is progressing so rapidly and as we move forward there are lots of new instructions and experiments that need to be tested assure the researchers of their credibility, authenticity, and reliability. Language testing is perfectly doing this by experiencing all the techniques and tests before letting them out into the real world and as the methods and strategies are getting more complex, their testing strategies are updated too. And the third sub-section in language teaching lies in the realm of linguistics and the researchers have proven that inor-



der to teach academically, you need to be linguistically equipped. As you know linguistic is mostly theoretical concept of language and give us information about all function of language production. To be a good teacher, you must know all rules and concepts of linguistic to convey the language better. It is exactly like an engineer who must know about all detail of a machine to fix and manufacture it, teachers must know these rudimentary details which are bases of language, so linguistic gives this occasion to the teachers to build linguistic structures and teach it in an appropriate way. The teachers are now expected to have a tenable knowledge in terms of the syntax to be acknowledged as a proper teacher.

All in all, these categories above are what students deal with in the academic majors of this field of study and are what the researchers prioritize to explore.

Teaching in progress (Tradition versus Modernity)

There are two spheres around which the progress of Teaching, specifically in English, is orbiting. Generally speaking, the first reason refers the nature of the language itself. English needs to be taught with greater avidness than before because there are more arrows directed toward it than before and it is the insiders of this field of study to make it easier. This need toward this is not what we observe in a limited place and based on what Riazi claims in 2005, "English is gradually been recognized as an indispensable means of communicating across national borders, allowing access to the requisite knowledge and technology for promoting technical, scientific and economic development", and this is now bounded all over the universe.

The second reason for this field to be developed is rooted in the nature of teaching in the area. Teaching is what we deal with in our daily life all the way back to the beginning, and for most of the teachers, it is the worry to wake up with, and the source of sleepless nights to find a way to teach in which the previous paucities are disappeared. The academics, instructors, and the students inside the field are not an exception. Looking at this field of study from its starting point up to now defines it in advance that teaching methodologies, techniques, and instruments are changing over and over. Once some techniques and instruments were quite useful, but the research we talked about found them useless for newer eras and suggested a new one which fits better. Marking the techniques and instruments, we can find the tension between the tradition and modernity with a furtive glance and a great example can be the entrance of modern technologies into the English classes which is one of the latest added techniques into the Corpora of teaching, and several studies have been done by the educators to prove that this technique turns out to be positive and can be helpful in terms of the assistance it provides to the learners. After all, it was proved that the students in the classroom supported by CALL (computer assisted language learning) had a significantly positive attitude and perception about the environment they were studying ahead of those that were equipped with no technological services (Kang-Mi Lim & HuiZhongShen, 2006).

Such changes and a large number of others were made because an increasing demand in language teaching to base decisions about the use of these ever more prevalent tools and techniques was made by the teachers, and that's why teachers are almost always changing, replacing, and reconsidering the present methods as soon as they feel a paucity.

To sum up, the aims of this field of study are now found clear, and due to the research, the mixture of the elements of knowledge and performance, or to make it simple, study and work, are considered as the factors for evaluating a good teacher. Teachers are now expected to face a large amount of experience to be qualified enough for their job, and they need to be equipped and feel comfort while using the instruments in order to compensate the paucities of their classroom especially about using the modern devices and although the mentioned factors are worthy and quite beneficial, the aims are nowadays a bit changing and some other factors are added. The aim of focusing on the teachers' activities is not adequate anymore and the objectives are changing toward the ultimate goal of student learning. In other words, it is important to know what the teacher is intended to do, but more important is what the students will learn and be able to do after that teaching process and that is why most research are now concerned with the definition of aims and objectives for teaching and learning; that is with the prior specification of what teachers intend to teach or what it is hoped learners will learn. To this aim different strategies are designed and different techniques are used and the more the learners learn, the better that teaching methodology is, and the higher the level of its stability will be.



Noam Chomsky

Roya Tabei

Who is he?

A famous American theoretical linguist, philosopher, historian, social critic and political activist, Avram was born on October 7, 1928 in Philadelphia. He is famous for both groundbreaking contributions to linguistics and his penetrating critiques of politics. Linguistically, he is the one whose work from the 1950s revolutionized the field of linguistics by considering language as a human-specific feature which is biologically made for him. As a matter of fact, his influence on linguistics is similar to Charles Darwin on evolution and biology. Chomsky is credited as the creator or co-creator of the universal grammar theory, the generative grammar theory, the Chomsky hierarchy, and the minimalist program

He entered the University of Pennsylvania in 1945, in which he achieved his B.A. in linguistics in 1949, M.A. in 1951, and PhD in 1955. During his career as a professor at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), he introduced his Transformational Grammar to linguistics. This theory is also called Generative. In linguistic topic, generative simple refers to the notion of "productivity", which is defined as the ability to produce infinite number of grammatical sentences by finite rules. These rules are "recursive". It means they can be applied over and over to produce more sentences.

Chomsky was moved by Zellig S. Harris, an American structural linguist. Soon, Harris was really influenced by his gifted personality, the one with great potential to learn. Thus, Harris introduced him to Nelson Goodman to study philosophy and Nathan Fine to study math at Harvard University.

Unlike Goodman who believed that the mind is a blank slate (tabula rasa) and that language is learned in a response to linguistic stimuli, Chomsky believed that human beings are born with innate ability to learn language. In other words, children use this innate ability to learn the language they are exposed to. In his opinion, language learning is the process of grammar construction from the basic principles of all languages which is built by the child himself not the social life.

According to Chomsky, children show ordinary creativity by their simple words. They make concepts when they play, invent and communicate. In fact, they seem to know more than they get from environment, therefore they might be equipped with an innate ability



"It's as if we're higher apes who had a language faculty inserted."

which is genetically planned for them. They can learn concepts and language amazingly fast, although they are not exposed to meaningful evidence and data. Environment plays a vital role, but it just can help to activate this innate ability. He believes that children master the grammar of a language by a kind of Universal Grammar (UG). It means they are familiar with general form of each language they are supposed to learn. This UG has some parameters that are regularized based on the language they are exposed. For example, all languages must have a subject (a principle). Although some languages show the subject, others delete it (a parameter). Based on this opinion, the differences we see are because of the parameters which are developed over time in our brains. It helps us to explain why children learn different languages easier than adults.

As an active writer, he has written a lot of books and articles, that some are Current Issues in Linguistics Theory (1964), Aspects of the Theory of Syntax (1965), The Sound Pattern of English (1968), Language and Mind (1972), Studies on Semantics in Generative Grammar (1972), and Knowledge of Language (1986).

Chomsky remains a highly respected one who is active to write books, contributes to various journals and take part on lecture circuit. Moreover, he has won a lot of awards including the Distinguished Scientific Contribution Award from the American Psychological Association, the Kyoto Prize in Basic Sciences and the humanitarian Sydney Peace Prize.

The Answer of “who knows? (1)”

Roya Tabei


It depends on how high (or low) you set the bar of fluency. Ziad Fazah, born in Liberia, brought up in Beirut and now living in Brazil, claims to be the world's greatest living polyglot, speaking a total of 59 world languages. He has been 'tested' on Spanish television, where it was not clear just how well he could communicate in some of them.

His record, however, pales in comparison to some from the past. Cardinal Giuseppe Caspar Mezzofanti, born in 1774, spoke 38 languages and 40 dialects. The 10th-century Muslim polymath Al-Farabi was reputed to know 70 languages. The German Hans Conon von der Gabelentz, born in 1807, researched and published grammars of 80 languages. The record, though, probably belongs to Sir John Bowring, Governor of Hong Kong from 1854 to 1859, who was said to know 200 languages, and capable of speaking 10 languages.



1. What occurs once in a minute, twice in a moment, but never in a thousand years?
2. What word becomes shorter when you add two letters to it?
3. How can you say “rabbit” without the letter R?
4. Forward I am heavy, but backward I am not. What am I?
5. What begins with T, finishes with T and has T in it?

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