

THE
JOURNAL
OF
HUMANITIES

Vol. 20

2014

THE INSTITUTE OF HUMANITIES
MEIJI UNIVERSITY

THE JOURNAL OF HUMANITIES
MEIJI UNIVERSITY
VOLUME 20 2014

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**Literature in writing vs. literature in film:
Cross-modal interpretation of *The Remains of
the Day***

OYAMA Rumiko

Literature in writing vs. literature in film: Cross-modal interpretation of *The Remains of the Day*

OYAMA Rumiko

Abstract

It is often the case that reading literature is a different set of experiences from watching a film, based on a literary work. In reading literature, messages are conveyed through a set of resources based around the written word while films use a different set of resources based around visuals and sound.

The starting point of this paper lies in the question: how can written literature be ‘translated’ into other modes with the best intention of sustaining the ‘flavour’ of the original work. In this paper, I would like to focus on some specific parts in literary works to be compared with the equivalent scenes in the film versions, with particular reference to the way in which the ‘core messages’ is represented. In particular, the functional potential of written words (in literary texts) is considered in relation to that of other modes such as the visual and sound. In so doing, I would like to explore what language does in written works and what language (in the form of either narratives or dialogue between actors) does in the film; in other words, to find if there is any difference or shift in the role of language when it is used as a single mode in the given context and when it is used in combination with other modes such as visuals and sound. Questions arise as to what aspects of meaning in written texts can be translated into what kind of meaning using other modes of communication. The literary work to be discussed is *The Remains of the Day* by Kazuo Ishiguro, the Booker Prize winner in 1989.

I. Introduction

Much research has been done in the field of literary interpretation in relation to the production of the films based on literary works. Some have taken an approach that focused primarily on the detailed and specific construction of the film text (Bordwell, 1985; Metz, 1974) and others have drawn attention to the script in comparison to the actual text in the novels as in Eto (1996). It goes without saying that literary works and films consist of different modes of communication even as

a starting point; the former is involved exclusively in the use of language and the latter with multiple modes such as visuals, sounds (music), actions and linguistic information in the form of dialogue. What differentiates literary works and films are not only limited to what is actually produced as a 'text', uni-modal or multi-modal it may be, but also to do with the way in which the two kinds of products come into being. That is, as Uchida (2003) points out, "Films are, most of the time, produced under the condition that the product is to be made public as something to be consumed and its characteristics are more or less something to be consumed in 'real time' (31)". It can be argued that the same goes for literary works but this primary difference of films and literary works cannot be ignored when they are compared both as textual objects.

In this paper, the focus is not so much on the nature of the types of products but on the exploration of the nature of different modes: language and visuals. There is no doubt that the overall analyses have to be compromised when other items such as sound effects and actions are not included. It has to be emphasized, however, that the primary focus of this paper is on the analysis of how two modes interact and function towards the overall meaning making of the given part of the literary work. Therefore, the detailed examination of aesthetic effects in the film or the management side of film production would have to be compromised in the current study. In other words, I would like to explore the way in which the written mode of communication as in the novel is 'translated' into the multi-modal text. In particular, in what way can the visual mode take on what has been represented verbally in the original text. By looking at how visuals have replaced or altered the information that has been originally carried through language in the novel, I'd like to investigate and reconsider the characteristics and 'functional load' (Kress and van Leeuwen, 1996) of each mode.

The novel that is going to be taken up in this paper is an extract from Kazuo Ishiguro's *The Remains of the Day*. The story takes on the form of recollection by a Mr Stevens, the butler at Darlington Hall, set in the 1930s. Stevens recalls various people around him, most notably Miss Kenton, who used to work at the hall as the headmistress and his relationship with his employer Lord Darlington and his faithfulness towards what he represents at the 'height of his career as a butler'. The story flashes back and forth between the present and the past and his struggle to come to terms with his new American employer, Mr Farraday, is depicted through some of the episodes. In this respect, the novel sheds the light on what 'Stevens sees' as Americaness as opposed to Englishness.

The novel is made into a film *The Remains of the Day* (1989), directed by James Ivory. It can be said that Ivory produced a film version of this novel relatively

faithfully to the original work but the focus seems to be more on the relationship between Stevens and Miss Kenton from a romantic point of view. The former was played by Anthony Hopkins and the latter by Emma Thompson. There is no doubt that the casting itself renders a certain 'flavour' or interpretation to what is produced already in the multi-modal environment.

Mr Stevens (simply referred to in the novel as 'Stevens') who has been working as a butler at Darlington Hall, sets his father (called Stevens Senior in the story) up with a post where he works. Against his expectation, his father's efficiency as a butler goes down hill drastically when he makes minor yet serious mistakes, the impact of which is even more highlighted when pointed out by his colleague Miss Kenton. She keeps on suggesting some amendments of his workload but Stevens does not want to accept her advice. One day, however, Stevens' father falls in front of the guests while serving tea and this incident marks a turning point of his career. In the light of the on-coming crucial international conference at the hall, Lord Darlington urges Stevens to cut down on the duties of his father (which means his stepping away from the centre stage as a butler). The part I am going to focus on is the scene where Stevens visits his father's room in order to break the bad news- that his father not being allowed to 'wait at table' anymore.

II. Textual analysis: written text in the novel compared with dialogue in the film

The announcement to Stevens Senior meant that he has to step back from the centre stage of butlership and I would like to draw attention to the way the interaction between father and son makes a different impact, then to the possible interpretations in the novel and in the film respectively. (For the text that I am going to take up for analysis, see Text-1 (an extract from the novel) and Text-2 (a dialogue from the film)).

Text-1 starts off with Stevens' thought on how, considering the serious mistake his father made on the previous day, he should break the news to his father, with the main focus on the description of his father's room. I'll come back to the description of the room later but I will first focus on the initial interaction between Stevens and his father. Both in the novel and the film, it was Stevens who utters the first word:

Novel: Ah, I might have known Father would be up and ready for the day (l.15)

Film: Good morning. (1)

There is a slight difference in his father's reaction between the two versions; that is, in the novel, he had 'been up for the past *three* (italicized by the writer) hours' as contrasted with 'two hours' in the film. Besides, his reply is accompanied by a narrative description, 'looking me up and down rather coldly.' (Text-1: 1.22). In the film, the father never even glances at his son, sitting straight and facing the viewer. Can it be one slight indication of the difference in the stance towards his duty as a butler at Darlington Hall? Or is it possible to argue that his father not engaging any eye contact with his son can depict a distanced relationship between father and son?

Stevens then goes on to break the bad news to his father:

Novel: I have come to relate something to you, Father. (1.33)

Film: Father, I've come to talk to you about something. (7)

In both cases, the utterance is there to inform Stevens Senior of something to come, but *how* it is conveyed shows a different stance of Stevens. In the film, Stevens uses the verb 'relate', which is more formal and perhaps business-like than the film version. If he has to 'relate' something to him, the significance of the matter increases than when he has 'something to talk about'. In response to son's remark, in the novel, the father snaps back at him saying,

Novel: Then relate it briefly and concisely. I haven't got all morning to listen to your chatter. (1.34-35)

He repeats and returns the same verb 'relate', which could sound patronizing and his response here can be interpreted as an indication of inner agitation on the father's part. Also, he dismisses whatever to come as 'chatter' that is something trifling, which makes a sharp contrast with the formal tone that 'relate' carries in the same sentence. It might also be said that he is already guarding himself from whatever happens to him. In the film, on the other hand,

Film: Talk then. I haven't got all morning. (8) Do...and be done with it. Some of us have work to be getting on with. (10)

This is more straightforward way of putting it than in the novel. There is no sarcastic repetition nor patronizing dismissiveness as in the novel. The father comes across as a more professional figure, who seems to be eager to carry out his duty as a butler. It may be safe to argue that the juxtaposition of the business-like formal tones of voice and the sarcastic rejection in the novel shows a more

complicated father-son relationship.

Another point that I would like to draw attention to is how Stevens informs his father of the resumption of his duty. He is there to convey his employer's decision.

Novel: 'Very well. Since you wish me to be brief, I will do my best to comply. The fact is, Father has become increasingly infirm. So much so that even the duties of an under-butler are now beyond his capabilities. His lordship is of the view, as indeed I am myself, that while Father is allowed to continue with his present round of duties, he represents an ever-present threat to the smooth running of this house hold, and in particular to next week's important inter-national gathering.'

'Principally,' I continued, 'it has been felt that Father should no longer be asked to wait at table, whether or not guests are present.'

Film: Yes. (pause) There's to be a very important international conference in this house next week. People of great stature will be His Lordship's guests. We must all put our best foot forward. Because of father's recent accident,...it has been suggested that you no longer wait at table.

(A transcription from a film *The Remains of the Day*)

First of all, the physical length of the turns is different; the novel extends Stevens' message into almost like a speech whereas the film version allows Stevens to be brief about it. This physical impact cannot be ignored on the printed page in the novel in that the dense long paragraph gives away an impression of the solid and stern nature of the delivery. It goes without saying that the words in the film are conveyed not in the form of written text but in the form of sound, and this has to be taken into consideration when analyzing a particular scene. Stevens addresses his father using the third person pronoun 'his capabilities' instead of 'your' and when calling him a 'threat', the third person pronoun is used again. The choice of pronoun is therefore one realization of their relationship, which is rather distanced and awkward.

More significantly, there seems to be a difference in the focal point of Stevens' speech between the novel and the film. While the film version emphasizes the importance of the international conference to be held at the house, which consequently compromises the distribution of the workload for his father, Stevens's speech in the novel focuses more sharply on his father's declining state, by referring to him as 'infirm'. He is scarcely 'allowed to continue' to do his duty as

he is told and ultimately labeled as a ‘threat’, which conveys a strong negative tone. In other words, the importance of the international conference is pushed in the background compared to the equivalent scene in the film.

This criticism is exaggerated by its length; that is, Stevens’ formal and eloquent ‘sermon’ towards his father sounds more sarcastic. Stevens’s logical yet lengthy justification of his points is encountered by his father’s non-reaction.

Novel: My father’s face, in the half-light, betrayed no emotion whatsoever. (1.48-49)

This has an anticlimactic effect on the printed page, the contrast between Stevens’ speech and this brief narrative about his father can indicate meaning outside the words. Namely, the visual impact of the text can contribute to the overall message of the text (which is conveyed through the meaning of the sentences).

Stevens, who was met by his father’s non-reactive attitude, continues his formal tone;

Novel: Principally, I continued, it has been felt that Father should no longer be asked to wait at table, whether or not guests are present. (1.50-52)

The style avoids making the agent clear by using a passive voice using the third person pronoun ‘it’ as in ‘it has been felt’ which functions to delete the responsibility of the person who ‘felt’ that was the case with Stevens Senior. It is notable however that in the film, father takes a physical action that is missing in the novel:

Film: I’ve, I’ve waited at table every day ...[pause] for the last fifty four years. (12)

This is when, in the film, Stevens’ father is represented in an agitated and disturbed state. His voice is raised and he suddenly turns to his son, standing and says:

Film: F: (standing up) Look, I fell...because of those paving stones. They’re crooked. (turning to Stevens) Why don’t you get them put right before someone else does the same thing?

As contrasted with his quiet reaction in the novel, his father is depicted as an individual with raw feelings and emotions and this message comes across through

both language (as in the utterance) and gestures and actions in the film. Father in the film allows himself even to make a sarcastic joke about it by saying ‘You don’t wanna those “gentlemen of statue” tripping up and breaking their necks, do you? (16)’, which is no doubt getting at his son who brought him the insulting news. Showing his agitation to his son reveals one side of this old butler, who has devoted himself to his career, and this cannot be observed in the novel, where he says with ‘his voice perfectly unhurried’ (1.54). It can be argued that within this calmness and serenity, his father’s solid determination and professionalism and perhaps some kind of resistance are conveyed. Confronting this silent resistance, Stevens goes on to say:

Novel: 'Furthermore, it has been decided that Father should not carry laden trays of any sort for even the shortest distances.

In view of these limitations, and knowing Father's esteem for conciseness, I have listed here the revised round of duties he will from now on be expected to perform.' (1.55-59)

In the equivalent scene in the film, on the other hand:

Film: It has also been decided that you should no longer carry heavy trays. (13)

It there is again the difference in the use of addressing pronoun: ‘father’ (as in the third person) in the novel and ‘you’ (in the second person) in the film and this creates a subtle difference in the nuance; that is, in the novel, this father-son relationship is emphasized rather addressing his father as ‘you’ has a more neutralized effect. One of the most notable remarks by Stevens is where he addresses his father, who is right in front of him, in the third person pronoun:

Novel: ...I have listed here the revised round of duties he will from now on be expected to perform. (1.58-59)

The formal and business-like and distanced (considering this is an interaction between father and son) tone is highlighted through the dialogue in this scene and accumulated speech by Stevens is more effective to indicate a distance rather than intimacy of the relationship. Taking the points so far discussed into consideration, it is possible to say that in the novel, Stevens father is represented as a highly professional person, who never shows any personal emotions, which creates the overall sense of formality and distance between him and his son. In other words, the restraint of one’s raw feeling can be the key to the professionalism.

It should be noted here, however, that the whole narrative in the novel takes on the form of Stevens's recollection while in the film the viewer is presented with visual information of something that is going on; in other words, something that has happened rather than something that is reflected on by someone. The following is the formula of this structure in the novel.

<Narrative through Stevens's recollection of what he remembers about
<what happened between him and his father when notifying the change in
his duties at Darlington Hall>

Namely, what has been 'told' in the film is embedded within what Stevens is supposed to remember about his father; therefore, the visual interpretation of the film production cannot be paralleled by what is described in the film. Lodge (2003) points out that the verbosity of Stevens' remark makes it clear, ironically enough, that he has no substantial meaning to convey to his own father and Stevens as a first person narrator is unreliable because of this very nature of narrative style:

When first-person narration is combined with a focus on "surface" rather than "depth" – when, that is, the consciousness that is revealed by the first-person narrative contains note of the emotions and values that we expect to find there – a peculiarly disturbing effect of alienation can be produced, ... (82)

In the film, on the other hand, the visual images are presented as 'visual facts' in front of the viewer, no matter how unreliable and self-betraying the narrated messages are. This is where the difficulty and the fundamental problem of comparing the novel text and its film production on equal grounds under the label of 'textual analysis'.

III. Textual analysis: message through language versus message through visual images

The previous section has focused on the language factor in the two different productions by looking at the text in the novel and the script in the film. In this section, I would like to explore how the father-son relationship is realized through written language in the novel and how it is realized visually in the film by taking up a few scenes. In the novel, before the morning when Stevens goes to break the news to his father, the reader is provided with the detailed inner feelings of Stevens as follows:

The question of how one could broach the topic of reducing his responsibilities was not, then, an easy one. My difficulty was further compounded by the fact that for some years my father and I had tended – for some reason I have never really fathomed – to converse less and less. So much so that after his arrival at Darlington Hall, even the brief exchanges necessary to communicate information relating to work took place in an atmosphere of mutual embarrassment. (*The Remains of the Day*: 1989:64)

Stevens seems to be aware of the difficulty of communicating with his father in this way and the narrative shows how nerve wrecking it can be for him to do the task.

In the end, I judged that best option to be to talk in the privacy of his room, thus giving him the opportunity to ponder his new situation in solitude once I took my leave. The only times my father could be found in his room were first thing in the morning and last thing at night. Choosing the former, I climbed up to his small attic room at the top of the servants' wing early one morning and knocked gently. (ibid: 64)

In the novel, the reader is given Stevens's inner conflict before he actually tells his father that he should be off the centre stage, and it becomes clear that his father is lodged in a 'small attic room', which in some ways prepares the readers for what is to come.

In the film, the whole inner monologue is left out and the scene starts with a shot of Darlington Hall and then focuses on where Stevens' father stands still by the window, which is followed by Stevens' appearance as follows:

Shot-1) Morning light. The entire house is shown.

Shot-2) A young servant getting ready for work down in the firewood pantry.

Shot-3) Kitchen. A few servants already engaged in their work.

(Shot-4) [Father's room] Stevens father looking out of window, turning his back to the viewer.

(Shot-5) Father turns around and takes out his pocket watch and checks the time, then looks down.

(Shot-6) [In the corridor] Stevens coming up the stairs. He exchanges a few words with Hugh, one of the young servants, and gives him a direction for the night. He then walks up to the floor where his father's room is.

(Shot-7) [Back in father's room] Father sitting on the edge of the bed, deep in thought.
(long pause)

(Shot-8) Stevens knocks on the door and comes in.

One of the differences from the novel version is that in the film Stevens comes across the young servant Hugh. He is depicted as contrasted with Stevens' father as a young and energetic man, full of prospects for the future as opposed to the withering state of his father. It may be said that his existence works as to make the feebleness of his father stand out, which is to come in the next seconds. In fact, Hugh runs up to the stairs after finishing talking to Stevens, making an upward directionality (or a vector), which can indicate a positive move. He is thrilled because Stevens assigned him to do something more advanced and prestigious than he is now doing and he seems excited about it.

Likewise, there is a big shift from dynamic shots, which show servants working hard in the morning, to the static shot of Stevens' father's little dim room and it is effective in making a contrast of the two different situations clearer, that is between being 'at work' and being 'not at work'. The only physical movement Stevens' father makes is to stand still by the window and look at his watch. The quiet static scene actually emphasizes the declining status of his father and his misery. This is one of the examples where visual images play a significant role in the sense that they are beyond linguistic information.

It is in the Shot-7 when Stevens reaches his father's attic room. Let me now take a closer look at this part in comparison with the equivalent part in the novel to see how the two characters interact with each other and how their feelings are represented through the choice of language and the structure of visual images.

In the novel, the room is negatively described in its 'smallness' (1.2) and 'starkness' (1.3), and negatively as 'a prison cell' (1.4). His father is described as if he were embedded within the prison-cell-like environment and Stevens guesses that his father had been looking out of the window earlier on:

Novel: ...there being little else to view from his small window other than

roof-tiles and guttering. (l.10-11)

All he could see are roof-tiles and guttering and this might symbolize the scale of his world as an individual because this is a shot that represents his point of view, that is, the world as far as he could see. This scene is actually visualized in the film showing his father's dark back that is obstructing the sight of the window, which emphasizes its subtleness of light in the space. In the novel this sense of darkness or dimness is even more emphasized through the narrative, 'the lamp I had brought to guide me up the rickety staircase' (l.14-15), which is not the case in the film where Stevens is not seen carrying the lamp. Instead, his presence is heard by the viewer in the form of the knocking sound on the father's door. It is not just staircase that is 'rickety' but also his father's limbs (considering that he had a fall the other day) and this might function as a parallel feature between his close environment and himself.

There is something in common between the novel and the film in terms of the representation of his father as a shadowed figure; his private space is presented as meager for what he has achieved as the first-class butler (as Stevens puts it) and this might indicate the barrenness of his private life as opposed to the seemingly successful professional life. Also, the bare room he lives in indicates the ultimate restraint in the emotional aspect of the father, which can lead to professionalism as a butler with expected and required dignity.

In the novel Stevens takes notice of the lamp in his room:

The oil lamp beside his bed had been extinguished, and when I saw my father glance disapprovingly at the lamp I had brought to guide me up the rickety staircase, I quickly lowered the wick. Having done this, I noticed all the more the effect of the pale light coming into the room and the way it lit up the edges of my father's craggy, lined, still awesome features. (l.12-18)

The description here makes it explicit that his father was sitting facing the door, in the direction from which Stevens enters and that Stevens could see the detailed features of his father shows the smallness of the room.

In the film, on the other hand, the father is seen to be sitting away from the door and when Stevens enters the room, there is no eye contact between them. Within the frame, we can see Stevens' father looking down sitting on the bed and in the background Stevens is standing straight by the door facing his father, talking over his shoulder. The metal pole attached to the bed works as a visual border between

the two and it remains so (for 57 seconds) until Stevens' words upset his father and makes him stand up in a huff. The sight of Stevens and his father divided by the pole remains rather persistently and a sense of suspension is created. Stevens keeps on talking to his father without shifting his posture and his father indicates no movement until he is met by the verdict that 'he is no longer allowed to serve at table'. This is when the old father takes physical action and turns to his son saying, 'I've, I've waited at table every day ... for the last fifty-four years. (12)'.

Father's intensified face is shown here and Stevens' facial expression is kept away from the viewer. For a few seconds, the viewer hears what Stevens says but can not see how he looks. The voice of Stevens goes on:

Novel: It has also been decided that you should no longer carry heavy trays. Now, here's a revised list of your duties. (13)

This is when Stevens' father goes beyond the pole (as a border line) to get closer to Stevens who is still standing by the door. This signifies the moment when the father is determined to confront his son openly for the first time in this scene. There is a sudden shift of action into something dynamic from a static state.

In the novel, however, Stevens's father had already stood up even before Stevens goes on to the details of his report as in:

Novel: My father reached forward to the only chair in the room, a small wooden one, and placing both hands on its back, brought himself to his feet. When I saw him stood upright before me, I could not be sure to what extent he was hunched over due to infirmity and what extent due to the habit of accommodating the steeply sloped ceilings of the room. (1.26-32)

In the novel he is described in this way as remaining still, towering over Stevens and receives the news about his new duties. Rather than dynamic and dramatic movement of his father in the film, this slow and static movement gives rise to his solidness as a dignified figure. His reaction in the novel is persistently described:

Novel: There was no trace of emotion discernible in his expression, and his hands on the back of the chair appeared perfectly relaxed. (1.63-65)

Unlike the sudden reaction seen in the film, father in the novel is indeed represented as 'relaxed' as to the extent that the word 'eventually' is used after a long silence:

Novel: Eventually, he said: 'I only fell that time because of those steps. They're crooked. Seamus should be told to put those right before someone else does the same thing.' (l.70-72)

In this respect, we get a different picture of Stevens' father in the novel and in the film. The former is more emotional and open to his own feelings while the latter is more closed off and hardly gives away his feelings, in other words, keeping himself as a professional figure. Besides, in the film, the viewer can see the perplexed facial expression that Stevens has after breaking the news and being met by his father's physical and verbal resistance.

In the novel, Stevens finishes off the conversation by dismissing his father's point about having the 'crooked steps' mended:

Novel: Indeed. In any case, may I be assured Father will study that sheet? (l.74-75)...

Indeed. Well, Father good morning. (l.77)

This marks the end of the recollection of this particular episode, which is given no additional comments by Stevens and this is what is represented by the shift in the paragraph that leads on to the next topic. In the film, it is possible to get a different interpretation about this same episode, where Stevens is not quite resolved about leaving the room and in fact he does not neatly finish off the conversation in the form of greeting 'good morning' but he slips quietly to the outside the door. Here the actions and facial expression play a role of complementing what has been said.

It goes without saying that all the information comes through words in the novel, which in some ways leaves more room for different interpretations but in this case, the dry and barren relationship between father and son is accelerated by the dry and factual-toned narrative by Stevens. The film production on the other hand has to accompany visual message through meanings made by modes of communication other than language, such as facial expressions and actions and spacing within the pictorial frame. As Oguri (2003) points out, there is a limitation to the extent visual modes can represent the inner world of the characters and the inner world cannot be externalized as they are and this is where the writing medium has strength. Facial expressions are one means of communicating inner world of the character but they are realized differently from the way words do and this gives rise to the difference in the overall meaning making of the (even) the individual scene let alone the whole work. Ambiguity exists at different levels; in the novel in terms of the unreliability of the narrative itself in comparison to that of the film

where the interpretation of the meaning with certain forms that come from visual information takes.

IV. Conclusion

The paper has examined the meanings that are realized through writing and through multiple modes, with particular reference to what is realized visually in combination with the script in Kazuo Ishiguro's *The Remains of the Day*. Based on the original story written as a novel that is now turned into a different product and it is notable to explore how different modes such as visual images takes on what is originally realized exclusively by language. This can be one of the effective ways to re-consider the nature of language in relation to other modes of communication. The novel consists only of language but the language can carry visually effective meaning. For example, the lengthy, rigid and business-like turn of Stevens is realized through a presence of long solid paragraphs as opposed to a brief line of father's reply. That is, to read the writing as a visual unit can contribute to the meaning making of the text. On the other hand in the film, Stevens is not represented as an eloquent (verbally) person who is actually facing his father, but instead he is portrayed visually through his posture and facial expressions, which makes up for what is verbally missing. In spite of the omission of the actual interaction between father and son, it seems to me that the film production is presenting a closer and more intimate relationship between the two than in the novel. In short the verbosity of Stevens in the novel is not a sign of intimacy with his father but a professional façade or front.

Finally, I would like to consider the kind of message the reader or the viewer of the novel or the film receives. Given the ground that the present analysis is partial within the whole text, it is possible to say that each version positions the reader/viewer in a particular way. In the novel, the image of 'perfectly dignified butler' is represented to the maximum extent with occasional exaggerations, which is modified and almost reduced to the common conflict between father and son. The father-son relationship in the novel had to be somehow beyond something common because the peculiarity of the butler as an occupation needs to be put before the family relationship. Unlike the novel, the film can be said to aim at more generality in its subject matter, being aware of the marketability as a commercial product. There the cultural specific-ness of English butler is relatively reduced so as to appeal to the general viewer compared to the impact of the representation of professionalism of being a butler in the novel.

Translating the novel into the film involves considerable shifts in the distribution

of meanings. That is, the meaning that language has taken on originally in the novel has to be re-distributed across different modes of meaning making mechanism such as visuals and sound and actions, including making the most out of what actors can contribute to this collaborated work called film making.

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The Remains of the Day. (1993) Dir. James Ivory.

Appendix

TEXT-1

I had rarely had reason to enter my father's room prior to this occasion and I was newly struck by the smallness and starkness of it. Indeed, I recall my impression at the time was of having stepped into a prison cell, but then this might have had as much to do with the pale early light as with the size of the room or the bareness of its walls. For my father had opened his curtains and was sitting, shaved and in full uniform, on the edge of his bed from where evidently he

had been watching the sky turn to dawn. At least one
assumed he had been watching the sky, there being little
else to view from his small window other than roof-tiles
and guttering. The oil lamp beside his bed had been
extinguished, and when I saw my father glance disapprov-
ingly at the lamp I had brought to guide me up the rickety
staircase, I quickly lowered the wick. Having done this, I
noticed all the more the effect of the pale light coming into
the room and the way it lit up the edges of my father's
craggy, lined, still awesome features.

'Ah,' I said, and gave a short laugh, 'I might have known
Father would be up and ready for the day.'

'I've been up for the past three hours,' he said, looking
me up and down rather coldly.

'I hope Father is not being kept awake by his arthritic
troubles.'

'I get all the sleep I need.'

My father reached forward to the only chair in the room,
a small wooden one, and placing both hands on its back,
brought himself to his feet. When I saw him stood upright
before me, I could not be sure to what extent he was
hunched over due to infirmity and what extent due to the
habit of accommodating the steeply sloped ceilings of the
room.

'I have come here to relate something to you, Father.'

'Then relate it briefly and concisely. I haven't all morning
to listen to you chatter.'

'In that case, Father, I will come straight to the point.'

'Come to the point then and be done with it. Some of us
have work to be getting on with.'

'Very well. Since you wish me to be brief, I will do my
best to comply. The fact is, Father has become increasingly
infirm. So much so that even the duties of an under-butler
are now beyond his capabilities. His lordship is of the view,
as indeed I am myself, that while Father is allowed to
continue with his present round of duties, he represents an
ever-present threat to the smooth running of this house-
hold, and in particular to next week's important inter-
national gathering.'

My father's face, in the half-light, betrayed no emotion
whatsoever.

'Principally,' I continued, 'it has been felt that Father should no longer be asked to wait at table, whether or not guests are present.' 50

'I have waited at table every day for the last fifty-four years,' my father remarked, his voice perfectly unhurried.

'Furthermore, it has been decided that Father should not carry laden trays of any sort for even the shortest distances. In view of these limitations, and knowing Father's esteem for conciseness, I have listed here the revised round of duties he will from now on be expected to perform.' 55

I felt disinclined actually to hand to him the piece of paper I was holding, and so put it down on the end of his bed. My father glanced at it then returned his gaze to me. There was still no trace of emotion discernible in his expression, and his hands on the back of the chair appeared perfectly relaxed. Hunched over or not, it was impossible not to be reminded of the sheer impact of his physical presence - the very same that had once reduced two drunken gentlemen to sobriety in the back of a car. 60

Eventually, he said:

'I only fell that time because of those steps. They're crooked. Seamus should be told to put those right before someone else does the same thing.' 70

'Indeed. In any case, may I be assured Father will study that sheet?'

'Seamus should be told to put those steps right. Certainly before these gentlemen start arriving from Europe.' 75

'Indeed. Well, Father, good morning.'

Text-2

The Remains of the Day (Directed by James Ivory, 1993)

In Stevens's father's room

1-Stevens: (opening the door) Good morning.

2-Father: (looking into the space, away from the door) Good morning.

3-S: I might have known you'd be up and ready for the day.

4-F: I've been up for two hours.

5-S: That's not much sleep.

6-F: It's all the sleep I need.

7-S: (pause) Father, I've come to talk to you about something.

8-F: Talk, then. I haven't got all morning.

9-S: I'll come straight to the point.

10-F: Do ... and be done with it. Some of us have work to be getting on with.

11-S: Yes. (pause) There's to be a very important international conference in this house next week. People of great stature will be His Lordship's guests. We must all put our best foot forward. Because of father's recent accident,...it has been suggested that you no longer wait at table.

12-F: I've! (turning to Stevens) I've waited at table every day... for the last 54 years.

13-S: (pause, looking at Father) It has also been decided that you should no longer carry heavy trays.

(showing father's face) Now, here's a revised list of your duties.

14-F: (standing up) Look, I fell...because of those paving stones. They're crooked. (turning to Stevens) Why don't you get them put right before someone else does the same thing?

15-S: (pause) You will read the revised list of your duties, father.

16-F: Get those stones put right. You don't wanna those 'gentlemen of stature' tripping up and breaking their necks, do you?

17-S: (pause, looking perplexed) No, indeed, I don't.

The Journal of Humanities, Meiji Univ., Vol.20 (March 31, 2014),21-32

What is America, American and Americanness?

YAGASAKI Junko

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I. Introduction

In this small personal essay, I would like to present one small thought on becoming American. I would like to think back and examine from psycho-anthropological perspective how I dealt with my very simple question that I came to hold during my first long-term stay in a foreign culture. Then I would like to reconsider what has intrigued me about America for a long time, from the foundation I have laid. My question that was evoked while I was studying abroad as an undergraduate was about the relationship between culture and personality for an individual.

I dreamed of studying abroad since I was a child, subscribing to a monthly magazine called *Study Abroad*, in my elementary school days. In those days, the information provided there was mostly about studying in the United States and so very naturally I became interested in America and Americans. Cross-cultural experience was something that I yearned for as a child and a foreign culture was almost equal to American culture for me in those days. My first real contact with the United States of America goes back to my teenage days when I attended a summer English program and spent one summer in Berkeley, California. This encouraged me to think of studying longer in an English language environment.

My first long-term cross-cultural experience, however, was not in the United States, but in Canada. I managed to go and study for one year at McGill University in Montreal, fulfilling my long-term dream of studying abroad since my childhood. It was more than thirty years ago and I was an undergraduate studying English literature at the University of Tokyo. I was one of a very few Japanese at McGill and in Montreal in those days and actually I only met two Japanese, whom I did not get to know, during the whole year. I made friends and enjoyed my student life. Everyday, everything was exciting, and living there itself was stimulating. Day to day living was to me like a sort of “performance” of myself.

After I returned to Japan, what occupied my mind were questions about culture and personality. I questioned whether the cultural difference is larger than the difference among the personalities of each individual within one culture. I felt very close to a few friends at McGill, finding many commonalities among us despite our cultural differences. I had difficulties relating to some others, which might have stemmed from cultural differences. Even in Japan, I felt close to some,

and not to others. Very simply, I asked why? It seemed to me that people's personality differences sometimes could be greater than cultural differences. In other words, there must be some "culture-free" areas within one's personality, so that we can relate to each other beyond cultural boundaries, which, however, I came to realize much later. Back at the University of Tokyo, I went to one psychology professor to ask about this problem. I cannot recall what he told me, but I only remember that his answer was not convincing.

Searching for a right discipline to solve this problem, years later, I had a chance to start studying anthropology and eventually went to the United States to study it to complete my Ph.D. at UCLA. Living in the United States provided me with a second long-term experience of living in a different culture. Although I again passed through psychological insecurity in my first year, I gradually gained a new "psychosocial homeostasis" (Hsu 1981), which might have been slightly different from the psychosocial homeostasis that I had when I was in Japan. The new homeostasis, which was my new inner state, was created by my experience of living in a physically and interpersonally new environment. I adapted to the new environment on the all three levels of "internal (self)," "social (others)," and physical/biological (nature)" (Bock 1969).

II. Culture and Personality

Franz Boas, the father of American Anthropology, and the professor of anthropology at Columbia University, and his students such as Benedict and Mead advocated the importance of culture in the 1930s. Benedict (1934) considered human cultures as "personality writ large." Although these scholars did not state that cultures determine personalities, the primal importance of culture was obviously highlighted. I did not completely agree with that idea from my personal experience and the question that was evoked during my stay at McGill. The term "culture and personality" was replaced later by the term "psychological anthropology" by Hsu (1961) and the areas it dealt with were expanded. This seemed the nearest framework for me to solve my question. I wanted to study and understand the relationship between culture and personality for an individual.

Through studying anthropology and living in a foreign culture, I thought I began to find an answer to my original question. I pursued the topic of adults' foreign experiences, which were different from children's, because children were considered to be still in the process of on-going enculturation. I realized that to separate "self" from environment was more easily achieved in a foreign culture than in one's own because you live through changes in physical and interpersonal environment when living in a foreign culture (Triandis and Brislin 1984). Meanwhile, the culturally shared aspects of personality should be revealed more

vividly in people living away from home (Tobin 1983). I thought that one could feel the sense of belongingness to one's mother culture more intensely in a different culture. This indicates that if one feels close to and sharing similarities with people who are from different cultures even when one is living in a foreign culture, the friendship becomes something really true and genuine.

Before starting my research on cultural identity of Americans living in Japan, I constructed a hypothetical personality model, which presumes that one's personality is composed of three levels: affective (emotional), behavioral, and cognitive (Yagasaki 1990). The emotional level of one's personality has been considered to be the hardest to change, because one's emotional patterns have been formed earlier in one's life, and once established, are really hard to change (LeVine 1982). I wanted to challenge this belief. People can imitate others' behaviors, and speak a local language (behavioral level), and understand different cultural patterns intellectually, with the head (cognitive level), but what about the emotional (affective) level? I wanted to ask whether or not adults, who had gone through and finished enculturation in their own culture, can emotionally become a member of a different culture and identify themselves with it.

During fieldwork in Japan, I interviewed many interesting foreigners, mostly Americans, which made me think many things. When I asked them about their cultural identity, they tried really hard to figure out what it was, what culture they felt they belonged to, which was a very tough job for them, since they had lived in Japan for so long. Although many of them said they would not be able to become Japanese because of their different appearance as a Caucasian, i.e., the biological difference, some felt they were Japanized even emotionally. There was an American male who wanted to be interviewed in Japanese, not in English, because he thought he was able to express himself on the emotional level in Japanese better, which I thought very interesting.

I came to realize that those Americans who felt really Japanized had originally had something Japanese in their personality even before coming to Japan. Those people felt really comfortable and at home living in Japanese culture. I thought that there should be some "innate-culture-free" area in one's personality, although a large part of one's personality was affected and formed by one's own culture in the process of enculturation at home. One's personality should be composed of the "culture-tinged area" and the "innate-culture-free area" (Yagasaki 1990). It suggested, I felt, a way to solve my original question back at McGill. My friend there and I could share something in common in our innate-culture-free areas of our personalities beyond cultural boundaries.

I visited Montreal in 2012 after a long interval and met my friend from McGill. She came from the Toronto area to Montreal to meet me. She had grown old, and so had I. We talked and ate together and had fun. I realized that I liked her because of what she was, not because of her culture. It felt good for me to

accept others as they are, not as those from another culture.

III. Becoming American

The visit to Montreal and having a chance to look at America from up close but outside gave me a new insight. I felt that America and Americans might be very unique. Montreal was free from a feeling of tension that I was always forced to have when walking on a street in America. Something that I took for granted in America, I thought, was unique to that country. It was a startling revelation to me.

Naturally, America is unique in the sense that the American War of Independence was the first successful anticolonial war in modern times and it was the first independent country that did not have the common prerequisites for nationhood, such as natural territorial boundaries and its members descending from common ancestors or sharing the same religion (Mann 1987). It was a new type of nation. The uniqueness that I came to realize, however, was not from such foundations, but from something that people are intentionally preserving or continuously creating based on their image of the country.

While staying in Montreal, I talked with a Canadian professor who had studied in the United States. We talked about America and Americans. As an Anglophone Canadian, he insisted on the difference between the two countries. Although it was difficult for him to describe what America or Americanness was, he perceived an obvious difference. We both have observed America for a long time and agreed that America has changed considerably and has been changing, and unfortunately changing in a bad direction. Because of the serious problems that trouble America and Americans they have revealed themselves more in recent times. I think the uniqueness of America has become conspicuous in recent years. We may be able to find a clue to the question of America in how Americans deal with their recent emerging problems.

The question of what is America or Americanness has intrigued me ever since I dreamed of studying abroad as a child. I visited America many times after my first visit, and traveled extensively, at first in the Western provinces while studying at UCLA, and later in other parts. It has a wide range of regional, geographical, ethnic, and racial differences, but it is united into one country even though it received many immigrants with various backgrounds from all over the world. I wondered why the country could be so united and how such diverse people could become Americans as a whole.

After I came back from UCLA, I started working at a university in Japan, married and raised a child by myself with my husband teaching at a faraway

university, at first in the UK and later in Sapporo. I was always busy managing to balance work with child rearing. Meanwhile, by checking what is happening in America, through the media or by visiting, I still have been trying to find a right and convincing framework for me to get to an answer to my question. Although I was given a sabbatical for special research in 2012, on the same year I was unexpectedly appointed associate dean for academic affairs at my university. This job has made me extremely busy with administration work, which made my sabbatical for research completely disappear. I am still at the post and working hard to promote reform in education, making this university better for our students.

I tried to examine the meaning of becoming American from my past research to analyze the meaning of becoming Japanese. I should make it clear that becoming Japanese or American here indicates the outsider coming to identify with the host culture on a cultural identity level, not at a nationality or national identity level. Very few Caucasian Americans I interviewed had become Japanese on a nationality level by obtaining a Japanese passport, although it did not mean that they had not become Japanese on a cultural identity level. It is difficult, however, even if they wanted to, for Caucasian foreigners to feel that they could become Japanese, because it is not expected, or even not positively accepted, by Japanese people. They are not encouraged to do so and are expected to remain as foreigners. Moreover, the range of “Japaneseness” is very narrow and rigid, even exclusive, compared to that of “Americanness.” I should say that this psychological barrier among Japanese is becoming less and less over time, and the range of Japaneseness is also expanding and less rigid and less exclusive, and therefore the situation is quite different in Japan today.

In America, however, immigrants, or even long-term sojourners like international students at universities, are expected to become Americans. I remember talking with a gas company repairman who visited my apartment just before my return to Japan after getting my Ph.D. at UCLA. When I told him I was going back home, he was very surprised and could not understand why I did not want to stay in America, which was, for him, the best and the most wonderful country in the world. He genuinely believed that everybody wanted to live in America.

This kind of innocent glorification of America seems to prevail among Americans at a grass-roots level. The pride and willingness to be a part of America on an individual level, I think, would connect people to be united in one country. In multicultural America, however, each individual’s cultural identity must be diverse, which should hold, to a certain extent, one’s ethnic and cultural background as well as a common shared area as an American. The latter is relatively broader in its contents than a common shared area of being Japanese.

The common shared area as an American in each individual is something that does attract people from all over the world. Illegal immigrants even risk their lives to cross the border to enter America. Undocumented people always exist in America even to becoming an indispensable part of the country's economy. It seems that many people do want to come to America and stay.

IV. What Attracts People to America

What attracts people to America, whether it is a fantasy or a reality, should be something that is universally desired. People want to come to America because it is the land of freedom. Freedom has been a keyword to describe America, since the first earlier settlers arrived from Europe in quest of religious and political freedom in the New World. Freedom from British political control meant liberation from old tradition, customs, and monarchy in the Old World, making democracy the key concept for Americans.

The word freedom, however, could be interpreted in a wider range of meanings over time. For some immigrants it means that people can do whatever they want. Although freedom should go with obligation, only freedom can be highlighted. Particularly for some newcomers from countries with strong government control, freedom could be a magical word to justify their self-centered or selfish behavior. I remember what my LA apartment next-door neighbor who liked listening to loud music told me. Since I was studying for the exams, I very politely asked him to turn down the volume. He apparently was annoyed by my request and shut the door in my face, saying, "It is America, it is a free country, I can do anything!" From his English and mannerisms, he was obviously an immigrant or a nonnative, who seemed to be a Chinese newcomer working in town. Freedom could be the most appealing concept in many ways for many people.

Another thing to attract people to America is the idea that America is the land of equality. In the beginning of the United States Declaration of Independence, which was adopted by the Continental Congress in 1776 during the anti-colonial war with the United Kingdom, equality is declared in the text as "all men are created equal."

Those who are attracted to America not only want to come and stay, but also want to become American even on a cultural identity level. I remember one Korean student who lived in the same dormitory in my first year at UCLA. One day she rushed into the common room and proudly announced that she had become an American that day. She came to America with her parents at the age of ten and since then had been striving to become American. All the students in the room congratulated her. She was really happy and full of pride. To become American meant far more than just a piece of legal paper or document.

In recent years, I think that various problems have been emerging about those ideals that have attracted so many people to America. For one thing, the deep-rooted objection to gun control among Americans, I think, is closely related to the belief that freedom is justified for the benefit of the individual in America. Guns were indispensable for people to protect themselves back in the pioneer days in the western frontier. Although people do not need them any more in modern civilized society, the American tradition of relying on guns dies hard. The freedom to own guns to protect themselves, I think, was the grounds for the National Rifle Association of America, by lobbying against gun control, to promote the Stand Your Ground Law, a kind of self-defense law. The fact that there exist numerous guns owned by ordinary Americans is a big concern today for those who try to promote gun control to make the society a safer one.

The ideal of equality has not been fully achieved in terms of race and ethnicity, although the situation has been improved. The big economic disparity among ordinary Americans, however, has become a serious problem after the Lehman Brothers collapse in 2008. It drove some people to occupy Wall Street in 2011 to protest against unfairness in the distribution of wealth in America today.

The ideals that were once shining and attracted people to America now seem to be dimming. However, I think we can find a clue in today's problems to find an answer to the question of America.

V. Conclusion

In this small personal essay, I tried to approach the question of America from the foundation I laid so far. Ever since Crèvecoeur asked, "what is an American?" in 1782, many studies have been done about this topic from various disciplines, such as sociology, history and others. Anglo-conformity, melting pot, and cultural pluralism (Gordon 1964) are sociological concepts and pluralistic integration (Higham 1975) is a historian's model to explain what Americans are. This question has intrigued many people, including me.

Looking at the meaning of becoming American from my theory of personality and culture is quite new and novel, so its perspective is a contribution to the accumulated studies about the topic. Still, how each individual is tinged by America in his/her personality and how those people can be united to make the whole entity that we call "America" has to be further examined. I would like to find a more, to me, convincing framework to unravel it.

America has been changing rapidly in recent years. As an American watcher, I will keep looking at where this country and its people are going. Ever since America was founded, it has been trying various experiments, having an impact on other countries. Its enterprising spirit attracts people. My quest for the source

of its uniqueness and for a convincing answer to the question of America will continue.

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THE JOURNAL OF HUMANITIES
MEIJI UNIVERSITY
VOLUME 20 March 31, 2014

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TEL 03-3296-4135 FAX 03-3296-4283
ISSN 1341-2000
PRINTED IN JAPAN

