‘Fictions written in a certain city’: Representations of Japan in Angela Carter’s work

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Submitted to Swansea University in fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Swansea University

September 2018

Abstract

In 1969, Angela Carter travelled to Japan. She lived there for two and a half years, returning to England twice during this time. When she returned to England for good in 1972, she had changed emotionally, romantically and sexually, with a newfound confidence emerging in her literature. This thesis investigates Carter's time in Japan between 1969 and 1972. It focuses specifically on *The Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor Hoffman* (1972) and Carter's collection of nine short stories *Fireworks* (1974). It also draws on Carter's essays about Japan which were written for the *New Society*, the *Statesman* and the *Guardian*. The memoirs of Carter's Japanese lover, Sozo Araki (2018) and the 'Angela Carter Papers' in the British Library also inform this work.

This thesis is split four chapters that investigate how Japan is represented in Carter's work. The first chapter assesses how the literary topography of the city evolves in Carter's work in Japan, as she positions herself as 'Other', attempting to navigate and interpret the streets of a foreign city. The second chapter assesses the ways in which images of Japanese theatre appear in Carter's short stories with specific reference to traditional *bunraku* puppet theatre and *kabuki* theatre. The third chapter shifts to a comparative analysis of Japanese literature, specifically between Carter and the Japanese author Tanizaki Jun'ichirō (1886-1964). The final chapter investigates Carter's interest in Japanese cinema, specifically the work of Akira Kurosawa (1910-1998), assessing the ways in which the techniques employed by Kurosawa are adopted and translated in Carter's fiction.

I suggest that Carter's time in Japan exposed her to new aesthetic possibilities: her time abroad saw a shift in her writing style, her sensibilities and her understanding of her own Judeo-Christian culture. Peering through the looking glass perched on the edge of Asia, it was in Japan that Carter 'learnt what it was to be a woman and became radicalised' (1982: 28). Although alienated as 'Other', as a Western Caucasian woman Carter was permitted a position of privileged estrangement. Themes of Otherness, alienation, the real and the unreal, exoticism and desire are all bound up with Carter's writing during this period.

Declarations and statements

DECLARATION

This work has not previously been accepted in substance for any degree and is not being concurrently submitted in candidature for any degree.

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STATEMENT 1

This thesis is the result of my own investigations, except where otherwise stated.

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Acknowledgements

Thank you to my team of supervisors, Dr Sarah Gamble, Dr Richard Robinson and Professor Julian Preece. I have been exceptionally lucky to have such an extraordinary team of academics help me shape my thesis over the past few years and guide me through to the final stages of completion.

Thank you also to the kind staff at the Research Institute of the Arts and Humanities (RIAH) at Swansea University. Dr Elaine Canning and Helen Baldwin have been so supportive and generous with their time, particularly in the early stages of this project. Thank you to Professor Wyn Davies, who told me in my second year of research to 'stop running and slow down' – advice that I'm going to try applying to life, not just to my research. Thank you to Professor Kirsti Bohata, Professor Caroline Franklin, Professor Michael Franklin, Professor John Goodby and Dr Steve Vine for your support (and for the occasional drink down the pub).

I have had a number of (somewhat varied) jobs over the past seven years, and every one of my colleagues has been lucky enough to hear me talk about my doctoral research. For those who listened – thank you. To the staff at the School of Management, Swansea University, thank you for understanding the highs and lows, for giving me guidance on completion, and lending an ear. Special thanks to Professor Yogesh Dwivedi, Dr Simon Brooks, Dr Jocelyn Finniear, Dr Paul White and the wonderful Professor Nick Rich for the many conversations we've had over the past few years. To my colleagues at Research England – thank for listening and for pushing me through the last two years of my project. I would also like to thank my PhD colleagues, Dr Heidi Yeandle-King and Dr Shareena Osbourne who have supported me throughout this work.

On a personal note, I would also like to thank my friends and family for their words of encouragement. To Karin and Paul for continuously supporting me and seeing me through every single stage of the process – thank you. Many thanks to my dad, my two brothers and three nephews – I'm now free to resume my role as 'Educational Aunt Helen' after a brief hiatus over the last few months.

Finally, thank you to my mum and to Adam for all of your support, generosity, encouragement and understanding over the last seven years.

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Abbreviations

Short stories, novels and essays by Angela Carter (in alphabetical order):

Burning your Boats and Other Stories (1995)	BB
'The Bloody Chamber' in *The Bloody Chamber and Other Stories* (1979)	BC
'Elegy for a Freelance' in *Fireworks* (1974)	EF
'The Erl-King' in *The Bloody Chamber and Other Stories* (1979)	EK
'The Executioner's Beautiful Daughter' in *Fireworks* (1974)	EBD
'Flesh and the Mirror' in *Fireworks* (1974)	FM
Heroes and Villains (1969)	HV
The Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor Hoffman (1972)	DH
'John Ford's *T'is Pity She's a Whore'* (1988) in *Burning Your Boats and Other Stories* (1995)	JF
Love (1971)	L
'The Loves of Lady Purple' in *Fireworks* (1974)	LLP
The Magic Toyshop (1967)	*MT*
Nights at the Circus (1984)	*NC*
'Penetrating to the Heart of the Forest' in *Fireworks* (1974)	PHF

The Passion of New Eve (1977)	*PNE*
'Reflections' in *Fireworks* (1974)	R
Shadow Dance (1966)	*SD*
'A Souvenir of Japan' in *Fireworks* (1974)	SJ
Several Perceptions (1968)	*SP*
'The Smile of Winter' in *Fireworks* (1974)	SOW
The Sadeian Woman (1979)	*SW*
'The Tiger's Bride' in *The Bloody Chamber and Other Stories* (1979)	TB
Unicorn (2015)	*U*
Wise Children (1991)	*WC*

Short stories, novels and essays written by other authors (in alphabetical order):

Iharu Saikaku, *The Life of an Amorous Woman* (1686)	*AW*
Italo Calvino, *Invisible Cities* (1972)	*IC*
Tanizaki Jun'ichirō, 'The Tattooer' (1910)	T
Tanizaki Jun'ichirō, *Naomi* (1924)	*N*
Tanizaki Jun'ichirō, *Some Prefer Nettles* (1929)	*SPN*

Archival material:

Additional manuscripts collection of the British Library	Add. MS
Private Collection	PC
The British Library Sound Archive	BLSA
The Harry Ransom Centre at the University of Texas	HRC

Introduction

> "A person who feels complete, who does not question who he is, or his place in the world, will dislike it here. To be constantly exposed to such a radically different culture becomes unbearable. But to a romantic, open to other ways of being, Japan is full of wonders. Not that you will ever belong here. But that will set you free. And freedom is better than belonging. You see, here you can make yourself into anything you want to be" (Donald Keene quoted in Buruma, 2018: 36).

On 26 March 1969, Angela Carter received the news that she had been awarded five hundred pounds for the Somerset Maugham Travel Award for her novel *Several Perception*, published in the previous year. Carter used the money to travel to America with her then-husband Paul Carter, before travelling to Japan by herself. Over the course of the next two and a half years, her experiences as a Western female writer living in the East would influence her writing, with representations of Japanese culture permeating her novels, short stories, and works of non-fiction. Focusing on Carter's sole novel written during her time abroad, *The Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor Hoffman* (1972), the nine tales which appear in her collection of short stories *Fireworks* (1974), as well the Angela Carter Papers at the British Library and her essays written about her time in Japan, this thesis examines the extent to which Carter's encounter with the East altered the way in which she was writing. I suggest that Carter's time in Japan exposed her to new aesthetic possibilities: her time abroad saw a shift in her writing style, her sensibilities and her understanding of her own Judeo-Christian culture. Peering through the looking-glass perched on the edge of Asia, it was in Japan that Carter 'learnt what it was to be a woman and became radicalised' (1982: 28). When she returned to England in 1972, she had changed emotionally, romantically and sexually, with a newfound confidence emerging in her literature. Japan functions as a place in which Carter confirms her ideas she was writing about in the 1960s, providing her with a way of exploring her aesthetic in more detail. Themes such as marionettes, incest, tattooing and representations of gender all take on a sense of 'strangeness' in Carter's Japanese writings: they are intensified, exoticised and mystified.

After her return to England in 1972, Carter would go on to give a range of reasons as to why she chose to travel to Japan: she claimed that she wanted to live 'in a non-Judeo-Christian culture', and that it met her 'stringent criteria for a bolthole' (Clapp, 2012: 31). In an interview with Lisa Appignanesi (1987) Carter also cites her love of Japanese cinema as one of the reasons for her visit. She comments, 'I was very fond of Japanese films, and when I won this prize, somebody said to me, "Now you can go to Japan". So, I had to' (Appignanesi, 1987).

Recent studies on Carter's work have been considerably extensive, although by no means exhaustive, with the most comprehensive research published after her death in February 1992. Sarah Gamble's *The Literary Life of Angela Carter* (2006) remains a seminal text in Carter studies, and edited collections such as Lorna Sage's *Flesh and the Mirror: Essays on the Art of Angela Carter* (1994), Joseph Bristow and Trev Lynn Broughton's *The Infernal Desires of Angela Carter: Fiction, Femininity and Feminisms* (1997), Alison Lee's *Angela Carter* (1997), Sonya Andermahr and Lawrence Phillips's edited collection *Angela Carter: New Critical Readings* (2012) and Rebecca Munford's *Revisiting Angela Carter: Texts, Context, Intertexts* (2006), as well as *Decadent Daughters and Monstrous Mothers* (2013) all have a rightful place in the 'essential' Carter reading list.

Prior to the start of this thesis seven years ago, there was a limited amount of scholarly literature that analysed Carter's time in Japan and the impact it had on her writing. Gamble (1997; 2001; 2006) and Sage (1994) offer overviews of the period, although neither of them investigate the cultural and traditional nuances of Japan that lead to an in-depth understanding of Carter's work written while she was abroad. Charlotte Crofts' essay 'Othering the Other: Angela Carter's "New Fangled" Orientalism' (2006) is one of the first pieces that sheds light on Carter's time in Japan, with specific focus on the implications of an imperialist narrative, examining the extent to which Carter's work can be identified as Orientalist. The last few years have seen a renewed focus on Carter's work, particularly in regard to her encounter with Japan. In *Angela Carter: Surrealist, Psychologist, Moral Pornographer* (2016) Scott Dimovitz draws comparisons between the grammatical structure of the Japanese language and the indigenous tribe of the River People who are described in *The Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor Hoffman*, and suggests that the language of the River People is

influenced by Carter's encounter with, and understanding of, the Japanese language.[1] *Unicorn* (2015) is an edited collection of Carter's previously unpublished poetry and includes three poems she had written about Japan (Carter, 2015). The poems 'Morning Glories', 'Hannabi' and 'Only Lovers' (43-45) are, like a number of her short-stories written during the period, semi-autobiographical in nature, with images of fireworks that hang like 'dissolving earrings on the night' (*U*, 44) and references to illicit Japanese love hotels in which 'the death-defying somersault of love may be performed' (*U*, 45). The imagery used in Carter's poems mirrors the descriptions in her short story 'A Souvenir of Japan': while attending a firework display with her lover, the narrator describes the fireworks like 'dissolving earrings on the night' (SJ, 3). She then goes on to reflect on the polarity of the sexes in Japan, commenting that 'If the only conjunction possible to us was that of the death-defying double-somersault of love, it is, perhaps, a better thing to be valued only as an object of passion than never to be valued at all (SJ, 8).[2]

In addition to these works, the scholar Natsumi Ikoma has also translated the memoirs of Sozo Araki, who was Carter's lover during her time in Japan between 1969 and 1971. The memoirs, published in English in 2018, offer an insight into Carter's encounter with Japan and her perceptions of Japanese culture. Araki's memoirs serve as a useful tool with which to situate Carter in Japan – and his own role in this context. He was the one, for example, to introduce Carter to the literature of Tanizaki Jun'ichirō (1886-1964), whose work Carter would continue to read after her return to England in 1972: indeed, in an interview with Ronald Bell in 1973, she described Tanizaki as one of the world's 'great novelists' (1973: 34). Most recently, in June 2018 (highlighting the timeliness of this thesis) a one-day symposium dedicated to Angela Carter and Japan was held at the University of East Anglia (UEA) in the UK. The symposium brought together scholars from across the globe in the first event that specifically sought to investigate representations of Japan in Carter's work, hosting discussions on

[1] An earlier version of this chapter first appeared as 'Cartesian Nuts: The Platonic Androgyne in Angela Carter's Japanese Surrealism', *Femspec*, Vol. 6: 2 (2005), pp. 15-31.

[2] The phrase 'death-defying somersault of love' also appears in *The Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor Hoffman*. In chapter five 'The Erotic Traveller', protagonist Desiderio asks the Count what he would 'to some degree condemn', he responds with 'The death-defying double somersault of love' (144).

Japanese folktales, the influence of *bunraku* in Carter's writing, Japanese literature and Carter's journalism written during the period.[3]

The addition of Edmund Gordon's biography *The Invention of Angela Carter* (2016) provides extensive research into Carter's personal and professional life, including the Japanese interlude which radicalised her. Gordon's research draws upon the Angela Carter Papers at the British Library and is the first major piece of work to extensively explore the collection.[4] Carter's papers were purchased by the British Library in 2006, making her unpublished work available to the public. This decision is not one that Carter would have taken lightly, having refused to deposit her work in a public repository at the very start of her career. In 1969, Boston University wrote to her offering to acquire her manuscripts and she turned them down, quite decisively. Rather critically, she 'dreamed of a gaggle of Eng[lish] Lit[erature] students […] dancing on my grave' (Add. MS 89102), an idea, Gordon suggests, she found 'exquisitely satisfying and profoundly irritating' (2016: 129).

Carter's literary executor, Susannah Clapp, was tasked with the organisation of Carter's literary estate after her death in 1992. In *A Card from Angela Carter* (2012), Clapp describes her encounter with Carter's study, finding drawers 'bulging with drama', full of scripts and radio plays. She writes that 'I had, of course, hoped to find in that filing cabinet a fragment from an abandoned novel or a clutch of unhatched short stories' (2012: 2-5). Although Clapp did not find any major works of fiction that had been left unpublished ('I knew I would not… [Carter] was, as she put it, "both concentrated and random"'), she did find old poems that Carter had written in the 1960s, the 'verses […] strikingly prefigured her novels in richness of expression, in their salty relish, in their feminism and in their use of fable' (2012: 9), as well as unproduced screenplays and theatrical works. The journals that Clapp discovered (and that now make up a considerable bulk of the Angela Carter Papers at the British Library) are full of 'richly coloured crayon pictures: of flowers with great tongue-like petals, of

[3] The conference programme can be viewed here: https://carterandjapan.wordpress.com/contact/.

[4] The Angela Carter archive was purchased through a dealer (Rick Gekoski) for £125,000 in January 2006. Gordon's biography of Carter was not the first publication to reference the Angela Carter papers at the British Library, however. Rebecca Munford's *Decadent Daughters and Monstrous Mothers: Angela Carter and European Gothic* (2013) utilises the Angela Carter papers in an analysis of Carter's textual engagement with European Gothic.

slinking cats' (Clapp, 2012: 7). A collection of Carter's personal reflections, drafts of manuscripts, reading lists for research, and letters of correspondence between old friends, the Angela Carter Papers offer a new insight into Carter's work, offering to confirm old ideas whilst simultaneously providing new and innovative readings of her fiction.

With her journals, drafts, and personal notebooks – described by Clapp as 'partly working notes and partly casual jottings' (2012: 7) – scholars are now able to confirm old ideas, to rethink previous perceptions, and to discover new work. Gordon's biography is particularly illuminating in its attention to the material drawn from the archives. He pinpoints the exact date Carter started writing her journals (29 October 1961), commenting that anything that 'was of value' to Carter eventually found its way into her journals. Compiled of

> working notes – sentences copied from books she was reading; ideas for stories; draft paragraphs; poems in progress – occupy the evenly numbered pages. Occasional jottings from life – descriptions of scenes and events; brief studies of friends and acquaintances; reflections on her moods, hopes and fears – are on the odd ones (Gordon, 2016: 54).

Gordon's biography of Carter seeks to challenge the popular view of Carter as the 'benevolent white witch' of English Literature (Rushdie, 1992). Instead, Gordon 'sets out to demythologise Carter and succeeds in depicting a unique and complex figure who was serious, funny, and politically engaged' (Liu, 2016). Most notably, it is Gordon's focus on Carter's time in Japan that has received considerable attention in literary reviews, an indication perhaps that we have much to learn from this unknown period of Carter's life. At the 'Angela Carter and Japan' conference held at UEA in June 2018, Gordon provided a video recording reflecting on his research into Carter's Japanese years.[5] He admitts that when he started his research in 2011, it was the period he knew the least about. Apart from Carter's essays collected in *Nothing Sacred*, and *Shaking a Leg*, and the seemingly semi-autobiographical tales of *Fireworks* and scattered references to Japan in interviews, there was little material to go on. However, a meeting with Carole Roffe, one of Carter's friends during the 1960s and 1970s, meant

[5] The video was recorded prior to the conference and then shown as part of the conference proceedings. See Edmund Gordon (2018) 'Searching for Angela Carter: A Biographer's Journey'.

that Gordon gained access to hundreds of letters (written to Roffe) from Carter while she was in Japan.

The papers – and Gordon's biography of Carter – are a significant contribution to the study of Carter. They reveal her encounter with Japan and Japanese culture, providing a context for her literature written during her time abroad. Read alongside Carter's fiction, the papers demand a more semi-autobiographical reading of her work. Scott Dimovitz remarks that 'the journals speak to the extraordinary range of eclecticism of her readings' (2016: 7), demonstrating what Yeandle calls a 'limitlessness of her intertextuality and multi-disciplinarity' (2016: 6). Explicitly revealing 'the ideas she was engaging and grappling with in her fiction' the Angela Carter papers offer 'quantifiable evidence of Carter's research interests' (Yeandle, 2016: 6).

Importantly, the archival materials (particularly the two Japan collections) demonstrate how Carter's trip abroad functioned as a means of both confirming and of intensifying the ideas that she was already writing about during the 1960s. For example, in her Japan journals she writes about *irezumi*, a type of Japanese tattooing. Carter was already writing about tattooing and body modification in her pre-Japan fiction – for example, *Several Perceptions* (1968) and *Heroes and Villain* (1969). The journals also include notes on *bunraku*, a traditional form of Japanese theatre in which four-foot tall puppets appear on stage, not unlike the marionettes of Carter's *The Magic Toyshop* (1967). Significantly, Carter's time in Japan gave her concepts and ideas to take forward: it helped her develop ideas she already had on surfaces, appearances and gender, intensifying her own sense of identity and estrangement which would find itself reappearing in her post-Japanese writing (for example, in her essays 'The Mother Lode' [1976] and 'My Father's House' [1976]).

This thesis presents new and original research in the field of Angela Carter studies. It brings together the latest critical and autobiographical studies on Carter's work, providing new interpretations and new readings of her work written during her time in Japan. With a renewed scrutiny on Carter's work – particularly her time abroad – this thesis is a timely assessment of her sojourn abroad.

'Gajin Gajin Gajin': alienation and estrangement in Japan

Carter's visit to Japan in 1969 was preceded by a month-long stay in America. Carter's visit to the States coincided with the Stonewall riots in New York, when the city was 'fractious and twitchy in the midsummer heat' (Gordon, 2016: 134). Her first trip to America would go on to inspire her 1977 novel *The Passion of New Eve* and she describes Manhattan as 'a very, very strange and disturbing and unpleasant and violent and terrifying place […] The number of people who offered to do me harm was extraordinary' (*Vector*, 1982). Similarly, *The Passion of New Eve* describes the 'rank, disordered streets' with 'rats, black as buboes, gnawing at a heap of garbage' (*PNE*, 10-11) and although this is an exaggerated version of New York it is nonetheless influenced by Carter's time there in the summer of 1969.[6]

A 'pre-curser to a more radical change of scene' (Gamble, 2006: 105), Carter left America (and her husband), travelling to Japan for the first time in early September 1969. The act of leaving her husband and establishing a life on her own seems to have been a positive one, and Carter describes her breakaway as 'very good, lovely, just what I needed after nine years of marriage' (Clapp, 2012: 32). Writing in her journals during the summer of 1971, Carter describes her experience of arriving in Japan for the first time:

> I arrived by air, in the dark. When night descended over the ocean, many unfamiliar stars sprang out in the sky; as we approached land, there began to blossom below me such an irregular confusion of small lights it was difficult to be certain if the starry sky lay above or below me. So the aeroplane ascended or descended into an electric city where nothing was what it seemed at first and I was absolutely confused (Add. MS 88899/1/80).

Carter's description of her arrival into the illuminated world of Japan encapsulates her experiences in a country she describes as 'the domain of the marvellous' (Add. MS

[6] Carter returned to America three times in the 1980s: the first in 1980 for a year-long teaching post at Brown University, the second in January 1985 to Texas University, and for the third and final time to the University of Iowa in 1986. The American landscape provided space in which Carter wrote scathing critical essays. For example, 'Snow-Belt America' (1981, *New Society*) and 'Rise of the Preppies' (1981, *New Society*) criticise a consumer society that benefits only the wealthy, and an American 'north-east mythology' (1997: 283) that disadvantages 'multi-ethnic, mixed-ability, unstreamed (and free) high schools', a mythology Carter doesn't 'immediately see. I am a foreigner' (1997: 283). Her visits to the U.S. in the 1980s also catalysed an interest in 'historical accounts of oppression, alienation and violence in the quaint landscape of New England' (Gordon, 2016: 308).

88899/1/81). Her arrival into Japan transcends the boundaries between reality and fiction, as she moves beyond the looking glass to a world wherein not only everything is unfamiliar and unknown to *her*, but in which she is unknown and unfamiliar *herself*. Descending into the unknown, into the 'city [of] delusion', 'nothing but a hall of mirrors' (Add. MS 88899/1/81), Carter's language marks the tropes that permeate her fiction produced during her time in Japan: just as Carter describes Tokyo being full of 'apparitions', so Desiderio lives in a constant 'flux of mirages' and proclaims that 'Nothing in the city was what it seemed – nothing at all!' (*DH*, 3). Carter was situated at a prime vantage point from which to assess Japanese culture as well as her own Western way of thinking, for 'there is no point in studying another culture if this does not tell us anything about our own' (Buruma, 1984: xi).

In Ian Buruma's rather aptly named *A Japanese Mirror: Heroes and Villains in Japanese Culture* (1984)[7] he provides a social commentary on Japan and its inhabitants through observations made during his stay from 1975 and 1981. Reviewed by Carter in 1984 (the review appears amongst her collection of essays in *Shaking a Leg*) and even boasting her recommendations on its front cover – '[a]n irresistible and occasionally very funny guide' – Buruma offers an insight to Western life in Japan, and its implications upon cultural observations. Buruma's opening comments provide the rationale that Japan provokes within the traveller 'a sudden urge […] to express their culture shock in writing; to explain to the incredulous folk back home' (1984: 4). Using the looking glass as a metaphor for examining Asiatic cultural norms, Buruma goes on to comment that

> Japan, at times, really does feel like the other side of Alice's looking-glass. Whether or not this is just an illusion is less important than the fact that is so universally believed both by foreigners and Japanese themselves. Thus living in Japan as a *Gaijin* (literally 'outside person') means being a completely scrutinised odd man out. As a result one cannot help but scrutinise oneself (1984: xi-xii).

Buruma uses the image of the looking-glass in order to highlight the reflective nature that the traveller experiences during their time abroad. Perched 'on the extreme edges of Asia' (1984: xi) the Westerner is provided the opportunity to not only make

[7] Apt because of its shared name with Carter's 1969 post-apocalyptic novel *Heroes and Villains*.

observations about another culture, but also about his or her own societal norms. In Carter's journals, she draws upon the same image to describe her time living in Japan, claiming that 'although I lived there, it always seemed far away from me. It was as if there were a glass between me and the world; but I could see myself perfectly well on the other side of the glass' and that 'I was […] all the time, elsewhere, monitoring myself, standing a little apart from my body' (Add. MS 88899/1/81).

For the first time in her life, Carter was physically perceived as an outsider because of the colour of her skin: as a Western Caucasian woman, she stood out. In 'Tokyo Pastoral' (1970), she recalls being surrounded by young Japanese children who were intrigued (and wary of) the 'first coloured family' on their street:

> They groped round the windows, invisible, peering, and a rustle rose up, like the dry murmur of dead leaves in the wind, the rustle of innumerable small voices murmuring the word: *Gaijin, gaijin, gaijin* (foreigner), in pure, repressed surprise. We spy strangers. *Asoka* (1997: 234).

Inverting the Westernised use of the term 'coloured', Carter deliberately positions herself as an outsider, and as Other to the Japanese. Describing Japan in her journals as a place where she felt in 'a state of permanent estrangement' (Add. MS 88899/1/80), Carter utilises her position as Other in order to not only observe Japanese cultural and social norms, but as a means of observing her own Western culture. She recalls the 'painful and enlightening experience to be regarded as a coloured person […] to be defined as a Caucasian before I was defined as a woman' (1997: 39), commenting that 'In Japan to say I came from England was like saying I came from Atlantis, or that I was a unicorn' (PC, 1969).[8] She goes on to comment in her journals that:

> The foreigner cannot escape a perpetual sense of foreignness; always defined as 'foreign' he lives on the twilit margins of a society that allows its denizens no half-measures. I am trying to create this sense of foreignness in every possible way in my narrative (Add. MS 88899/1/80).

Feelings of estrangement and alienation feature in Carter's Japanese writings; for example, in the short story 'A Souvenir of Japan' (the first story of Carter's *Fireworks* collection) the narrator refers to herself as 'inexpressibly exotic', a 'fabulous beast' and

[8] Angela Carter to John Osborn, 18 October 1969. Personal Collection of Jenny Osborn.

an ‘outlandish jewel’ (SJ, 8), deliberately inverting the Occidental narrative of the Orient towards the West.

Carter’s writing in Japan is not the only instance in which she explores themes of alienation, and her sense of estrangement stayed with her after she had returned to England in 1972. For example, Lee argues that Carter repeatedly reinforces images of estrangement and that ‘[a]long with the confident originality that characterises her journalism is a repeated trope of expressing her sense that she was an outsider, or a foreigner’ (Lee, 1997: 2). Themes of alienation and estrangement then, play a broader role in Carter’s understanding of her own identity. Carter’s essays which appear in *Shaking a Leg*: *Collected Writings* (1997) are littered with references to childhood and adolescent estrangement, a constant feeling of not being able to quite fit in ‘(thank goodness)’ (1997: 12). In her essay ‘The Mother Lode’ (1976), Carter describes her childhood experiences, relating her feelings of alienation back to the construction of relationships within her family: ‘I felt like a foreigner because my mother had married a foreigner […] it was as if we were stranded, somehow’ (1997: 12). Her Scottish father’s inability to settle in England and his eventual return to Scotland to live in the house he grew up in certainly has a profound effect on Carter and her perceptions of ‘home’. In her essay ‘My Father’s House’ (1976) Carter writes about returning to her father’s homeland, Scotland, after fifteen years. She relishes the fact that ‘nothing had changed’ in her father’s town, ‘I felt entirely at home here’, a consequence she suggests is linked to ‘rootlessness and alienation’ rather than belonging to one place (1997: 19). Carter’s nomadic-like approach is further confirmed as she suggests that ‘[y]ou don’t choose your own landscapes. They choose you’ (1997: 19). This results in the ability to adopt a ‘home from home’ and contributes to an idea of ‘rootlessness’ that Carter argues for earlier in the essay.

Carter’s first steps in her writing career resonate with her childhood sentiments of estrangement. Carter learnt from a young age ‘that the literal truth might not be the whole truth’ and that ‘one of the functions of fiction is to ask questions that can’t be asked in any other way’ (1997: 35). Realising that there were no limitations to fictional writing, Carter turned against the mainstream, with fans ‘ready and indeed eager to offer me resident alien status […] I became the literary equivalent of a displaced person’

(1997: 35).[9] She was never shortlisted for the Man Booker Prize,[10] an extraordinary degree of neglect which did not go unmissed by Carter. She was

> not acclaimed in the way that the number of obituaries suggest. She was ten years too old and entirely too female to be mentioned routinely alongside Martin Amis, Julian Barnes and Ian McEwan as being a young pillar of British fiction. She was twenty years too young to belong to what she considered the 'alternative pantheon' of Iris Murdoch, Doris Lessing and Muriel Spark (Clapp, 2012: 3).

Yet, this degree of detachment enabled Carter to make salient social observations from afar, and her wit and intellect in relaying these observations is a familiar trope within her work. Certainly, her trip to Japan only served to exaggerate this tendency to view things from afar, and provided Carter with an opportunity to reflect and observe both the Judeo-Christian West, as well as the social behavioural norms of the Japanese. Consolidating cultural differences as well as identifying similarities between home and away is achieved through the eyes of the distant observer: 'alienated is the only way to be, after all' (1997: 12). It is from this position Carter consciously created her narratives, conveying the alienation she felt during her trip whilst simultaneously realising her position as an (exotic) female writer.

The composition of Carter's Japanese short stories

In Carter's essay 'Notes from the Front Line' (1983), she reflects how her earlier work conforms to a patriarchal rhetoric: she was, she writes 'suffering a degree of colonisation […] there was an element of the male impersonator about this young person as she was finding herself' (1983: 26).[11] Carter's sojourn in Japan saw her make a departure from the male colonisation that characterises her earlier works, and both

[9] See Carter's essay 'Fools Are My Theme' in *Shaking a Leg*., pp. 31-37. The essay was originally published in *Vector* (a critical journal for the British Science Fiction Association) in 1982.

[10] Betsy Draine (2003) suggests that Carter's work was 'a bit too transgressive for the taste of prize juries' (332).

[11] For example, the misogynist treatment from which Ghislaine suffers at the hands of Honeybuzzard and Morris in *Shadow Dance* (1966); Melanie's victim status in of *The Magic Toyshop* (1967); and the abusive three-way power relationship between Annabel, Lee, and Buzz in *Love* (1971). Carter was certainly aware of this male colonisation,

Sage (1994) and Gamble (2006) suggest that Japan altered the way in which Carter was writing. Working in a room 'too small to write a novel in' (*BB*, 459)[12] Carter's writing takes on a claustrophobic form manifested in shifting towards a first-person narrative. Indulging in a self-reflective exercise in which Carter began to understand her own (alien) identity as Caucasian woman living in a foreign country, the form her writing takes is deliberately condensed into short stories. The nine profane tales that make up her collection of Japanese short stories *Fireworks* (1974), her experiments with short forms of Japanese haiku poetry,[13] and even the episodic nature of *The Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor Hoffman*, are all reflective of an increasingly conscious experimentation that plays with the 'vacillating perspectives an individual subjectivity' (Gamble, 2006: 114), an approach brought about by Carter's intense experiences of alienation in a foreign country. There is a paradox, however, in Carter's claustrophobic form and her ability to explore new images through her writing. Carter uses a more focused form to explore the unfamiliar and the unknown, indulging in overblown and excessive prose, and yet the landscape which she explores through this experimentation is far beyond the imagination of the Bristol and London landscapes in which her novels of the 1960s are set (excluding *Heroes and Villains* which is set in a post-apocalyptic dystopian world). The narrowed and intensified form of Carter's writing thus serves to exaggerate the wild and unfamiliar images in her writing.

For the purpose of this thesis I have chosen to analyse texts that were written (either completed or drafted) by Carter during her time in Japan. Specifically, these are *The Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor Hoffman* (1972), a novel that was written in three months during Carter's stay in a small fishing village in Chiba; and *Fireworks* (1974), a collection of nine short stories that reflect Carter's experiences during her time abroad. Although *Fireworks* was not published until 1974, the earliest versions of

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[12] 'Afterword' to *Fireworks*. Originally written in 1974, but published posthumously in 1995 as part of *Burning Your Boats: Collected Stories*. London: Vintage.

[13] There are a number of examples of Carter's experiments with haiku poetry in the Angela Carter Papers in the British Library. Carter seemed particularly interested in haiku during 1972. She did not strictly keep to haiku's form (three lines, following a five-seven-five syllable structure); instead, she utilised short poems to write about obscure subjects. Under a page entitled 'Haiku' in her journals she writes: 'The flea/ That is poor at jumping/ All the more charming', 'Where can he be going/ In the rain/ This snail?' and (the closest to haiku Carter seemed to reach) 'Winter seclusion;/ Listening, that evening/ To the rain in the mountain' (Add. MS. 88899/1/93).
Additional examples of Carter's poetry have been published posthumously in *Unicorn: The Poetry of Angela Carter* (2015) ed., Rosemary Hill, London: Profile Books.

the tales appeared in Carter's Japanese journals, and were written between 1969 and 1973.[14] The tales 'A Souvenir of Japan', 'Flesh and the Mirror' and 'The Smile of Winter' (1974) all draw upon Carter's own experiences; representations and images of Japan also resonate in many of the remaining tales such as 'Penetrating to the Heart of the Forest', 'The Executioner's Beautiful Daughter' and 'The Loves of Lady Purple', all of which are discussed extensively in this thesis. Significantly, this thesis also draws upon Carter's manuscripts available in the British Library, as well as her collection of essays and journalism in *Shaking a Leg*. And, although this study primarily focuses on Carter's writing from 1969 to 1972, her journals and her essays written both before and after this period help provide an understanding of the extent to which Japan changed Carter as a writer.

Carter's notes, reflections and excerpts (what would eventually become the short stories for *Fireworks*), originally appeared in a collection of three A5 notebooks. According to her working manuscripts at the British Library, Carter originally planned to publish a manuscript entitled 'Fictions Written in a Certain City' (from which this thesis draws its name) made up of three sections, which were to be around 15,000 words each. The three sections (and their corresponding notebooks) are entitled 'The Entire City', 'Victims of Circumstance' and 'The Grammar of Existence'. The 'Entire City' focuses on Carter in Japan as an estranged, foreign Westerner. The imagery used in this first notebook is similar to that in *Doctor Hoffman* as Carter describes Tokyo as 'the city, the constantly changing city' with its 'structured chaos' (Add. MS 88899/1/80). Similarly, in *Doctor Hoffman* the narrator Desiderio describes his home city as 'constantly fluctuating' and the 'kingdom of the instantaneous' (*DH*, 12). The first notebook also contains references to images which would later appear in 'A Souvenir of Japan' and Carter describes the pleasure-quarters of Japan glowing 'like a bed of neon irises' with 'signs of the love-hotels that let out clean rooms with crispy sheets by the hour' (Add. MS. 88899/1/80). The second notebook, 'Victims', is a much more personal reflection of the relationships Carter had in Japan and she describes her lover with hair 'the purplish black of poison berries' with a full mouth set into a 'perpetual smile' like a cat, with 'bee-stung, underlips'. Again, this confusion of imagery would

[14] In the order that they appear in *Fireworks* these are 'A Souvenir of Japan', 'The Executioner's Beautiful Daughter', 'The Loves of Lady Purple', The Smile of Winter', 'Penetrating to the Heart of the Forest', Flesh and the Mirror', 'Master', 'Reflections' and 'Elegy for a Freelance'.

find its way into 'A Souvenir of Japan', as the narrator describes her lover as having hair 'a black so deep it turned purple in sunlight' and 'blunt, bee-stung lips' retractable eyelids 'like those of a cat' (SJ, 8). The third and final notebook of the collection returns to the theme of estrangement, with a particular focus on grammar and language in Japan where 'language possesses no true future tense', as well as a detailed study of *irezumi* (Japanese tattooing) which has the ability to transform men into a 'work of art' (Add. MS 88899/1/80). Both of these themes would later emerge in *Doctor Hoffman* in the chapters 'The River People' and 'Lost in Nebulous Time', respectively.

Although these notebooks demonstrate the origins of Carter's fiction and the tentative drafting stages of her tales, they are, for the most part, casual jottings and reflections on her day-to-day experiences in Japan. Not all of Carter's ideas for *Fireworks* are found within these three notebooks, though. The archives at the British Library also hold drafts of 'The Smile of Winter', with the earliest version dating back to 1970. Additional notes (also not in the three notebooks) for 'Souvenirs of Japan' are also in the archives and date back to 1969.[15]

Reflecting upon her *Fireworks* collection, Carter thought she was 'peaking a bit, stylistically' and that she had 'developed this highly decorative, very tightly structured prose that could almost fit anything, and I was quite consciously utilising it. I mean it was lovely, it was beautiful, because I was in control of it' (BLSA C1365/12). The writing that Carter produced during her time in Japan is full of lush, atmospheric imagery, and the illustrative qualities of the short stories in *Fireworks* demonstrate a film-like quality to her work as they fill the pages with snapshots or 'frames' of her time abroad.[16] Even the naming of the *Fireworks* collection is pertinent to her evolving literary aesthetic. In a note from her journals taken from 4 November 1961, she writes:

> Fireworks night; celebrated today because one cannot profane the Lord's Day with such frivolities. Too bad that so many writers have mucked around with fireworks. […] I don't know how to describe fireworks. "See the sky is all in bloom," nonsense. Whizz – a sparkling trail and a silent explosion into three dropping, dissolving trails. The cone of gunpowder that sent up a series of low, precise lights, tinted like fruit drops, red, blue, green, yellow boiled sweet colours (Add. MS 88899/1/86).

[15] Chronologically, this coincides with when Carter first met her Japanese lover, Sozo Araki.

[16] The cinematic qualities of Carter's work are discussed in chapter four of this thesis. A close-reading of 'The Smile of Winter' forms part of this analysis.

It is ironic that over ten years later Carter would dedicate the two opening pages of the first short story in *Fireworks* to the image that she claimed writers 'mucked around with'. In 'A Souvenir of Japan' she describes the sparklers like a 'beard of stars' as she lies down with her lover on the grass, during a night 'filled with a muted bourgeois yet authentic magic' (SJ, 3). This shift in Carter's writing style and her confidence in the way that she was writing can in part be attributed to her time in Japan. Carter was conscious of adopting these approaches in her writing, as she remarks upon the change as a 'pull towards visual expression […] almost as if I didn't trust words anymore' (Add. MS 89102).[17] And, although Robert Coover describes Carter's stories possessing a 'fireworks-like tendency to fade a little at the end (a diminishing shower)', he admits that they demonstrate 'very extraordinary pyrotechnics' (Add. MS 88899/1/83). Even the word 'firework' has Japanese connotations: in Carter's journals, she refers to the word *hannabi* which means 'fire flower' in Japan: 'they are the morning glories of the night and possess that quality of evanescence' (Add. MS 88899/1/82). *Fireworks* is also analogous to Carter's own time in Japan. The initial explosive, all-consuming and awe-inspiring experience, characterised by her new-found freedom away from her ex-husband, eventually faded to a diminishing shower after the failure of her romantic relationships and her inevitable return to England.

In an afterword to *Fireworks* (1974; republished in 1993), Carter claims that the short stories were 'written between 1970 and 1973 and are arranged in chronological order' (*BB*, 1993: 460). However, that is not to say that when reading the tales that one is immediately struck by their supposed linear composition: indeed, it appears quite the opposite. Interspersed with semi-autobiographical tales such as 'A Souvenir of Japan', 'The Smile of Winter', and 'Flesh and the Mirror' (the first, fourth, and sixth respectively) the remaining stories appear fantastical. It is arguably only through an understanding of a contextual analysis of Carter's time in Japan that the three-aforementioned tales can in fact be perceived as semi-autobiographical. Furthermore, as this thesis will argue, 'Japanese' elements also permeate throughout Carter's other tales such as 'The Executioner's Beautiful Daughter', 'The Loves of Lady Purple', 'Reflections' and 'Penetrating to the Heart of the Forest'. The deliberate assembly of individual stories that provide a 'snapshot' of Carter's time in Japan are thus placed

[17] Letter to Carole Roffe, 27 October, 1971.

together to make a coherent whole. Although each individual story provides an insight in to Carter's time in Japan, I suggest that it is through reading the texts within the context of her time abroad and within the context of a *collection* that provides additional value.

The formation of *Fireworks* can be likened as a form of the composite novel, a term used Margaret Dunn and Ann Morris in place of the phrase 'short story cycle'.[18] The 'short story cycle' refers to a collection of related works, for example, short stories or loosely connected framed tales that don't quite fit into the structure of the novel.[19] The phrase 'composite novel' refers to a 'literary form that combines the complexities of a miscellany with the integrative qualities of a novel' (Dunn and Morris, 1995: 1), and looks to address some of the problems associated with the term 'short story cycle'. For example, Dunn and Morris suggest that the term composite novel emphasises the integrity of the collection as a whole, while the short story cycle emphases the 'integrity of the parts'. The 'cycle' also implies a 'cyclical motion, a circular path, a return to the beginning, all of which preclude linear development' (Dunn and Morris, 1995: 12). If we consider *Fireworks* in relation to Carter's experience in Japan, then we could shoe-horn the short story collection into this 'cyclical' narrative. The stories, which Carter first started to write when she went to Japan for the first time, reflect Carter's departure and return to England, with the final story in the collection firmly rooting itself in London. And yet, although the end of *Fireworks* signals a geographical return, it does not imply the return of the Self. Carter came back from Japan with new ideas, having been influenced by Japanese culture to explore new aesthetic possibilities: her writing in Japan informed the way in which she was thinking and acted as a crucial transitionary period for her writing and informing her feminist politics. The term 'short story cycle' does not capture this transformation of Carter's fiction during this period. Her sense of estrangement (as realised in Japan) would carry through her work of the 1970s and she explores this biographically (in her essays 'The Mother Lode' and 'My Father's

[18] Forrest L. Ingram proposed and defined this phrase in 1971 in *Representative Short Story Cycles of the Twentieth Century: Studies in a Literary Genre?* London: De Gruyter. Ingram suggests that the short-story cycle refers to a unified short story collection.

[19] Dunn and Lewis list the following as examples of the composite novel: *The Country of the Pointed Firs* (1896), *Dubliners* (1914), *Winesburg, Ohio* (1919), *In Our Time* (1925), *Go Down, Moses* (1942), *The Golden Apples* (1947) and *Lost in the Funhouse* (1968).

House') and in her fiction – take, for example, the strangeness of the American dystopian landscape in *The Passion of New Eve*. Carter's post-Japan fiction explores the idea of space and place, and is part of a much broader understanding of her own identity.

The term 'composite novel' further implies that the collection of work is an organised whole, and Dunn and Morris describe it as 'literary work composed of shorter texts that – though individually complete and autonomous – are interrelated in a coherent whole according to one or more organising principles' (Dunn and Morris, 1995: xiii). The composite novel is

> A single text composed of shorter texts: its aesthetic is one that insists on a coherently developed whole text, even though that whole text must, for the most part, be composed of individually autonomous pieces. Thus, a dynamic tension exists between the whole and its parts (Dunn and Morris, 1995: 19).

Carter's *Fireworks* can be interpreted as a composite novel, capturing her experiences in Japan through a series of semi-autobiographical stories mixed in with other less obviously 'Japanese' tales. The deliberate assembly and the composition of Carter's short stories undergoes a process of transformation, of negotiation, and a literary editing process from first draft to final publication. Carter's writing alters by varying degrees from her notes in her journals to her short stories. Some started off as poems, for example, 'The Executioner's Beautiful Daughter' and 'A Souvenir of Japan', whereas other tales emerged organically from biographical reflections, such as 'The Smile of Winter' which was based on a fishing village Carter stayed at in Chiba. Key themes such as Otherness, alienation, boundaries between the real and the unreal, passion and desire all resonate throughout the nine profane stories that make up *Fireworks*. The collection as a whole is more than the sum of its parts, with each part providing a snapshot of Carter's experiences in Japan.

An emerging tension from Carter's *Fireworks* collection is that which remains *unsaid*: Carter's editing process makes a number of compromises and negotiations in the drafting and redrafting stages of her short stories. Visually, the reader is presented with negated space that exists on the pages between stories, suggesting a disruption, a discord, a silent interval between the stories which serve as *tableaux vivants*. These 'omissions or cancellations that are necessarily part of any writing or speaking' and imply a 'secret of denial and a denial of secrets' (Buddick and Wolfgang, 1987: xv) in Carter's *Fireworks*. Carter very carefully composes her narratives, selecting and

compromising which semi-autobiographical elements to include. As the narrator in 'The Smile of Winter' reflects,

> Do not think I do not realise what I am doing. I am making a composition using the following elements: the winter beach; the winter moon; the ocean; the women; the pine trees; the riders; the driftwood; the shells; the shapes of darkness and the shapes of water; and the refuse (SW, 56-7).

The narrator's comments continue from Carter's earlier archival notes, 'see how I choose my imagery', invoking a self-awareness of the semi-autobiographical tone that blurs the boundaries between author and narrator, fact and fiction. A quotation from Henri Matisse – 'Composition is the art of arranging in a decorative way the various elements the painter employs to express his own feelings' (Add. MS 88899/1/81)[20] – that appears in later drafts of 'Souvenir of Japan' reveals not only the precise structure and formation of images within the story, but also the way in which Carter composed *herself*, presenting an image of 'Carter' within her archival narrative and within her short stories. Carter's idea of composing a version of herself aligns with Gordon's suggestion of her invention of the self: indeed, it is by no means a coincidence that Gordon's biography of Carter is *The Invention of Angela Carter* – a reference not only to Gordon's presentation of Carter's life, but to Carter's invention of herself.

The Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor Hoffman

Carter's time in Japan not only signalled a shift in the way that she was writing – her tales 'dispense almost entirely with such conventional trappings as character and plot' – but the amount that she was writing, too (Gordon, 2016: 159). Considering that she wrote five novels during a short space of time in the late 1960s,[21] Carter published only four novels over a much longer period after her return to England (including *The*

[20] Carter's quote from Matisse's 'Notes d'un Peintre' ('Notes of a Painter', 1908) is written incorrectly in her notes. The correct citation is 'Composition is the art of arranging in a decorative manner the various elements at the painter's disposal for the expression of his feeling'. This translation is from *Artists on Art – from the 14th – 20th centuries*, ed. by Robert Goldwater and Marco Treves; Pantheon Books, 1972, London, p. 410. It is possible that Carter could have read Matisse's essay in the original French, although this is not clarified in the archival material.

[21] These are: *Shadow Dance* (1966); *The Magic Toyshop* (1967); *Several Perceptions* (1968); *Heroes and* Villains (1969); and *Love* (1971).

Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor Hoffman). There was, Gordon notes, a 'slowdown in productivity after 1970' (2016: 158). During her time in Japan she blamed this on the space that she was living in – 'I can't work in this fucking flat because there is no other room to get up and walk to' (Add. MS 89102)[22] – although she wrote most of the short stories that would eventually appear in *Fireworks* during this period.[23] Despite the slow pace of *Fireworks*, Carter wrote *The Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor Hoffman* in just three months, plunging into the 'anxiety-ridden, frenetic, exhilarated yet terribly agitated state' of writing a book (Add. MS 89102).[24]

In an interview with Olga Kenyon, Carter claims *Doctor Hoffman* marked the 'beginning of my obscurity. I went from being a very promising young writer to being completely ignored in two novels' (1992: 40).[25] Yet, this apparent obscurity did not stop Carter's fondness for the novel, and when asked if she had a favourite amongst the work that she had published, it was *Doctor Hoffman* that she picked. In an interview with Lorna Sage she admits that '[t]here are passages in *Hoffman* that still give me enormous pleasure' (1977: 56). Perhaps Carter's fondness for the novel comes from the fact that it draws on her relationship with her Japanese lover Sozo, although in a 'less direct way' (Gordon, 2016: 154) than her semi-autobiographical short stories: Doctor Hoffman's daughter Albertina is, in part, a literary representation of Carter's Japanese lover.[26] When Albertina first appears to Desiderio (disguised as a man), she is described as having 'vestigial' eyelids with 'cheekbones unusually high' (*DH*, 30) much like the

[22] Letter to Carole Roffe, 31 July 1970.
[23] 'The Executioner's Beautiful Daughter' was written between May and July 1970, 'A Souvenir of Japan' between August and September 1970, and 'The Loves of Lady Purple' between September and December of the same year.
[24] Letter to Carole Roffe, 16 December 1970.
[25] The other novel Carter is referring to here is *Love* which received little critical attention considering that she had won the Somerset Maugham Travel Award in 1969, just two years before *Love* was published.
[26] There are recurring references to Sozo and Ko in her journals and Gordon gives them both due attention in *The Invention of Angela Carter*. She was, Gordon notes, never as emotionally invested in Ko as she had been in Sozo. In fact, her relationship with Sozo was so serious that in her original plans for the publication of *The Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor Hoffman* she initially wanted to include the dedication, 'For Sozo Araki, my more than Albertina.' However, she asked this to be changed at the last moment, and when it was published by Hart-Davies in June 1972 the dedication read 'For the family, wherever they are, reluctantly including Ivan [the bitter, isolated middle sibling in *The Brothers Karamazov*] who thought he was Aloysha.' (Gordon, 2016: 206).

narrator's description of her lover in 'A Souvenir of Japan', whose 'high cheekbones gave to his face the aspect of a mask' and whose 'eyelids were retractable, like those of a cat' ('SJ', 8). As Gordon points out, the

> period of the Doctor's campaign "the time of actualized desire" represents the period in Angela's life after she left Paul […] The twin poles of romanticism and reason, as represented by the doctor and the minister, are reflections of the warring parts of Angela's psyche (2016: 175).

According to Ikoma (in Araki, 2018), the novel's ending, in which the power struggles between Desiderio and Albertina 'cannot help but obliterate one or the other and lead them to ultimate disillusionment' foretold the direction in which Carter and Sozo's own relationship was heading (Araki, 2018: 162). Carter's conflicting desires are manifest in Albertina, a literary representation of the desire that must eventually be rejected in favour of logic and reason.

Written in a small fishing village in Chiba, *Doctor Hoffman* is Carter's most experimental novel. Seen as a departure from mainstream fiction of the period, Carter's literature gave a voice that had the potential to challenge the 'hegemony of bourgeois and industrial society' (Davidson et. al., 1995: 67). Reviews from publishers and correspondence with friends reveal the extent to which *Doctor Hoffman* was seen a departure from Carter's *oeuvre* of the 1960s. In April 1972, Carter received a particularly discouraging letter from her publishing house, Simon & Schuster:

> I'm afraid I have nothing but bad news to report about our reaction to *THE INFERNAL DESIRE MACHINES OF DR HOFFMAN* […] I very much regret to tell you that all of us thought it too excessive (to use your own word) and a book that we couldn't possibly do even as well with the (to me) disappointing sales that we have experienced with some of your novels which we thought so good […] *HOFFMAN* is just too much of an odd item to have any chance in our opinion (Add. MS 89102).[27]

Carter's friend Michael Richardson similarly comments:

> I do have some reservations [about *Doctor Hoffman*], mainly concerning the relationship between Desiderio and Albertina. In particular, that fact that she is for him only a sort of masochistic dream, an unattainable spectre to be admired,

[27] Letter from Peter Schewd (of Simon & Schuster) to Angela Carter on 3 April 1972.

> who he even has to murder to complete his torture, to prove his impotence (Add. MS 88899/3/1 n.d.).

The Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor Hoffman follows Desiderio (meaning 'the desired one'), now an old man, as he tells the story of how he saved his city against the renegade Doctor Hoffman. Under attack from a series of hallucinations and illusions engineered by the Doctor's anti-reality machines, Desiderio is tasked by the Minister of Determination (a man who 'had never in all his life felt the slightest quiver of empirical uncertainty' [*DH*, 17]) to discover and destroy the devices that cause 'desires [to] become manifest and warp the fabric of reality' (Gamble, 2006: 121). The Doctor's machines are powered by the secretions from the 'true acrobats of desire' (*DH*, 256), a hundred 'of the best-matched lovers in the world, twined in a hundred of the most fervent embraces passion could devise' (*DH*, 255). Yet, the assassination of the Doctor and the subsequent destruction of the anti-reality machines means that Desiderio can never fully realise his *own* warring desires for his true love – Albertina, the Doctor's daughter. The sexual coupling of Desiderio and Albertina would create such an enormous surge of energy, completely liberating the Doctor's experiments from the confines of space and time. Thus, Desiderio finds himself locked in a paradox: in destroying the Doctor's machines he ensures the safety of his city and its people, restoring rationality and reason over desire. Yet, the very destruction of the Doctor's machines also means that he will never be able to act upon his own desires for Albertina. Desiderio's eventual murder of both the Doctor and his daughter thus annihilates desire in order to restore reason. Recounting his story fifty years later, Desiderio is filled with remorse and regret, 'condemned to live in a drab, colourless world' his only desire is to see Albertina again before he dies (*DH*, 7).

The dichotomous relationship between desire and reason is a recurring theme throughout the novel and 'objects, people, landscapes and event time are subject to the whims of the desire machines which [generate] "eroto-energy" as a force in opposition to rational knowledge' (Robinson, 1991: 99). Desiderio's own desires are manifest throughout the novel; indeed, his passion for Albertina is a driving force in the narrative as he seeks to consummate his love for her. Albertina appears in many different guises throughout Desiderio's journey: as a ghostly spectre in his dreams; as a male emissary of Doctor Hoffman. Later, Albertina appears as the Madame in the House of Anonymity, where the Count (loosely based on the Marquis de Sade, who Carter was

reading around the time) indulges in sadistic bestiality with hybrid creatures. She finally appears as Lefleur, the Count's valet, before being revealing her true self, Albertina. Albertina's transvestism in the novel (she appears to Desiderio disguised as a man on two occasions) alludes to her ability to move between two worlds: the imagined world of her father's in which anything is possible, and the vulnerable world of Desiderio's, which is still clasping on to the last vestiges of reason.

For much of the narrative Albertina is masked, with a focus on Desiderio's desires, rather than her own. Carter's observations that Japan is a 'man's country' (SJ, 8) in 'A Souvenir of Japan' iterates throughout *Doctor Hoffman*. Indeed, women in the novel are 'to varying degrees, transformed into Woman by hegemonic representations of gender' (Robinson, 1991: 162). Albertina's identity is in a state of constant flux as she appears to Desiderio in a number of different guises, an act which is sustained through Desiderio's own passions: 'all the time you have known me, I've been maintained in my various appearances only by the power of your desire' (*DH*, 243). When Albertina *does* reveal her true identity, she is subsequently raped by a group of centaurs, an act which the horsemen only apologise for after discovering that she 'belongs' to Desiderio. The horrendous treatment of Albertina in this instance is not the only example of sexual violence in the novel. At the start of Desiderio's journey he has sexual relations with the Mayor's daughter while she sleeps, before finding her dead body washed up on the beach the next day. Nine-year old Aoi (one of the 'River People') is made to exploit her sex by her family as part of their plans to kills Desiderio and eat him. There is 'no place for a woman in this text' (Robinson, 1991: 105) and the continuous sexual objectification that Desiderio casts on his female subjects further underpins his own bid for sexual gratification. And yet, it is a form of gratification that is never realised, and the anti-climactic ending of the story (we are told the outcome in the first few pages) is analogous for Desiderio's failure to fulfil his own desires.

Doctor Hoffman consciously rejects realism, instead exploring the boundaries (or lack thereof) between the real and the imaginary. The Minister of Determination's attempts to distinguish between reality and unreality are ultimately futile because of Doctor Hoffman's 'refusal to allow it to be differentiated' (Filimon, 2014: 48). The warring conflict between desire and rationality, between the real and the imaginary are analogous to Carter's own conflicting desires of the period, drawing heavily on her relationship with Sozo. The rejection of desire and the return to reason at the end (and at the beginning) of the novel is analogous to Carter's own return to England in 1972.

Yet, Carter's physical return to the West did not correlate with a return to her prior emotional and romanticised state – when she returned she came back radicalised as a woman, with a new sexual and emotional confidence that would define her as a writer in the years to come.

Shaking a Leg: Carter's essays

Alongside *Fireworks* and *The Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor Hoffman*, Carter also wrote a number of essays for the *New Society* magazine during her time living in Japan, as well as during her post-Japan years living in England. Carter's essays written after 1969 provide a useful insight into her perceptions of the cultures and traditions of Japan during her time abroad. For example, 'Tokyo Pastoral' (1970) reflects on Carter's personal feelings of estrangement living in a non-Judeo-Christian culture, she is *gaijin* (an 'outside person' or 'foreigner'). The neighbourhood in which Carter finds herself residing has 'considerable cosy charm' with an 'absolute domestic charm' (1997: 232). And yet, one may easily find the love hotels which offer 'hospitality by the hour' situated rather innocuously and 'sedately' up one of the side streets (1997: 232).

In the essay 'Poor Butterfly' (1971), Carter further explores this reversed voyeuristic practise by examining the treatment of Caucasian bar hostesses working in Tokyo. Carter found work in one of these bars herself and describes white women as 'exotic extras' with 'foreign girls' being able to demand more pay from the male Japanese clients. The hostesses become automatons, constructed under a 'blueprint for an ideal hostess', a point highlighted through Carter's claims that they [the hostesses] 'do not really need to speak and no doubt soon will cease to do so' (1997: 250). The main job of the hostess is to 'make the (male) customer feel relaxed and happy, thereby encouraging him to consume food and drink, patronise the establishment regularly, and advertise that establishment to other potential customers' (Mock, 1996: 180). The main way of hostesses achieving this task is 'through flirtation, flattery, laughter, and "mothering"' (Mock, 1996: 180). The position of foreigner for Carter appears to be a difficult one to reconcile: on the one hand, she relishes the exotic qualities it commands; yet it is this exoticism that invites Japanese male gaze to objectify and to treat Carter as an interchangeable commodity. Although appalled by the 'intense polarity of the sexes' she simultaneously marvelled to see gender being so 'ludicrously exaggerated' (Add.

MS 89102).[28] Writing to Roffe in 1970, she remarks that '[t]he men in a society which systematically degrades women also become degraded. And, dear god, this society degrades women' (Add. MS 89102).[29]

Carter's essays provide a unique insight into her time in Japan, although they do occasionally veer into an imperialist narrative. Written for a Western audience and published outside of Japan, Carter's pieces for *New Society* place her in the position of the imperialist eye: she permits herself the authority to observe, report and comment on Japanese cultural norms. Carter's adopted imperialist discourse functions as a means of representing Japan as Other, a place that is *not West*. Carter (whether consciously or not) creates a culture of difference, an 'Us' and 'Them' discourse that relies on Japan (pushed into the position of the Orient) functioning in a certain way. In this strange country, Carter takes advantage of her place as estranged foreigner, as *gaijin*. The structure of her essays all follow a similar format: she starts off by providing historical facts and cultural norms, in an attempt to unpick and to rationalise Japanese culture. This rationale is then disrupted by the 'strangeness' of Japan, and by Carter's encounter with the Other. Although this is imperialistic, it also shows that Carter was deeply interested in the culture, and sought to understand the mechanics below the surface, as it were. She seeks to avoid cultural misinterpretation, in an attempt to balance out her strange encounters. And yet, Carter *requires* some sense of strangeness, and it is through creating a cultural counter-narrative that she avoids becoming 'strange' herself. Carter needs the Orient to function in a certain way for her to be perceived as Other in a foreign country.

These are not entirely objective statements that Carter is making, and Carter's 'I' is firmly situated within these essays. Carter's adoption of the first-person narrative reflects a transformation in her own writing process, a change that would appear throughout her later writings. After her time in Japan, she became more confident in placing herself in stories, adopting a story-telling narrative dependent on oral agency: take for example, *The Bloody Chamber and Other Stories* (1979) a feminist rewriting of the fairy-tales originally written by Charles Perrault, Jeanne-Marie Leprince de Beaumont and the Brothers Grimm. Throughout the 1970s, suggests Sage, Carter became 'more explicitly and systematically interested in narrative models that pre-date

[28] Letter to Carole Roffe, 3 August 1971.
[29] Letter to Carole Roffe, 29 June 1970.

the novel: fairy tales, folktales, and other forms that develop by accretion and retelling' (Sage cited in Benson, 2001: 46).

Carter was also interested in the sexual and the fetishised, both of which were easy to come by in a country interested in the surface of appearances. Carter published pieces on Japanese manga comic books ('Once More into the Mangle', 1971) and the art of Japanese tattooing, known as *irezumi* ('People as Pictures'). Her sense of strangeness of Japan is further defined in these two pieces – she suggests manga comics (which often depict sexually graphic imagery) are 'directed either at the crazed sex maniac or the dedicated surrealist' (1997: 244). Likewise, *irezumi* 'survives strangely but tenaciously' as one of the 'most exquisitely refined and skilful forms of sadomasochism' (1997: 238). The sadomasochistic practices Carter observed during her time in Japan she suggests, 'maintains a repressed culture' (1997: 238); indeed when Japanese author Yukio Mishima committed ritual suicide in a failed *coup d'etat* in 1970, Carter suggests that his act was 'an orchestration of certain elements: sado-masochism; the homo-eroticism inevitable in a culture which has, for the past 800 or 900 years, systematically degraded women; a peculiarly nutty brand of fidelity; narcissism; and authoritarianism' (1997: 241).

Carter was conscious about her own foreignness in Japan, and themes of alienation that reverberate throughout her fiction of the period also make themselves known in her essays. In 'A Fertility Festival' (*New Society*, 1974) she recalls attending a festival in which the focus is 'a wooden phallus of immense size'. She writes that there 'are more foreigners in the crowd than I expected; we all look a little sheepish. Has anthropological curiosity or mere prurience brought us here?' (1997: 257). Carter is aware of her own sense of Other in Japan, reverting to type to 'foreign' as a means of observing a new culture. Yet she also touches on the strangeness of Japanese traditions, using the idea of the Oriental Other to explain the sexual, exotic and unusual cultural traditions. Carter thus mirrors the Oriental Other as a means of constructing her own identity as foreigner, creating a 'contrasting image' of the West (Said 1977: 3). Anna Pasolini suggests that Carter's imperialist eye (and 'I') functions to gain a deeper understanding of the self and of the Other. Carter's aim, Pasolini goes to argue, is 'probably to be looked for in a political agenda, where the priority is not to uncover power imbalances in the relation between the European self and the colonised Oriental other, but rather those shaping uneven gender roles and relationships in the West' (2012: 136).

After her return to England in 1972, Carter would go on to write reviews on Japanese film and literature well into the 1980s. For example, in 1977 she reviewed Edward Seidensticker's translation of Murasaki Shikibu's *The Tale of Genji* (published in 1976), in 1978 she reviewed Nagisa Oshima's film *Ai No Corrida* (*In the Realm of the Senses*, 1976) and 1986 she wrote about Tanizaki's short novel *Naomi* (1924) just one year after the first English translation of the novel was published.

There are other, perhaps unexpected links that Carter would forge with Japan outside of her essays, novels and short stories. For example, she would go on to teach British-Japanese author Kazuo Ishiguro (class of 1980) at the University of East Anglia whilst she was lecturing on the Creative Writing course there. During the summer holiday, Ishiguro would sit with Carter discussing writing techniques and approaches for what would end up being *A Pale View of Hills* (1982), his first novel. The narrator of the novel is pregnant for much of the story, and Ishiguro was concerned with getting the psychology of the central female character right. Carter thought that his approach was 'very nice. Most male writers would have just plunged ahead' (Carter, 1983, cited in Gordon, 2016: 290).[30] Carter's encounter with Japan, its writers and its film-makers lasted long after she left in 1972, demonstrating her continued interest with this far-eastern culture.

Carter and Orientalism

There is a tension to explore between Carter's time in Japan and her relationship with Orientalism. Moving from one imperialist country to another, Carter's presumed Western privilege (as noted by the invocation of the imperialist 'I') deliberately places Japan into the non-Occident, the sexualised, fetishized orient. There is a danger of Carter slipping into an imperialist narrative in which she enhances and exacerbates the mysterious nature of Japan. And yet, Carter's time in Japan changed the way she looked at her own culture. She realised that there is nothing special about Western culture: Japan is perceived as mysterious, and the West too, is perceived to be strange.

The looking-glass narrative that Carter alludes to in her journals invokes a sense of privilege. Standing apart from the rest of the world, Carter's estrangement gave her an opportunity to reflect on her own culture and on the practices of others. Indeed, in

[30] Angela Carter in *The Guardian*, 28 February, 1983.

an analysis of Carter's time abroad it is crucial to note that her journey 'took place in a specific cultural, social and historical context' (Crofts, 2006: 95). After the Second World War, Japan was placed under Allied Occupation by American forced from 1945 to 1952. During this period, 'many of the central institutions of Japanese society were reshaped. Universal suffrage was introduced, the power of the parliament enhanced, the constitution rewritten, farmland redistributed, and the education system overhauled' (Morris-Suzuki, 1998: 171-2). When Carter arrived in 1969, Japan was still in the process of 'redefining its own culture and its role in the wider world' (Gamble, 2006: 119). Japan (much like Britain) had experienced what it was like to lose their empire.

Japan's ambiguous relationship with imperialism also adds an additional layer of complexity to an analysis of Carter's work. As a country, Japan has never formally been colonised: in fact, Japan underwent a period of self-imposed isolation from 1633 to 1853 under the foreign policy of the Japanese Tokugawa Shogunate.[31] Known as *sakoku*, or 'closed country', relations and trade between Japan and other countries[32] were severely limited during this period, and common Japanese people were not allowed to leave the country. Forced to open its ports in 1853 after the arrival of Commodore Matthew Penry and the U.S. Navy, Japan began to trade with the rest of the world again, a move substantially helped by the policies from the Meiji Restoration period which resulted in exponential economic growth in Japan. The U. S. occupation of Japan after WWII marked the first time that a foreign presence had been in Japan for any extended period of time. This 'imperialist regime' argues Chanth 'left Japanese society in a state of extreme Westernisation' etched onto it a 'text of western superiority' (2015: 169). Thus, we draw upon a concept of a monolithic Japan whereby Otherness takes on a new perspective: not only does it denote that which is not Japanese, but the Other also serves as a reminder of changes to the imperialist regime over the last two hundred years.

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[31] *Shogun* is a military title in Japan meaning 'General'. The Tokugawa Shogunate refers to a feudal military government in Japan where the heads of government were *shoguns*. The Tokugawa period between 1603 to 1868 is also known as the Edo period, which is a direct reference to where *shoguns* lived. Edo was renamed in 1868 and is now known as the city of Tokyo.

[32] Despite Japan's self-imposed isolation during this period they still traded with China and Dutch merchants. It was also illegal for the Japanese to leave the country until 1868, during the Meiji Restoration period which saw exponential growth in Japan, with major changes to social and political systems in the latter half of the 1860s.

One of the more complex challenges in analysing Carter's time in Japan is understanding her relationship with imperialism and whether she slips (consciously or not) into a narrative that reinforces Western privilege over the Orient. For Edward Said, the Orient is formed within 'European Western experience'[33] and is akin to a 'European invention'. His seminal text *Orientalism* (1978) – a historiography concerned with a 'Western style for dominating, restructuring and having authority over the Orient' (3) – suggests that defining the figure of the Orient is fundamental to the construction of European identity over recent centuries through its 'contrasting image, idea, personality, experience' (1978: 1-2). In Crofts' 'The Other of the Other: Angela Carter's "New-Fangled Orientalism"', she argues that 'Orientalism [is] a useful paradigm for deconstructing white male subjectivity' within Carter's work (2006: 93). Carter's own de-colonization project, suggests Crofts, is projected from an 'anti-colonial impulse' and the need for 'counterhegemonic narratives' (Crofts, 2006: 99). Yet, Carter's decolonization project is not entirely sustainable as an anti-imperialistic critique, and Carter's work demonstrates an uncertain space in which she attempts to move beyond a colonial narrative writing style. And, although themes of alienation litter Carter journals written during the period, she is afforded a certain degree of privilege due to her Western origins, a 'racially superior Other' (Chanth, 2015: 171).

However, as Gordon points out, Carter's feelings of estrangement are somewhat unusual given her circumstances, 'a middle-class English woman, raised in the capital city of the British Empire, educated at a private school and a good civic university' (Gordon, 2016: xiii). Refusing to identify with any of these she instead deliberately veered towards alienation, explaining that 'integration means giving up one's freedom of being, in that one becomes mastered by one's role' (Add. MS 89102).[34] Carter knowingly seeks out the estrangement offered to her during her time in Japan, and her recognition of Other and her complicity with a position of alienation and estrangement alters the state in which we understand Carter to be 'fully' estranged. Although Carter

[33] Said's *Orientalism* has been subject to critique since its publication. See Ania Loomba, *Colonialism/Postcolonialism* (London and New York: Routledge, 1998); Porter, D. '*Orientalism* and its Problems', in G. Barker, P. Hulme, M. Iversen and D. Loxley, eds., *The Politics of Theory*, Proceedings of the Essex Sociology of Literature Conference (Colchester: University of Essex Press, 1983), pp. 179-193; Bhabha, H. K., (1983) 'Difference, Discrimination, and the Discourse of Colonialism', also in *The Politics of Theory*, pp. 194-211.

[34] Angela Carter to Carole Roffe, undated.

will always be seen as Other and as *gaijin* in Japan, she also adopts a kind of elective estrangement, capitalising on her experiences as a foreigner. Robbie Goh suggests that Carter cultivates herself as a 'much-travelled, somewhat picaresque observer of societies, whose writing are as much sociological criticism as entertaining fictions' but that there is an 'ideological blind spot of national space as identity that runs through Carter's discourse' (Goh, 1999: 69-70). Furthermore Said's 'contrasting image' is certainly a theme this is iterated in Carter's work, and Araki suggests that 'it was probably important to her that her culture be odd or exceptional, no matter good or bad' (2018: 45). Thus, Orientalism for Carter could be interpreted as a means by which she made her own Judeo-Christian culture look out of the ordinary, and to 'think of her culture as just something quite ordinary would have reduced her to a colourless creature robbed of glamour' (Araki, 2018: 45).

Carter's relationship with Orientalism is made all the more complex when we compare the Otherness of the Orient in Western discourse with that of the female Other. Both 'partake of the exotic; both function to stabilise the identity of the Western male subject' (Doane, 1991: 182). In her essay 'Notes from the Front Line' (1983) Carter admits that 'women can't get out of our own historical complicity in colonialism', acknowledging the 'slow process of decolonising our language and our basic habit of thoughts (1983: 39). Anna Smith proposes that:

> The woman who is able to travel through countries, discourses, and texts occupies a privileged place because she refuses to domesticate the structures that surround her […] To her every potential home becomes an estranging place, offering a site of dissolving identities and structures in motion (Smith, 1996: 57).

Carter's status as a Western foreigner (who sees with the imperial eye) combined with being a woman (thus a subordinated Other) engenders contradictions which query her privileged position. However, Carter demonstrates an ability to subvert her (theoretically) unprivileged position of woman into a position of female / feminine power. Take, for example, the description of the Japanese bar in Carter's essay 'Poor Butterfly'. Carter recounts her experience working as a hostess in the male-only bar, employed as an 'erotic extra' serving no more than a 'masturbatory device for gentlemen' (1997: 254). However, she confesses that the 'throbbing sexuality is by no means the dominant quality of such [a] place' with the atmosphere 'curiously similar

to that of an English charabanc outing' (1997: 251). There is a tension between Carter's perception of herself as an erotic extra (made more erotic as a Caucasian, rather than assuming the role of a typical Japanese hostess) and also familiarizing the space around her through a Western association. Although Gamble suggests that Western women might be in demand as 'exotic extras' (1997: 252) and this 'does not mean that they are treated any more respectfully by their clients' (Gamble, 2016: 106), Carter's ability to both occupy a distinctly Oriental space *and* to openly comment on said occupation, suggests a Western privilege that is difficult to ignore, a point further evidenced by the fact that she can walk away from her job as a bar hostess at any point. Thus, there is 'a central paradox and conflict that fuels Carter's writing about Japan. She is torn between an anti-colonial impulse to renounce Western hegemony and a deep sense of being indebted to her white male predecessors' (Crofts, 2006: 99).

Moreover, Robbie Goh also suggests that although Carter is 'often alert to gender codes […] she is much less aware of the imperialist codes which places the West in the centre of her consciousness' (Goh, 1999). Carter's comments in her interview with John Haffenden in 1985 serves as a prime example – her localised cultural perspective is made apparent when, talking about her time in Japan, she refers to 'western European culture' (85) and 'in the context of Britain' (94). Carter knowingly situates herself, showing an awareness of where she comes from, what her assumptions are, and she is not narrowly limited to the UK or to England. There is a returning or a kind of centring on Judeo-Christian culture that she claimed to be running away from in 1969 when she left for Japan. Araki also suggests that it took Carter a while to shift away from this kind of Eurocentric approach during her time in Japan. According to Araki, 'Western people were prepossessed with the Judeo-Christian concepts of sin and punishment. This made them culturally exceptional in the world […] she regarded Japanese culture as frankly mysterious' (2018: 44).

The difficulty in interpreting Carter's relationship with Orientalism and Japan will be acknowledged throughout this thesis; certainly, Gordon's biography of Carter and the publication of Araki's memoirs serve as a means of shedding further light on this strand of work. And, although this thesis will not put forward a distinct position as to whether or not Carter creates an imperialist narrative that centres on a static image of the Orient, the tensions discussed here provide a springboard for further consideration in the analysis of Carter's Japanese works.

‘Is she fact or is she fiction?’ Using the Angela Carter Papers in the British Library

The Angela Carter Papers at the British Library provide a deluge of information pertaining to Carter’s time in Japan. Certainly, the papers are one of the most significant contributions to Carter studies in recent years. They are revelatory in the new material they provide for new readings of Carter’s fiction, and confirm old ideas. Acquired by the British Library in 2006, the papers provide a context to the time in which Carter was writing her stories, providing evidence that the short stories that form Carter’s *Fireworks* collection are semi-autobiographical in nature. Take, for example, her first meeting with her lover Sozo Araki, the man that gave her reason to return to Japan two more times over the next three years. Carter and Araki spent their first night together in one of Japan’s ‘love hotels’, a story which is corroborated by Araki’s memoirs (2018). Gordon speculates that experience inspired ‘A Souvenir of Japan’, a tale that ‘makes use of her experience in an unusually direct way’ (2016: 140). The sense of freedom and newfound independence Carter found in Japan (further confirmed by her decision to divorce Paul on her return to England) is also reflected in the one novel she wrote during her time abroad. *The Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor Hoffman* is, at its core, a novel about the conflict between reason and passion, reflective of Carter’s own warring desires at the time.

Yet, there is a danger of relying on the Angela Carter Papers to over-contextualise her fiction. The evolving function of Carter’s journals means that it is often difficult to distinguish between fact and fiction. Carter’s notes from the early 1960s are of a far more personal quality, functioning as more traditional journals, scattered with ideas for novels, short stories and poems. Reading through Carter’s earlier notebooks feels rather invasive, particularly when reviewing journals from 1961-2, prior to Carter publishing any major pieces of fiction. For example, on 12 November 1961, Carter confesses that she is unhappy in her marriage to Paul Carter, scrawling ‘I want to go home. I want to go home. I want to go home’ over the paper (Add. MS. 88899/1/86). Comparatively, the journals from the late 1960s are considerably more structured, with Carter taking a more methodical approach to recording her ideas. This indicates that Carter was progressively becoming more conscious of what she was writing in her journal, presumably taking a speculative stance that her work could one day be read by a third party. This is something that

Carter was perfectly aware of, and possibly even frustrated by, confessing at one point: 'Shit, I am writing this for the reader over my shoulder. I am the most self-conscious thing that ever breathed' (Add. MS 88899/1/89). However, it is naïve to assume that Carter's earlier journals do not express at least some level of self-awareness. Given that she scribbled out her notes (quite furiously in some instances) it is possible that even from the early 1960s she did not want potential readers seeing some of her work.

Furthermore, Heidi Yeandle also highlights a number of problems with relying on the archival material available. Inevitably, the collection does not include all the notes that Carter ever made, argues Yeandle – and the frantic (and perhaps deliberate) approach Carter took of scribbling out pages of her writing, and sticking pictures over things she did not want to read creates some limitations in gaining a more detailed overview of her work. The Angela Carter Papers, continues Yeandle, also 'overloo[k] Carter's private reflections about her writing and research' (2016: 6), although this may be more applicable to Carter's later notebooks where her self-awareness is more pronounced. There are then a number of issues with relying on Carter's journals to provide a 'pure' version of contextual analysis for an enhanced understanding of her work. The work from the archives – in particular those that denote more personal experiences – should therefore not be read as absolute truth, but interpreted as an indication of the direction in which Carter was thinking at the time.

The blurred boundaries between fact and fiction that feature in Carter's papers is a characteristic that is also discussed in Gordon's biography. Citing Carter's comments that 'I do exaggerate, you know… I'm a born fabulist' (Add. MS 89102),[35] Gordon cautions that she 'wasn't always a reliable witness to her own life' (2016: xvi). However, Carter did believe that 'even the most imaginatively sculpted confession could reveal truths about the confessor's experience'. She would later go on to say that,

> Autobiography is closer to fiction than biography. This is true both in method – the processes of memory are very like those of the imagination and the one sometimes gets inextricably mixed up with the other – and also in intention. 'Life of' is, or ought to be, history: that is 'the life and times of'. But 'my life' ought to be (though rarely is) a clarification of personal experience, in which it is less important (though only tactful) to get the dates right. You read so-and-

[35] Letter to Carol Roffe, undated.

> so's life of somebody to find out what actually happened to him or her. But so-and so's 'my life' tells what so-and-so thought about it all (1997: 358).[36]

It is difficult to pin Carter down and truly understand the relationship between what is fact and what is fiction in her work, and Gordon criticises academics who tend to 'read her as though she always wrote in the grip of an agenda' (Gordon, 2016: 130). However, Carter does not make it easy to understand whether or not there indeed is an agenda behind her works (for certain, there are specific intellectual arguments, as demonstrated by the sheer level of intertextual references she persistently engages in), and she admits to loading her fiction with allegories and metaphors. In her interview with Haffenden, Carter comments that she does 'put everything in a novel to be *read* – read the way allegory was intended to be read […] on as many levels as you can comfortably cope with at a time', admitting that she is incapable of writing 'plain, transparent prose' (1985: 86). However, in Carter's biography, Gordon signals a shift from reading Carter's novels as 'straightforwardly intellectual arguments' (her own words used in her interview with Haffenden) and instead berates academic commentators who align her work with a distinctly feminist agenda. Yet, Gordon surely cannot deny that it is existence of an academic commentary supporting Carter's work that has (in part) led to such a sustained existence of the author's work, certainly within the academic community.

'Flesh and the Mirror' serves as a prime example of the blurred boundaries between biography and fiction. During Carter's time in Japan she returned to England twice: the first time was after she had spent her grant money; the second was to promote the publication of *Love* in 1971. Her return to Japan both times was influenced by her desire to continue her relationship with Sozo. In 'Flesh and the Mirror' an unnamed woman returns to Japan expecting to find her lover waiting for her. Finding no one to meet her, she trawls the streets looking for him. Instead, she meets a stranger, and they return to a love hotel together for one night of passion. The next morning the narrator departs, full of regret and remorse. Compared with Carter's journals and her correspondence with friends at the time, one may conclude that 'Flesh and the Mirror' is based on actual events. Upon Carter's return to Japan in July 1971, after being in England for three months, her lover, Sozo, was not there to meet her. After looking for

[36] 'Much, much Stranger than Fiction' was originally published in the *New Society* magazine in 1979.

him, Carter returned to a love hotel with a stranger. She recalls the events in a letter to her friend Carole:

> It was an absolutely triumphant night…a grand tour of Japanese eroticism – from bath to bed, innumerable sequences of positions. Ever had your armpits licked? (He'd washed me very carefully first.) He only had 222 yen (a nice round sum) in the world (conceivably people with a great deal of erotic energy are always penniless due to fucking too much to make an honest living by sublimating) so, inevitably, I paid the hotel. Worth every yen…It transpired he's an actor with a left-wing group that takes Gogol and Gorki & stuff like that to the workers. His English was minimal but he said one luminous thing: 'I feel your holy body' (presumably meant 'whole'…) (Add. MS 89102)[37]

Carter's reaction to her night with the 'Summer Child' differs in her letter to Carole to the final fictional version that appears in 'Flesh and the Mirror'. The sequence of events that led up to the one-night stand are undoubtedly familiar in the short story, as the narrator laments 'however hard I looked for the one I loved, she could not find him anywhere and the city delivered her into the hands of a perfect stranger' (FM, 80). However, the narrator does not perceive the one night stand as triumphantly as Carter does and upon catching sight of herself and the stranger entwined in an embrace in the mirror above the bed she reflects that,

> I saw the flesh and the mirror but I could not come to terms with the sight. My immediate response to it was, to feel I'd acted out of character. The fancy-dress disguise I'd put on to suit the city had betrayed me to a room and a bed and a modification of myself that had no business at all in my life, not in the life I had watched myself performing (FM, 82).

Comparing the two versions of the tale, Gordon argues that 'the two versions are of equivalent biographical value', as, despite their differences, they recall nearly identical events. Carter appears to act out of character in both accounts of the story, enveloping a sense of liberation. Certainly, Carter is as likely to exaggerate the version of events in her letter to Carole as she does in the 'Flesh and the Mirror'. The best conclusion that we can draw, argues Gordon, 'is that their differing moods were both present in her encounter with the Summer Child' (2016: 187). As with her journals, Carter deliberately refuses to deliver a 'real' account of the tale, instead preferring to adopt a performance that is evasive of reality. A cautionary approach is required when reading

[37] Letter to Carole Roffe 18 July 1971.

Carter's journals, and her writing should not be taken as fact (nor, indeed, as fiction in her short stories). Carter's representation and re*imagining* of Japan means that the non-Judeo-Christian country she writes about in her journals cannot be truly authentic. Rather, the journals manifest Carter's ideas, images and experiences that she encountered in Japan, contributing and shaping her own imagined version of the far-eastern culture.

Breakdown of thesis chapters

Carter's encounter with Japan exposed her to new aesthetic possibilities. Although this work will primarily focus on a narrow range of texts in order to deliver an appropriately in-depth analysis of Carter's fiction and non-fiction written during her time in Japan, I also draw upon her fiction of the 1960s in order to demonstrate how her work altered during her time abroad. Notably, representations of Japan also appear in Carter's earlier works, and Gordon claims that Carter's fiction written during this period is 'studded with references' (2016: 132) to Japanese culture. Although these references are subtle they are, nonetheless, present and Carter's interest (and her knowledge) of Japan pre-1969 should be considered in an analysis of her time abroad. For example, Annabel in *Love* (1971)[38] is likened to a Japanese fox, an animal respected by the Japanese peasantry and a creature they believed 'could enter a person's body through the breast or else the space between the flesh of a fingernail and any one fingernail. When the fox was inside, it would harangue its host until he lost his reason' (*L*, 15). Similarly, in *Heroes and Villains* (1969) the tattoo of The Fall that is etched across Jewel's back is comparable to *irezumi*, the Japanese art of tattooing. Described as a 'close undergarment of colour' (*HV*, 94) Jewel's body modification draws similarities with the traditional tradesmen of Japan who wear tattoos as an occupational badge, a 'paint[ing] with pain upon a canvas of flesh' (Carter, 1997: 234).

My analysis of representations of Japan in Carter's work engages with thinkers whose own experiences are largely based on their time spent in Japan, including European semioticians such as Roland Barthes, Japanese authors such as Iharu Saikaku

[38] *Love* was written in 1969, before Carter first visited Japan. However, it was not published until 1971. Carter returned to England in 1971 to promote the novel, before returning to Japan later in the year.

and Tanizaki, and filmmakers such as Akira Kurosawa (1910-1998)[39] and Nagisa Oshima (1932-2013).[40] There are also strong intertextual references to literature Carter read before her visit to Japan, and the work of Charles Baudelaire (1821-1867),[41] Jorge Luis Borges (1899-1986),[42] Walter Benjamin (1892-1940)[43] and the Marquis de Sade (1740-1814)[44] all shape a reading of Carter's Japanese tales. Rebecca Munford suggests that Carter's *oeuvre* is 'characterised by its extraordinary range of literary and cultural references' (2006: 1) and that Carter's work, often 'multiple and unstable', is concerned with 'offering new perceptions of wor(l)ds, new ways of knowing and seeing' (2006: 16). Carter was certainly aware of the extent of her intertextuality, and confesses to using 'a very wide number of references because of tending to regard all of western Europe as a great scrap-yard from which you can assemble all sorts of new vehicles…*bricolage*' (Haffenden, 1985: 92). It is perhaps misleading for Carter to suggest that her 'scrap-yard' is limited to Western Europe and, as this thesis argues, Carter's interrogation and inclusion of Japanese literature in her own work demonstrate the degree to which her visit to the East is represented in her work, too.

One of the primary objective of this thesis is to address Carter's more neglected works, and to develop an understanding of a contextual analysis that seeks to explore (and in part, explain) the representation of Japan in her work. Working alongside Carter's archival material (specifically the journals that she kept between the years from

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[39] Japanese film director, widely considered to be one of the most important and influential film-makers in cinematic history. His works include *Rashōmon* (1950, which was awarded the Golden Lion award at the Venice Film Festival in 1951), *Ikiru* (1952), *Seven Samurai* (1954), *Throne of Blood* (1957), *The Hidden Fortress* (1958) and *Ran* (1985).

[40] Japanese film director, most well-known for his film *Ai no Corrida* (*In the Realm of the Senses*, 1976) in which the two lead actors Tatsuya Fuji and Eiko Matsuda have unsimulated sex.

[41] French poet whose works include *Les Fleurs du mal* (*The Flowers of Evil*, 1857), *Le Peintre de la Vie Moderne* (*The Painter of Modern Life*, 1863) and *Le Spleen de Paris* (Paris Spleen, 1869).

[42] Argentine writer whose work includes *Ficciones* (*Fictions*) and *El Aleph* (*The Aleph*).

[43] German philosopher whose essays include 'The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction' (1936) and 'Theses on the Philosophy of History' (1940). Benjamin also translated the parts of Charles Baudelaire *Les Fleurs du mal*. The section on the *flâneur* in chapter one discusses the relationship between Baudelaire and Benjamin in more detail.

[44] French nobleman, known for his sexually erotic and sadomasochistic literature, namely *Justine, ou Les Malheurs de la Vertu* (*Justine, or The Misfortunes of Virtue* (1791).

1969 to 1974), the most appropriate approach to adopt is to focus primarily on the texts that she produced during this time, as it is this work that features most prominently within the journals of the early 1970s. This methodology allows for an extensive close-reading analysis of Carter's short stories and the one novel written during her time in Japan.

The objective of this work is not to focus on theoretical approaches in relation to Carter's work. Instead, I focus on a comparative reading of texts that are representative of Carter's own Japanese experiences in order to demonstrate rigorously the links between Carter's work and Japan. My reading of Carter's texts approaches her time in Japan thematically, rather than chronologically. That is not to disrupt the order in which Carter's experiences took place, but rather to understand the extent to which representations of Japan appear across her work. The themes are often intersectional and chapters interweave with one another: this is a deliberate approach to demonstrate the subtle nuances and connections between Carter's work and the representations of Japan. Moreover, this approach provides an opportunity to cross-reference short stories from *Fireworks* with specific chapters in *The Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor Hoffman*, providing new and original readings across Carter's work.[45] The episodic narrative of *Doctor Hoffman* means that individual chapters can be situated in relative isolation and analysed in a more granular manner. And, although it is crucial not to lose sight of the key themes that run throughout *Doctor Hoffman* – most pertinently the

[45] There is an omission from this thesis that warrants an explanation for its absence. There are only a handful of references to the Marquis de Sade, whose work Carter began to read 'during or just before her stay in Japan' (Gamble, 2006: 118). And, although not explicitly linked to Japan, Sade does manage to creep his way into Carter's fiction, and is clearly personified through the perverse cloaked figure who is only known as the Count in *Doctor Hoffman*. Both Gamble and Sage suggest that Carter's work became increasingly fetishised during the early 1970s, and this may be attributed to Carter's exposure to what she thought was an overtly sexual culture in Japan and that the Japanese people 'enjoyed sexuality to their heart's content' (Araki, 2018: 46). Gamble ascribes Carter's changing narratives to the 'customary ways in which women are fetishised' (2006: 109); likewise, Sage suggests that Carter adopts an almost Barthes-like approach in her fiction that allowed her to 'escape [her] culture's sexual norms' (1994: 27). Although Carter's journals and notebooks written during her time in Japan hold little material on the Marquis de Sade, his ideas stuck with her through the 1970s, as she grappled with what would eventually become her polemical extended essay *The Sadeian Woman: An Exercise in Cultural History*, published in 1979.

conflict between desire and reason - an assessment of the chapters as individual pieces allows for a more in-depth comparative analysis with Carter's other works.

The opening chapter of this thesis explores Carter's literary topography of the city and investigates the way Carter's writing of the city altered from the architecturally insular buildings that characterise her novels written in the 1960s, to the streets of the metropolis she explores during her stories written in Japan. I suggest that this shift mirrors Carter's own experience of Japan as she navigates the space within the city, imprinting her own self-professed position of alienation and estrangement. Carter's writing during this period is informed by those works she had read prior to her time in Japan (Baudelaire, Benjamin, Hoffmann, Barthes and Borges) and those works she encountered after her visit (Italo Calvino, and Barthes' *Empire of Signs*). Baudelaire and Benjamin's interpretation of the *flâneur* resonates with Carter's own interpretation of the city: marginalised and wandering free, although Carter is in a position of estrangement she is still in a position of privilege, afforded to her by her Occidental Otherness. Japan is constructed as a de-centred, eroticised and unfamiliar space, and these tropes are reiterated throughout Carter's short stories and novel written during her time in Japan. Influenced by Japanese representations of the cityscape and by Carter's personal experiences, images of Tokyo find themselves resonating throughout *The Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor Hoffman*, particularly through the representation of Desiderio's home city in the very first chapter of the novel. The dream-like hallucinatory city where Desiderio lives has elements which are distinctly Oriental in their appearance. Carter's experiments with the image of the metropolis is a conscious rejection of realism, allowing her to explore the binaries between passion (a literary representation of Japan) and reason (civilization and the West). Passion and desire are complicit with a destructive, hallucinatory and unsustainable way of living in the city and, in *Doctor Hoffman*, must be abandoned in favour of reason and rationality. Irrational thought is particularly emphasised by the disconnected, fragmented and non-linear representation of time. Carter's sense of Japan as an alienating and estranging place is further shaped alongside a reading of Calvino's *Le città invisibili* (*Invisible Cities*), also published in 1972 (translated and published in English by William Weaver in 1974).[46] There is no evidence that Carter read Italian, and the English translation of

[46] See: Calvino, I. [1972] (1974) *Invisible* Cities, trans. William Weaver. San Diego, New York and London: Harcourt Brace & Company.

Calvino's *Invisible Cities* was published after *Doctor Hoffman*, in the same year as *Fireworks*. Although there is no intertextual relationship between *Doctor Hoffman* and *Invisible Cities* a comparison of the two texts serves as a way of reading Carter alongside Calvino's postmodernist text.

Chapter two shifts the focus from the city to Japanese theatre, specifically looking at the ways in which *bunraku* puppet theatre appears in Carter's work, expanding upon the work that has already been carried out in this area (Fisher, 2001; Crofts, 2006; Wisker, 2006). Building upon a critical assessment of *The Magic Toyshop*, the chapter will demonstrate the representation of *bunraku* puppets in the short story 'The Loves of Lady Purple' (1974) which is included in *Fireworks*. As a comparative study between the Occidental and Oriental representation of the marionette, this chapter argues that 'The Loves of Lady Purple' draws explicitly on Saikaku's seventeenth-century novel *The Life of an Amorous Woman* (1686; translated by Ivan Morris in 1963). Challenging authority within an overtly phallocentric society, Carter's Japanese marionettes seemingly adhere to a performance that is imitative of gendered and socio-political expectations. Carter purposely seeks to redefine power dynamics between participants (real or otherwise) that engage in a theatrical performance.

The short story 'The Executioner's Beautiful Daughter' also continues the theme of 'Japaneseness' and the decapitation of the executioner's son ensures a spectacle which both the actor (the executioner) and the audience are complicit in sustaining. Moreover, the incestuous relationship between the son/daughter and the father/daughter can be read within a Japanese context, and although by no means a new theme in Carter's work (as it is one she explores in *The Magic Toyshop* and in *Love*), incestuous relationships in her writing during the period take on a particular pertinent meaning when one considers that incest is not illegal (although is stigmatised) in Japan. An assessment of 'The Executioner's Beautiful Daughter' and Sigmund Freud's 'A Child is Being Beaten' (1919) further explores how pleasure is derived from spectacle, and how the ritual act of the performance permits space for violent acts. Finally, chapter two will consider how a comparison of traditional Japanese theatre can look beyond that of the marionette through an analysis of *kabuki* theatre, in which an all-male cast known as *onnagata* play female characters. Alongside *The Passion of New Eve* (1977), and Judith Butler's theories of performativity, the final section of this chapter provides

a comparative reading of the representation of femininity across Carter's texts and *kabuki*.

Chapter three shifts to a focus on Japanese literature, conducting a comparative reading between Carter and Tanizaki Jun'ichirō.[47] Writing in the early twentieth century, Tanizaki's work has a number of similarities with Carter's own literary *oeuvre*. This chapter will investigate this previously unexplored literary relationship by analysing the ways in which both Tanizaki and Carter use the female body as a site to explore representations of feminine beauty. Tanizaki experiments with different ideas of femininity: from the conservative doll-like O-hisa in *Some Prefer Nettles* (1929), to the grotesque figure of the Pink Lady and Western*esque* beauty Naomi in the eponymous novel, representation of women in Tanizaki's tales is revealing of his own social and personal preferences during the time in which he was writing. Likewise, Carter's use of the grotesque in her short stories – for example, in 'A Souvenir of Japan' – serves to emphasise her sense of alienation in Japan; yet, as a Caucasian woman, her apparently grotesque and lumbering appearance is inverted and serves as a means of positioning herself as a figure of exotic Occidentalism in the eyes of the Japanese.

Both Carter and Tanizaki also use fashion, make-up and tattooing as a means of exploring modifications of the body. These forms of ornamentation function as markers of cultural and social histories; although these forms of body decoration may be used to express individual identity they are more frequently used as ways of reading the Other. The Japanese art of *irezumi* is utilised in Carter's *The Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor Hoffman* and in Tanizaki's short story 'The Tattooer' (1910): both employ this imagery as a means of fetishizing the body, highlighting sadomasochistic approaches through their fiction.

The final chapter of this thesis explores Carter's interest in Japanese cinema. Writing in her journals in the 1960s, Carter provided extensive lists of the films she watched at the movies. The journals show that she was watching Japanese films – specifically the work of Kurosawa – from as early as 1963. This chapter will assess the extent to which Carter adopts, negotiates, and translates the kind of cinematic

[47] The usual way of presenting a Japanese name is to place the surname before the forename, thus Tanizaki Jun'ichirō. This format is adopted by scholars such as Donald Keene (1971); Anthony Chambers (1972); Noriko Mizuta Lippit (1977); Miriam Silverberg (1992) and Cody Poulton (1999).

techniques used in Japanese films, and subsequently applies it to her fiction. Specifically looking at the films by Kurosawa, this chapter suggests that there is a cross-cultural exchange of ideas between the East and the West: Japanese cinema was influenced by the import of films from the West at the turn of the twentieth-century: in turn, Japanese films then influenced Hollywood cinema (Kurosawa's *The Hidden Fortress* [1958] informed the narrative of *Star Wars: A New Hope*, 1977). Yet, the distinctiveness of Japanese cinema is still retained in Kurosawa's work – the integration of elements from Japanese *noh* theatre, the use of the wide frame to capture a broad landscape, intended to replicate the audience's view of a play being enacted on stage. Kurosawa's body of work, much like Carter's, can be interpreted as a bricolage that draws upon the traditional, the modern, the East and the West in order to construct a distinctive style.

Specifically analysing two of Carter's short stories 'The Smile of Winter' and 'Flesh and the Mirror' (both in *Fireworks*; 1974) alongside Kurosawa's *Seven Samurai* (1954), I suggest that Carter intentionally employs a 'wide lens' in the framing of her narratives, heightening an alienation effect in her work. The use of the wide-lens is a technique frequently used by Kurosawa in a bid to refuse the audience empathy with the characters in his films. The long scenes of Kurosawa's films and the painterly compositions of Carter's short stories create an estrangement that fosters detachment. This alienation effect seems Brechtian in its design, drawing on techniques from Russian Formalism to make something *strange*. There is then, a clear cross-cultural exchange that functions across global film which enables cinematic techniques to be adapted, borrowed and evolved from other countries. Moreover, this cultural osmosis also applies across mediums, and Carter's interest in world cinema (for example, Hollywood, Spaghetti Westerns, European and Japanese films) is clearly reflected in her own writing. The visual elements of cinema are transformed and recreated across literature, play, and screen.

Juxtaposing the long and unedited scenes that bring about an alienation effect, Kurosawa's deliberate use of montage – sharply-edited, fast-moving scenes – are strategically employed in order to heighten tension. For example, in the final battle scene of *Seven Samurai*, the short and fast-paced scenes contrast strongly with the use of the long and unedited scenes early in the film. Carter's use of montage in her literature is also particularly effective, most pertinently in her short story 'John Ford's

'*Tis Pity She's a Whore*' (1988).[48] Although not written during her time in Japan, Carter's short story serves as an excellent example of how Carter continued to employ cinematic techniques within her work.

It is through an assessment of the topics detailed above that this thesis provides an in-depth analysis of the Japanese literary and cultural influences in Carter's work. By contextualising Carter's position in Japan, and seeking to consolidate her relationship with the landscape, texts, and culture around her, the reader can gain a more nuanced understanding of her time encountering this far-eastern culture. There is no better time to be re-reading the works of Carter, and it is testimony to the scope of Carter studies that scholars continue to revisit her work, endeavouring to find new meanings and interpretations hidden amongst her words.

Chapter one

Cities and space

Representations of cities and space in *The Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor Hoffman* (1972) and the two stories, 'Reflections' and 'Penetrating to the Heart of the Forest' from Fireworks (1974)

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[48] Originally published in *Granta* 25, Autumn, 1988. Published posthumously in *Burning Your Boats* (1995) London: Vintage

Carter's topographical narrative

Carter describes her arrival in Japan as an experience akin to vertigo, finding herself immersed in a 'ceaseless controlled frenzy' (Gordon, 2016: 137). She describes the streets of Tokyo as 'garish, bedizened, breathtakingly vulgar' and 'architecturally vile'; and yet, she thought that the city was 'one of the most truly civilised cities in the world' (*Vogue*, January 1970). Carter would soon discover the varied topography of Japan for herself: writing in a letter to her friend Carole Roffe she reflects that '[Tokyo] is probably the most absolutely non-boring city in the world' (Add. MS 89102, n.d.), and yet, in an essay for the *New Society* (1970)[49] she describes the residential district she was living in as possessing a 'prim charm' with an 'inescapable accompanying ennui of respectability' (1997: 231).

Carter's dislocation from England and her subsequent reorientation in Japan provided her with a new means of approaching a topographical narrative within her fiction. This chapter investigates the ways in which Carter's writing transitions from a narrative whose primary focus is situated within the interior of the home, to one that extends outwards and explores the streets of the metropolis. The space that is described in both *The Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor Hoffman* (1972) and *Fireworks* (1974) is unfamiliar and unknown territory to Carter, contrasting with the familiar and known spaces that characterise her novels of the 1960s, which include her 'Bristol Trilogy' (*Shadow Dance*, 1966; *Several Perceptions*, 1968; *Love*, 1971) and *The Magic Toyshop* (1967), which is set in London.

Starting with an analysis of the interior space that Carter occupied during her stay in Japan, I argue that images of buildings in Carter's writing (and her occupation of these buildings) specifically act as a means for her to understand her own place in Japan. Carter's work published in the early 1970s demonstrates a transition from the internal and domestic spaces that characterised her fiction of the 1960s to an exploration of (and experimentation with) the space beyond the home. We begin to see the origins of these practices in *Heroes and Villains* (1969) when Carter extends her literary space beyond that of the familiar: after the death of her father, the novel's heroine, Marianne, leaves the protective white concrete and steel towers of the Professors.[50] Running away

[49] 'Tokyo Pastoral' (1970) in *Shaking a Leg: Collected Writings*, ed. Jenny Uglow, (London and New York: Penguin), pp. 231-34.

[50] Yoshioka (2002) suggests that Marianne gets her name from Marianne Renoir in Jean-Luc Godard's *Pierrot le fou* (1965) (69).

with the barbarian boy Jewel, Marianne is confronted with 'a wholly new and vegetable world, a world as unknown and mysterious […] as the depths of the sea' (*HV*, 26). Moving away from the gothic and decaying buildings that characterise her earlier novels, the interior spaces that Carter writes about during her time in Japan are sexually charged and are symbolic of passion. Take, for example, the love hotel in 'A Souvenir of Japan' in which the narrator and her lover are shown a room with 'nothing but a mattress spread on the floor. We lay down immediately and began to kiss one another' (SJ, 6), and again in 'Flesh and the Mirror' where the mirrored ceiling is 'dedicated to the reflection of chance embraces' (FM, 81). Furthermore, navigation and the use of interior space are key in understanding Carter's own sense of Otherness, as is found in the dualistic world of 'Reflections' (1974), the penultimate tale of *Fireworks*.

That is not to say that the cityscape does not play a pertinent role in the reading of Carter's earlier novels: indeed, the location of her fiction is key in developing a contextual understanding of the narrative in most, if not all, of Carter's novels written in the 1960s. Rather, we see a shift in the *way* the metropolis is represented. Just as Marianne begins a new adventure in a 'time-eaten city' (*HV*, 150) at the end of *Heroes and Villains*, so Carter continues an exploration of the unfamiliar in her stories written in Japan. As outlined in the introduction, Carter's time abroad was marked by feelings of estrangement and alienation: as Other she occupied the fringes of society, banished to the margins. The city, too, becomes Other, a space to be explored and investigated. For example, the narrator of 'Flesh and the Mirror' searches 'among a multitude of unknown faces' (FM, 78) through the crowds of Tokyo looking for her lost lover; the twins in 'Penetrating to the Heart of the Forest' navigate the topography of the forbidden forest, which acts as a metaphor for the metropolis, their father 'seeking a destination whose whereabouts he did not know' (PHF, 62). The topographical narrative that Carter experiments with during her time abroad is correlative with her own attempts at navigating space in Japan.

Moving outside of the home, I go on to discuss Carter's navigation of the streets of Tokyo in her role of the *flâneuse*.[51] Drawing on the work of Charles Baudelaire

[51] I use the term *flâneuse* (the female *flâneur)* to capture Carter's gendered experience abroad. Importantly, the nineteenth-century *flâneur* was male, with no female equivalent as 'such a character was rendered impossible by sexual divisions' (Wolff, 1985: 45). There is an initial difficulty in reconciling Carter to the figure of *flâneuse* – Griselda Pollock goes so far as to assert that 'there is not and could not be a female *flâneuse*' (1988: 71). The *flâneuse* should be recognised as partially sharing the

(1821-1867) and Walter Benjamin (1892-1940) I suggest that Carter's understanding of the city and subsequent estrangement within this space aligns with the idea of the *flâneur* or rather, the *flâneuse*, given Carter's gender-specific Japanese experience. *Flânerie* affords Carter a point of privilege: although the metropolis is unknown, her position as a Western Caucasian woman ensures that her Otherness is not negated, allowing her to amble and explore the city's surroundings. Wandering aimlessly through the metropolis, Carter succeeds in retaining her position of Otherness, a notion that is also shared with Roland Barthes' own experience of Japan. Through a comparative reading of Carter's short story 'Penetrating to the Heart of the Forest' (1974, in *Fireworks*) and Barthes' *Empire of Signs* (1970), I examine the use of semiotics and cartography, specifically focusing on the representation of the city centre and Carter's own construction of Japan as a de-centred, eroticised and fictive place, which shares similarities with Barthes' own representation of Japan as a 'fictive nation' (1970: 3). Carter's prior knowledge of Baudelaire and Barthes[52] would have informed her mode of thinking during this period. Although it is not clear if Carter came across Benjamin's work before or during her time in Japan, Benjamin's essays continue a similar trajectory of thought as that of both Baudelaire and Edgar Allan Poe. Indeed, Benjamin translated Baudelaire's work (specifically *Les Fleurs du mal*) who, in turn, translated Poe,[53] both of whom exercise a persistent intertextual presence throughout Carter's literary *oeuvre* (Munford, 2013).

This chapter also provides an analysis of Carter's most symbolically charged work of fiction written during her time abroad, *The Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor*

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leisurely, aimless walks characterised by the *flâneur*; yet, she is different in the ways in which she encounters the city. See Lauren Elkin (2016) *Flâneuse: Women Walk the City in Paris, New York, Tokyo, Venice and London*. London: Chatto & Windus.

[52] It is not clear whether or not Carter read *Empire of Signs* during her time in Japan. She was a French linguist, and would go on to translate Xavière Gauthier's *Surréalisme et Sexualité* in 1973. Carter's translation was never published, but drafts of her work appear in the British Library (Add. MS 88899/1/83). Also see Anna Watz 'Angela Carter and Xavière Gauthier's *Surréalisme et sexualité'*, *Contemporary Women's Writing*, Vol. 4: 2 (2010): 114-133.

[53] Baudelaire's translations include *Histoires Extraordinaires* (*Extraordinary Stories)* (1856); *Nouvelles Histoires Extraordinaires* (New Extraordinary Stories, 1857); *Adventures D'Arthur Gordon Pym* (The Adventures of Arthur Gordon Pym, 1868); Eureka (1864) and *Histoires grotesques et sérieuses* (*Grotesque and serious stories*, 1865). The translations are archived in the Baudelaire Collection at the W.T. Bandy Centre for Baudelaire and Modern French Studies, Vanderbilt University Library.

Hoffman. The novel is analogous to the manifestation of sexual desire, actualised through Doctor Hoffman's eroto-energy caves filled with copulating couples whose secretions provide the charge for the Doctor's illusions. These illusions, which are cast on to Desiderio's home city, take its inhabitants 'entirely by surprise and chaos supervene[s] immediately' (*DH*, 11). I argue that Desiderio's city, subjected to Doctor Hoffman's hallucinations, is partially based on Carter's encounter with the East, and that references to Japan are littered throughout the novel. Unlike alternative critical interpretations of the cityscape that claim it is 'resolutely European' (Munford, 2013: 46), I suggest that the dream-like hallucinatory world of Doctor Hoffman cannot be pinned down to a single site, although there are elements that are distinctly Oriental in their appearance. Carter's experiments with the image of the metropolis is a conscious rejection of realism, allowing her to explore the binaries between passion (a literary representation of Japan) and reason (civilization and the West). Passion and desire are complicit with a destructive, hallucinatory and an unsustainable way of living in the city and, in *Doctor Hoffman*, must be abandoned in favour of reason and rationality. Irrational thought is highlighted by the 'nonlinear concept of time' (Panigrahi, 2015: 235) that is scattered throughout the novel, in which Desiderio encounters the River People's utopian society 'which ignored the time and action of the rest of the world' (Dimovitz, 2009: 98), and the realm of 'Nebulous Time' which exists 'outside the formal rules of time and place' (*DH*, 196). Carter's sense of Japan – as unfamiliar, alienating and estranging – is further shaped alongside a reading of Italo Calvino's *Le città invisibili* (*Invisible Cities*), also published in 1972 (translated and published in English in 1974) and Jorge Luis Borges's 'Tlön, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius' (1940; translated into English in 1962). Chronological and geographical temporalities are interlocked with one another's destinies, with the city serving as a host for past, present, and future events.

Finally, this chapter touches upon Carter's encounter with the Japanese language. Although she was well-versed in both French and German, Carter never fully grasped Japanese, and Araki's memoirs suggest that this may be because the language simply did not interest her. Yet, the language of the River People in *Doctor Hoffman* is quite clearly a reference to Japanese: for example, the River People's speech has no future tense, disrupting chronological concepts of time and space.

Carter's representation of space in Japan encapsulates her sense of 'Otherness': finding herself on the margins of society she is eroticised, mirroring the West's

objectification of the East. Carter's adoption of the role of estranged foreigner not only impacts upon her representation of the interior within her stories, but also in her description of the city. Rather than depending on the cityscapes of London and Bristol, Carter's short stories and novels written during her time in Japan openly explore a less familiar path, unbound to streets that she is familiar with. Eight out of the nine tales in *Fireworks* take place in either places that are explicitly Japanese and can be traced directly back to Carter's own experiences or in an unfamiliar landscape, such as a jungle, a forest, or an obscure village in the highlands. Likewise, *Doctor Hoffman* is purposely constructed in an episodic fashion in which Desiderio moves from place to place: the success of his mission depends on his mobility and the ease of which he can move from one strange place to the next. It is only 'Elegy for a Freelance' (the final tale of *Fireworks*) which is set in London. Given that the nine tales appear in the order in which they were written and that the collection was only completed when she returned to England, it is perhaps to be expected that the location of the final tale should be set in an English city.[54] And, although the end of the short story collection sees a 'return' to the West, the city is personified as a desirable, lascivious woman, continuing the theme of desire that is iterated through much of Carter's tales written abroad: 'London lay below me with her legs wide open; she was a whore sufficiently accommodating to find room for us in her embraces, even though she cost so much to love' (EF, 134). Moreover, Natsumi Ikoma suggests that Assassin X in 'Elegy for a Freelance' is a reference to Carter's Japanese lover, Sozo.[55] Desire, suggests Ikoma, 'dominated Angela Carter's literary imagination related to Japan' (2018: 167-68).

[54] The deliberate reference to 'England' in this sentence (rather than the UK or Great Britain) is important. Estrangement and belonging are bound up in Carter's interpretation of her own 'rootlessness', being born to a Scottish father and an English mother.

[55] When Carter separated from her lover Sozo in 1971, she copied poetry written by Wallace Stevens (1879-1955). Ikoma notes that Carter seemed particularly interested in the fifth part from 'Extracts from Addresses to the Academy of Fine Ideas' (1940) which includes the word 'assassin'. Carter then marked the word 'Assassin' down as a title for a new story about Sozo (Araki, 2018: 167).

Inside/outside: a comparison between the representation of interior space in Carter's novels of the 1960s and 'Reflections'

In order to draw a meaningful comparison between Carter's literature written pre-Japan and the fiction she produced during her time abroad, some background analysis of Carter's earlier novels is required. In three of Carter's novels written during her early career (*Shadow Dance*, *Several Perceptions* and *Love*), often referred to as 'The Bristol Trilogy', Carter utilises the metropolis as a means of representing a 'fictional mediation of and imaginative response to the particular place where the [she] lived' (O' Day, 1994: 26). Likewise, *The Magic Toyshop* depicts protagonist Melanie's move from a small suburban English town to the capital city of London, a transition that sees her and her two younger brothers exposed to an impoverished lifestyle, unbound by the traditions (and implied safety) of a nuclear family life. Set in 1950's London 'around the time when [Carter] was 13 or 14' (Paterson, 1986: 45), the 'location is never given an explicit identification': rather, *The Magic Toyshop* 'represents a space that existed and represented the majority of the city' (Goulding, 2012: 190).

Carter's novels of the 1960s (excluding *Heroes and Villains)* have a particularly strong focus on the interior of the home: they are places where 'characters of the novel live, interact and develop' (Goulding, 2012: 188). The run-down houses are spaces for attempted suicide (Joseph in *Several Perceptions*, Annabel [twice] in *Love*), murder (*Shadow Dance*), rape (*Shadow Dance*, *The Magic Toyshop*) and incest (*The Magic Toyshop*). They are portrayed as unwelcoming spaces: *Shadow Dance*, for example, is awash with images of the derelict ruins of Victorian houses with curtains 'layered with dust […] rank with urine', with a kitchen that smells of 'garbage, of age, of hopelessness' (*SD*, 129-133). The masses of junk and the image of the decaying and unused hoard of rubbish referenced throughout the novel are 'symbolic of old, outdated cultured values', and read 'like a clearing operation. A clearing away of the past and its darkness of attitude and outlook' (Day, 1998: 14-15). Likewise, in *Several Perceptions*, Kay's mother's house is described as a 'mausoleum […] full of tatty splendours' (*SP*, 11). Lee and Annabel's apartment in *Love* serves as a template onto which Carter sets out the fate of the young couple: the weak, paper-thin walls of their flat are analogous to the fragile disposition of its inhabitants, a foreshadowing of the self-destructive nature of their relationship that claims Annabel as its victim at the end of the novel.

The Magic Toyshop is a prime example of the insular nature of Carter's earlier fiction, and the granularity which she indulges in the description of domestic space. The large detached home in semi-rural England that Melanie lives in before her parents' death is the 'epitome of bourgeois comfort' (Gamble, 2006: 31), a 'red-brick [house], with Edwardian gables, standing by itself in an acre or two of its own grounds' (*MT*, 7). Melanie's family home starkly contrasts against the cramped living quarters she must then live in with her Uncle Phillip and Aunt Margaret. The suburb that she moves to is

> crumbling in decay, over-laden with a desolate burden of humanity, the houses had the look of queuing for a great knacker's yard, of eagerly embracing the extinction of their former grandeur, of offering themselves to ruin with an abandonment almost luxurious (*MT*, 98-99).

However, Melanie's move to London from her family home that smells like 'lavender furniture polish and money' (*MT*, 7) does not just focus on the representation of interior space. The London that Carter represents in *The Magic Toyshop* is a 'collection of smaller spaces, locations, settings and background' (Goulding, 2012: 189). The landscape that Melanie faces is 'distinctly reminiscent of the distinctively sixties landscape Carter has already evoked in *Shadow Dance*, situated at the point at which history has run out, leaving nothing but the wreckage of past glories' (Gamble, 1997: 71).

A clear shift to outside space (and the unfamiliar) is found in Carter's 1969 novel, *Heroes and Villains*. Although written prior to her first trip to Japan, the novel refuses an insular focus in its representation of the home and its heroine, Marianne, moves beyond the physical boundaries of the Professor's white ivory tower 'made of steel and concrete' (*HV*, 3) in order to explore that which is beyond reason and rationality. The description of the ivory towers in *Heroes and Villains* is similar to Carter's description of Desiderio's city (before it is cast under Doctor Hoffman's illusions) with its solid, drab architecture. It is perhaps telling however, that at the end of *Heroes and Villains* Marianne is drawn to a lighthouse, 'the twin of the white tower in which she had been born': 'abhor shipwreck, said the lighthouse, go in fear of unreason' (*HV*, 151). A balance must be struck between desire and reason; between irrationality and logic, a conclusion that Carter finds herself returning to in *Doctor Hoffman.*

In comparison, the tales that make up the *Fireworks* collection differ from the ways in which Carter represents interior space in her novels of the 1960s. Carter's claim that she was 'living in a room too small to write a novel in' (*BB*, 459) is often pointed to as one of the reasons why she started writing short tales in Japan (Gamble, 2006; Crofts, 2003). Given the semi-autobiographical nature of *Fireworks*, Gamble suggests that the 'short story mode also served a more pragmatic function for Carter, enabling her to teasingly fictionalise those experiences she did not want to record in a more unambiguous form' (2006: 108). Carter's experiments with short stories mirrors the claustrophobic setting in which she was writing in; yet this claustrophobia only applies to the form of the story, not the content – Carter's writing in Japan ventures to unknown spaces outside of the home. Of the nine tales that appear in *Fireworks*, four refer explicitly refer to internal space, with three of them ('A Souvenir of Japan', 'Flesh and the Mirror' and 'Reflections') heavily influenced by her stay in Japan.[56] However, unlike the interior spaces of her 1960s novels which are characterised by death and gothic imagery, Carter's Japanese short stories have a distinct focus on desire and passion. The love hotel in 'A Souvenir of Japan' holds 'nothing but a mattress on the floor', and 'the city is hospitable to lovers' (SJ, 6). Similarly, in 'Flesh and the Mirror', the narrator finds herself in an 'unambiguous hotel with mirror on the ceiling and lascivious black lace draped round a palpably illicit bed' (FM, 80), and these images are influenced by real-life Japanese sex-hotels. Carter's journals provide an insight into how Eastern space influenced her narrative, writing that

> lovers' hotels […] proliferate through the city, quoting the price per hour on a neon sign outside the price per night and offering beside the mattress or the bed on which to fuck; a bathroom for pre-coital diversion and post-coital lustrance [sp]; central heating or air conditioning depending on the time of the year; and colour television (Add. MS 88899/1/80).

[56] The fourth, 'Elegy for a Freelance' is set in London. As indicated earlier in this chapter, this short story may have been influenced by Carter's Japanese lover Sozo, rather than her experiences of the metropolis.

Internal spaces in Japan are transformed into places of desire, and it is through Carter's *Fireworks* collection that a new narrative emerges – one that deliberately seeks to disassociate internal space from harm and destruction.[57]

Carter's use of internal space in her Japanese short stories provides her with a way of exploring her position as a Western woman in a foreign country. Her use of mirrors and (a literary) reflective narrative in 'Reflections' captures the implications of being Other. 'Reflections' tells the story of a lone male traveller who stumbles upon the 'mirror image' of a shell whilst wandering in the forest. The traveller attempts to carry the shell through the forest, but is dragged down by its 'fabulous weight' (R, 105). Attacked by a young androgynous nymph named Anna (her palindrome name suggesting that 'she can go both ways' [R, 114]), the traveller is taken back to a neglected cottage in the depths of the forest (a setting which is not unlike 'Penetrating to the Heart of the Forest'). Here, the protagonist is introduced to Anna's sexually androgynous aunt, whose face is split between the profile 'of a beautiful woman, the other that of a beautiful man' (R, 111): Anna swiftly returns the shell to the world from which it has fallen, by throwing it into the mirror where, 'when it met its own reflection, disappeared immediately' (R, 114). The aunt reveals that the shell had fallen into this reality because she had dropped a stitch in her knitting 'only one little stitch… and that confounded shell slipped through the hole the dropped stitch made' (R, 115). The young man, having discovered the shell in the forest, now knows 'too much' (R, 115) and must be forced to enter the world that the shell has come from, through a mirror on the wall. To enter this world, the young man must indulge in an exercise of narcissism and kissing his mirrored lips that appear in his reflection, he engages with a 'profound sensuality' an 'intense embrace' that sees him topple from one world into the next (R, 117-8).

Giving birth 'to [his] mirror self', the protagonist finds himself in a world 'the same; yet absolutely altered' (R, 119). There is an opportunity here to interpret the two worlds as a rather rudimentary representation of the East and the West, although Carter's image of the 'colour negative' and the 'absolute darkness' (R, 118-9) of the parallel world again raises challenges for a post-colonial reading of her work. The

[57] That is not to say that consensual sexual relationships and desires are not explored in Carter's earlier novels. For example, in *The Magic Toyshop* Melanie's Aunt Margaret and her cousin Frances have a consensual, incestuous relationship with one another.

interior of the cottage (described as a 'half-way house' [R, 118]) may be interpreted as a 'literal representation of identities of difference' (Bhabha, 1994: 3). However, this is arguably redeemed by the protagonist's uncertainties in determining 'which was the primary world and which the secondary' (R, 119). Take, for example, the use of architecture within the cottage in which the aunt resides. On first stepping into this space, the young man thinks that 'every corner was softened by cobwebs', but soon comes to realise that the 'determinate pattern' winding down the inner side of the staircase is actually the aunt's knitting (R, 109-10). As he is lead *down* the stairs in the parallel universes, he notices that 'the geometrical engineering had all been executed backwards' and that the 'alignments of the stairwell had been subtly altered': it is the same, yet different. Homi K. Bhabha explains:

> The stairwell as liminal space, in-between the designations of identity, becomes the process of symbolic interaction, the connective tissue that constructs the difference between upper and lower, black and white. The hither and thither of the stairwell, the temporal movement and passage that it allows prevents identities at either end of it from settling into primordial polarities (1994: 3).

Thus, the stairs in the cottage become symbolic of the two worlds colliding; they are the same, but different. The either/or binaries represented in 'Reflections' are limiting to a postcolonial reading of the story, whereby only two versions of the world (which work in opposition to one another) are presented. The thesis cannot exist without the antithesis; the Occident relies on the creation of the Orient in able to situate its own identity. Rather than presenting itself as a tale that forges two worlds together, 'Reflections' can instead be interpreted as a transitional story in which the occupation of both inside and outside is explored. Carter's investigation into the interior of the home provides a context in which everything is the same and everything is different. In a rather neat interpretation of the tale, 'Reflections' can be understood as a tale that compares the two worlds through the looking glass (a common image that Carter draws upon in her discussions of Japan) as well as offering a reading in which the narrator occupies the outside, a parallel that is commensurate with Carter's occupation as *outsider*.

The deliberate use of mirroring in Carter's short stories, argues Anna Pasolini, reflect 'what has been previously hidden, or what was unknown to the subject' (2012: 141). The mirror in 'Reflections' is a metaphorical representation of Carter's own

reflective gaze as she gained a further understanding of her own sense of Otherness in Japan. Although 'Reflections' does not name Japan directly, Carter's experience in Japan results in a collapsing of spatial barriers in which she is forced to 'acknowledge that otherness is to be accepted as part of the self and must be reconciled with it' (Pasolini, 2012: 146). The collapsing of the two 'worlds' in 'Reflections' is analogous to an increasingly porous relationship between Carter's work and representations of Japan, and the dissolution of topographical boundaries (or inside/ outside) is pertinent in gaining an understanding of a Carterian themes.

Navigating Japan: Charles Baudelaire and Walter Benjamin's *flâneur*

Although the city is a pertinent image within Carter's earlier stories, they are categorised as familiar spaces, with both Bristol and London featuring prominently in four of her five novels written in the 1960s. *Shadow Dance* for example, is 'about a perfectly real area of the city in which [Carter] lived' and 'as real as the milieu [she] was familiar with' (Sandhu, 2006: 46-7). The limited reference to the landscape in Carter's texts can be interpreted as a response to the time (and her surroundings) in which she was writing.[58] Certainly, one of the most prominent features of Carter's writing during her time abroad is the sense in which she attempts to distil imagery of alienation and estrangement. Carter was perfectly conscious about this approach, and admits that she was 'trying to create this sense of foreignness in every possible way in [her] narrative' (Add. MS 88899/1/80).

The concept of the city as an unfamiliar space – and the subsequent movement around this unfamiliar space – is aligned with the activities of the *flâneur*, a phrase originally coined by Charles Baudelaire (1821-1867) in his 1863 essay 'Le peintre de la vie moderne' ("The Painter of Modern Life", trans. Jonathan Mayne, 1964).[59] For Baudelaire, *flânerie* (the act of the *flâneur*) was a 'form of city travel, of displacement' (Huberman, 2014: x), synonymous with alienation for the artists living on the fringes

[58] Interpreting Carter's work as a response to the time and place in which she was writing is a theme that will be picked up in chapter three of thesis in the analysis of Carter and Tanizaki Jun'ichirō's literature.

[59] Originally published in *L'art Romantique* (Paris), pp. 64-65. Translated and edited in 1964 by Jonathan Mayne. London: Phaidon Press

of society in nineteenth-century Paris as it underwent a period of rapid change. Baudelaire writes that

> For the perfect *flâneur*, for the perfect spectator, it is an immense joy to set up house in the heart of the multitude, amid the ebb and flow of movement […] To be away from home and yet to feel oneself everywhere at home; to see the world, to be at the centre of the world, and yet to remain hidden from the world – such are a few of the slightest pleasures of those independent, passionate, impartial natures which the tongue can but clumsily define (1964: 9).[60]

Baudelaire's figure of the *flâneur* was undoubtedly known to Carter given that his work has a strong intertextual presence throughout her fiction: Rebecca Munford even goes so far as to describe Baudelaire as one of Carter's 'most influential and persistent literary models' (2013: 74). For example, in *Shaking a Leg*, Carter refers to Baudelaire a number of times: she draws on his work in her essay 'Wagner and the Mistral' (1997: 336-340, originally published in *New* Society, 1975), her observations on D. H. Lawrence's *Women in Love* (1997: 499-504, originally published in *New Society*, 1975) and on her reflections on surrealism in 'The Alchemy of the Word' (1997: 507-512, originally published in *Harpers & Queen*, 1978).[61] Although in her essay 'Notes from the Front Line' (1983) she claims that 'his poetry is the product of terminal despair, and he was a shit, to boot' (41), her texts are still peppered with references to his work. As Munford continues,

> the ornate textures of Baudelaire's poetics are […] woven into the fabric of Carter's fiction [appearing in the] representation of Leilah's bejewelled and perfumed body in [*The Passion of New Eve*] and the Marquis's appropriation of [Baudelaire's] words in 'The Bloody Chamber' (2013: 74).

The short story 'Black Venus' (1985) is also based on Baudelaire's mistress Jeanne Duval, providing her with vocal agency.

Baudelaire's idea of the *flâneur* was re-introduced by Benjamin in the 1930s, although Benjamin had already started to begin to translate individual poems from

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[60] This excerpt also appears in Walter Benjamin's *The Arcades Project* (*Passagenwerk*). A collection of writings on the city life of Paris in the nineteenth century, Benjamin wrote *The Arcades Project* between 1927-1940. *The Arcades Project* was published posthumously in 1982. See Walter Benjamin [1982] (1999) *The Arcades Project*, trans., Howard Eiland and Kevin McLaughlin, Cambridge, Massachusetts and London: Harvard University Press, p. 443.

[61] In *Shaking a Leg* Carter also refers to Baudelaire's influence on the 'thoroughly Europeanised' Japanese author, Tanizaki (1997: 267-8).

Baudelaire's *Les Fleurs du mal* as early as 1914. Benjamin's most prolific essay on Baudelaire 'On some motifs in Baudelaire',[62] although first published in German for the journal *Zeitschrift fur Sozialforshung* in 1939, appears in Benjamin's posthumously published edited collection of work *Illuminations* in 1955, with an English translation later appearing in 1970. For Baudelaire and Benjamin, the *flâneur* is a man who is permitted the time to cruise around the city: he does not work and can stroll at a leisurely pace. He is 'one who wanders aimlessly', a figure of 'masculine privilege and leisure, with time and money and no immediate responsibilities to claim his attention' (Elkin, 2016: 3). Carter certainly drew on Benjamin's work for her work written post-Japan, referring to 'The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction' (1936) in one of her reading lists for the research for her 1991 novel *Wise Children* (Add. MS 88899/1/113). Although there is no evidence that Carter was reading Benjamin's *Illuminations* when it first appeared in English, her interest in Baudelaire and the evidence of her later interest in Benjamin's work suggest that she came across the collection of essays at some point.

Benjamin's *The Arcades Project* (1982) also draws upon a number of literary figures who influenced Carter's work. With specific reference to the *flâneur*, *The Arcades Project* and *Illuminations* include excerpts from Baudelaire (as above), Edgar Allan Poe's 'The Man of the Crowd' (1840) and E. T. A. Hoffmann's 'My Cousin's Corner Window' (1822). Much like Baudelaire, both Hoffmann and Poe influenced Carter's work, and in Japan she used these thinkers to inform her own ideas of foreignness. In her afterword for *Fireworks*, Carter expresses her admiration of the two authors, writing that 'I'd always been fond of Poe and Hoffmann – Gothic tales, cruel tales, tales of wonder, tales of terror, fabulous narratives that deal directly with the imagery of the unconscious', listing a host of images such as 'mirrors; the externalised self; forsaken castles; haunted forests; forbidden sexual objects' (1995: 459) that are familiar to readers of Carter's work. Writing in 'such an extreme fashion that they do

[62] 'On some motifs in Baudelaire', originally appeared in *Zeitschrift fur Sozialforshung*, VIII, 1-2 in 1939, three years after 'The Work of Art in the Age of Reproduction' was published in the same journal (1936). Benjamin originally submitted an essay on 'The Paris of the Second Empire in Baudelaire' to the *Journal for Social Research* in late 1938; this was rejected and Benjamin was advised to revise the essay, and to focus on the central section on the *flâneur*. The essay was published in 1939 as 'On some motifs in Baudelaire'.

not trick us about the nature of social problems' (Carter, 1995: 459), Carter persistently used Poe's imagery as 'part of the décor of her own fictions' (Munford, 2013: 74). For example, a waistcoat from a film adaptation of 'The Fall of the House of Usher' makes its way into Morris and Honeybuzzard's junkshop in *Shadow Dance* (ibid.); the namesake of Poe's poem Annabel Lee' (1849) lends her name to the two central characters – Annabel and Lee – in *Love*; and the short story 'The Cabinet of Edgar Allen Poe' also appears in her collection of tales *Black Venus* (1985). Furthermore (and perhaps most pertinent to note in this chapter), the German poet E. T. A. Hoffmann lends his name to Doctor Hoffman. Susan Suleiman extends this argument, suggesting that there is a plurality of Hoffmann's tales behind *The Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor Hoffman*. Drawing on a similar framework that sees an all-powerful father who keeps his beautiful daughter out of reach of a desiring young man, that eventually leads to the death of the daughter (as in 'Councillor Krespel' [1819]) or the young man (as in 'The Sand Man' [1816]). Carter's novel 'conforms to the first pattern' suggests Suleiman, 'but adds a new twist: it is the young man himself who kills the daughter, as well as the father' (1994b: 129-30). Thus, Baudelaire, Benjamin, Poe and Hoffmann can be read as literary figures who not only influenced one another – Baudelaire translated Poe, with Benjamin interested in the work of Baudelaire – but also play a pertinent role in unveiling Carter's intertextual *oeuvre* of Western literary thought. These distinctly European thinkers become entangled with the way Carter perceived her own role as a Westerner in Japan, shaping a new way of thinking.

Hoffmann's 'My Cousin's Corner Window' is 'probably one of the earliest attempts to capture the street scene of a large city' (Benjamin, 1955: 169). Although Hoffmann's cousin is not able to follow the crowd (unlike Poe's observer who succumbs to the fascination of the scene) as he is immobilised as a paralytic, but he is 'inspired as it is by his observation post'. Viewing the crowd from a 'vantage point' – his 'opera glasses enable him to pick out individual genre scenes' (Benjamin, 1955: 169) – the cousin is afforded a sense of superiority over the masses that throng outside. He willingly indulges in this voyeuristic activity, watching the snapshots of daily life below, the *tableaux vivants* of society. And yet, Hoffmann's 'Cousin' can never truly become the *flâneur*: his immobilisation ensures that he can at best be an observer of the crowd, not a participant. The crowds play a pertinent role in the motions of the *flâneur*:

> nowhere is the *flâneur*'s exile felt more strongly than in amongst the crowds congregating in streets. Immersed in the swarming multitude, the *flâneur* experiences a profound sense of anonymity that borders on the effacement of his character (Huberman, 2014: 6).[63]

In Carter's manuscript 'Fictions written in a certain city', she draws upon the importance of the crowd as a vital part in the construction and understanding of the city:

> When the moved friezes men and women that decorated the boulevards is gone, you can see how ramshackle they are. It is the constant presence of great crowds alone that gives the city a consistency of style. Without the crowds, the haphazard architecture resembles nothing so much as a studio (Add. MS 88899/1/80).

Carter transcends the role of the voyeur (Hoffmann's cousin) and indulges in the crowd, drawing from it '*une ribote de vitalité*', an 'orgy of vitality' (Huberman, 2014: 1). It is perhaps no coincidence that in the depths of the crowd in Carter's short story 'Flesh and the Mirror' (which is semi-autobiographical) that the narrator falls into step with a stranger, before returning to a love hotel to sleep with him. After arriving back in Japan and not finding her lover there to meet here, the narrator wanders through the city searching for him and, although the crowds are described as quiet and gentle, which contrasts against the busy nature of Poe's city, they are 'never-ceasing, endlessly circulating' and are likened to 'waves full of eyes' (FM, 78). The narrator describes trawling 'through the endlessly quiet, gentle, melancholy crowds', reflecting how 'the city designed to suit not one of my European expectations, this city presents the foreigner with a mode of life that seems to him to have the enigmatic transparency, the indecipherable clarity, of dream' (FM, 79). It is her absolute estrangement and alienation (and her anonymity) that allows the narrator to indulge in a night of passion with a man from the crowd. She is estranged yet exoticised (or rather, she is exoticised *because* she is estranged), and her role as *flâneuse* (rather than *flâneur*) means that she occupies a distinctly gendered space within the city.

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[63] In the prose poem 'The Crowd,' (1869) Baudelaire presents the drama of the *flâneur*, who expertly extracts pleasure from the crowd, "It is not given to everyone to blend into the multitude: enjoying the crowd is an art, and only he can gain a stroke of vitality from it, at humanity's expense". Baudelaire's poem was originally published in *Le Spleen de Paris*. See *Paris Spleen: Little Poems in Prose*, trans. Keith Waldrop. Middleton, CT: Wesleyan University Press (2009), p. 22.

The multitude of the city's crowd serves to exaggerate Carter's sense of estrangement. She writes in her notebooks how

> in this city I will always be protected from conflict with the signs that surround me by a triple thickness of estrangement – my own and the estrangement of the populous solitudes of the crowds; and however long I live here, the city would always define me as a stranger (Add. MS 88899/1/80).

Carter's reflections highlight her own consciousness as an outsider – and her ability to transform these seemingly mundane, everyday experiences into a more illustrative fictional narrative through her short stories. In Japan, she was 'poised always on the brink of understanding everything perfectly nevertheless, a full understanding of the mysteries around one is always denied', concluding that the 'foreigner cannot escape a perpetual state of foreignness: as ways defined as "foreign" lives on the twilit margins of society that allows its denizens no half measures' (Add. MS 88899/1/80).

Carter's sense of *flânerie* also finds itself weaving through her essay 'Toyko Pastoral' (1971). Depicting the neighbourhood Carter lived in with Sozo, she writes about navigating and exploring the streets of the residential district that she lives in. She describes how she can 'touch the walls of the houses on either side', and as she walks through the district she observes its inhabitants ('This is a district peculiarly rich in grannies, cats and small children' [1997: 261]); a blue movie theatre; a cluster of love hotels; a supermarket; a fruit stall; a poodle-clipping parlour. The intensity and the variety of Carter's descriptions, and the overwhelming nature in which she squeezes in all of her sensory reactions is certainly akin to experiences of the *flâneuse*. As she wanders the streets, observing (but not participating), Carter is reminded of her role as an outsider, a foreigner. The observing that she indulges in – a means of exercising the imperial eye – is also challenged by the inhabitants of the district. She is *flâneuse*, but she is not invisible, and the Japanese children 'groped round the windows, invisible, peering' (1997: 234).

Carter's alienation through *flânerie*, reinforces her estrangement in Japan. Yet, this is not to say that the *flâneur* (or *flâneuse*) occupies negated space. Rather, 'the position of the alienated subject is seen as a privileged space from which the intellectual can observe and comment on dominant culture' (Crofts, 2006: 95). This, is 'clearly problematic in terms of the upwardly mobile Western traveller straightforwardly aligning themselves with the less privileged, economically and politically marginalised

‘other’’ (Crofts, 2006: 95). Alienation, estrangement and *flânerie* all become bound up within Carter’s encounter with Japan. Indeed, it is the condition of Carter as *flâneuse* that allows her to occupy a position of privilege as she is at once both estranged and exoticised.

Navigating the Metropolis: Roland Barthes’ *Empire of Signs* and Carter’s ‘Penetrating to the Heart of the Forest’

Intertextuality in Carter’s fiction is a ‘boldly thematised part of her work’ (Munford, 2006: 4) and this is made apparent in her work written during her time abroad. Not only was Carter drawing on her own experiences in Japan to formulate some of her more semi-autobiographical short stories, but she also continued to borrow a range of literary and cultural references from European literary figures. The overlap and interplay between ‘allusions and references drawn from a wide range of cultural spheres’ (Munford, 2006: 1) is a pertinent feature of Carter’s writing in Japan as she experiments with a cross-cultural intertextual narrative that combines ideas of the West with images from the East.

As this chapter has shown, Carter’s literary knowledge of Baudelaire, Benjamin (as well as Poe and Hoffmann) can be read alongside her Japanese writings in order to understand how Carter can be positioned as the *flâneuse* in Japan. In addition to this, Carter’s alignment with Barthes’ work provides further scope to understand how the Japanese metropolis is represented in Carter’s short stories, specifically ‘Penetrating to the Heart of the Forest’ (1974) where the image of the forest can be interpreted as a displaced city. There is a significant degree of overlap between Barthes and Carter, particularly pertaining to their time in Japan. The ‘coincidence between Barthes’ Japan and Carter’s is striking: they visited the same country of the skin, no question, and its topography derives from their very Western wants’ (Sage, 1997: 27). As a self-confessed ‘amateur of signs, one who loves signs, an amateur of cities, one who loves the city’, Barthes’ interests lie within semiotics, ‘this double love […] impels [him] to believe in the possibility of a semiotics of the city’ (Barthes, 1967: 413). Japan ‘demonstrates the sort of thing that smart semioticians secretly wanted at the time – to discover a culture that despised depth, where “the inside no longer commands the outside”’ (Sage, 1997: 26, citing Barthes, 1970: 62). Like Barthes, Sage goes on to explain, Carter ‘treasures the new sense she has of the resistance of surfaces […] Art’s

purpose in this view is to help us recognise our own artificiality […] and to estrange us from our home-selves' (Sage, 1997: 27). The Barthesian notion of text, that is, a text 'made of multiple writings, drawn from many cultures and entering into mutual relationships of dialogue, contestation' (Barthes, 1968: 148) seems to be an almost perfect encapsulation of Carter's own *oeuvre*.

Barthes' own visit to the East preceded Carter's by only a few years, with *Empire of Signs* (1970; translated into English in 1983) as the central publication from his travels.[64] Citing an interview in which Barthes discusses his time abroad, Diana Knight comments that 'he had not known that he was going to write about Japan while he was there, that his 'Japan' has been entirely reconstructed from memory' (1997: 146). Barthes openly admits that he is not writing about the 'real' Japan, remarking in the interview that he would have to go back if he were to write a different sort of book about the 'real country' and that he always knew that his Japanese readers would 'neither recognise themselves in his book nor really appreciate it', admitting that 'from the outset I was totally lucid about this' (Knight, 1997: 146).[65] Barthes' idea of Japan as a 'fictive nation' (Barthes, 1970: 3) corresponds to Carter's own perception of Japan – a country that is unfamiliar and one which she must find something which is familiar amongst the strangeness of the metropolis. In the following analysis, I suggest that the forest imagery in her short story 'Penetrating to the Heart of the Forest' is analogous to Carter's understanding of the cityscape in Japan. One of the more neglected tales from Carter's *Fireworks* collection, 'Penetrating to the Heart of the Forest' tells the story of adolescent twins Madeline and Emile who, raised in the wilderness by their father, are dismayed to discover that their home is not the centre of the forest in which they reside.[66] The tale follows them as they journey their way into the centre of the forest, guided only by a rudimentary construction of a map, drawing on natural resources and

[64] Barthes experienced the East first hand during his time abroad in the mid-1960s; he then returned to China with members of the French *Tel Quel* group in 1974. A group of literary theorists (including Marcellini Pleynet, Francois Wahl, Phillipe Sollers, and Julia Kristeva), *Tel Quel* sought to re-evaluate positions of colonial discourse by experiencing historically non-Westernised cultures.

[65] See: 'Pour la liberation d'une pensee pluraliste', *OC* ii. 1699-1704: 1704, first published in *UNI*, a Japanese journal, in 1973.

[66] The familiar narrative of a young brother and sister treading their way through the forest, leaving a trail of signifiers behind them is akin to the story Hansel and Gretel, a hint of Carter's interest in the fairy tale that would come into fruition at the end of the decade through the collection of short stories in *The Bloody Chamber* (1979).

‘clues in the labyrinth’ (PHF, 66) to find their way around. As the twins draw closer to the centre of the forest the more aware of their bodies and their sexualities they become. Their journey corresponds to Madeline and Emile’s burgeoning sexual desires and upon discovering the centre of the forest, their journey culminates in a climactic act of incestuous love. The centre, as a site of taboo, of the unbidden, and of a burgeoning sexuality, appeals to Madeline and Emile because of the sensual qualities it holds.

Biblical imagery is scattered throughout the story in a clear reference to the tale of Genesis: twins Madeline and Emile represent Adam and Eve, whilst their father Dubois who ‘seemed to them more an emanation of their surroundings than an actual father’ (PHF, 64) serves as an absent God. Raised in an Eden-like forest described ‘like an abandoned flower bowl, filled to overflowing with green, living things’ (PHF, 59), Madeline and Emile are warned from penetrating the heart of the forest, where a ‘mythic and malign’ tree lies whose moist bark ‘exuded a virulent sweat of poison’ whose ‘fruits could have nourished with death an entire tribe’ (PHF, 61). And, although no-one has encountered this ‘wicked tree’, its mere presence ‘forbade exploration’ of the forest (PHF, 61).

Carter’s analogous representation of ‘forest as city’ also has some bearing on *flânerie*. In the ‘Berlin Chronicle’ (1932), Benjamin reflects upon his childhood in Germany (with specific reference to his own memories in relation to space), drawing upon the image of the forest ‘Not to find one’s way in a city may be uninteresting and banal. It requires ignorance – nothing more. But to lose oneself in a city – as one loses oneself in a forest – that calls for quite a different schooling’. Benjamin suggests that ‘signboards and street names, passers-by, roofs, kiosks, or bars must speak to the wanderer like a cracking twig under his feet in the forest’ (598). He goes on to comment that it was his time in Paris that ‘taught me this art of straying […] I penetrated to its innermost place’ (598). His image of the forest is particularly fitting in the analysis of Carter’s short stories and in the context of the *flâneur*.

Madeline and Emile’s attempts to navigate their way to the centre of the forest are aided by a self-made map of the woods, and although it is ‘by no means the map an authentic cartographer would have made’ (PHF, 66), its landmarks serve as a means to explore the terrain of the region. Using leaves and feathers from the forest to make a ‘tapestry’, the forest’s natural signifiers guide the two siblings through the woods.

> They marked hills with webs of feathers of the birds they found there, clearings with an integument of pressed flowers and especially magnificent trees with delicate, brightly coloured drawings on whose watercolour boughs they stuck garlands of real leaves so that the map became a tapestry made out of the forest itself (PHF, 66-7).

Madeline and Emile's attempts to familiarise the landscape echoes Carter's own experiences of the Japanese metropolis. In 'Penetrating to the Heart of the Forest' Madeline and Emile's navigation to the 'untrodden, virginal reaches of the deep interior' (PHF, 66) of the forest relies on their own interpretation and curation of a series of signs in order to understand where they travelling to. There is a crossover then, with Barthes' *Empire of Signs*, with Madeline and Emile's map acting as a signifier for the forest's key locations: space therefore becomes a text to be 'read' and to be explored by the reader and the pedestrian, much as Dubois describes the forest as 'a remarkable book' that would take 'all the years that remained to him to learn to read' (PHF, 64).

Emile and Madeline's movement through the forest mimics Barthes' own approach to navigating Tokyo's streets: for example, in *Empire of Signs* the chapter describes how strangers draw impromptu maps on scrap pieces of paper to help those who are lost find their way around the city. Given directions by a 'kind of geographical summary' (1970: 33), the traveller moves from a 'known landmark' to his or her desired destination. There is something about the impromptu nature of these drawings, argues Barthes, that the people of Japan seem to excel at, and his description mimics Madeline and Emile's approach of navigating the forest. Barthes describes

> [W]e see being sketched, right on the scrap of paper, a street, an apartment, a canal, a railroad line, a shop sign […] making the exchange of addresses into a delicate communication in which a life of the body, an art of the geographical gesture recurs (1970: 34).

As a form of 'reading' the city, these impromptu drawings act as a text that the pedestrian must read, interrogate, and decipher: the image must 'establish its own writing' (Barthes, 1970: 36). As David Frisby remarks,

> The notion of the city, its streets, its architecture, its populace, as a text is to be found in various forms […] In particular, the conception of the city as text rests upon a number of presuppositions. Amongst these is that the city possesses features of textuality – at the basic level a potentially decipherable constellation

> of signs and symbols. In its most basic form, a language is presupposed, a system of hieroglyphics (2002: 15).

The metropolis is a language that must be 'lived' rather than 'decoded' in any literal way. To 'live' the city is to engage in a semiotic relationship with it but above all to wander through it and experience its spaces. Neil Leach claims, 'The city is a discourse and this discourse is truly a language: the city speaks to its inhabitants, we speak to our city, the city where we are, simply by living in it, by wandering through it, but looking at it' (2002: 4).

Carter depends upon understanding signs around the city in order to find her way around. In a diary entry from 1970 she writes that 'the city comes equipped to me with a set of subtitles by Lewis Carroll' (Add. MS 88899/1/80). Forced to interpret the culture 'entirely through its visual aspect' (Gordon, 2016: 157) the excessive imagery of Carter's writing in Japan is abundantly clear with only three[67] stories in her *Fireworks* collection containing any dialogue; instead Carter creates a tableau of snapshots, with the reader moving between the spaces on the page, journeying across Carter's own episodic narrative (much like the *tableaux vivants* referred to in Hoffmann's 'My Cousin's Corner Window'). Thus, the city becomes 'fully knowable but not yet known' (Williams, 2010: 121)[68] and as is clear for Carter, a city that will never be fully known to the outsider: she will always be *gaijin*. Attempts to 'rationalise' the landscape through the use of cartography serves as a metaphor for Carter's own attempts to find something familiar within an alien country; thus 'Penetrating to the Heart of the Forest' can be interpreted as a rural representation of the Japanese cities Carter was exploring and experiencing.

As the twins grow older, they become increasingly curious about the inner sanctum of the forest and are 'seized with a desire to pierce more and yet more deeply' (PHF, 67). And, although Madeline and Emile 'refuse to believe in the threat of the mythical tree, they are fearlessly curious about it, driven by the sense that their world seemed incomplete, lacking 'the knowledge of some mystery' (Jennings, 2012: 171-2). Pursuing their curiosities and delving further into the forest, where Jennings observes, the landscape takes on 'distinctly feminine maternal features' (2012: 172) with trees

[67] These are: 'Flesh and the Mirror', 'Reflections' and 'Penetrating to the Heart of the Forest'. Dialogue is used sparingly in all three tales, for example in 'Penetrating' only Madeline utters a single sentence, appearing on the final page.
[68] From Raymond Williams 'Tenses of the Imagination', originally published in 1978.

'knobbed with white, red-tipped whorls' (PHF, 74) that look like breasts, plants that offer oysters, and a landscape that increasingly seems to 'envelope them like a womb' (Jennings, 2012: 172). The lush, exotic imagery that comes prior to the centre of the forest suggests the transient nature of the twins' relationship as they move from childhood to adulthood and discover their once concealed sexuality is bound up with the centre of the forest. For Madeline and Emile, the centre of the forest acts as a harbour where they can come into sexual fruition and maturity, and explore previously hidden taboos, unbounded by laws of society. It is perhaps because of these qualities – that are to be interpreted in a sexual nature – that Madeline and Emile find themselves drawn to the centre.[69]

When Madeline and Emile reach the centre of the forest they discover the 'fabled Upas Tree', only to find out that it is a 'little larger than a common apple tree but far more graceful in shape' (PHF, 75). Bearing fruit that are marked with bite indentations, Carter deliberately steers the tale to directly imitate Eve's fall into temptation in Genesis.

> [Madeline] raised her hand to part the leaves in search of a ripe fruit but the greenish skin seemed to warm and glow under her fingers so the first one she touched came as easily off the stem as if it had been brought to perfection by her touch. It seemed to be some kind of apple or pear. It was so juicy the juice ran down her chin and she extended a long, crimson, newly sensual tongue to lick her lips, laughing.
> 'It tastes so good!' she said. 'Here! Eat!' (PHF, 76)

Madeline acts as the driving transgressive force in this scene: much like Eve, she is the one who picks the fruit from the tree, inviting Adam/Emile into temptation.

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[69] Carter would find herself returning to the image of the centre as analogous to a sexual awakening in her 1979 short story 'The Erl-King', published as one of the short stories in *The Bloody Chamber* collection. The narrator is told not to go into the forest, for there the Erl-King 'will do you grievous harm' (EK, 97). Making her way through the 'subtle labyrinth' (EK, 96) of the woods, the narrator steps into the forest, drawn by her own desire. Unable to resist the temptation of the Erl-King – 'he drew me towards him' (EK, 101) – the narrator becomes the King's lover. She eventually pledges to kill the King in order to free his prisoners – young women who have been turned into birds, and who are kept in cages who 'cry because they can't find their way out' (EK, 103). The narrator's journey into the centre of the wood is 'not an aimless stroll but an imaginary quest for identity' (Filimon, 2014: 181) and the narrator's occupation of the centre, much like Madeline and Emile in 'Penetrating to the Heart of the Forest' leads to a sexual wakening and maturity.

> Eve's transgression in eating the forbidden fruit could be representative of Adam's sublimated desire to transgress the law; the responsibility for the man's shame or guilt is then shifted onto the woman in an attempt to rationalise man's powerlessness to resist their own forbidden desires (Kristeva, 1986: 143)

Carter also follows a close reading of Genesis in her characterisation of Adam and Eve, picking up on those elements in the biblical text where Eve comes across as far more active due to her curiosity (Jennings, 2012).

The fall is clearly analogous to the sexual maturation of the siblings, although their fall into guilty knowledge is, for Jennings, one that is experienced as a form of grace: both regard each other with a 'renewed innocence, and without fear or the desire for appropriating the other's difference'. When Emile watches as his sister bathes in the river, he finds that he is 'no longer [able to] ignore his sister's nakedness' (PHF, 72). Jennings goes on to claim that 'this awakening of desire is unsettling not only because he recognises something lacking within him himself, thus penetrating to the heart of desire, but also because he accepts this lack rather than project it onto his sister' (2012: 172). The maternal flesh and the eroticised centre that fosters the love between the two siblings supersedes the Law of the father and the hierarchy of the phallus (Jennings, 2012: 172), challenging the normative Judeo-Christian myth of Genesis.

In *Empire of Signs* Barthes presents the idea of the centre as a Western construct, and one that offers little existential value. His commentary on Japan is littered with references to the de-centred nature of the Orient: take for example his chapter on 'Food Decentred', 'No Address' and of course 'Centre-city; Empty-Centre' in which he claims that the 'synesthetic sentiment of the City […] requires that any urban space have a centre to go to, to return from' and that 'the West has understood this law all too well' (1970: 30). The most central point (according to Western civilization) represents a 'a marked site [and] it is here that the values of civilization are gathered and condensed'. Comparatively in the 'polynuclear city' (1967: 416) of Tokyo there are five or six mini centres that are based around landmarks (for example, a train station). These are all 'spiritually empty' yet serve to contribute to the cartography of the city, providing urbanists with signifiers that allow the city to be read. According to Michel de Certeau, recognition of these spaces is crucial in order to navigate the metropolis and 'in the spaces brutally lit by an alien reason, proper names carve out pockets of hidden and familiar meanings'. In other words, they 'make sense'

to the navigator, 'they are the impetus of movements, like vocations and calls that turn or divert an itinerary by giving it a meaning (or a direction) that was previously unknown' (1984: 104).

For Barthes, Tokyo is an example of an Oriental city that deliberately challenges the Western construct of the metropolis. Rather than containing a central point of civilization, it holds an empty site in which only the emperor is permitted to live and 'the entire city turns around a site both forbidden and indifferent, a residence concealed beneath foliage, protected by moats, inhabited by an emperor who is never seen, which is to say, literally, by no one knows who' (1970: 38). Instead, we are forced to continuously circle around the outer perimeter of the fortress, 'obliged to circulate' the walls of the palace (Knight, 1997: 149). Barthes also associates central space with sexual maturation, and suggests it is the city centre in particular that draws the 'young, the adolescent'. As the condensed area of activity and the 'gathering point of any city' the centre is the natural 'site of our encounter with the other' (1967: 417), a space in which one is permitted to interact, to purchase, and to exchange. The centre, much like that in Carter's 'Penetrating to the Heart of the Forest' is one of eroticism and for realising sexual desire.[70]

Furthermore, Barthes and Carter's representations of the centre can be theorised in line with a Freudian analysis. Both Barthes and Carter adopt a repetitive narrative strategy: for example, in *Empire of Signs* we are forced to circle the emperor's palace walls, eventually returning to the same place; in 'Penetrating to the Heart of the Forest' Madeline and Emile repeat their journeys through the woods before making their way to the centre of the forest, replicating (and repeating) the actions of Adam and Eve from the Fall. Compare this to Sigmund Freud's 'The Uncanny' (1919) in which Freud recalls losing his way in an Italian piazza:

> As I was walking, one hot summer afternoon, through the deserted streets of a provincial town in Italy which was unknown to me, I found myself in a quarter of whose character I could not long remain in doubt. Nothing but painted women were to be seen at the windows of the small houses, and I hastened to leave the narrow street at the next turning. But after having wandered about for a time without enquiring my way, I suddenly found myself back in the same

[70] In 'Tokyo Pastoral' (1970) Carter writes about the clusters of the love-hotels which charge per hour – notably, these hotels are located near a train station which, suggests Barthes, is a mini-centre for erotic behaviour.

> street, where my presence was now beginning to excite attention. I hurried again once more, only to arrive by another *détour* at the same place yet a third time. Now, however, a feeling overcame me which I can only describe as uncanny, and I was glad enough to find myself back at the piazza I had left a short while before without any further voyages of discovery (1919: 237).

Although Freud's recollection of events appears to be somewhat disorienting when he returns to the same street three times, he manages to maintain a present self in his role as 'storyteller who manipulates such feelings' (Lydenberg, 1997: 1076). Adopting a storytelling narrative, the protagonist deliberately distorts and disorients time, creating a sense of 'uncanny helplessness': the repetition of returning to the same street over and over again distorts the linear framing of the tale, when it turns out he has only been gone for 'a short while'. It is no coincidence that the narrator returns to the painted women (who are implied to be selling sex) as a means of demonstrating transgressive desire. Freud's Italian anecdote retains a 'certain disruptive power because it is provoked by and constructed on the uncertain ground of foreign territory, a ground particularly fertile for the production of the uncanny' (Lydenberg, 1997: 1075). Like Carter and Barthes, Freud manages to bypass the anxieties of being lost in the city because Freud's Italian piazza is not a threatening environment. Repetition and the uncanny is associated with 'a passive and feminine, a displaced, non-original position. It also invokes a kind of pleasure, which is perhaps why we enjoy uncanny stories, intermingled with anxiety' (Bernstein, 2003: 1126). We are reminded of Poe's 'Man of the Crowd' the man in the London coffee house 'enters into a circle of signifiers' with the track that he lays out in pursuit of the crowd 'the first in a repeated series' (Bernstein, 2003: 1120).

In Barthes' Japan, we are obliged to circumnavigate the perimeter of the emperor's palace, returning time and time again to the same place: the centre is exposed as a place of forbidden longing, a Freudian return to that which has been (and still is) hidden and repressed. The 'sexual coding' of the city denotes the contradictory nature of space; one that is (superficially) of rationality and reason, masking spaces of eroticism. Freud's discussion of the uncanny suggests that its significance – specifically in relation to the city – lies within the shift between the familiar and the unfamiliar; the known and the unknown, creating an 'uncanny urban geography of the city' (Pile, 2001: 266). Central points within the city (such as Freud's Roman piazza, and Barthes'

palace) acts as a 'site for the intersection of native and foreign, natural and strange, attraction and repulsion' (Lydenberg, 1997: 1076).

Similarly, we experience a Freudian 'return' in the final scenes of 'Penetrating to the Heart of the Forest'. Carter's challenges to a patriarchal narrative structure inevitably invoke a return to the imagery associated with the original tale of Genesis. Upon Madeline and Emile's arrival at the forbidden tree they find fruit described as having 'a round set of serrated indentations exactly resembling the marks of a bite made by the teeth of a hungry man' (PHF, 75). The return to the story of the fall (that which is familiar) is disrupted by sex, desire and incestuous love, or, that which is unfamiliar to the siblings. Yet, their return to the womb-like centre of the forest is also inimical to a Freudian return to the beginning and to that which is familiar.

Although both Carter and Barthes read the metropolis through a series of signs, there is a distinct difference in their approaches that is marked by the impromptu nature of Barthes' sketches, and the planned, measured approach adopted by Emile and Madeline as they slowly construct a 'text' of the forest. However, both are immersed in the environment (both rural and urban) which is synonymous with the figure of the *flâneur* that adopts a 'kind of reading of the street in which human faces, shop windows, café terraces, street cars, automobiles and trees become a wealth of equally valid letters of the alphabet' (Hessel, 1929: 145, cited in Frisby, 2002: 17). Images, bodies (leaves and feathers) become sites onto which a language of the city can be read, understood, and navigated. For Carter, the forest is a rural representation of the metropolis – specifically Tokyo – with Dubois even referred to at one point as a 'plant in alien soil' (PHF, 62), not unlike Carter's own experience. That is not to say that Dubois represents Carter in a biographical sense in this narrative: rather, Carter's understanding and positioning of the self during her time in abroad is realised through the imagery and the language that she draws upon in her stories. The similarities between the imagery invoked in the tale and Carter's own experiences of Tokyo are subtle, although the language used throughout the *Fireworks* collection is too consistent to be considered coincidental. Yet, contextualising the tale in relation to Carter's time in Japan allows for a more nuanced reading that explores Carter in her role as an apprentice of signs.

Memory, time and rationality in *The Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor Hoffman*, Jorges Luis Borges's 'Tlön, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius' and Italo Calvino's *Invisible Cities*

Thus far, this chapter has demonstrated the ways in which the short stories in *Fireworks* offer a contextual understanding of Carter's trip to Japan, and how she perceived her role as an outsider. And, just as the analysis of 'Penetrating to the Heart of the Forest' offers a reading of the displaced forest as analogous to the Japanese metropolis, so this next section moves on to a reading of the city with a specific focus on how Japan is represented in Carter's work. The widening of the landscape is also imitated in the choice of fiction to analyse, and it is within this broader landscape that this thesis offers an analysis of two chapters ('City under Siege' and 'The River People') of Carter's sole novel written during her time abroad, *The Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor Hoffman.*

Certainly, *Doctor Hoffman* is by no means an easy read: the episodic narrative follows protagonist Desiderio as he seeks to save his city from destruction at the hands of the renegade Doctor Hoffman, who is waging a guerrilla war on the unnamed capital of a south American country by projecting bewildering apparitions into the city. Powered by erotic-energy from copulating couples, 'desire becomes manifest and warp the fabric of reality' (Gamble, 2006: 121). The only person immune to the Doctor's hallucinations is the Minister of Determination, 'the most rational man in the world' (*DH*, 20) who, aided by the Determination Police, seeks to formulate a systematic procedure in order to verify any given object. The novel – quite consciously – rejects the concept of realism, instead indulging in overblown, exaggerated prose in which new worlds and civilizations are created.[71]

Carter's use of space as a vehicle for desire reaches its peak in *The Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor Hoffman*. The Doctor's eroto-energy caves housed with lovers are revealed to be the driving force behind the illusions cast over Desiderio's city. Sex acts as a disruptive force to time, space and reason: it is perhaps no

[71] There is a likeness in Carter's approach in *Doctor Hoffman* to Lewis Mumford's *The Culture of Cities*, which is referenced in Carter's journals in her preparatory notes for the novel. Exploring the discipline and order of the post-medieval city, Mumford's concept of seventeenth-century baroque holds two contradictory elements: the first is the mathematical and methodical side 'expressed to perfection in its rigorous street plans, its formal city layout and in its geometrically ordered designs'. Yet, it also embraced something more sensuous and rebellious, expressed through its sexual life and 'religious fanaticism' (Mumford, 1938: 77).

coincidence that Carter wrote the novel whilst she was in a relationship with Sozo, her lover while she was in Japan from 1969 to 1971.[72] As noted in the introduction, *Doctor Hoffman* is a literary representation of Carter's own conflicting psyche, torn between her newly-awakened sexual passion for her Japanese lover, fighting against an Occidental need for reason and rationality. There are also comparisons to be made between *Doctor Hoffman* and *Heroes and Villains* (1969) which I have highlighted as the anomaly in Carter's earlier novels in regard to its representation of space. And, although *Doctor Hoffman* is 'much more confident – both in its method of constructing an imaginary world […] and in its ideas' (Gordon, 2016: 174), both novels deliberately juxtapose reason with desire; both stories tell of a departure from reason and a cyclical return to rationality and a form of civilization.

In order to end the War on Reality, Desiderio, refusing to indulge in the fantasies and the far-fetched anti-realities that take place in his home city ('I instantly became bored and irritated. Boredom was my first reaction to incipient delirium' [*DH*, 11]), is tasked with the assassination of Doctor Hoffman. However, after reaching Doctor Hoffman's laboratories he learns that the sexual encounter between himself and the Doctor's beautiful and elusive daughter Albertina would provide 'such a charge of energy [their] infinity would fill the world and, in this experimental void, the Doctor would descend on the city and his liberation would begin' (*DH*, 257). Desiderio's hand is forced, and he chooses to sacrifice 'a night of perfect ecstasy in exchange for a lifetime's contentment' (*DH*, 247), killing the Doctor and then his daughter, allowing rationality to reign over desire. The novel's status as 'fictionalised autobiography' (Gamble, 2016: 121) is made clear from the very beginning, as a now-old Desiderio laments the fact that his one true love is lost forever: 'For it was I who killed her' (*DH*, 6).

Described by Gamble as 'an 'excessively complicated book of ideas' (2006: 118), *Doctor Hoffman* unveils the extent to which Carter indulged in intertextuality throughout in her fiction. The novel's indebtedness to Jorge Luis Borges (whom she read in 1969, just before she went to Japan) links with the 'speculative and didactic medieval literature that [Carter] admired' (McEwan, 1984: 43). Lorna Sage suggests that Carter's novel draws on Borges's *The Book of Imaginary Beings* (1957; translated

[72] Carter also had a relationship with a 19-year old Korean named Ko. They were together from the latter half of 1971 until Carter returned to England in 1972.

into English in 1969) in regard to intertextual themes; Gamble takes this further and argues that Carter also makes use of Borges's 'metafictional techniques' demonstrated through the novel's story-telling approach as Desiderio recounts his experiences from his youth – the novel is a 'narrative within a narrative' (2006: 121). Gordon adds to this analysis in his biography of Carter, commenting that 'all the societies Desiderio passes through have their own religion, political structure and language, and these are meticulously described as in Borges's story 'Tlön, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius'' (Gordon: 2016: 175; Borges, 1940; originally published in English in 1961). In the city of Tlön, for example, books of a 'philosophical nature invariably include both the thesis and the antithesis […] A book which does not contain its counterbook is considered incomplete' (1940: 11). The city of Tlön's principle on books finds itself embedded in Carter's novel: Doctor Hoffman and his opposite, the Minister of Determination, work counter to one another as they battle between desire and reason.

Intertextually, the foreign setting of *Doctor Hoffman* which is 'broadly identifiable as Latin America' (Day, 1998: 65) also draws on Gabriel Garcia Marquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude* (1967, published in English translation in 1970), the Marquis de Sade (whose work Carter started reading around the period)[73] also influenced Carter's novel, and he even makes an appearance as the sexually flamboyant Count in chapter five. On a more granular level Carter admits that the Acrobats of Desire derive their name from 'a rock group in Sheffield. [That] gave me great pleasure. They don't know me at all' (Sage, 1977: 56). And, of course, Doctor Hoffman is a nod to E. T. A. Hoffmann, as has already been noted earlier in this chapter. Carter's Hoffman also refers to Doctor Albert Hoffman, the first man who synthesised and ingested LSD (Gordon, 2016: 174) and Albertina borrows her name from Proust's Albertine, the object of desire in *A La Recherche du Temps Perdu* (Smith, 2012: viii).

Given the broad range of European influences, it is perhaps unsurprising that *Doctor Hoffman* is seen as Carter's most European novel (Munford, 2013: 46). However, for Gordon (and for myself) the home city of Desiderio obviously borrows

[73] *Justine, or The Misfortunes of Virtue* (1791); first translated into English by Austryn Wainhouse in 1953 by Olympia Press. Wainhouse revised his translation and published another version in 1965 by Grove Press. Wainhouse also translated *Juliette, or Vice Amply Rewarded, L'Histoire de Juliette ou les Prospérités du vice* (1797-1801) into English in 1968.

imagery from Japanese space with further contextual references to Carter's time abroad appearing throughout the novel. As Gordon claims,

> Perhaps more clearly than any of Angela Carter's other novels, *The Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor Hoffman* reveals the processes by which she transmuted her day-to-day experience into strange, hallucinatory art. The city in which the narrative opens, with its ephemeral and baffling topography ('the Doctor has liberated the streets from the tyranny of directions and now they can go anywhere they please') and its thrilling strangeness ('nothing in the city was what it seemed – nothing at all!'), is a dream-version of Japan (2016: 175).

For Scott Dimovitz, the 'topos of the city [is] a personification of contemporary postmodern patriarchy' and *Doctor Hoffman* in particular remains 'obscure' as Carter leaves 'little in the way of cultural markers' that clearly indicate where the story is set. (2009: 85). For example, Dimovitz points out that the country may be South American in origin (possibly Brazil based on immigration patterns and Carter's description of the Cathedral); yet its currency consists of quarters and cents (*DH,* 43-44) – suggesting that it may be the United States, but the reference to 'torch' rather than flashlight (*DH,* 70) is English in origin (Dimovitz, 2009: 85). The city in *Doctor Hoffman* is no fixed site, but rather is an amalgamation of cultures, with jumbled references, a space in which Carter's *bricolage* comes to life.

The 'thickly, obtusely masculine' (*DH*, 10) buildings that Desiderio describes in the opening chapters of *Doctor Hoffman* are quite clearly Japanese, a reference to the physical infrastructure that Carter encountered during her time abroad, and a visual representation of the patriarchal social structures that reverberated throughout the country. If the country is defined as male, it is also in a state of constant change, with 'buildings and townscapes swell[ing] to enormous, ominous sizes or repeating themselves over and over again in a fretting infinity' (*DH,* 14). Much like Madeline and Emile's initial attempts at navigating the wooded region in 'Penetrating to the Heart of the Forest' the streets of the city become a 'complex labyrinth', with a 'curious sense of strangeness' invading the city (*DH,* 9).

As Desiderio begins his narrative, which consists of a collection of memories that reveal the romantic tragedy of losing his beloved Albertina in order for the city to survive, he recalls that 'the city was full of mirages' and that 'nothing […] was what it seemed – nothing at all!' (*DH,* 3). He describes the city as being full of 'hallucinations', a 'sea of mirages' (*DH,* 9; 21). Compare this language to that found within the contents

of Carter's archival material, in which she repeatedly focuses on the appearances of the East, describing it as an 'apparition', the 'domain of the marvellous' and a 'bewildering phantasmagoria of marvellous illuminations' (Add. MS 88899/1/80). Furthermore, as noted in the introductory chapter of this thesis, the titles of several of Carter's journals deposited in the British Library archives are also aptly named 'Fictions of a Certain City' and 'An Inventory of Imaginary Cities'. In an interview with Sage, Carter admits that she sees *Doctor Hoffman* as 'an inventory of imaginary cities as it's got quite a well worked out science-fictionish schema' (1977: 56). Although we must avoid conflating Carter's journals with her fiction, their use within the context of this thesis is necessary in order to understand Carter's sense of Japan – and her sense of self within it.

Moreover, there are similarities between the language used in the journals and in the novel. Take, for example, her comments on European cities when she writes that 'they exist in time, as a man does, they are born, they grow old, they die, progressing through time, since they were constructed in time' (Add. MS 88899/1/80). In comparison, Tokyo has for her 'no definite location in time or space' and 'is a city that can be broken down and put together again time and time again, forever and ever'. Carter goes on to write that,

> Our cities are vast repositories of past time, so we exist in the present tense at the same time […] But here, the only tense is the permanent tension of the present continuous…and so the city, the constantly changing city, is a living image of the transience of life.
>
> Time is the medium in which we execute our cities; time is the medium in which we execute our desires; time is the medium in which we execute our lives. But I do not think they do so here (Add. MS 88899/1/80).[74]

Carter associates a linear approach with European cities in which the city ages and progresses chronologically, corresponding with a rational order of time and age. This model is disrupted during her time in Japan, with *Doctor Hoffman* acting as a vehicle in which to explore the unrestrained order and distortion of time and space. We must

[74] At the 'Angela Carter and Japan' conference at UEA in June 2018, Gordon reflected on the changing topography of Carter's Japan. In Carter's letters to Carole Roffe, she describes the low-rise building of the neighbourhood she was living in at the time; forty years later however, and Gordon discovered that the city had altered entirely, the low-rise buildings replaced by skyscrapers – a city constantly in flux.

not forget of course that the seemingly transient nature of time Carter experienced in Japan is linked to a historical context of the country. When Carter refers to Western cities she invokes a chronological narrative, in which the present is built on past time. Yet, during her time Japan from 1969 to 1972 Carter would have found herself straddling two eras that saw traditional Japanese heritage clash with Western ideas of modernity. Given that Japan only opened its ports again in 1853 following the eventual lifting of the Sakoku Edict that was put in place in 1635, there is a sense of a renewed period of living for Japan, a rebuilding and reconstructing of something new through an eclectic mix of both the past, a fluctuating present, and an undefined future. This temporal inbetween-ness is manifest in *Doctor Hoffman* as Carter openly experiments with uncertain and shifting representation of time – for example, in the opening pages of the novel Desiderio claims that 'I remember everything. Yes. I remember everything perfectly' (*DH*, 3) before later conceding that 'I cannot remember exactly how it began' (*DH*, 9). Likewise, Borges also experiments with this 'recollective' approach, deliberately muddling chronology and reality. Although 'Tlön' was published in 1940 there is a 'postscript' that appears at the end 'written' in 1947, with the narrator commenting that 'So many things have happened since [1940]. I shall do no more than recall them here' (1940: 13).

If Carter's reading prior and during her trip to Japan (for example, Borges, Marquis de Sade) informed her perception of the East – with Japan emerging as an erotic, de-centred, unfamiliar and fictive space – then her subsequent readings upon her return to England in 1972 develop the private and imagined 'Japan' she carries in her mind. For example, the narrative approach of *Doctor Hoffman* has parallels with Italo Calvino's *Le città invisibili* (*Invisible Cities*, 1972), where Marco Polo uses his memories to construct images of the cities he has visited, as he recalls his adventures to Kublai Khan. A set of mini-tales, each of which is separate from the last, there are a number of running themes through Polo's narrative including 'City and Memory', 'City and Signs' and 'City and Desire', all of which bear resemblance to the themes iterated throughout *Doctor Hoffman*. And, much like Desiderio's own story-telling narratives in which he recalls past tales that are not portrayed as a wholly reliable narrative, so 'Kublai Khan does not necessarily believe everything Marco Polo says when he describes the cities visited' (1972: 5). The story-telling technique is construed as somewhat unreliable, with memory serving as a vehicle in which to enhance and exaggerate fictional elements of the metropolis.

Although Carter would not have read Calvino when she wrote Hoffman (and thus *Invisible Cities* does not serve to function intertextually), a comparison of the two texts is useful in order to assess similar themes, approaches, and representations of foreign cities. Although it is not clear whether or not Carter was reading Calvino during her time in Japan[75] she certainly came across his work in the late 1970s and the early 1980s, and relied heavily on his work when she was teaching in America. While she was based at Brown University (1980-81) Carter taught on an undergraduate course on Science Fiction and Fantasy Writing and devised a reading list that includes Borges, Calvino and Bruno Schulz (Gordon, 2016: 315). She returned to similar texts when she was teaching at the University of Texas from 1985-86, and included folk tales, Calvino, and Chekhov's short stories for a creative writing course for the students to 'take them apart to show how they're done' (HRC, TXRC03-A14, 1984).[76] John Kowk, a student of Carter's at Brown University, claims that

> her seminar was devoted to challenging our pre-existing assumptions as to the relevance of fantasy – and in some respects, science fiction too – to mainstream literature, in the process "deconstructing", for example, such cherished works as the Brothers Grimm Fairy tales (2007, cited in Gordon, 2016: 315).[77]

The inclusion of fairy tales in Carter's reading lists comes as no surprise, with the publication of her own feminist re-writing of folk tales just a few years before she was invited to teach in the United States, but the persistent presence of Calvino is perhaps surprising given the lack of critical scrutiny and comparative analysis given to Calvino and Carter.

Invisible Cities is particularly striking in its similarities to Carter's fiction written during her time in Japan. Much like the story-telling tableau adopted by Carter in *Fireworks*, Polo creates a montage of the city, a text that is constructed through a series of building blocks with blank (not negated) spaces left between them for expansion: 'But what enhanced for Kublai every event or piece of news […] was the space around it a void not filled with words' (*IC*, 38). Elizabeth Kiszely draws upon the image of the narrative (on the page) and Polo's stories, observing that the Khan is

[75] Given that *Invisible Cities* was published in English in 1974 there is no question of the text bearing any influence on the themes of *Doctor Hoffman.*
[76] Letter from Angela Carter to Zulfikar Ghose, 28 October 1984. The original source is held at the Harry Ransom Centre at the University of Texas (HRC), TXRC03-A14.
[77] Quoted in *Tin House: Fantastic Women*, 28 September 2007.

'aware that that the contract of the materiality of letters articulated, coupled with the silence of the page – or the absence that borders letters and words – is precisely what fuels expansion of the frontiers of the rhetorical universe' (Kiszely, 2008: 14).[78] Silence and the blankness of space left behind is integral to the Khan's imaginative process, and his own version of his Empire.

However, it is the similarities between Calvino's 1972 text and Carter's *Doctor Hoffman* published in the same year that are most pertinent in a comparative analysis of the two authors. Calvino's chapters on desire, signs, and memory are specifically relevant to the topics presented in this chapter. In the city of Fedora there is a museum filled with globes in every room and inhabitants choose 'the city that corresponds to his desires' (*IC*, 28); the city Zobeide is based on dreams of desire; Anastasia 'awakens one desire at a time only to force you to stifle them' (*IC*, 10). Similarly, in the city of Tamara, Polo must decipher the language of signs, 'The eye does not see things but images of things that mean other things' (*IC*, 110); in Hypatia a new language is revealed, free of associated images of the past: 'Signs form a language, but not the one you think you know' (*IC*, 41), correlating with Carter's own experience in Japan as an apprentice of signs.

The most significant comparison between the two texts is their respective challenge to conventional chronology. Relying on Polo's memories to recall tales of the Khan's empire, the Khan is overcome with hypochondria claiming that 'Your cities do not exist. Perhaps they have never existed. It is sure they will never exist again' (*IC*, 51). Spirited by the grandeur of Polo's stories on other occasions, the doubtful nature of the Khan highlights the fluctuating existence of the cities that are cast from Polo's tales. Time, and the representation of the past, present and the future is thus seen as an

[78] Calvino's assemblage of *Invisible Cities* can also be interpreted as analogous to building blocks, or constructing an image of the city. Architecturally, it follows a pattern that includes nine chapters, referring to fifty-five cities in total. Each city crosses over with a key theme (such as memory, desire, signs) and Calvino moves across cities and themes in a logical sequence. The blank space between the stories in Calvino's *Invisible Cities* is also similar to Carter's *Fireworks*, and both Carter and Calvino's presentation of their tales is tableau-like in appearance. Each of the individual stories that make up the collection of tales stands alone from the rest; an image that can be analysed and interpreted as a singular item. Both, although they can be read as single episodes, find further context when placed together: they are more than the sum of their parts (both texts therefore align with Dunn and Morris' idea of the composite novel, rather than the short story cycle).

unstable and fluctuating force in Calvino's narrative, and a disruptive model that is also explored in *Doctor Hoffman*.

In Carter's novel, it is the Doctor's manipulation and subsequent destruction of time that is most disruptive to reason and rationality. Tricks with time, watches and clocks are 'pet devices' of the Doctor's, reinforcing the lack of chronological temporality within the city: 'we no longer held a structure of time in common'. Desiderio recalls that 'I often glanced at my watch only to find its hands had been replaced by a healthy growth of ivy or honey-suckle which, while I looked, writhed impudently all over its face, concealing it' (*DH*, 16). Similarly, in *Heroes and Villains* Marianne drowns her father's clock in the lake after his death: shortly afterwards she leaves the community of the Professors and leaves to be with the barbarians, in a direct rejection of reason and logic. It is through the movement of time through which we are able to learn about the past, the present, and to predict the future of the urban city. The construction of the new is dependent on the *de*struction of the old; the future on the transformation of the present. Carter's deliberate manipulation of time, and her refusal to adhere to a chronological temporality in *The Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor Hoffman* (and, although to a lesser extent, in *Heroes and Villains*) serves as a means of destabilisation, estranging the self from that which is real. Distorting the boundaries between that which is real and unreal, Carter continues the theme of estrangement during her time in Japan.

Furthermore, the Doctor's refusal to maintain a chronological order to time within the city walls has implications on the representation of space. The elimination of one linear measurement (time) has negative repercussions on temporal space. In an exchange between the Minister of Determination and one of the Doctor's ambassadors, the Minister exclaims that 'There are no directions left in the city while the clocks no longer answer to the time', to which Albertina/ the ambassador replies,

> Yes, indeed! The Doctor has liberated the streets from the tyranny of directions and now they can go anywhere they please. He also set the timepieces free so that now they are authentically pieces of time and can tell everybody whatever time they like. I am especially happy for the clocks. They used to have such innocent faces (*DH*, 31).

There is also a rather subtle link between clocks and Japan. Carter notes in her journals that the Japanese celebrate 'Time Day' on June 10th every year, and as part of the

festivities, they make a bonfire of old clocks in the garden of the Meiji Shrine. 'That is the extent of their contempt for Time', she writes, 'They are not slaves of Time. That is one good thing to be said for them' (Add. MS 88899/1/81).[79]

In *Invisible Cities*, Polo recalls the three cities of Zaira, Aelma and Berenice in his letters to the Khan. All three demonstrate what Panigrahi coins a 'non-chronological temporality' (2015: 235) providing a space in which the past, present and the future collide. For example, in Zaira, the past merges with its present and the city 'consists of relationships between the measurement of its space and the events of its past' (*IC*, 9); in Berenice, the future is bounded within the present 'wrapped one within the other, confined, crammed inextricable' (*IC*, 146). Moreover, Calvino deliberately distorts the chronology of Polo's narrative. Not only is Berenice represented as a 'temporal succession of different cities' (Panigrahi, 2015: 236), but Polo's recollections also refuse a linear narrative to develop.

A clear rejection of realism in both *Doctor Hoffman* and *Invisible Cities* contributes to a postmodern reading of both stories against provincial realism. Carter deliberately adopts an anti-realist stance that contrasts against the realist fiction that was being published during the period.[80] The creation of another world strengthens the idea that *Doctor Hoffman* is a postmodern text – it is consistent with the way writers undo the pieties of empiricism and reason, and the way that they undermine the foundations of literary realism imagination, undoing Western rationalism. Desiderio and Marco Polo's postmodern worlds have the 'ability to make people perceive ideas or desires or senses' (Zirange, 2012: 4). Boundaries between the artificial dissolve, and 'everything it is possible to imagine can also exist' (*DH*, 110). The postmodernism of Carter's text acts as a revolt against the limits imposed by time, by reality and the ordered world of reason.

There is a distinction to be made between the structural strategies employed by Calvino and by Carter. Calvino adopts a non-chronological model in which past,

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[79] Although Carter is right in saying that there is a day dedicated to clocks (and this day does indeed fall on June 10th) the detail around the origins of the festival aren't quite accurate. The annual clock festival takes place at a shrine dedicated to seventh century Emperor Tenji in Shiga Prefecture. Every year participants offer items from Japanese clock makers to show its deity how clocks have developed. There are no sources to suggest that timepieces are destroyed at this event.

[80] For example, Kurt Vonnegut's *Mother Night* (1961); *Cat's Cradle* (1963); *Slaughterhouse-Five* (1969); Gabriel Garcia Marquez *One Hundred Years of Solitude* (1967); J. G. Ballard *The Atrocity Exhibition* (1970); Don DeLillo *Ratner's Star* (1976).

present and future are entangled with one another: as the Khan questions Polo's incentives to travel in which he asks whether they are 'Journeys to relive your past? Journeys to recover your future?' (*IC*, 25). Yet, although *Doctor Hoffman* takes a similar approach through the time experiments that take place in the city, the novel's overarching framework does follow a chronological sequence with each future action dependent on past decisions. Yet, the sequence of stories is internally distorted: according to Dimovitz, 'most of Doctor Hoffman's characters and scenes […] offer this negation of linear temporality through some kind of ahistorical perpetual motion' (Dimovitz, 2009: 98). For example, the River People's society ignores the time and the action of the rest of the world; the travelling fair 'acknowledged no geographical location or temporal situation' (*DH*, 98) and the Count's costumes 'were of no time or place' (*DH*, 130). However, given that Desiderio's journey mimics that of the peep-show proprietor's samples set out in the opening chapters of the novel, there is an element of control (governed by Doctor Hoffman). Once the proprietor's samples have been lost, Albertina and Desiderio end up in Nebulous Time 'outside the formal rules of time and space'. As Albertina confesses 'I haven't the least idea what might happen' (*DH*, 200).

There is a comfort in Desiderio's revelation that 'time had begun again' (*DH*, 263) once Doctor Hoffman has been killed and his laboratories destroyed. Desiderio however, feels the physical and psychological limitations of being trapped in chronological time: 'I suffered from terrible headaches, weakness and nausea […] now all changes would henceforth be, as they had been before, absolutely predictable (*DH*, 264). Desiderio is filled with regret that the impossible will now remain impossible, with realistic limitations posed on the imagination. Thus, we see a (regrettable) return to rationality and reason, with the Minister of Determination triumphing over the chaotic reign of Doctor Hoffman. As Fisher suggests, such a return is 'inevitable and perhaps necessary' given the need for balance between 'civility and eroticism' (2001: 174). Although Calvino's *Invisible Cities* does not feature within *Doctor Hoffman* on an intertextual level, the comparison between the two texts expose an affinity in which both Carter and Calvino construct the city as a site of disruption, defamiliarisation, and one that is in flux and subject to change.

The nonlinear structures of time within *Doctor Hoffman* allows space for irrationality and unreason, confirming the novel's status as a 'dialectic between passion and reason' (Sage, 1994: 34). For example, it is only through the disruption of time that

Albertina is permitted to journey between landscapes so quickly, appearing in different guises throughout Desiderio's adventures. The novel's ultimate refusal to give the reader a climactic end – as we already know the Doctor and crucially, Albertina, have been killed within the first three pages of the novel – is also reinforced through the decay of time and the fluctuation of the city: there is no constant in Carter's narrative.

'The River People' and the Japanese language in *The Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor Hoffman*

Carter picks up on the theme of temporal distortion once again in the third chapter of *Doctor Hoffman,* 'River People', in which Desiderio finds himself living with a nomadic tribe of Indians. The tribe allow Desiderio to live with them when he is accused of murdering a young girl, Mary-Anne, after Desiderio finds her lifeless body 'wreathed and garlanded in seaweed and shells' on the beach (*DH*, 65). The River People live 'secret, esoteric lives' on the river, and are 'rigidly exclusive in their dealings with the outside world' (*DH*, 76). Desiderio, with 'hair black enough and cheekbones high enough' (*DH*, 77) and fortunate enough to have 'Indian extraction' from his prostitute mother, passes off as one of the clan. He soon becomes betrothed to nine-year old Aoi, with whom he develops a sexual relationship. Yet, the night before their wedding, Desiderio learns that the River People plan to kill him and eat his flesh in a ritual act of cannibalism in the belief that they will absorb his knowledge. Desiderio flees, and begins his next adventure with the travelling circus.

An 'isolated and entirely self-contained society' (*DH*, 77) the River People are influenced by Carter's encounter with Japan. The Japanese geisha is mirrored in Carter's representation of the family matriarch 'Mama' who wears a 'coat of matte white cover[ing] her nose, cheeks and forehead', on top of which is drawn a 'spherical scarlet dot in the middle of each cheek' (*DH*, 79). The tiny origami birds that appear on the deck of the boat provides far more granular imagery: Carter's choice in the images she invokes, as well as her description of the female characters is a deliberate narrative strategy that not only highlights her own 'sense of strangeness of Japan' (Fisher, 2001: 171), but also serves as a reminder of the contextual analysis behind the page.

Dimovitz goes on to suggest that the Japan connection explains why the River People have Japanese names. Nine-year-old Aoi means 'inexperienced', and may also

refer to Lady Aoi in Murasaki's *The Tale of Genji*. Nao Kurai derived from two 'highly coded' words. Nao can translate to *more, mischief, ordinary, common,* and Kurai to *dark, gloomy*, when used in a suffix it can mean *rank, nobility crown, occupying a position*' (Dimovitz, 2005: 17). The names act as signifiers indicating social ranking and tell us something about the individual. In her journals Carter emphasises the importance of a name, writing that 'names are signs, which start as marks; marks are designed to recall thoughts; and a name pronounced to others is a sign, not a public thing, but of a thought in a speaker's head' (Add. MS 88899/1/90).

Further to the analysis on time, memory and rationality, the language of the River People also functions as a means to distort linear narrative structures in the novel. Carter's sense of strangeness of the Japanese language is explored in the way the River People's language is constructed. Desiderio describes the 'elaborate system' of their language:

> The tenses divided time into two great chunks, a simple past and a continuous present. Neither contained further temporal shading. A future tense was created by adding various suffixes indicating hope, intention and varying degrees of probability and possibility to the present stem. There was also a marked absence of abstract nouns, since they had very little use for them. They lived with a complex, hesitant but absolute immediacy (*DH*, 78).

The phrasing used in this excerpt is strikingly similar to that found in Carter's notebooks when she was writing in Japan. She comments on the distortion of the Japanese language, writing that:

> To begin before the beginning. You must realise that the language possesses no true future tense – only various verbal suffixes indicating varying degrees of probability, possibility, and surmise. Yet, as if to cheat the question mark they have themselves hung over the notion of the future, history hence runs more quickly than we do (Add. MS 888899/1/80).

The 'immediacy' that the River People live with correlates with the lack of future tenses: their language seeks to heighten the importance of the past and a continuing present. Certainly, Carter's description of the Japanese language in her notebooks plays to a contextual analysis of Japan, where she describes history running 'more quickly'. A nod to the exponential rate at which Japan charged through fascism, militarism, defeat and economic prosperity since the end of the Edo period in 1868, Carter seems

to acknowledge that the future, by the very construction of the past, is formulated to only suggest possibilities *not* certainties.

Importantly, the River People's language does not just draw upon Japanese. Although Dimovitz argues that Carter 'transformed contemporary Japanese culture into an indigenous South American culture' (2005: 17), I suggest that (much like the concept of time in *Doctor Hoffman)* language cannot be pinned down to just one site. Although the River People's language is undoubtedly influenced by Japanese, it also bears a likeness to the language used in Borges's 'Tlön'. The city is 'successive and temporal' and language, religion, letters, metaphysics 'all presuppose idealism' (1940: 6). Notably, there are no nouns in Tlön's language (much like the River People's), but there are impersonal verbs, 'modified by monosyllabic suffixes (or prefixes) with an adverbial value' (Borges, 1940: 6). Carter's understanding of the Japanese language thus informed her reading (and rereading) of works she had already encountered, or would do in the future. There is a bricolage of intertextual references embedded in her work, an eclectic "mash-up" of Oriental, European, and South American influences.[81]

Carter's nod to the complexities of the Japanese language in her notebook and in *Doctor Hoffman* suggest that she was interested in this strange tongue. Carter did attempt to learn Japanese, although she wasn't particularly successful (but she was well-versed in both French and German).[82] According to his memoirs, Araki started to teach Carter Japanese in 1970, while she was working at Nihon Hoso Kyokai (NHK) an international broadcasting company. He tried to teach her *hiragana*,[83] the Japanese alphabet, but Carter 'showed almost zero interest in the Japanese language' (Araki, 2018: 36). When Carter did show an interest, it was when Araki taught her about the subtleties between the male and female vocabulary, to which she commented 'That's not good. That kind of gender difference must be the cause of such extreme discrimination against women in Japan. No?' (Araki, 2018: 36). Araki seems to suggest that Carter in fact, understood most of what he was teaching her (2018: 36) a suggestion which is corroborated in Caryl Phillip's article 'Finding oneself at home' (2006). Phillips recalls attending her first literary festival in Toronto, Canada, when she first

[81] This 'mash-up' is explored further in chapter four, specifically in reference to Akira Kurosawa's films, John Ford's Westerns, and Carter's post-Japanese writing.
[82] For example, she translated Xavier Gauthier's *Surréalism et Sexualité* in 1973. Carter's translation was never published, although drafts are available to view in the British Library. See Add. MS 88899/1/83.
[83] *Hiragana* – a basic component of the system of written Japanese.

met Carter. Walking down a street near Lake Ontario, Carter and Phillips were approached by a Japanese man who asked the two women for directions. Phillips remembers how Carter 'dealt with the inquiry with characteristic grace, but I knew immediately that there was something strange about the encounter. I could not put my finger on what was amiss' (2006). Phillips reveals that Carter had provided directions in Japanese, something which Carter seemed to find amusing: "You know," she said, "around about now it will be occurring to him that I just spoke to him in Japanese" (Phillips, 2006).

Araki also tried to teach Carter Japanese phrases, such as the concept of *mono no aware*, a term used to describe the transience and the 'sad appreciation of passing things', although Carter 'never grasped what it meant' (Araki, 2018: 41). She did, however, take a liking to the term *setsunai* (a Japanese term to describe 'something painfully and romantically sad') and used it frequently when her and Araki were together (Araki, 2018: 41). Carter appears to have been selective in her use of the Japanese language, and the suggestion that she did not understood the language at all is not quite correct. Her selection of Japanese expressions correlated with her own interests, including gender and an excessive sense of emotion.

Unsustainable desires: a departure from the unknown

Carter's time in Japan marks a departure away from the familiar landscapes of Great Britain, thrusting her into an unknown world. This movement is echoed within her fiction produced abroad and both *Fireworks* and *Doctor Hoffman* explore a much wider landscape than Carter's earlier works. Partly a reflection of her own understanding in her role as an outsider, and partly as an attempt to untangle new and unfamiliar spaces, Carter's work poses a challenge to the rational and the known, forging new and unknown paths in a bid to seek something that did not fit into the Western mould. Experiments with *flânerie* are littered throughout Carter's works and are a reminder not only of Carter's literary influences of the period (Baudelaire, Hoffmann and Poe), but also of her own attempts at navigating the streets of Japan. Even Desiderio's journey can be interpreted as an 'exemplary example of the Baudelairean *flâneur*', suggests Gamble, as 'by the end [of the novel] he is a shaken shadow of his former self, having been very nearly seduced into active participation within a world of seductive illusions and complex desires' (2001: 73).

Yet, Carter's fiction written from 1969 to 1972 sees an inevitable return to the West. The seductiveness of Japanese illusion and desire wanes and the ending of *Hoffman* is interpreted as analogous to the breaking of this biographical 'spell'. Desiderio returns to his city, Doctor Hoffman and Albertina dead, with the clocks returned to normal and reality restored. Fisher suggests that Carter's return is determined by Carter's own preconceptions of Japan, motivated by a form of escapism from the 'patriarchal traditions of Judaic and Christian monotheism' (2001: 174). However, much like the tricks of image that Doctor Hoffman casts over the city, such a form of escapism was an illusion for Carter and *The Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor* Hoffman 'demonstrates how terrifying the world would be if desires were always fulfilled' (Fisher, 2001;174). Desiderio's return to reason at the end of his adventures is analogous to Carter's own physical return to the West in 1972. Yet, this physical return to Western space did not correlate with Carter's own return to her prior emotional, sexual and romanticised state. She came back from Japan radicalised as a woman, and occupying space in a very different way: a more confident writer, her encounter with the East transitioned her to a new way of writing. The concepts she was presented with during her time in Japan – estranging, navigating unfamiliar landscapes – continue to appear in her post-Japan fiction. From the strangeness of the American landscape in *Passion of New Eve*, to her biographical essays she wrote for *News Review* and the *New Society* in 1976, Carter's exploration of (and experimentation with) a kind of elective estrangement is reworked into her literary *oeuvre*.

Chapter two

Theatre

Representations of Japanese theatre in 'The Loves of Lady Purple', 'The Executioner's Beautiful Daughter' (both in *Fireworks*, 1974) and *The Passion of New Eve* (1977)

Carter's fascination with performance and the theatrical resonates throughout her novels, short stories, and works of non-fiction. In the opening lines of her first novel *Shadow Dance* (1966) the bar is described as a 'mock-up, a forgery, a fake' (*SD*, 1), *The Magic Toyshop* (1967) explores the role of the marionette in Uncle Phillip's basement puppet theatre, and in *Love* (1971) the park is reimagined as a 'premeditated theatre where the romantic imagination could act out any performance it chose' (*L*, 2). In Carter's work published post-Japan, she experimented with more explicit and excessive forms of performance, demonstrated through the six-foot winged-wonder Fevvers in *Nights at the Circus* (1984) and her final novel *Wise Children* (1991), which encapsulates her fascination with William Shakespeare. In an interview with Paul Bailey, Carter admits that she did try to 'get a little bit of everything [from Shakespeare's plays] in [to *Wise Children]'* (Bailey, 1991): certainly, the excessive use of doubling exudes a 'Shakespearean design', imitating imagery from *A Comedy of*

Errors and *Twelfth Night*.[84] From the contorted and pornographic theatrical poses of Honeybuzzard and Ghislaine in *Shadow Dance*, to her final novel that displays a complex labyrinth of Shakespearean intertextuality, theatre and performance play a vital part in the construction and understanding of Carter's narratives.

Carter's interest in theatrical tropes is also demonstrated through her numerous screenplays, many of which went unpublished during her lifetime. Susannah Clapp describes going through Carter's study after her death in 1992, finding a grey filing cabinet 'stuffed with papers' (2012: 5). Amongst Clapp's discoveries was an unproduced screenplay for *The Christchurch Murder* (1987), an operatic adaptation of Virginia Woolf's *Orlando* (written by Woolf in 1928), as well as a version of Frank Wedekind's German drama "Lulu".[85] Clapp recalls the rejection of Carter's script by the National Theatre (then under the direction of Richard Eyre) in 1987, commenting that 'Angela was not forgiving […] she was white-faced and narrow-eyed with fury: "The National have just flushed my *Lulu* down the toilet"' (Clapp, 2012: 6).

Carter's continued interest with performance 'includes all the varieties, high and low, of drama and entertainment: theatre, film, puppet shows, music hall, circus' (Fisher, 2001: 165). Her writing in Japan, much like the fiction that straddles the beginning and latter parts of her career, also indulges in the theatrical, using images influenced by traditional Japanese theatre (such as *bunraku* puppet theatre) as a vehicle through which to experiment with representations of performance. And, although she explores performance in her work of the 1960s (with specific focus on gender), Japan provided Carter with new ways of developing the aesthetic possibilities of this theme. Drawing on Carter's two short stories 'The Loves of Lady Purple' and 'The

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[84] The novel also draws upon an American adaptation of A *Midsummer Night's Dream* as one its focal points in the narrative. Shakespearean intertexuality in Carter's work is also discussed in Lorna Sage (1994) *Angela Carter*, Tavistock: Northcote House, Sarah Gamble (2006) *Angela Carter: A Literary Life.* Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, and Kate Webb (1994) 'Seriously Funny: *Wise Children*', in *Flesh and the Mirror: Essays on the Art of Angela Carter*, ed. Lorna Sage. London: Virago, pp. 279-307.

[85] Wedekind's 'Lulu' cycle consists of two plays: *Erdgeist* (*Earth Spirit*, 1895) and *Die Büchse der Pandora* (*Pandora's Box*, 1904). The plays were adapted for G. W. Pabst's *Pandora's Box* starring Louise Brooks as Lulu. Carter writes about the film in the essay '*Femmes Fatales*' published in *New Society* in 1978 and reprinted in *Shaking a Leg* (1997). Her essay 'Femmes Fatales' (1978; *New Society*), is a review of *Pandora's Box* and Josef von Sternberg's *The Blue Angel* (1930). In her essay Carter writes that Pabst's screen version of Wedekind's Lulu plays 'remains one of the great expositions of the cultural myth of the *femme fatale*' (1997: 350).

Executioner's Beautiful Daughter', both of which appear in her *Fireworks* collection, this chapter studies how Carter's interest in the theatrical and the overblown evolved during her time in Japan. Her time abroad allowed her to explore themes that interested her before she went to Japan – for example, her interest in marionettes was magnified through *bunraku*, a traditional form of Japanese puppet theatre. The concept of performance (specifically a gendered performance) is intrinsic to Japanese *kabuki*, which would go on to inform Carter's later work (such as *The Passion of New Eve*) in a more indirect way.

This chapter investigates Carter's relationship with, and ideas of, performance and authenticity in Japan by explicitly drawing on material in her archives. Firstly, I argue that the idea of the inauthentic or 'performing self' features consistently throughout her fiction written during her time in Japan and themes of the 'real' and 'unreal' persist throughout her work. Moreover, Carter's journals from 1969 to 1972, coupled with interviews conducted post-Japan, also reveal her recognition of the Japanese appreciation of performance and of artificiality. Carter reflects that the Japanese themselves appear 'submerged in their roles' and that 'their own play has become the only mode of reality they acknowledge' with a direct reference to *bunraku*, noting that 'it is hardly surprising that they have perfected, as their most magnificent art-form, the most passionate puppets in the world' (Add. MS 88899/1/80).

I also suggest that Carter deliberately draws on images from traditional Japanese theatre as a means of experimenting with gendered performance in Japan. Carter's interest 'in that bundle of tropes – theatricality, spectacle and play acting – now commonly associated with the theory and (cultural) politics of "gender as performance"' (Bristow and Broughton, 1997: 14) is demonstrated in 'The Loves of Lady Purple' (the third story in Carter's *Fireworks* collection), a tale of a travelling Asiatic Professor and his puppet, Lady Purple, who comes to life. Lady Purple, forced to indulge in a series of repetitive acts and gestures as part of her nightly performance, becomes complicit in sustaining a gendered practice from which she cannot escape, even after she has freed herself from the shackles of her strings. Despite Carter's deliberate challenges to what would be termed the 'Butlerification'[86] of Lady Purple

[86] 'Butlerification' is a term used by Joanna Trevenna in her 2002 essay 'Gender as Performance: Questioning the "Butlerification" of Angela Carter's fiction'. Trevenna suggests that Carter has been misrepresented through the application of Judith Butler's theories on gender to her literature. Trevenna instead suggest that Carter's presentation

(for example, by aligning the puppet with the image of a vampiric *femme fatale* figure), Carter's puppet can be interpreted as a symbolically charged representation of femininity which must adhere to a scripted performance of gender. There are also distinct parallels between Carter's 'The Loves of Lady Purple' and the seventeenth-century Japanese novel *The Life of an Amorous Woman* (1686) by Iharu Saikaku. A pre-scripted narrative sustains Lady Purple's performance and the in/authenticity of her act becomes increasingly complex to unravel in Carter's short story.

Both spectator and the performer have a role to play in sustaining the artful nature of a performance, and this is explored in 'The Executioner's Beautiful Daughter' (in *Fireworks*, 1974). The third section of this chapter provides an analysis of this much-neglected tale, arguing that spectatorship is a pertinent factor in sustaining performativity. Drawing on Sigmund Freud's 'A Child is Being Beaten' (1919; first published in English in 1924), the section analyses the perverse nature of the spectator as he/she willingly engages in (and maintains) an inauthentic and often violent performance.

The chapter primarily focus on representations of *bunraku* puppet theatre in Carter's work, using current scholarly criticism as a springboard from which to initiate further discussion on this topic. Yet, there is also something to be said for another form of traditional Japanese theatre, *kabuki*, which is addressed in the final section of this chapter. Although there are not explicit references to this kind of theatre within Carter's fiction written during the period, the gendered performances that characterise the theatrics of *kabuki* theatre (which traditionally has only an all-male cast) find themselves emerging in the gendered dystopia of her 1977 novel *The Passion of New Eve* in which the movie star Tristessa successfully masquerades as a woman because s/he is a man. Thus, the final section of this chapter explores the ways in which tropes from *kabuki* theatre find themselves resonating in Carter's first post-Japan novel, furthering the argument that gender performativity (and elements of the theatrical) appear throughout her works of fiction after her return to England.

Care must be taken with this chapter in order to demonstrate an original contribution to the study of Carter's work. Given the overt references to Japanese puppet theatre *bunraku* in 'The Loves of Lady Purple', substantial critical analysis on

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of gender acquisition is more aligned with theories put forward by Simone de Beauvoir in *The Second Sex* (1949) rather than Butler's *Gender Trouble.*

this topic is readily available to draw upon. Charlotte Crofts (2006) references 'Lady Purple' in relation to Barthes' three contributions on *bunraku* in *Empire of Signs*, and Susan Fisher (2001) writes articulately on the role of performance and the Other in Japan, suggesting that 'Lady Purple' 'employs the metaphor of performance most directly' of the four Japan tales in *Fireworks*, specifically offering material 'for regarding femininity as a performance directed by patriarchal society' (2001: 166-7).[87] Certainly, there will be a degree of overlap between Fisher's work in this chapter given her focus on the role of performance and the Other during Carter's time in Japan, as she argues that Carter's experience of finding oneself defined as Other is central to her stories written during her time abroad. For Fisher, Japan offered a way for Carter to be Other 'in a far more definitive way than her life in England' (2001: 171), citing Susan Rubin Suleiman's description of Carter as 'an unassimilable Other' (Suleiman: 1994: 99).

Carter's journals confirm the commentary by critics such as Crofts, Fisher, and Sage, revealing Carter's interest in the Japanese theatrical form of *bunraku*. In her journals written during her time in Japan, Carter devotes two pages to the intricacies of the art, commenting that Japanese *bunraku* puppets are 'absolutely life-like' and 'have not the slightest resemblance to the marionettes of Europe' (Add. MS 88899/1/80). Commenting on the trinity of puppet-masters of *bunraku*, she remarks that the 'puppets lie in the embrace of manipulators, dressed in black as a token of invisibility, who hold their little charges as closely as mothers'. Notes that appear scrawled across the page also remind her to '(check out that play by Chikimatsu [Monzaemon], the love suicide play)' before referring to Chikimatsu's play 'The Love Suicides at Amijima' (1721), before writing '(already read)'.[88] Although 'The Love Suicides at Amijima' was originally written for *joruri* theatre (an earlier form of *bunraku* puppet theatre) it was also adapted for *kabuki* shortly after its first performance. By drawing on existing sources and by investigating new evidence from the archives, this chapter provides a new reading of representations of Japanese theatre in Carter's work.

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[87] The four Japanese tales Fisher is referring to are 'A Souvenir of Japan', 'Flesh and the Mirror', 'The Loves of Lady Purple' and 'The Smile of Winter'. As chapter one of this thesis has highlighted, other tales included in *Fireworks* draw upon her time in Japan. A reading that interprets only four tales in *Fireworks* is therefore too narrow and draws on a limited focus of Carter's time abroad.

[88] Presumably Carter's first reference to 'the love suicide play' is to Chikimatsu's 'The Love Suicides at Sonezaki', his first on the topic which was first performed in 1703.

The 'art of faking': performance in Japan and an introduction to the history of *bunraku* theatre

Tropes of performance and in/authenticity resonate throughout Carter's stories written during her time in Japan. For example, in 'A Souvenir of Japan' the narrator contemplates 'how far does a pretence of feeling, maintained with absolute conviction, become authentic?' (SJ, 12), suggesting that the surface of appearance substitutes, and eventually becomes, a reality. Such superficial performances thus become iconic rituals in which the true self is disguised or hidden from view: 'To look at a samurai, you would not know him for a murderer, or a geisha for a whore […] They live only in a world of icons' (SJ, 13). Similarly, in the short story 'Flesh and the Mirror' the narrator quite consciously slips into her performing role as she admits that 'I was always rummaging in the dressing-up box heart for suitable appearances to adopt in the city', as she attempts to play the role of the 'perfect heroine' (FM, 79). Yet, her artifice is revealed to her as she makes love to a stranger in a hotel with a mirror on the ceiling. The mirror reveals the extent to which the narrator is 'performing' a version of herself:

> I was the subject of the sentence written on the mirror […] Women and mirrors are in complicity with one another to evade the action I/ she performs that she/ I cannot watch, the action with which I break out of the mirror, with which I assume my appearance. But *this* mirror refused to conspire with me; it was like the first mirror I'd ever seen (FM, 82).

The narrator's performance is exposed to her through her own reflection, unveiling her act as inauthentic and revealing the 'true' self, hinting at the semi-autobiographical undertone of the story. Art's purpose, in this instance, 'is to help us recognise our own artificiality' (Sage, 1994: 27). Otherness for Carter thus becomes performative, but it is a role that she is unable to negotiate.

More pertinently, authenticity and interpreting the 'real' are also explored through Japan itself: that is, its culture, traditions, and its cities (specifically, the city of Tokyo). In her interview with Ronald Bell (1973) Carter reflects that 'the Japanese […] have always wished to make themselves works of art' (1973: 35). Her observation correlates with a similar position put forward by Ian Buruma in his social commentary *A Japanese Mirror: Heroes and Villains in Japanese Culture* (1984). Much like Carter,

Buruma claims that the Japanese 'are not interested so much in "real selves" and no attempts are made to hide the fake': instead, 'artificiality is often appreciated for its own sake' (1984: 69). There are, however, some fundamental differences in the ways that Buruma and Carter perceive the Japanese, and their own respective roles as a foreigner in Japan. In her interview with Bell, Carter comments that 'It's the fact that everything's the same and everything's different to what I'm accustomed to' (1973: 24), acknowledging the similarities between cultures. She goes on to say that 'There is a great deal of common ground between us – and then they freeze into Japanese attitudes, and then they are lost to me' (1973: 23). She doesn't find this difference unsettling, however; instead she finds it 'exhilarating', especially 'in situations where I'm not particularly close to the Japanese' (1973: 24). In comparison, the Japan that Buruma encounters is a 'long way from the austere, exquisitely restrained, melancholy beauty most people in the West have come to associate with Japan', an approach that Carter mocks Buruma for taking. It 'is hard to tell from his tone […] just how great his personal disappointment originally was when he discovered what he terms the "raunchy" side of Japanese culture' (1984: 266).

Yet, it seems that perhaps Carter, too, may have been disappointed with some aspects of Japan that she encountered, particularly when it came to sex. Carter assumed that the Japanese people were sexually liberated and indeed, raunchier than their Western counterparts. In Araki's memoirs, he says that Carter 'used to think that virginity and chastity were not important in Japanese culture, and that Japanese people enjoyed sex more freely and uninhibitedly' (2018: 71).[89] Yet, continues Araki, the more time Carter spent in Japan the more she came to realise that the Japanese were less liberated when it came to sexuality than European Christians.

Japanese theatrical traditions echo the sentiments of a cultural appreciation of artificiality. For example, *noh* and *kyogen* (the oldest forms of Japanese theatre, dating back to the twelfth century) are symbolic dramas structured around dance and song. Characterised by its use of masks to represent its characters, *noh* has an 'immediate recognisable beauty: the masks; superb examples of the carver's art; the magnificent costumes; the hypnotically eloquent singing of the chorus; the stately movement of the actors' (Keene, 1990: 14). *Noh* and *kyogen* differ in the stories that they tell: while *noh*

[89] Araki suggests that Carter's raunchy idea of the Japanese was influenced by pornographic colour prints produced in the Edo period (2018: 71).

performs tragedies, *kyogen* is considerably more comedic, with representations of the Everyman figure portrayed through its use of masks. Another form of theatre, k*abuki* (characterised by its use of an all-male cast known as *onnagata*) adopts highly stylised and exaggerated movements in its performance, amplified through its excessive make up and elaborate costumes. Artificiality is on full display in these forms of theatre.

The other form of traditional Japanese theatre is *bunraku*. A term coined in the nineteenth century, *bunraku* refers to 'the puppet theatre in Osaka descended from the [theatre] founded by Uemur Bunrakken (or, Bunraku-ken) some 150 years ago' (Keene, 1990: 120). Delivered on a much larger scale than its Western counterpart, the main spectacle of *bunraku* is its puppets which stand around four feet tall, and are often luxuriously adorned in traditional Japanese attire such as the kimono, and accessorised with flamboyant wigs and jewellery.[90] Unlike the marionettes of the West, they are free from the shackles of strings and are instead controlled by three highly skilled puppeteers (three for each puppet) who are visible on stage. Departing from the Western presentation of puppet theatre in which the manipulators are hidden from view, *bunraku* deliberately places the trinity of puppeteers on stage in full view of the audience. The main puppeteer (known as the *omu-zukai*) controls the facial expressions and the doll's right hand; a second puppeteer (the *hidrai-zukai*) has control over the left hand, which leaves the feet to be controlled by the third player, known as the *shi-zukai*. Three raised partitions of different heights run across the width of the stage, partially concealing the lower half of the *omu-zukai*, more of the *hidrai-zukai* and almost all of the *shi-zukai*. Dressed in dark black cloaks called *kurogo* (which translates to 'nothingness') two of the three puppeteers hide their true identity from the audience by wearing black hoods. The head of the trinity is permitted to wear flamboyant kimonos and to unveil his 'true self' to the audience, as a mark of respect towards the skill and the training that has gone into his performance.[91] The trinity of puppeteers are joined by a chanter (*taya*) who provides the vocals for all of the puppets, and a samisen player, who bears the chief responsibility for providing a musical accompaniment to guide the performance (Keene, 1990: 127). Unlike the three puppeteers, the *taya* and the samisen player do

[90] Puppets designed to portray the upper classes would often be adorned in this excessive manner: those who were made to represent the lower, working classes however, did not don such attire.

[91] Training begins at a young age and can last for up to a decade. The main puppeteers are the most experienced of the trinity.

not appear in front of the audience, and are instead located on a separate dais to the right-hand side of the stage. The *taya* sits on bulky cushions before a reading stand; to his left sits the samisen player, 'dwarfed by the chanter' (Keene, 1990: 126). Their visual absence is by no means a relegation of their contribution to the overall performance of *bunraku*. Keene emphasises that the three puppeteers must 'breathe' together to sustain the dramatic illusion of animation; if they are unable to work harmoniously with one another, the actions of the doll appear clumsy, awkward and unrealistic. Similarly, the harmonious alignment of the 'three writings' (Barthes, 1970: 49) of *bunraku* – the manipulator, the chanter and the samisen player – are crucial to sustaining an eloquent performance. *Bunraku* imitates a story-telling narrative, and originally the puppeteers supplied the necessary pieces of dialogue to support the performance. Yet, when more and more literary texts were adapted and performances became more sophisticated, it became necessary to use a chanter to recite the lines of the play. At first the chanter remained hidden behind the scenery but as plays 'became more realistic and closer to the circumstances of ordinary life, the chanter was moved from backstage to a place before the audience' (Keene, 1991: 124). The chanter, like the puppeteer trinity that appear on stage, must undergo years of training to perfect the vocals of all the characters that appear on stage.

The photo of a *bunraku* play in Figure 1 (below) shows three puppeteers clearly visible on stage. The man to the left is the *omu-zukai*, the central figure is the *shi-zukai* and the hooded puppeteer on the right is the *hidrai-zukai*. To the bottom of the photo is the top of a partition, hiding the lower half of the puppeteer trinity. The doll is dressed in a kimono and is a *musume*, or maiden puppet.[92]

[92] Source: https://www.japan-zone.com/culture/bunraku.shtml. The title of the play is not recorded.

Figure 1 An example of a bunraku play.

In *Empire of Signs* (1970), Roland Barthes dedicates three chapters to the discussion of *bunraku*: 'The Three Writings', 'Inside/Outside' and 'The Written Face'. Fascinated by the 'concurrent but separate performances of the puppet master, the puppet and the narrator' (Crofts, 101: 2006), Barthes argues that the practice of *bunraku* offers these three writings to be 'read simultaneously in three sites of the spectacle: the puppet, the manipulator, the vociferate: the effected gesture, the effective gesture, and the vocal gesture' (Barthes, 1970: 49). The 'fusion' of the three elements combined together is a 'universal work of art', a performance 'which satisfies simultaneously by the literary interest of the text, the musical appeal of the samisen, and the visual brilliance of the puppets' (Keene, 1990: 127). Working in *bunraku* comes with extremely high expectations – the audience wants to be presented with an act that is constructed through an aesthetic of artificiality, not a half-hearted attempt that mocks theatrical performances through a poor presentation of mimicry.

In *Empire of Signs* Barthes continues to describe *bunraku* puppeteers as 'agents of spectacle' that are perceived not as performers per se, but as an intricate part of the performance in which they are exempt from meaning. Comparatively, in Western performances

> the actor pretends to act, but his actions are never anything but gestures: on stage nothing but theatre, yet a theatre ashamed of itself. Whereas Bunraku (this is its definition) separates action from gesture: it shows the gesture, lets the action be seen, exhibits simultaneously the art and the labour, reserving for each its own writing (Barthes, 1970: 54).

Barthes' discussion of the simultaneous exhibition of the 'art and the labour' is not dissimilar to Bertolt Brecht's *Verfremdungseffekt*,[93] or alienation effect in which the audience detach themselves from the empathy of the performance in order to fully understand dramatic effects. Like *bunraku*, the audience do not lose themselves completely – rather they indulge in a reflective detachment in which both art and labour are appreciated.

Barthes needs the Occident to function in a certain way in order for him to find meaning in Japan. Barthes' role as a semiotician coupled with his desire to 'discover a culture that despised depth' (Sage, 1997: 26) points to a need to find meaning in appearances. These claims are made all the more relevant when one considers Barthes' description of the trinity of puppeteers. He describes them as

> agents of the spectacle […] at once visible and impassive: the men in black busy themselves around the doll, but without any affectation of skill or of discretion and, one might say, without any paraded demagogy; silent, swift, elegant, their actions are eminently transitive, operative, tinged with that mixture of strength and subtlety which marks the Japanese repertoire of gestures and which is a kind of aesthetic envelope of effectiveness; as for the master, his head is uncovered; smooth, bare, without make-up, which accords him a civil (not a theatrical) distinction, his face is offered to the spectators to read; but what is carefully, preciously given to be read is that there is nothing there to be read (1982: 61-62).

Unlike Western puppet theatre that seeks to conceal the mechanics of its art, *bunraku* ensures that these manifestations of artifice are clearly on display for the audience to see. The very point of *bunraku* is that it refuses to conceal and so places the trinity of puppeteers on stage in full view of its audience: 'there is no reason to hide them. People want to see them so they can appreciate their skills' (Buruma, 1984: 69). *Bunraku* thus becomes 'immune to the temptation known in certain theatres of the West of trying to persuade it is watching reality and not a play' (Keene, 1990: 125).

[93] Brecht's alienation effect is discussed in further detail in chapter four.

Furthermore, *bunraku* demonstrates the pertinent nature of 'faking' through a variety of deliberate staging strategies and through promoting a relationship that is complicit with its audience engaging in its theatrical nuances: 'Performers do not try to seem informal or real, for it is the form, the art of faking, if you like, that is the whole point of the exercise' (Buruma: 1984: 69). Similarly, in *Nō and Bunraku* (1990) Donald Keene argues that the 'stylisation in art and not literal fidelity is what the audience craves' and that the puppeteers must maintain a harmonious balance between 'realism and non-realism' (1990: 124). However, as Buruma explains, in 'Western theatres the manipulators remain hidden in order to make the puppets seem as real as possible' (1984: 69).

The act and the appreciation of artifice, argues Buruma, is an integral part of the *bunraku* performance and can be seen to be permeating Japanese culture. Continuing on from his discussion on traditional Japanese puppet theatre, he suggests that

> [t]he same principle [as *bunraku*] applies to social life. The more formal a society, the more obvious the roles people play. In this respect the Japanese are quite scrutable. Acting, that is, presenting oneself consciously in a certain prescribed way is part of social life everywhere […] In Japan it is still in most cases a necessity to subordinate personal inclinations to the social form. Being a polite people, most Japanese spend most of their time acting (1984: 69).

Buruma highlights the similarities between theatre and everyday life, whilst taking a dig at the stereotype of the Japanese being inscrutable. Like Buruma, Carter also treats the theatre as a metaphor for Japanese society and suggests that in *bunraku* the 'disassociation of speech and action and the total dependence of the dolls on their masters, and the abstract passion of the narrative provide, together, a perfect image of Japanese society' (Add. MS 88899/1/80). Barthes, Carter and Buruma are all linked through a chronology of influence and evolution of ideas; Barthes influenced Carter who was able to react to Buruma's own ideas about Japan in 1984.[94] In turn, although Buruma does not draw from Barthes explicitly, there is an overlap in ideas between the

[94] In a review for Buruma's recent memoirs *A Tokyo Romance* (2018), Edmund Gordon reflects that Buruma's experiences in Japan in the 1970s are not dissimilar to those had by other Western visitors such as Donald Richie, Carter and Barthes. The 'things he notices – the low-level surrealism produced by the Japanese emphasis on surfaces over depths; the bittersweet sense of ephemerality that shapes the culture' are all closely aligned with Carter, Ritchie and Barthes' experiences, although, as Gordon points out, Buruma has the advantage over his predecessors of being able to read, as well as speak, Japanese (2018b).

two writers, particularly in regard to the artificial nature of Japan puppet theatre. Themes of the 'real' and the 'unreal' fascinated Carter before and during her time abroad, and traditional Japanese theatre gave her a new way of experimenting with this theme in her fiction.

Angela Carter's 'The Loves of Lady Purple' and Iharu Saikaku's *The Life of An Amorous Woman*

The motif of the living doll in Carter's fiction first appears in *The Magic Toyshop* (1967). From Uncle Phillip's basement puppet theatre in that novel, to the replica automaton of the young girl in the short story 'The Tiger's Bride' – 'a marvellous machine' (TB, 66) – Carter experimented with forms of simulacra and what it meant to be 'real'. She was 'very interested' in the idea of 'invented people, of imitation human beings, because […] the big question that we have to ask ourselves is how do we know that we're not imitation human beings' (Katsavos, 1994: 11). Particularly in Carter's earlier fiction, the image of the marionette acts as a metaphor for the complex dynamics of gender performativity and Carter uses the puppet figure as a representation of Woman. As Paulina Palmer points out, in Carter's 'early texts' (by which she means those published before 1978),

> the themes that occupy her at this stage are: gender and its construction, the cultural production of femininity, male power under patriarchy, and the myths and institutions which serve to maintain it. The image which she frequently adopts to represent woman's role in society (man's too, on occasion) is the *puppet* (1987: 180; italics in original).

In *The Magic Toyshop*, Carter explicitly draws upon these gendered stereotypes, experimenting with imagery that sees a curious interplay through the interchangeable behaviours of humans and puppets. Following the death of her parents, Melanie is forced to leave her middle-class rural home to live with her Aunt Margaret and Uncle Phillip and her aunt's two brothers, Finn and Francie, above her uncle's toyshop in London. When Finn gives Melanie a tour of her uncle's basement puppet theatre for the first time, she is taken back by the puppets 'of all sizes […] blind-eyed puppets, some armless, some legless, some naked, some clothed, all with a strange liveliness as they dangled unfinished from their hooks' (*MT*, 67).

The blurring of boundaries between the animate and inanimate is further explored in Carter's description of Margaret's brothers. When she first meets Francie, his movements are described in a disjointed, wooden manner like a 'tower falling, a frightened, uncoordinated progression in which he seemed to crash forward uncontrollably at each stride, jerking himself stiffly upright' (*MT*, 34). Similarly, in the first puppet performance that Melanie watches, the marionette Bothwell walks 'tentatively, uncertainly' with 'Francie's toppling fall' (*MT*, 130), as Finn controls his strings from above. This behavioural osmosis sees humans adopt puppet-like mannerisms, with the marionettes in turn controlled by a human hand. It is not clear where the 'real' or authentic behaviour lies, made more troublesome when humans adopt puppet-like mannerisms. When Melanie is forced to enact the role of Leda in Phillip's performance of 'Leda and the Swan', she temporarily takes on the role of puppet, as she describes 'she felt not herself, wrenched from her own personality, watching this whole fantasy from another place' (*MT*, 166). For Gina Wisker, this sentence clearly points to Melanie's 'disempowerment, and her loss of identity' and the rape scene in which Melanie is forced to perform enacts her Uncle's 'perverse sexual fantasies' (1997: 122). Melanie is, much to Phillip's disappointment, unsuccessful in her performance of a marionette, refusing to comply with the puppet figure as she screams when the swan mounts her. As Finn explains, 'you were melodramatic. Puppets don't overact, you spoiled the poetry' and as Melanie emerges from her role she describes that she 'was alive again' (*MT*, 167-8).

Carter picks up on the image of the living doll again in 'The Loves of Lady Purple', the third story of her *Fireworks* collection. Although *The Magic Toyshop* and 'The Loves of Lady Purple' share a number of similarities – the image of the life-size marionette and the puppet as a metaphor for gendered performativity – the short story is clearly drawn from Japanese *bunraku* puppet theatre (Sage, 1994; Fisher, 2001; Crofts, 2006). It was Carter's time in Japan that opened up the possibilities for her to further explore the boundaries between the real, and the unreal, the animate and the inanimate, and Japanese theatre provided a way in which to explore this aesthetic. Evidence from Carter's journals confirms that imagery in 'The Loves of Lady Purple' draws directly from Japanese puppet theatre. In an early plan for the tale, she summarises the story as follows:

Lady Purple (The Oriental Venus)

> A bunraku puppet that comes to life
> The puppet show
> She dominates the life of the puppeteer who manipulated her
> At length, she ~~sucks his~~ pierces him through the heart with the jewelled pin she wears in her hair, sucks out his soul in a kiss and goes out into the streets of the city
> Intro: either – there are premeditated and unpremeditated cities (Add. MS 88899/1/93). [95]

Led by an Asiatic Professor, a 'master of marionettes' (LLP, 28), who is accompanied by his deaf nephew and a dumb orphan girl, the formation of a puppeteer trinity pre-empts Lady Purple's performance. Exercising an 'exquisite precision' with 'godlike […] manipulations' (LLP, 27-8), the puppet master reveals the artifice of the mechanisms of his art in a homage to *bunraku* theatre. Describing how the puppet-master handles Lady Purple, he 'revealed his passions through a medium other than himself' executing puppetry so perfectly that the marionette 'transcended the notion she was dependent on his hands' (LLP, 30-1). Night after night, Lady Purple is submitted to commit a sexual and violent performance in the play 'The Notorious Amours of Lady Purple: The Shameless Oriental Venus', an act made 'all the more disturbing because we know it to be false' (LLP, 8). The story of a young girl who seduces her foster father before murdering her family, Lady Purple is initiated into the role of seductress from a young age, finding work in a brothel where she 'dryly and perfunctorily perform[s] these tactical manoeuvers' of the flesh. In the same brothel, there lies a supporting cast of 'mannequins of desire' that are 'displayed in wicker cages so that potential customers could saunter past inspecting them at leisure' (LLP, 35), promoting a voyeuristic gaze that degrades flesh to currency.[96] Booted in leather, Lady Purple becomes 'mistress of the whip' before her fifteenth birthday, and is soon successful enough to run her own establishment. As the 'sole perpetrator of desire' she indulges in sadomasochism, murdering her lovers 'either to be rid of them or, simply, for pleasure' (LLP, 37). Yet, her sexual rapacity is short lived, and she becomes 'as

[95] Crossed out as it appears in Carter's journals.
[96] A similar image is also explored in *The Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor Hoffman* in chapter 5 'The Erotic Traveller', when Desiderio encounters the Count and his valet, Lafleur, for the first time. Visiting the House of Anonymity, Desiderio finds a 'dozen girls in the cages in the reception room […] reduced by the rigorous vocation of their discipline of their vocation to the undifferentiated essence of the idea of the female.' On closer inspection, the girls are revealed to be 'sinister, abominable, inverted mutations, part clockwork, part vegetable and part brute' (*DH*, 154).

contagious as the plague […] more ghastly than those she had infected' (LLP, 38). Finally, Lady Purple (acting as a woman) turns into a wooden puppet, absolved to 'nothing but wood and hair […] herself her own replica' (LLP, 39). The performance comes to a close. One night, the Asiatic Professor notices a ripped seam in Lady Purple's shroud; a dropped stich, a seam undone.[97] In an ominous foreboding of an unravelling world in which the real blends with the unreal, the Professor leans in to kiss Lady Purple: she awakens, sucking the life from the puppet master. Renewed with life, Lady Purple frees herself from her strings and, in a move that mirrors her nightly performance, heads for the nearest brothel.

It is unclear from Carter's tale, argues Fisher, whether or not Lady Purple is a 'real woman changed into a puppet, or a puppet who comes alive', and she suggests that Lady Purple's performance is both 'within and beyond her control' (2001: 167). Lady Purple is instructed by the puppeteer to act out a gendered performance in the nightly plays; and yet, it is possible that the play itself is in imitation of Lady Purple's previous life as a real woman. Thus, Lady Purple's role as a 'universal whore' (LLP, 34) is maintained throughout her life as both a marionette and as a living, breathing woman whose single purpose is to satisfy the needs of men. She is 'an incarnation of what the male-dominated society, symbolised by the puppeteer, cannot accept (in this case, excessive female sexuality) and therefore casts off in the figure of the monstrous woman' (Tavassoli and Ghasemi, 2011: 56).

References to Japanese puppet theatre are made throughout the tale: Lady Purple's performance is enacted to the accompaniment of the 'delirious *obbligato* of the dumb girl's samisen' (LLP, 34), and the star of the show is imitative of the Japanese geisha with a face 'as white as chalk', and a wig 'of black hair arranged in a chignon' (LLP, 31). The vibrant purple colours that she is adorned with, claims Fisher, are a direct influence from Japanese literature, and are influenced by Murasaki Shikibu, author of *The Tale of Genji* (c.1021): murasaki meaning 'violet or purple' (2001: 168).[98]

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[97] A similar blurring of boundaries and a collision of the real and the unreal appears in 'Reflections' when the aunt drops a stitch in her knitting a mirror image of a shell falls from another world.

[98] The first partial translation of *The Tale of Genji* was by Suematsu Kenchō in 1882. Arthur Waley published a six-volume translation (of all but one chapter) of the text between 1921-1933. See: *Tale of Genji*. Cheshire: Stellar Classics, 2016. Edward Siedensticker was the first to publish a complete English translation of the novel in 1976. See: *The Tale of Genji*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. The most recent translation

Yet, the performance itself that Lady Purple enacts is not *bunraku*, and the autonomy that the puppet-master has over the performance challenges Barthes' idea of 'Three Writings' – that is, the three elements of *bunraku* must act harmoniously with one another – that is crucial to the performance of *bunraku*. Although Carter creates a 'trinity' through the dumb girl and the samisen player, they are side-lined by the mastery of the puppet-master, who plays both narrator and director throughout Lady Purple's performance. Furthermore, the nomadic nature of the travelling show infiltrates Europe – this is not a Japanese show for a Japanese audience. Rather, Carter's story shows a mash-up of European and Japanese images with *bunraku* providing a way of exploring aesthetic possibilities of the living doll.

Carter's journals suggest that 'The Notorious Amours of Lady Purple' is also influenced by Saikaku's *The Life of an Amorous Woman* (1686). There is a reference to Ivan Morris's 1963 translation of Saikaku's novel alongside her draft notes for 'The Loves of Lady Purple'. Carter collates a series of images of the 'voluptuous passions of Lady Purple, whose dry rapacity turned at last into that of a Machine Lady Purple: a jointed wooden puppet whose limbs are covered in the supplest white leather' with 'jewels in her head for eyes', and 'robes of purple and crimson' whose movement capture 'the angular geometry of lust' (Add. MS 888991/93). Versions of these phrases appear in the final published version of Carter's story: Lady Purple has clothes of 'deep, dark, slumberous colours' with 'glass rubies in her head for eyes', whose movements were calculated 'in an angular geometry of sexuality' (LLP, 31-3).

Written in the Edo period, Saikaku's novel is a book of the 'floating world' (*Ukiyo*), the first major genre of popular Japanese fiction written between the 1680s and the 1770s in Kyoto and Osaka that captures hedonistic, pleasure-seeking behaviours of the Japanese, and include stories of geishas, courtesans and brothels. *The Life of an Amorous Woman* tells the story of a young traveller making his way to the capital city, passing through the banks of the Mumézu River where he comes across two gentlemen travellers. Watching them from afar, he follows them to a hermitage owned by an old lady of noble visage. The two companions confess that they are 'both hard put to understand love in all its diverse aspects' with one desiring women above all else, and the other put upon to never see a woman again. Having heard of the

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by Dennis Washburn was published in 2015 (unabridged with annotations and "Introduction"), New York: W. W. Norton & Co.

woman's 'great repute' the travellers ask to 'learn these great mysteries' of love (*AW*, 123). The woman proceeds to reveal a series of tales in which she recalls her sexual deviancy before she chose to atone for her sins and commit her life to Buddhism by living in solitude in her final years. As she tells the story of her past, it becomes clear that there is a clear crossover between Saikaku's heroine and Carter's Lady Purple. Saikaku's protagonist describes how 'from the beginning of my tenth year I fell prey to wanton feelings' and was 'favoured in [her] looks' (*AW*, 124). In one instance, Saikaku's storyteller recalls how, when she was twelve years old, she is taken in by a couple who arrange for her to marry their son. Sleeping in the same bed as the husband and wife, Saikaku's heroine seduces the husband, much like Lady Purple seduces her foster father in *The Notorious Amours of Lady Purple* (although Saikaku's tale has a less grisly end, with the husband and wife merely dismissing the young girl from their service, blaming her promiscuous nature to her city upbringing). The tales recall the woman's days as a courtesan who 'shaves her eyebrows, paints heavily above her forehead and eyes with an ink stick' (*AW*, 137) As she falls into a life of wantonness and sexual pleasure, Saikaku's narrator speaks of her successes with men, claiming of one that she 'made him my own creature' (*AW*, 176) before confessing that 'the men whom I could remember having enjoyed as partners were more than I could count on my fingers' (*AW*, 178). And, much like Lady Purple, at the end of her life she reflects on her 'shameful past' making her way to Mount Narutaki where she could 'aspire to reach the other shore' (*AW*, 207). Saikaku's imagery is mirrored in Lady Purple's nightly performance as she is reduced to 'scavenging on the seashore' (LLP, 38). Unlike Lady Purple though, Saikaku's courtesan devotes her life to religion and is thus found by the two travellers where she recalls her story.

There are more similarities between the two tales, although many of these are in comparison to Carter's personal notes in her journal, rather than the final published version of 'The Loves of Lady Purple'. For example, at one point Saikaku's heroine reveals the lengths to which clients will go to in order to please their mistresses. She recalls how, after one courtesan expressed her love for clove bushes and deer, one gentleman ordered the back of a courtesan's parlour to be demolished and had a number of clove bushes planted there, 'thus making the room into a veritable field'. After bringing two deer to add to the scene, he thus restores the parlour to its previous state (*AW*, 147). Similarly, Carter experiments with this idea, writing in her journals: 'She

wanted to see a snowy landscape, one fur-lined summer's day; so, her lover spread four miles of silk around the garden' (Add. MS 88899/1/93).

The prostitute narrative of *The Life of an Amorous Woman* can, in some ways, be seen as a means of giving autonomy and agency to the elderly woman who tells her tale to the two male travellers. Yet, this agency is only permitted as she has lived to tell her tale, a means by which she has succeeded in achieving because she has seen the error of her ways. However, there is an additional layer of complexity that distorts this agency. For example, the true narrator of Saikaku's novel is not, as we are led to believe, the older woman; rather it is the lone and anonymous male traveller who overhears the conversation between the woman talking to the two men. Furthermore, the very fact that the novel is authored by a male further distorts any perceptions the reader has had with regard to understanding the novel as a means of expressing (positive) overt female sexuality; the older woman is too, puppeteered by a male, revealing the fictional and constructed nature of the source.

There are other underlying limitations within the narrative that indirectly restrict Lady Purple's performance, restricting her to a gendered stereotype of promiscuous femininity. Not only does Lady Purple become locked within a set of repetitive and prescribed set of gendered behaviours, but Carter's narrative is also limited through the intertextuality of Saikaku's story. The result is a complex layering of inauthenticity in which the 'reality' is lost through the act of story-telling. The lone traveller eavesdrops on the courtesan's story in Saikaku's story; a version of her events then evolves into a nightly performance in Carter's 'The Loves of Lady Purple' which itself is performed by a puppet and her puppet-master. Yet, Lady Purple and Saikaku's courtesan differ in their respective endings; Carter's marionette is able to break free from the shackles of her strings (although whether or not she is free or continues to re-enact her performance night after night is a source of contention), whereas Saikaku's old woman, although living a life of debauchery and scandal, ultimately shifts to a redemptive figure at the ending of the tale.

Theatricality and performance in 'The Loves of Lady Purple'

Much like Saikaku's female story-teller, Carter's Lady Purple also 'wears' her womanliness as she enacts her performance night after night. She is a 'universal whore' (LLP, 31) with 'ferocious teeth, carved out of mother o' pearl' with 'five inches of

enamelled scarlet' for nails' (LLP, 31). After a highly-charged erotic performance, Lady Purple is made to lie in her 'coffin-shaped case' (LLP, 42): however, the old professor is so enraptured with the puppet that he later re-dresses her, adorning her with the props and jewels that she is accustomed to wearing during her performance. In a suitably vampiric fashion, having awoken from her coffin at dusk, Lady Purple proceeds to drain her master of his blood, absorbing his life's essence into her own wooden body. The growing physical strength of the puppet contrasts with the increasingly fragility of the professor's body as Lady Purple crushes his 'delicate apparatus of bond and skin', sucking 'his breath from his lungs so that her own bosom heaved with it' (LLP, 43). Lady Purple's first act of freedom is to remove herself from the shackles in which she has been restrained, leaving the Professor's dead body then heading for the nearest brothel.

Carter's pertinent use of vampiric imagery within the scene is a 'metaphorical representation of a [male] fear of Otherness' (Wisker, 1997: 126). The fear of the Other, argues Gina Wisker, provokes male anxieties and fears over the potential of female sexuality: the monstrous female vampire as both non-male and invasive 'represent[s] male anxieties of sexually voracious women' (Wisker, 1997: 126). The symbolic nature of the coffin not only seeks to reinforce the vampiric image of Lady Purple (and thus the idea of a monstrous woman that must be contained) but it also pertains to Elisabeth Bronfen's idea of the displayed female corpse. Take, for example the glass coffin that Sleeping Beauty is contained in during her 'undead state' in which she can be 'viewed from all sides, but owing to the prominence of its position, the body virtually offers itself to the gaze of the other, drawing its gaze onto itself' (Bronfen, 1992: 100). Similarly, Lady Purple serves as *object d'art*, confirming her status as one who invites spectacle: her performance on stage deliberately invites the male gaze. Her very vocation and position as a (female) puppet seeks to relegate her to the realm of 'Other' whereby she must remain inferior to the patriarchal hierarchy. Bronfen goes on to comment that 'the "surveyed" feminine body is meant to confirm the power of the masculine gaze' (Bronfen, 1992: 102), which is further acknowledged through the Professor's infantile treatment of the doll. For her own part, Carter attempts to challenge the spectacle of the male gaze, in a reversal that sees the marionette gain her physical strength from her master. However, once Lady Purple attains her freedom, she immediately burns her home down and leaves for the nearest brothel, mirroring the actions of *The Notorious Amours*. Lady Purple's freedom from the shackles of the

puppet-master is distorted by her inability to imagine a script alternative to that which she has re-enacted night after night. Although she is successful in breaking free of the strings that constrained her to the form of marionette, she is trapped within a 'tautological paradox' in which she cannot perceive anything beyond that which she has been taught, open to only the 'scantiest notion of possibilities' (LLP, 45). And yet, it is unclear from Carter's tale where the origins of Lady Purple's behaviour lie: if she was human and has been transformed into a puppet, forced to re-enact her former promiscuity night after night or, if the puppet-master teaches her how to behave through such repetitive nightly acts. When Lady Purple becomes human at the end of the story, it is not clear if she 'was renewed or newly born, returning to life or becoming alive, awakening from dream or coalescing into the form of a fantasy generated in her wooden skull by the mere repetition so many times of the same invariable actions' (LLP, 45).

Nevertheless, Lady Purple's behaviour is complicit with a gendered performative practice aligned with a distorted image of femininity and is unable to (re)imagine an alternative behaviour beyond such repetitions. This repetition is at once 'a reenactment and reexperiencing of a set of meanings already socially established' (Butler, 1990: 191). As Butler sets out in *Gender Trouble*:

> In other words, acts, gestures, and desire produce the effect of an internal core or substance, but produce this *on the surface* of the body, through the play of signifying absences that suggest, but never reveal, the organizing principle of identity as a cause. Such acts, gestures, enactments, generally construed, are *performative* in the sense that the essence or identity that they otherwise purport to express are *fabrications* manufactured and sustained through corporeal signs and other discursive means (Butler, 1990: 185; italics Butler's).

Thus, Lady Purple maintains a gendered performance even after the Professor's death, repeating the acts, gestures and desires that are complicit with her role as the *femme fatale*. Not only is she forced to enact a performance that aligns with her role as a monstrous woman but, argues Helen Davies, the relationship between puppet and puppet master is also founded on the idea of repetition, specifically inferring that ventriloquism in particular represents the lack of an independent authorial voice, capable only of producing 'inferior "copies" of the […] "original"' (2012: 17). Hillel Schwartz also suggests that 'the dummy's destiny is finally determined from above, but in the meantime it makes one articulate gesture after another in the direction of free will' (1996: 136), supporting Davies's argument that the marionette figure is unable to

attain an authentic idea of autonomy. These complexities raise a pertinent question: 'how do we know what is authentic behaviour and what is inauthentic behaviour? Can the marionette in ['Lady Purple'] behave in a way she's not programmed to behave?' (Katsavos, 1994: 11). Lady Purple must simultaneously enact her role of a real woman, a 'mistress of the whip', performing a tale that not only mimics the hundreds of performances that have gone before, but complies with a gendered act that sees her fall into the demise of her sex: she becomes 'herself her own replica, the dead yet moving image of the shameless Oriental Venus' (LLP, 39). The final scene of *The Notorious Amours of Lady Purple* in which the Professor's marionette transforms into a wooden puppet – i.e. the thing that she really is – results in a double-layered performance that complicates the notions of performativity and authenticity. This restricted performance lends itself to a wider debate concerning gender power struggles within the tale. The puppet in this instance fails to escape the blueprint to which she must conform as she is 'not simply the machine of desire. Lady Purple is the machine itself' (Munford, 2013: 121). She has perfected the art of gendered performance so entirely that such aspects of artificiality have for her, become real.

Beyond 'The Loves of Lady Purple': *bunraku* and oral agencies

The limits of puppet performance are inherently bound up with the form of *bunraku* theatre. Current-day performances of *bunraku* draw upon historical performances of puppet theatre, a significant portion of which were written in the eighteenth and nineteenth century. In *Noh and Bunraku*, Keene lists over 100 *bunraku* plays in Japan, the majority of which were performed for the first time performed between 1700-1899. In fact, Keene only provides the details of seven *bunraku* plays written in the last century, the majority of which are adaptations from other forms of Japanese theatre, or are based on Western plays. For example, a *bunraku* version of *Hamlet*, adapted by Onishi Toshio, was first performed in 1956; *Kokaji* (1941) is a dance play adapted from the *noh* drama of the same title that has its origins in the late tenth/early eleventh century; and *Tsuri onna* (1938), composed by Tsurusawa Dōhachi, is a dance play adopted from a *kyogen* play with the same name that was originally performed in

1901.[99] A *bunraku* version of John Luther Long's 1898 short story *Madame Butterfly*, which premiered on stage as *Madame Butterfly: A Tragedy of Japan* in 1900, was also adapted by Onishi Toshio and performed for the first time in 1956. By this time Puccini's opera had asserted itself as the main version of *Madame Butterfly*, (re)performing the main modern western myth of Oriental women. With so many historical plays still acted out as part of *bunraku* and relatively few new plays being introduced, there is little room for radically improvised or substantively revised versions of the tales (or indeed, new stories at all).

Carter's use of the marionette figure, although indicative of male anxieties around the uncontrolled femme fatale figure, experiments with a gendered performance that is reliant on repetitive signifiers, acts and gestures. Indeed, if we are to read the story as one which Lady Purple becomes alive for the very first time once she has killed the Professor, then the tale could be interpreted as one that conforms to a gendered narrative in which the marionette adheres only to the script that she has been taught. Yet, these scripted tales are challenged in Carter's later stories: for example, in *The Bloody Chamber and Other Stories* (1979) Carter uses the form of the fairy-tale as a means of writing a feminist agenda. Adapting traditional tales such as Charles Perrault's *Bluebeard*, and in some cases inverting tales such as *Little Red Riding Hood* and *Beauty and the Beast*, Carter rewrites the tales to openly challenge gendered perceptions of femininity (and of masculinity). In 'The Bloody Chamber' Bluebeard's wife is rescued by her mother, who comes dashing on a horse with her skirts swept to one side; Red Riding Hood explores her burgeoning sexuality, creating herself equal to the beast as she lies down with the wolf at the end of the story; the heroine of 'The Tiger's Bride' likewise chooses to lie with the tiger 'as each stroke of his tongue ripped off skin after successive skin, all the skins of a life in the world' (TB, 75).

The fairy-tale narrative, argues Crofts, is a 'productive form for [Carter's] own mythologising project because its roots in the oral tradition might offer a way to circumscribe the phallocentric patriarchal constructions of gender which had become inscribed in the fixed literary versions' (2003: 41). The importance of the oral tradition

[99] The other three *bunraku* plays Keene lists are: *Ne mo Sayuru Haru no Usuzuki*, author unknown (1915), *Sanyūshi Homare no Nikudan* by Matsiu Shōō (1932, not currently performed), and *Tōkaidōcū Hizakurige* (1919). Original story by Jippensha Ikku.

and its relationship with the fairy tale is not lost here, and the matrilineal associations of telling stories orally (and providing a form of vocal agency) is pertinent to a reading of Carter's stories. As Gamble points out '[the fairy tale] has always been identified with women who have played a large part in its development both as tellers and as writers' (1997: 131) and it is 'precisely because the fairy-tale is regarded as a domestic and personal narrative form' – in other words feminine – that it becomes 'a medium for gossip, anecdote, rumour' (Carter, 1990: xxi).

Yet a disassociation between speech and action can be perceived as a positive space in which marginalised groups can allow themselves to be heard, permitting a new approach to challenging the normative prescribed social 'script'. For example, in *Anagrams of Desire* (2003) Crofts suggests that radio plays offer a 'unique space for the articulation of (female) subjectivity because of its reliance on the voice' (2003: 48). Citing Mary Ann Doane, she writes that 'the voice appears to lend itself readily as an alternative to the image, as a potentially viable means whereby the woman can "make herself heard" (1980: 346). Notably, Davies also suggests that ventriloquist strategies – in which we are presented with a silent, passive woman – also provides the 'opportunity to produce "voice", to exercise agency where it has socially and culturally been denied […] The 'dummy's performance allows space to "talk back" to the machinations of patriarchal ventriloquisms' (Davies, 2012: 22).

In *bunraku*, holding on to the traditions of the performance (as well as the performances themselves) can be interpreted as a 'talking back' to Western modernity. For example, the role of the chanter in *bunraku* puppet theatre went on to influence early forms of cinema in Japan, with a story-teller called a *benshi* appearing at the side of the screen. The role of the *benshi* was to provide a dialogue (called a *setsumei*) to contextualise and explain foreign concepts to the audience. Although Donald Richie argues that a *benshi's* success was marketed on the fact that Japanese cinema-goers were 'constantly afraid of missing a point' (1982: 23), Jeffrey Dym (2000) suggests that their role goes far deeper than such simple psychology, and links back to the audio-visual experience that *bunraku* puppet theatre offered. The chanter and *samisen* player supplied the vocal narration for the visual dramatics on stage. Aural and visual were kept as separate entities, a practice that was retained throughout silent Japanese cinema. Joseph Anderson suggests that,

> Perhaps one reason why Japanese audiences readily accepted *benshi* was because they fit into the prevalent practice of comingled theatre – that is, performances in which two (or more) separate but equal forms of narrative information, usually one visual, the other aural, coalesce into one presentation (1992: 262-68).

The *benshi* was more than a reassuring role to the audience; he helped bridge the gap between Japanese theatrical tradition and Western invention, whilst remaining an informative and educational source. The role of a *benshi* in the early twentieth century was certainly lucrative; they were often advertised by specific film theatres and marketed alongside new films being promoted. If a *benshi* was not engaging, or witty, or informative enough for the audience, then cinema-goers would often wait until the same film came out under another *benshi*'s narration: 'the issue often was not going to see such-and-such a film, but to hear such-and-such a *benshi*; that is, they chose a theatre based on not what was showing but who provided the *setsumei*' (Dym, 2000: 528). The *benshi* were actors on their own stage, performing a style of theatrics to which the audience were accustomed. They remained an integral part of the cinema experience until the introduction of sound technology in the mid-1930s – it is down to the *benshi* that the era of silent films in Japan lasted much longer than it did in other countries. Thus, the ventriloquist operation of the chanter in *bunraku* had an opportunity through the act of story-telling to invoke a sense of agency and autonomy away from the scripted nature of performance. The oral act of story-telling provides an opportunity to re-tell, re-write and (in Carter's case) challenge heteronormative narrative structures.

Performance, spectacle and incest in 'The Executioner's Beautiful Daughter' and Sigmund Freud's 'A child is being beaten'

Given the complex dynamics of Japanese puppet theatre with its multi-faceted components (the puppet-masters, the chanters, and the samisen player), references to *bunraku* puppet theatre in Carter's fiction are not always obvious. Yet once a contextual understanding of the form has been developed, there is an opportunity to further analyse additional (and previously neglected) texts in comparison to *bunraku*. Indeed, it is Carter's more subtle images of *bunraku* theatre that serve as the most fascinating to assess on a critical level. The second short story in Carter's *Fireworks* collection, 'The Executioner's Beautiful Daughter' is a prime example of how Carter drew on Japanese influences in a less-direct way. Carter's first story written during her time in Japan

(between July and August 1970), 'The Executioner's Beautiful Daughter' draws on images that strongly resonate with Japanese theatre. Moreover, the incestuous relationship between father/ daughter and brother/ sister picks up a theme that Carter was already writing about (for example, in *The Magic Toyshop*), but was heightened during her time abroad. Carter's interest in incest, which admits a Freudian reading in relation to 'The Executioner's Beautiful Daughter', is inflected by her experience of Japanese culture.

Much like the other tales that make up the *Fireworks* collection, 'The Executioner's Beautiful Daughter' 'dispense[s] almost entirely with such conventional trappings as character and plot […] and compel[s] attention via the play of language and ideas', with Carter claiming in an interview in 1977 that the story is 'absolutely static, […] it's all about words' (BLSA C1365/12). The opening sentence reads 'Here, we are high in the uplands', deliberately estranging the reader into unfamiliar territory. Carter sets out a tableau frozen in time with 'whispering shifting sawdust freshly scattered over impacted surface of years of sawdust clotted […] with blood shed so long ago' and 'the air is choked all day with diffuse moisture tremulously, endlessly on the point of becoming rain' (EBD, 15-16). An executioner beheads his son in a theatrical spectacle whilst the inhabitants of the village looks on: decapitation is the only retribution for the incestuous love between the executioner's daughter and his son. Living in a wet, cold and impoverished environment, the village is ruled by an absent king who 'is in reality the poorest beggar in all his ragged kingdom' who 'hangs by […] an iron ring set in the roof of a stone hut' (EBD, 23-4). In her draft notes for the short story Carter confirms that 'the king only exercises a ritual function: the true ruler is the executioner' (Add. MS 88899/93/1).

The origins of 'The Executioner's Beautiful Daughter' can be traced to Carter's more experimental endeavours, with draft notes and a poem appearing in her journal written in 1970 during her time in Japan. She writes

> decapitation is the punishment for incest
> the executioner in his mask of black leather
> In this country, hanging is the punishment for incest; the hangman and his beautiful daughter make love beneath the gallows until the noose shakes with the vibrations of their well-orchestrated orgasms (Add. MS 88899/1/93).

The poem then later appears as a simplified version of the tale, formed through a series of five couplets that summarise the central premise of the story.

> In this country, incest,
> is a capital crime
>
> we learn at school didactic
> dirges for copulating sibling
>
> and only the chief executioner, dare
> in the privacy of his leather mask
>
> upon the blood-bespattered block
> make love to his beautiful daughter
>
> he never dare take off his mask
> lest, in a mirror, he surprise his face
> (Add. MS 88899/1/93).

There is a clear similarity between Carter's earlier poem and her final published tale. For example, the lines that appear in the *Fireworks* collection have their origins in the final couplet in the poem above: 'Yet the executioner dare not take off the mask in case, in a random looking-glass or, accidentally mirrored in a pool of standing water, he surprised his own authentic face. For then he would die of fright' (EBD, 18). The evolution of Carter's writing process seems to suit her during her time in Japan, and she admits to writing 'short pieces when [she] was living in a room too small to write a novel in' (1995: 459). Her journals also show that she was experimenting with haiku poetry (Add. MS 88899/1/93) and her process of adaptation from poetry to prose reveals the negotiations and revisions she had to make in order to produce the final version of her stories. For example, the short story 'Souvenir of Japan' also appears as a poem 'Only Lovers' in which Carter writes

> Only lovers use this hotel and so
> Our presence here defines our status.
> He checks the price per hour
> It is not unreasonable. […]
>
> It is not a bedroom at all!
> It is a safety net in which the death-
> Defying somersault of love may be performed

In perfect safety' (Add. MS 88899/1/93).[100]

Although 'The Executioner's Beautiful Daughter' is perceived as a less obviously Japanese text, there are still images within the short story than can be likened to *bunraku* puppet theatre. The dramatic backdrop of the highlands, in which plays a 'baleful almost-music […] repercussing in an ecstatic agony of echoes against the sounding boards of the mountain' (EBD, 15) constructs a stage onto which the performance of the execution will be carried out. The distant music is reminiscent of the samisen players that provide the sound for *bunraku* performances: the 'twanging, plucking and abusing with horsehair bows' (EBD, 15) is antithetical to the harmonious background it should provide, and acts as an ominous foreboding to the events that lie ahead; as Keene reflects that a 'performance whether of a complete play or of only a single scene, invariably begins with a samisen passage which creates the desired mood' (1990: 157). The early pages of the story are littered with deliberate staging techniques and references to theatrical nuances – the executioner performs a 'hieratic ritual' and commands a 'dramatic silence' from his audience; the altar on which he beheads his victim (his son) is described as 'the canvas on which he exercises his art' (EBD, 16-17). In a curious gesture that promotes an artistic execution that culminates in a *literal* execution, Carter's narrative suggests that 'art becomes far more important than life', an attribute she closely associates with the Japanese 'because they make life an art and once you do that, you forget how to live' (Bell, 1973: 26). In a story that sees an executioner behead his own son for committing incest with his only daughter, Carter integrates a counter-cultural narrative that incorporates popular Japanese themes such as love and death alongside familiar Carter tropes developed throughout the 1960s, such as incest and an exuberant use of theatrical imagery.

However, it is the striking image of the executioner that bears an uncanny resemblance to the puppeteers of *bunraku*. In her notes on Japanese puppet theatre, Carter reflects that the 'puppet-masters wear loose, black hoods that entirely conceal

[100] The image of the acrobat recurs throughout Carter's Japanese fiction: for example, in *The Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor Hoffman* Desiderio is sodomised by a group of acrobats in chapter four, which is entitled 'The Acrobats of Desire'. In chapter five, when the Count is asked if there is anything in the world that he condemns, he responds with the phrase 'The death defying somersault of love' (*DH*, 144).

their heads, so they look like executioners' (Add. MS 88899/1/80). Hidden behind a mask and swathes of black cloth the executioner in the tale

> stands more than six and a half feet high and he is broad to suit; the warped stumps of villagers gaze up at him with awe and fear. He is dressed always in mourning and always wears a curious mask. The mask is made of supple, close-fitting leather dyed an absolute black and it conceals his hair and the upper part of his face entirely except for two narrow slits through which issue the twin regards of eyes as inexpressive as though they were part of the mask. This mask reveals only his blunt-lipped, dark-red mouth and the greyish flesh which surrounds it (EBD, 17).

As the executioner rises above the crowds below him, his booted feet resting on the 'grim and sacrificial altar which is to him, the canvas on which he exercises his art' (16-17). Reflecting on his early work on *bunraku* theatre, Keene recalls seeing photographs of performances, admitting that 'the first thing to strike my eyes […] was the face of the principal operator, then his costume, and only thirdly the doll in his hands'. However, after experiencing a performance in the flesh Keene finds himself 'drawn into the world of the puppets, and if I looked at the operators' face afterwards it was by deliberate choice' (1990: 119). This correlates with the image of the executioner, who, although an undeniable part of the performance, is so grotesquely bland in his appearance that 'there is nothing there to be read' (Barthes, 1970: 62).

The execution, watched by the 'gnarled features' of the grinning audience is sustained by its spectatorship, maintaining an authentic spectacle that that is interpreted as a performance. The spectators are described with an 'intent immobility […] wholly absorbed as they are in the performance of their hieratic ritual' (EBD, 16), and the string band, accompanied by the 'screeching wail' of a 'choir of stunted virgins' is reminiscent of *bunraku* whose 'progress resulting from a steadily increased awareness of dramatic possibilities, may be measured in terms of the additional demands made on it audience' (Keene, 1991: 124). The audience take part in a 'violent "act of viewing"' in which 'complicity, intimacy and distance […] work in tandem' (Robson, 2017: 103). The boundaries between the spectator, victim and the perpetrator in Carter's short story 'dissolve in a frenzy of identifications' (Adler, 2015: 237) in which the spectators experience a form of perverse pleasure at the violent performance carried out by the

executioner: 'there is no spectacle we so eagerly pursue, as that of some uncommon and grievous calamity' (Burke, 1997: 222).[101]

The deliberate use of theatrical tropes makes it possible for the audience to accept the atrocities of the execution. Recalling watching a performance of 'The Village School', Keene (one of the most prominent writers on *bunraku* puppet theatre)[102] writes about a scene in which a father examines the severed head of his son: 'the scene […] would either fill the audience with terror or stir uneasy laughter if not acted with ritual formality'. The ritual act of the executioner ensures that he complies with a pre-meditated performance, and makes 'it possible for us to witness this scene without any acute discomfort' (1990: 125). The audience become complicit in the performance of execution because they are no longer able to distinguish between authenticity and art: 'No hideous parody of the delights of the flesh would be alien to them … *did they but know how things were, in fact, performed'* (EBD, 22). Like the executioner, they are scripted to follow a performance: other desires are unknown and thus unknowable to them. Drawing parallels with the marionette in 'The Loves of Lady Purple' who performs in the only way that she has been taught, so the villagers' desires are premeditated.

Bunraku's mix of drama and theatrical aesthetics also means that the audience have to ignore some elements of the performance that have been adapted to satisfy formal requirements, or to make movement easier for the puppeteers. For example, *bunaku* puppets often have disproportionately small heads to satisfy the idea that a small head is more aesthetically pleasing that a large one (see Figure 1 for an example). Furthermore, Keene points out, female puppets often have no feet so the kimono can fall in a straight line to the floor, uninterrupted. For practical reasons the left arm is longer than the right as the operator of the left arm is required to stand farther away from the puppet's body. The audience accepts the visual implications of the distorted proportions of the puppet for the aesthetics of the performance.

There is also something to be said about the incestuous relationship between the executioner's children, and between the executioner and his daughter (who remains absent from the main scene of the spectacle). A theme that Carter also explores in 'Penetrating to the Heart of the Forest' (1974), incest is typically a Christian taboo and

[101] From Edmund Burke's essay 'Enquiry into the sublime and beautiful' (1757).
[102] See Keene, D. (1965) *Bunraku: The Art of the Japanese Puppet Theatre* *Twenty Plays of the Noh Theatre* (1970) and *Noh and Bunraku* (1990).

has not been abhorred in Japan until recently. However, conducting incest is not illegal in Japan and the law prohibiting incest in Japan was abolished in 1881, and incestuous couples are allowed to have children. The Civil Code of Japan restricts family marriages, but the act of incest itself is not a crime.[103]

The inhabitants that live in the sordid village in the highlands implicitly believe that they have been damned, with traditional folk tales suggesting that their tribe, once living in a more prosperous region, were banished for the 'enthusiastic practice of incest […] every baroque variation possible upon the determinate quadrille of the nuclear family' (EBD, 24). Yet 'in the immutable privacy of his leathern hood' the executioner is permitted 'make love to his beautiful daughter' (EBD, 24) as there is nobody there (not even the king) to cut off his head. Notably, Carter's comments in her draft for the tale suggest that this incestuous relationship is consensual. She writes that

> In spite of all the dirges for fornicating siblings which every day terrify our ears and enlighten our minds, every day the executioner exercises his inalienable rights and makes love with his beautiful daughter upon his bloodstained block.
>
> Even in the last extremity of the act, he retains his leather hood
> Their common shriek of pleasure transforms the sullen courtyard of flowers explode where few, if any, flowers grow before to see in action an example of that tragic dignity which lend lovers their solitude and their beauty (Add. MS 88899/1/93).

Although by no means a new trope within Carter's work (Melanie's aunt Margaret is in relationship with Margaret's brother Francie in *The Magic Toyshop*, and Carter would later return to a theme of incest in *Wise Children* with Dora and her Uncle Peregrine), Carter's willingness to experiment with the taboo subject is magnified and intensified during her time in Japan.

Carter's references to incest in 'The Executioner's Beautiful Daughter' lend themselves to a Freudian reading in which pleasure is derived from the child (in this case the son) being beaten (being killed) thereby affirming the daughter's status as the preferred child. Notably, the child being beaten is never the one producing the phantasy – Freud suggests that it is invariably another child 'most often a brother or a sister […] the child producing the fantasy is never doing the beating herself' (1919: 184-5). In his

[103] Consensual incest is also legal in Belgium, France, The Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Luxembourg, Turkey, Russia, parts of India, Brazil and Israel. Therefore, there is not a Western/Eastern element to laws on incest.

essay ‘A child is being beaten’ (1919) Freud suggests that the interplay between the beater (invariably the father or a figure of authority), the beaten, and the spectator (who are often siblings) has three distinct phases. The first is the ‘phantasy of the period of incestuous love’ in which the spectator affirms parental preference through watching his/her sibling being beaten: ‘He (my father) loves only me, and not the other child, for he is beating it’ (Freud, 1919: 189). The second phase explores unconscious and masochistic tendencies in which the child itself is being beaten by the father; in the third phase, the child who produces the phantasy appears ‘almost as a spectator, while the father persists in the shape of a teacher or some other person in authority’. In the case of ‘The Executioner’s Beautiful Daughter’ the father/ executioner fulfils this role, and the phantasy of the third phase becomes sadistic once more, confirming ‘My father does not love this other child, *he loves only me’* (Freud, 1919: 187; italics Freud’s).

The oedipal implications of the execution suggest that executioner’s daughter derives an egotistic lift through the death of her brother, bringing about a perverse and incestuous pleasure. Pleasure and masochistic disgust associated in phase one of Freud’s ‘Child’ theory is highlighted through the presence of the spectators, who willingly participate in the decapitation. The third stage in particular suggests that a wide audience is able to derive pleasure from violent acts; but at this phase spectators attempt to deny complicity, watching from a distance. Such denial is ultimately unsuccessful as the onlookers or bystanders still ‘participate in the images’ spectacular pains and pleasures albeit indirectly’ (Adler, 2017: 250). A Freudian reading of ‘The Executioner’s Beautiful Daughter’ therefore not only unveils a new interpretation of the tale, but also provides a way of understanding the complicit relationship between spectator, puppet and puppet-master in *bunraku* theatre: the ritual act of the performance permits space for violent acts.

‘The Executioner’s Beautiful Daughter’, although not obviously Japanese, has underlying themes that can be traced back to the images, influences and ideas which Carter was exposed to during Japan. The theatrical-like decapitation of the executioner’s son draws its imagery from *bunraku* theatre, and the violent spectacle – and the pleasure drawn from the spectacle – lends itself to a Freudian reading of Carter’s tale.

Gender performance in *kabuki* theatre and *The Passion of New Eve*

Thus far, this chapter has demonstrated that there is a strong overlap between the images that appear in Carter's Japanese tales and those that are associated with *bunraku* puppet theatre. Given the excess of images that can be drawn upon, it is perhaps no surprise that critics such as Sage, Fisher and Crofts have chosen to focus their analysis on the subject. Yet, a further study of Japanese theatre and a deliberate inclusion of texts written after Carter's time in Japan provides an opportunity for a continued analysis of other forms of traditional Japanese theatre. The introduction of this chapter set out the different types of Japanese theatre and included references to *bunraku*, *kabuki*, *noh* and *kyogen*. In particular, gender performativity in *The Passion of New Eve* (Carter's first novel written after her return to England from Japan) finds itself resonating with *kabuki*'s own representations of gender. As a novel intended to comment on the 'cultural production of femininity' and to act as a 'discussion of femininity as a commodity' (Haffenden, 1985: 148), gender identity and what it means to be wo/man is at the heart of both *The Passion of New Eve* and *kabuki*.

Contemporary *kabuki* is distinguished by its use of an all-male cast, known as *onnagata*. Historically, *kabuki* did not always have an all-male cast, and in seventeenth-century Japan female characters were performed by courtesans. This meant that *kabuki* theatre became associated with debauchery and prostitution, with courtesans offering their services after performances had come to an end. To address this problem, government officials during the Edo period (1603-1868) pushed for a review of *kabuki* in order to 'purge' it of its 'unsavoury elements' (Fisher-Sorgenfrei, 2003: 244). Young boys were brought in to replace the women and to play the female characters and became known as the *onnagata*. The *onnagata* did more than just impersonate specific characteristics of women as part of their performance: they created an ideal version of femininity that even the courtesans had been unable to achieve. The effort the *onnagata* put in to portraying the ideal woman was painstaking and young boys would learn how to adapt themselves to the role physically, walking with the knees together and their shoulders slightly stooped, taking on the posture of a woman. Butler's theories of gender performance echo the efforts that the *onnagata* went to in order to appear 'womanly', as she says:

> Performativity is thus not a single "act," for it is always a reiteration of a norm or set of norms, and to the extent that it acquires an act-like status in the present,

> it conceals or dissimulates the conventions of which it is a repetition (Butler, 1993: xxi).

The *onnagata*'s portrayal of femininity was so alluring that female spectators started to copy the movements and the styles of the female impersonators. Instead of the *onnagata* imitating women, the idea of Womanliness was standardised by male *kabuki* actors. Painstaking practices to perfect female impersonations are still carried out today, and it is through adopting a 'hyperconsciousness' (Senelick, 2000: 89) of the masculine body that *onnagata* create an idealised version of femininity through a performing a series of gestures and mannerisms.

Similarly, in *The Passion of New Eve*, Carter deliberately draws attention to the male construction of femininity through the movie star Tristessa de St Ange, "The most beautiful woman in the world" (*PNE*, 5) who is revealed to be a man in drag. The novel tells the story of Evelyn, a young university lecturer who is caught up in the chaotic revolution of a dystopian America. Raised on Hollywood ideals of femininity (reinforced through the gendered falsehood of movie stars such as Tristessa), Evelyn's own relationship with women is built on misogynistic and objective practices, a 'result of how he has been culturally taught how to view femininity' (Makinen, 1997: 156). Abandoning his lover, Leilah, after a botched abortion, Evelyn is captured by a group of feminists before being castrated by a triple-breasted woman known as 'Mother'. Evelyn becomes Eve, and s/he represents the ultimate construction of femininity, learning her behaviours and attributes from the very films that he watched in his youth.

Palmer suggests that there are three different types of 'the performative aspects of gender' in the novel (1997: 29). The first is through the transformation of Evelyn to Eve, both biologically (through his castration by Mother Nature) and through her construction of gendered 'female' behaviours. It is through the 'subsequent inculcation of the attributes of dependence and passivity that women are expected to display, and his enactment of them, that make him truly *feminine*' (Palmer, 1997: 29). Moreover, it is understanding the treatment at the hands of a man (specifically, the impotent Zero) that contributes to the final construction of Eve's femininity. I agree with Palmer's suggestion that there are a number of stages to Eve's transformation to Woman, although there appears to be three distinct phases, rather than two. The first is the biological construction of her physical self, a 'lyrical abstraction of femininity' (*PNE*, 74). Visually, Eve is everything her former self desired in a woman, resulting in a

psychological discrepancy that evokes a warped narcissistic desire based on her (previously male) sexual needs: 'They had turned me into the *Playboy* centre fold. I was the object of all the unfocused desires that had ever existed in my own head. I had become my own masturbatory fantasy' (*PNE*, 75). The second stage of Eve's transformation consists of psychological conditioning: forced to watch Hollywood movies, films about reproduction and non-phallic images, Eve begins to learn what it is to be a woman through a grounding of repetitive acts and gestures, an approach which is again consistent with Butler's theory of gender performance. As Butler comments

> As in other ritual social dramas, the action of gender requires a performance that is *repeated*. This repetition is at once a re-enactment and re-experiencing of a set of meanings already socially established; and it is the mundane and ritualised form of their legitimation. Although there are individual bodies that enact these significations by becoming stylised into gendered modes, this "action" is a public action. There are temporal and collective dimensions to these actions, and their public character is not inconsequential; indeed, the performance is effected with the strategic aim of maintaining gender within its binary frame – (Butler, 1990: 191).

However, it is only when Eve has the opportunity to enact these behaviours, and regulatory norms are achieved 'materialisation through a forcible reiteration of those norms' (Butler, 1993: xii) that Eve truly understands what it is to be Woman. Zero's sexual objectification of Eve (an exaggerated imitation of Evelyn's own mistreatment of women), coupled with a sexual longing for Tristessa in his male form provokes this change, and Eve finds herself willingly submitting to the needs of her new body: 'I wanted the swooning, dissolvent woman's pleasure I had, heretofore, seen but never experienced' (*PNE*, 147).

A second example of the construction of femininity in *The Passion of New Eve* is demonstrated through Leilah, the woman Evelyn has an affair with in the open chapters of the novel. Before his transformation, Evelyn seeks to fulfil his sexual pleasure through unhealthy and objective relationships with women and his relationship with Leilah is evidence of his misogynistic and abusive behaviour towards women. The first time that they meet, Leilah is objectified and fetishised as Evelyn observes her wearing a 'pair of black, patent leather shoes with straps around the ankles' with an 'immense coat of red fox' (*PNE*, 19) slung around her shoulders. Leilah is a construction of male desire and complies with this construction through her various props and guises as she transforms herself into a version of femininity who lives 'only

in the not-world of the mirror' (*PNE*, 28). Her 'conscious effort' to become a sexualised, feminised version of herself however is revealed to be 'play-acting' when she reveals her 'true' self as a feminist fighter in the final chapters of the novel: her previous masquerade serves as representation of the artifice of femininity. Luce Irigaray's theories on the construction of femininity in *This Sex is Not One* (1985)[104] suggest that

> masquerade has to be understood as what women do in order to recuperate some element of desire, to participate in man's desire, but at the price of renouncing their own. In the masquerade, they submit to the dominant [male] economy of desire in an attempt to remain "on the market" in spite of everything (Irigaray, 1985: 76).

Yet, argues Irigaray, participating in the female masquerade (which refers to Rivière's theories on 'Femininity as Masquerade' [1929]) and mimicking conventional images of femininity, ultimately act as a means of exposing their constructed nature and thus their artifice and artificiality. This, argues Palmer, provides a means of avoiding being subject to male control, allowing women to achieve a degree of agency (1997: 26): 'I used to rouge my nipples and dance a dance called the End of the World, to lead the unwary into temptation –' (*PNE*, 173-4). Lilith's masquerade under the guise of Leilah complements Evelyn's own transformation to Eve: both are unveiled as the 'first woman' *in absentia* of a New World version of Adam.

The third example of gender performance in the novel – and the one with the most pertinent link to *kabuki* theatre – is the representation of the film star, Tristessa. The most beautiful woman in the world is in fact, a man, and his sex is revealed to Eve, Zero and his harem of wives when they discover him in his house of glass, hidden in the barren wasteland of the desert. As Zero tears off Tristessa's clothes, his true sex is revealed as he tries to 'swallow his cock within her thighs' (*PNE*, 128). The interchange between masculine and feminine pronouns is telling of Eve's inability to separate the actress Tristessa from the male figure presented in front of her. Tristessa's genitalia is strikingly masculine – 'the rude, red-purple insignia of maleness' (*PNE*, 128) – yet Evelyn still refers to 'her' thighs: the body that has been masquerading as a woman for so long is not so easily usurped by the phallic image. Tristessa is the illusion of Woman, a 'media image of the female, concocted by the male gaze' (Day, 1998: 20).

[104] Predating Butler's own theories on gender performativity.

> *That* was why he had been the perfect man's woman! He had made himself the shrine of his own desires, had made himself the only woman he could have loved! If a woman is indeed beautiful only in so far as she incarnates most completely the secret aspirations of man, no wonder Tristessa had been able to become the most beautiful woman in the world, an unbegotten woman who made no concessions to humanity (*PNE*, 128-9).

Eve/lyn expresses admiration for Tristessa's 'self-invention' and goes so far as to admit that he prefers her performance of femininity to the real thing. Interestingly, comments Palmer, in achieving a sex change, Tristessa 'employs neither surgery nor psychological conditioning. Her willed performance of femininity, combined with her audience's belief that she is a woman, are sufficient' (1997: 30). However, Tristessa's repetition of acts, gestures and gendered behaviours are significant in maintaining the illusion that he is a woman and Palmer's suggested 'willed performance' does not go far enough to capture the extent to which Tristessa is completely absorbed in her performance.

Similarly, in *kabuki*, the trained repetition of acts eliminates the need for female actors. As *kabuki* actor Nakamua Utaemon asks: 'why should women appear when I am here? There is no woman in all Japan who acts as femininely on stage as I' (Hyland, 1987: 6). Representations of femininity are perfected and exaggerated and centre on patriarchal notions of male desire: the reason that Tristessa is so successful in her disguise is because she adheres to male (or her own) expectations of the female body. The influence of cinema too, helps shape this, and Trisessa embodies 'cinema's projection of fantasy and illusion on to the female body' (Mulvey, 1994: 232). Similarly, during Evelyn's transformation, cinema plays a pertinent part in the construction of his femininity, as he watches Hollywood movies over and over again in the womb-like room in the caves of Beulah.

The prominence of gender-crossing as a motif in *The Passion of New Eve* and as a practice in *kabuki* theatre lends itself readily to exploration of performativity. Butler's theory on drag (*Gender Trouble*, 1990) suggest that the 'notion of an original or primary gender identity is often parodied within the cultural practices of drag, cross-dressing, and the sexual stylization of butch/femme identities' (1990: 187). Drag achieves this through an element of parody and excess – in *The Passion of New Eve* for example, Eve's excessive behaviours '[ring] false' to Zero, 'he knew it by some atavistic intuition' (*PNE*, 106). As she tries to conceal her true masculine self, she

'began to behave *too much* like a woman' (*PNE*, 101; italics in original). In *Mother Camp: Female Impersonators in America*, Esther Newton suggests that drag reveals the social construction of gender, commenting that,

> Drag says "my 'outside' appearance is feminine, but my essence 'inside' (the body) is masculine." At the same time it symbolises the opposite inversion: "my appearance 'outside' (my body, my gender) is masculine but my essence 'inside' (myself) is feminine" (1972: 103).

There is a distinction to be made between drag and *kabuki* in this regard. Specifically, unlike Butler's theories of drag in which it acts as a parody or a pastiche of gender, *kabuki* does not operate in this way. Rather, its exaggerated forms of stylization, aesthetics and gesture are so beyond the spectrum of illusion that they do not seek to replace the original. *Onnagata* are an imitation of the original, but in an extremely exaggerated form and *kabuki* does not aim to parody the sexual stylization of butch/femme identities in the same way that drag does. However, as much as drag creates a unified picture of 'woman' (which, suggests Palmer, is what its critics often oppose) it does reveal the distinctness of the falsely naturalised aspects of the gendered experience. In '*imitating gender, drag implicitly reveals the imitative structure of gender itself – as well as its contingency*' (Butler, 1990: 187; italics Butler's).

The off-stage persona of an *onnagata* is often misconceived, particularly by Westerners. It is assumed that the female impersonators integrate their roles into everyday life, practicing mannerisms of femininity both on and off the stage. This (incorrect) assumption owes much to a quote by Yoshizawa Ayame, who once commented, 'if he [the performer] does not live his normal life as if he was a woman, it would not be possible or him to be called a skilful *onnagata*' (Senelick, 2000: 85). However, Senelick points out that Ayame was primarily seeking to highlight the importance of the separation of gender identities: one must be aware of what constructs a 'masculine' gender, in order to accurately portray a feminine one. In order to be a truly skilful *onnagata*, a performer must abolish and eliminate the man in him in order to successfully embrace the perfect woman.

If the actors of *kabuki* do not seek to replace Woman (being such an exaggerated and overly-stylised figure of femininity) then Tristessa can be seen to be doing the opposite. She replaces and supersedes Woman, encapsulating an idea of femininity that embodies the virgin and the whore. Tristessa's disguise remains tantalisingly out of

reach. There are, of course, competing (and certainly more prominent) influences on the image of the transgendered subject in *The Passion of New Eve*: after all, it is a novel regarding representations of femininity in Hollywood cinema. A comparative reading of Carter's novel alongside Japanese *kabuki* provides just one interpretation of the story through which we can further understand the 'constructedness of all sex and gender' (Halberstam, 2000: 64). The transgendered subject in *The Passion of New Eve* is figured as a key queer trope (Prosser, 1998). Yet, suggests Rachel Carroll, Carter's novel also 'features motifs which […] are identified as symptomatic of transphobic discourses, including the "exposure" of the transgendered person as inauthentic and the depiction of sex reassignment surgery as an act of material and symbolic violence' (Carroll, 2011: Abstract). This problematic reading of Carter hinges on the 'queering' of Tristessa as he challenges gender normativity. Revealing the cultural construction of femininity, Trsistessa is 'unmask[ed] as a transvestite who has successfully disguised his male sex throughout "his"/her Hollywood career' (Rubenstein, 1993: 107). Marja Makinen goes on to comment that 'Tristessa's cross-dressing is a male-appropriation of femininity, not a radical form of gender-bending (1997: 158). There is also a tension here, suggests Carroll, that representations of femininity assumed by the transsexual is 'culturally constructed, and hence inauthentic' which build on a 'presumption that "women" have a prerogative to femininity based on "real" female experience' (2011: 249)

The 'authenticity trap' that *The Passion of New Eve* falls in to is arguably avoided in *kabuki* theatre: there is no exposure or 'unveiling', as the audience knows crossdressing is part of the act. *Kabuki* theatre deliberately presents an artificial construct of gender whilst simultaneously refusing its audience a 'true' representation of gendered norms through its act of excess and exaggeration. Similarly, both Eve/lyn and Tristessa masquerade as women, mimicking portrayals of femininity promoted by Hollywood cinema. Through a gendered performance, the *onnagata*, Evelyn and Tristessa mimic gendered behaviour that presents a falsehood of femininity.

Conclusion

Both *bunraku* and *kabuki* theatre have clear crossovers with Carter's fiction. Early drafts of her stories written during her time in Japan are particularly revealing in the extent to which her time abroad influenced her choice of images during the period: for example, her personal experiences of Japanese theatre, as well as the literature she was reading at the time resonate throughout 'The Loves of Lady Purple'. Carter's interest

in the animate, the inanimate, and boundaries between the real and unreal are also explored in this short story, and although the play itself that Lady Purple performs is not *bunraku*, the reader is left in no doubt that key components of the tale draw on imagery from traditional puppet theatre. Carter deliberately invokes the image of the marionette to draw upon the aesthetic possibilities that push against the boundaries of the real.

Images from Japanese theatre resonate throughout Carter's writing of the period, and the artful nature of the decapitation in 'The Executioner's Daughter' further demonstrates the extent to which Carter experimented and adapted these images for her own aesthetic. Lending itself to a Freudian reading, the story unveils a 'Japaneseness' realised through its incestuous content, a theme also explored in 'Penetrating to the Heart of the Forest'. And, although these were themes that Carter was already exploring in her fiction, the exposure to an alien culture gave Carter the opportunity to explore more taboo themes within her work, themes she believed aligned with a more sexually liberated people.

Finally, it is important to recognise the impact Japanese theatre had on Carter's work beyond the stories she wrote during her time in Japan. The theme of cross-dressing and the transgendered subject in *The Passion of New Eve* is similar to the performance of *kabuki* theatre: although I do not suggest that *kabuki* had a direct influence on the novel, a comparative analysis of the two is useful in furthering an understanding in the use of Japanese images of the theatre in Carter's work. Carter continued to explore representations of in/authenticity and artificial construction of femininity in her fiction post-Japan, and indeed, throughout the rest of her literary *oeuvre.*

Chapter three

Literature

A comparative reading of *The Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor Hoffman* (1972), 'A Souvenir of Japan' and 'Flesh and the Mirror' (both in *Fireworks*, 1974) alongside Tanizaki Jun'ichirō's 'The Tattooer' (1910), *Naomi* (1924), and *Some Prefer Nettles* (1929)

In an interview with Ronald Bell in 1973, Angela Carter refers to the Japanese author Tanizaki Jun'ichirō (1886-1965) as one of 'the world's great novelists' (34). She had discovered Tanizaki's work just four years early in 1969 during her very first trip to Japan: it was her lover, Sozo Araki, who first introduced Carter to Tanizaki's work, telling Carter '[His books are] all interesting. Just take one and read it' (2018: 18). Araki recalls speaking to Carter about the first Tanizaki novel she read, *The Makioka Sisters* (1943-1948; first published in English in 1957).[105] He remembers Carter's disappointment at the 'boring English title', but she thought the translation of the original Japanese title *Sasamei-yuki* to 'fragile snow' was a 'wonderful translation' (2018: 18). From her first encounter with Tanizaki in 1969 on the lawn of Shinjuku Gyoen (Araki, 2018: 18) Carter's interest in the Japanese author would continue well past the mid-1980s, when she wrote a review for Tanizaki's *Naomi* (1924) which was first translated into English in 1985. This chapter will assess the literary affinity between Carter and Tanizaki, analysing how similar themes are interspersed throughout both of their literary *oeuvres*. Specifically, it will assess the literary trajectory of both Carter and Tanizaki, suggesting that both authors were writing as a response to the period in which they were living. Tanizaki in early twentieth-century Japan, surrounded by new Western ideas and imports, crashing into the rise of Japanese militarism and nationalism in the late 1920s; and Carter, at the cusp of becoming radicalised as a woman, learning what it was like to live in a man's country where she was perceived as Other.

According to Araki, Carter read Japanese literature 'extensively' (2018: 38). She readily dismissed the work of Yukio Mishima (1925-1970),[106] who enjoyed

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[105] *The Makioka Sisters* was serialised between 1943 to 1948 and first translated and published in English by Edward Seidensticker in 1957.

[106] Male Japanese author whose works include *The Temple of the Golden Pavillion* (1956), trans. Ivan Morris (1959); *Forbidden Colours* (1951-53), trans. Alfred H. Marks, (1968-74) and *The Sea of Life Tetralogy* (1965-1970) and the play 'Madame de Sade' (1965), trans. Donald Keene (1967). Mishima was considered for the Nobel Prize for Literature three times (1963; 1964; 1965). He lost out to: Giorgos Seferis, Jean-Paul

success in the West in the 1970s, saying 'He's a shallow writer without any real talent'. In Carter's interview with Bell she compares reading Mishima's novels akin to 'being on a train with someone very unpleasant, like being on a train with a compulsive madman' (1973: 34). Nevertheless, Carter wrote about his death in her essay 'Mishima's Toy Sword' which appeared in the *New Society* in 1971. Mishima's ritual suicide by *hara-kiri* in 1970 after the failure of his *coup d'état* was news shared across the world. His manner of death befitted the artistic nature of one of Japan's greatest writers of the period: the 'conclusion to which most intellectuals came [that his death was] the climax of a life spent on the dangerous borderland between life and art' (1997: 243).

Carter also showed disdain for Osamu Dazai (1909-1948),[107] calling his 'childish manner […] nauseating', and had no interest in Nobel Laureate Kenzaburo Oe (1935-2015),[108] observing that he 'embraces narcissism, and not a shred of sexiness' (Araki, 2018: 38-9). Carter *did* enjoy the works of Kobo Abe (1924-1993),[109] Akiyuki Nosaka (1930-2015)[110] and Soseki Natsume (1867-1916),[111] calling the latter 'a very agreeable old man with considerable intelligence' and thought his works should be read more widely in Europe. Araki also notes that Carter held Murasaki Shikibu's *The Tale of Genji* (c. 1021) in high regard, telling him that in English she was known as 'Lady Purple', a nod to her short story 'The Loves of Lady Purple' in *Fireworks*.[112]

Sartre and Mikhail Aleksandrovich Sholokhov. His mentor, Yasunari Kawabata, won the prize in 1968.

[107] Male Japanese author whose works include *The Setting Sun* (1947), trans. Donald Keene (1956). In 1948, Dazie drowned himself in the Tamagawa Canal.

[108] Male Japanese author who won the Tanizaki Prize in 1967 for *The Silent City* and the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1994. A Japanese author had not won the Nobel Prize for Literature since Kawabata in 1968.

[109] Male Japanese author whose work includes The *Woman in the Dunes* (1962), trans. E. Dale Sunders (1964). Abe also wrote a number of short-stories, essays and plays during his literary career.

[110] Male Japanese author whose works include *The Pornographers*, (1963), trans. Michael Gallagher (1968) and *Grave of the Fireflies* (1967). Carter thought that Nosaka would be 'praised in the future and rated highly, even by overseas readers' (Araki, 2018: 39).

[111] Male Japanese author whose works include *Kokoro* (1914), *Botchan* (1906) and *I Am a Cat* (1905).

[112] Carter also lists the following authors and novels in her journals:
Matsuo Bashõ (1644-1694) and *The Narrow Road to the Deep North* (1689) trans. Nobuyuki Yuasa (1966); Ryūnosuke Akutagawa (1982-1927) and *Kappa* (1927); Yasunari Kawabata (1899-1972), and *House of the Sleeping Beauties*, (1961). Carter also refers to a number of non-fiction in her journals, including books about Japanese

Carter also enjoyed reading Tanizaki, and would go on to read more of his work after her initial encounter with *The Makioka Sisters* in 1969. In her interview with Bell, Carter reflects on Tanizaki's work commenting that, 'I think that his work is all about the great confrontation – or the mini-confrontation, depending on which end of the telescope you're looking through – between East and West' (1973: 34). She had 'great admiration' for Tanizaki's work, particularly *Some Prefer Nettles* (1929), *The Makioka Sisters* (1943-1948) and *Diary of a Mad Old Man* (1961), and thought that they were 'super' (Araki, 2018: 40).[113]

Given that Carter made no secret of her admiration of Tanizaki's work, it is unusual that the literary relationship between the two authors remains under-researched. Tanikazi's body of work is not dissimilar to Carter's: he is the author of twenty novellas as well as a number of essays that reflect the period of cultural disharmony in which he was living. *In Praise of Shadows* (1933) is an extended essay (and can be read as a series of 'mini-essays'*)* and is akin to Carter's posthumously published volume of journalism *Shaking a Leg* (1997), with Tanizaki covering topics ranging from traditional Japanese interior design, cooking, theatre and women (with a bizarre reference to the 'perfection' of the Japanese toilet).[114] Furthermore, both Carter and Tanizaki experiment with representations of the female body in order to explore notions of femininity (and masculinity), challenging a heteronormative narrative structure that centres on the inclusion of the *femme fatale* figure in their stories. Representations of the women in Tanizaki's work serve as a means of highlighting the increasing influence of the Western aesthetic, as well as his own subsequent return to traditional Japanese values.

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culture. For example, she refers to D. T. Suzuki *Zen and Japanese Culture* (1959) and Richard Dorson's *Folk Legends of Japan* (1961). See Add. MS 88899/1/92, Add. MS 88899/1/93 and Add. MS 88899/1/110

[113] *Some Prefer Nettles*, trans. Edward Seidensticker and Alfred A. Knopf, 1955 and Vintage Press, 1995; *The Makioka Sisters*, trans. Edward Seidensticker, Alfred A. Knopf, 1957 and Vintage Press, 1995; *The Key and Diary of a Mad Old Man*, trans. Howard Hibbert, Alfred A. Knopf 1960 and 1965 respectively, reissued in a single volume by Vintage Press, 2004.

[114] Tanizaki's interest with excretory processes can also be found in *The Makioka Sisters* (1943-1948), in which the novel ends with an image of diarrhoea. The hero in *Captain Shigemoto's Mother* (1950) steals a lady's chamber pot, savouring the pleasure in smelling it. Tanizaki also explores this unusual interest in *In Praise of Shadows* as he writes about the aesthetic of Japanese toilets. Unlike Westerners who 'regard the toilet as utterly unclean', the Japanese toilet is 'perfection' (1933: 10).

Carter and Tanizaki's literary *oeuvres* experiment with the codification of Woman in order to challenge (or adhere to) social expectations of femininity. The idea of the body as a 'model which can stand for any bounded system' (Douglas, 1976: 115) is distorted by the two authors who both employ the female body as a means of exploring the 'nexus between physicality and culture' (Costantini, 2002: 15). Mariaconcetta Costantini explains:

> The human body is a crucial site for the inscription of cultural paradigms. People's bodily characteristics significantly determine and legitimise their social identities. In other words, how people are perceived controls the way they are treated (2002: 14).

The habitual marking of the body, argues Costantini, is commensurate with an individual's social functions. Thus, ornamentation, clothing, make-up and even tattoos can be interpreted as a means of controlling the way that we are treated by others. Such cultural signifiers are symbolic of individual identities as well functioning as communal unifiers. If the body is to be read as a site that is representative of both social and cultural codes, then it is also a site that denotes the successes of such representation.

This chapter is divided into three distinct yet complementary sections that provide a comparative reading of Carter and Tanizaki, specifically focusing on the representation of women. The first section situates Tanizaki and his writing at the turn of the twentieth century, a period that saw in Japan an increasing influence from Hollywood films, Western literature and American fashion. Although deeply interested in the Western aesthetic in his earlier works, in the late 1920s Tanizaki experienced a 'return' to more traditional Japanese values, a move which coincided with the rise of Japanese militarism and strengthened feelings of nationalism in Japan. Tanizaki's biographical shift is echoed in his literature, most notably *Naomi* (1924) and *Some Prefer Nettles* (*Tade kuu mushi*, 1929), and he deliberately juxtaposes ideas from the East and the West in order to signal Japan's disillusionment with Western culture. *Some Prefer Nettles* is a literary representation of Tanizaki's return to Japan in which representations of feminine beauty serve as metaphors for Japanese heritage clashing with Western modernity. The doll-like woman O-hisa juxtaposes against the modern woman Misako, with Tanizaki drawing on imagery of traditional Japanese theatre and the marionette as a means to explore representations of, and challenges to, different models of femininity.

Both Carter and Tanizaki published essays, books and short pieces as a response to the period that they were writing *in*. Carter's own representation of women shifts throughout her literary career, but in the opposite direction to Tanizaki. Although the heroines of Carter's earlier fiction suffer from a lack of autonomy, her work published in the late 1970s and in the 1980s focuses on the 'celebratory and the utopian […] A re-evaluation of female experience takes place and the emergence of a female counter culture is celebrated' (Palmer, 1987: 180).

The second section assesses Tanizaki's novel *Naomi* (*Chijin no Ai*, also referred to as 'A Fool's Love') in relation to the phenomenon of the Japanese Modern Woman that appeared in the 1920s. As part of his growing sense of disillusion with the West, Tanizaki experimented with the idea of the Modern Woman – a woman who 'in the defiance of Japanese convention, cut her hair short and wore high heels, went to movies, danced, played sports and was open, frank and hedonistic' (Chambers, 2001: ii) – as part of his own journey back to Japanese conservativism. Adopted by a Japanese white-collar worker, Joji, when she is fifteen years old, Naomi (the titular character) is heavily influenced by the Western aesthetic: she learns English, takes up dance lessons and dresses like Hollywood film stars such as Mary Pickford. Tanizaki's modifications of Naomi's body – for example, through the way that she dresses, her make up, and even the language she uses – is demonstrative of her culturally transgressive behaviours and her decision to reject traditional Japanese values in favour of a Westernised modernity. Naomi (and Joji)'s identity becomes increasingly fragmented and unstable as a result of Naomi's rejection. This degree of fragmentation is echoed in Carter's 'Flesh and the Mirror' (1974), in which modifications of the Self are presented to the narrator in a mirror of a love-hotel. The narrator suffers from an identity crisis, in which she is unable to define her 'authentic' self. Tangled in invention and fantasy, the narrator is estranged from her *self* in a foreign country.

Not all women in Tanizaki's *Naomi* are successful in assimilating prescribed representations of Western beauty though, and the grotesque appearance of the Pink Lady serves to demonstrate the incompatible nature of Eastern and Western body modifications, a theme that is further explored in Carter's 'A Souvenir of Japan'. Carter's deliberate use of the grotesque in her short story serves to exacerbate the narrator's sense of alienation in Japan; yet, as a Caucasian woman, the narrator's grotesque and enormous appearance is inverted and instead functions as a means of exoticising the Western body.

The final section of this chapter looks at representations of the body and body modification in a more direct way, conducting a comparative reading of Carter's *Heroes and Villains* (1969), *The Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor Hoffman* (1972) and Tanizaki's short story 'The Tattooer' ('*Shisei*', 1910).[115] Although Carter's earlier work includes images of tattoos (they appear in *Several Perceptions*, 1968; *Heroes and Villains*, 1969; *Love*, 1971, and in Carter's final novel *Wise Children*, 1991), *Doctor Hoffman* explicitly draws upon the art of *irezumi*, the traditional Japanese practice of drawing on the body. Situating Carter in Japan is essential to an understanding of her use of body modification in *Doctor Hoffman*, and the act (or the art) of *irezumi* is clearly a driving influence in her work. Similarly, Tanizaki's 'The Tattooer' draws upon the same practice and its central protagonist Seikichi, a talented young tattoo artist, derives pleasure from the pain he inflicts on his customers. His ultimate fantasy, however, is to be devoured by a beautiful woman – a *femme fatale* figure – a fantasy fulfilled at the end of the tale when he falls victim to one of his tattooed subjects. Body modification in Tanizaki and Carter serve as a means of social, cultural and sexual identification. Whilst tattooing in particular can be seen as a social marker and a practice that brings people together, it can also be used as a means of 'Othering' the body.

Both Tanizaki and Carter utilise social and cultural markers as a means of exploring tensions between East and West. Tanizaki's representations of women are bound up in his own shift away from Western modernity to Japanese traditions. Carter, although exploring similar themes as Tanizaki, uses these markers as means of signifying the Other – both in regard to herself, and to the country she was in.

Tanizaki Jun'ichirō's Western aesthetic, and the return to Japan in *Some Prefer Nettles*

In order to conduct a comparative analysis of Carter and Tanizaki, it is necessary to draw upon biographical information as a means of understanding Tanizaki's evolving literary style. As a young man, Tanizaki found himself drawn to Western ideas and his move to Yokahoma in 1922 'seemed a fitting design to satisfy his interests in the European aesthetic' (Keene, 1971: 179). In 1918, Tanizaki confessed that he had in fact

[115] 'The Tattooer' was also adapted to a film *Irezumi* (1966), directed by Yasuzô Masumura. It is not clear from Carter's journals whether or not she watched Masumura's film prior to her visit to Japan.

'come to detest Japan even though I was obviously a Japanese' (Keene, 1971: 179), resenting the fact that Japan could never, in his eyes, be comparable to the West. His fiction became a way in which to explore his constantly shifting relationship with the Western aesthetic: writing in 'The German Spy' ('*Dokutan*') in 1915, Tanizaki comments that

> I felt within me an irrepressible urge to know about these European countries that produced an astounding array of arts, and about the everyday activities of the superior people who lived there. Everything about the West was to me beautiful and desirable. It came to the point where I could not look at the West without seeing it as if it were a god. I resented that I was fated to be born in a country where no decent art could flourish (243-44).

Although 'The German Spy' is fiction, Tanizaki's tone 'carries conviction' (Keene, 2003: 10) and his early work echo the sentiments that appear in the excerpt above. However, after the Great Kanto earthquake in 1923 in which many parts of Tokyo were destroyed, Tanizaki became markedly more conservative and moved to Kyoto where he discovered a new interest in traditional Japanese beauty. His changing personal attitudes are made apparent in a shift in his narrative content. Choosing to reside in isolation and solitude, Carter interprets Tanizaki as a 'thoroughly Europeanised writer, profoundly influenced by Baudelaire and Wilde, [who] rediscovered his own Japaneseness' (1997: 267-68). Moving away from the superficial aesthetics of Western beauty, Tanizaki's work began to reflect a new appreciation of traditional heritage, culture, and art. Commenting on these changes, Tanizaki claims:

> It is not my intention to debate here whether having been influenced by the West was beneficial or harmful to my writings, but no one knows as well as I – to my great embarrassment – in what extremely superficial, indeed mindless ways this influence revealed itself (cited in Keene, 1971: 171. Original source not listed).

Although Tanizaki was writing about sexually deviant women in his earlier fiction (as will be demonstrated in the analysis of *Naomi* and 'The Tattooer'), as part of his 'return' to Japan in the late 1920s he started to experiment with images of traditional Japanese theatre in his literature, demonstrated through his increasing number of references to *bunraku*. In a continuation of the discussion of the marionette explored in the last chapter, it is of notable interest that one of the recurring images throughout Tanizaki's later work is the *bunraku* puppet theatre. Tanizaki extensively uses the image of the

puppet in his 1929 novel *Some Prefer Nettles* as a means of investigating social constructs of the 'ideal woman' in Japan, seeking a return to Japanese values.

Some Prefer Nettles is, at its core, an exploration of ideal feminine beauty and how ideas of traditional Japanese forms of beauty conflicted with that of the Western woman. The novel follows the male protagonist Kaname, who is trapped in a loveless relationship with his wife, Misako. At Kaname's discretion, Misako is also in the midst of an extra-marital affair: the narrative explores the tensions within the confines of their marriage, and their continuing reluctance to proclaim the dissolution of the relationship at the risk of shaming Misako's family. Referred to only as 'the old man', Misako's father represents the very pinnacle of Japanese traditions: residing in Osaka he deliberately ignores the modern city of Tokyo, instead advocating a lifestyle that is reminiscent of the Edo period (1603-1868).[116] Likewise, his (much younger) wife personifies traditional family values and upholds the Japanese ideology of the perfect woman: she is subservient and obedient to the old man, and '[h]er complete, almost blind submission is most clearly manifested in her readiness to serve the old man at any time' (McDonald, 1977: 197).

One of the primary issues that Tanizaki focuses on in the novel is the conflict between modernity and tradition, as represented by Kaname and Misako, who are suspended 'between the conflicting claims of the two societies' (McDonald, 1977: 196). Torn between familial obligation and individual development, the two characters are irreconcilable between their two urges. Misako for her own part, sides with a Westernised cultural system: she enjoys Hollywood movies, listens to 'high-class jazz' and dresses in non-traditional 'foreign' clothes (*SPN*, 28). Comparatively Kaname, although not wholly integrated into a more traditional notion of living, is more willing to adopt traditional Japanese values, as demonstrated through his visits to the *bunraku* theatre: it is here that he finds himself returning to an older style of living, known as '*nohon kaiku'* (Golley, 1995: 365), and learns to re-appreciate Japanese beauty, a move not dissimilar to Tanizaki's own rejection of the Western aesthetic.

Indeed, the performance that Kaname and his family watch together is particularly telling of attitudes towards the West. Comparing the Japanese puppets to the far less impressive Occidental string marionettes of the West, Kaname reflects that

[116] Also known as the Tokugawa period.

> The latter [Occidental] could indeed be very active with their hands and feet, but the fact that they were suspended and worked from above made it impossible to suggest the line of the hips and the movement of the torso […] The Bunraku puppets on the other hand, were worked from inside, so that the surge of life was actually present, sensible, under the clothes. Their strongest point perhaps derived from the good use made in them of the Japanese kimono. The same effects would be impossible from puppets in foreign dress, even if the same manipulating techniques were adopted. The Bunraku puppet was therefore unique, inimitable, a medium so skilfully exploited that one would be hard put to find parallels for it anywhere (*SPN*, 23-4).[117]

The inimitable quality of the *bunraku* puppet suggests itself to the superiority that the old man associates with Japanese culture and is simultaneously analogous to his own marriage to O-hisa. His excitement and attention towards the dolls on-stage being manipulated by the puppeteers is imitated in the confines of his marital relations: O-hisa is described as being 'doll-like' and her 'slow, sleepy expression' (*SPN*, 25) is not unlike the *bunraku* puppets that appear on stage. In her interview with Bell, Carter reflects on the use of puppet theatre in Tanizaki's novel, commenting that

> There's a metaphor in one of his novels, the one called in English *Some Prefer Nettles*, it's about a man who goes back to Japanese culture. The metaphor is the *bunraku* puppets. I have the horrible feeling that this is how Tanizaki saw his countrymen, he saw them as very decorative puppets (Bell, 1973: 34).

Kaname's return to traditional Japanese culture also symbolises his rejection of consumer culture. Misako, her lover, and Kaname's cousin Takanatsu, are represented as consumers of mass culture, whereas the old man, O-hisa, and Kaname consume a superior form of high culture, demonstrated through their frequent visits to *bunraku* theatre. Kaname and Misako's relationship has failed precisely because she occupies a space between tradition and modernity that Kaname cannot define. As a wife and mother, she fails to adhere to the domesticated figure, spurning tradition in favour of modernity. Kaname's increasing attraction towards a 'type O-hisa' (*SPN*, 128) confirms his return to an older style of thinking: just as the Osaka puppets of the *bunraku* theatre act as a 'style' of doll, so O-hisa is reduced to a 'style' of woman. Kaname even goes so far to deduce that 'surely […] one does better to fall in love with the sort of woman one can cherish as a doll' (*SPN*, 117). That is not to say that Kaname

[117] See chapter two of this thesis for full details of the construction of the *bunraku* theatre.

is not torn between the two types of women, and his personal journey is analogous to Tanizaki's own experiences: he is caught in a transitionary space between East and West. Later in the novel he finds sexual gratification with a Eurasian prostitute, who powders her legs to make them completely white. In this 'transitional novel, the hero is torn between his desire for white flesh and his longing for whiteness, the eternal beauty of woman' (Lippit, 1977: 237). Kaname's internal conflict between two cultures echoes Tanizaki's own growing unease with the West. The semi-autobiographical novel captures Tanizaki's own growing discomfort with the Western aesthetic, utilising female beauty as a means of reflecting his inner turmoil.

Although representations of women altered throughout Tanizaki's evolving literary aesthetic, his men tend to be 'weak-willed and negative', reduced to 'grovelling slaves' (Keene, 1971: 172). Donald Keene suggests that Tanizaki's 'worship of cruel women' and degrading treatment of men by the figure of the *femme fatale* in his earlier works is 'undoubtedly indebted to Western influence' (1971: 172). Comparatively, Carter's female characters are ultimately denied any autonomous sense of agency throughout her novels of the 1960s. In *Shadow Dance*, the once beautiful Ghislaine is laid out on an altar after meeting her death at the hands of the psychotic Honeybuzzard. Likewise, in *Love*, the final scene of the novel sees Buzz standing triumphantly over Annabel's dead body, a 'bedizened corpse' (*L*, 109), assuming the ultimate role of the passive female form. In the afterword to the novel, written almost twenty years after it was first published, Carter admits some regret for her novel's 'icy treatment of the mad girl', confessing that the text was effectively a symbolic representation of 'Annabel's coffin' (*L*, 111). Carter's regret serves to demonstrate just how far she evolved as both a writer and as a feminist throughout her career: certainly, Carter was conscious of this change in her writing and her time in Japan acts as a crucial transitionary period in her own movement toward a feminist agenda. In 'Notes from the Front Line', Carter comments on the evolving process of her identity as both a writer and a feminist, writing:

> My work *has* changed a good deal in the last ten or fifteen years; it would be rather shocking if it hadn't, since, during that time, I've progressed from youth to middle age, and, for me, growing into feminism was part of the process of maturing (1983: 24).

This level of gross sexual violation of women is a defining characteristic in Carter's earlier novels and a motif that Elaine Jordan claims is 'very much of the period' (1998: 119). In her essay 'The Dangers of Angela Carter' (1998), Jordan goes on to comment that Carter's later work later evolved to demonstrate a 'series of honourable attempts to be an agent of change – part of the solution, rather than contemplating a problem of which she is part – to be boldly and honestly materialistic, atheist, anti-tyrannical and feminist' (1998: 34). The changes to Carter's feminist politics that came about in the early 1970s can be interpreted as a catalyst that influenced the shape, composition and narrative of her later work. Certainly, alongside the characters such as Ghislaine and Annabel there are glimpses of the New Woman characters that indicate Carter's personal development through her writing. Take, for example, Emily in *Shadow Dance*. Although the focus of much of the novel is towards the violent treatment of Ghislaine, and the consequences of Honeybuzzard's atrocities, his new girlfriend Emily offers a glimpse of the future heroine that characterise Carter's later novels. After finding herself pregnant with Honeybuzzard's child, Emily explicitly denies the need for her child to have any patrilineal associations, acknowledging the fact that she alone will be responsible for raising her unborn baby.

Carter's time in Japan is a hinge on which her stories seem to turn, and her encounter with Japanese literature contributes towards her evolving literary narrative. This shift in Carter's writing is hinted at in *Heroes and Villains* (1969) in which the young girl Marianne flees from the Professors' ivory tower and joins the enigmatic barbarian Jewel and a group of nomads. The text is littered with references that suggest a patriarchal hierarchy; for example, Marianne's first encounter with Jewel's brothers sees them expose their half-naked bodies to her, leaving Marianne 'poorly protected' against the men 'shaking themselves dry' from water like animals (*HV*, 53); when she marries Jewel, she is forced to wear an old traditional wedding dress made of 'an endless skirt of time-yellowed tulle' (*HV*, 75). However, the final pages of the novel look towards a much brighter future for the young girl. With the renegade Professor Donnally and the young warrior Jewel both dead, Marianne pronounces herself as 'the Tiger Lady', ready to rule the group of nomad barbarians with a 'rod of iron' (*HV*, 163). After Carter's time in Japan, she openly explored a more explicit feminist agenda, and by the 1980s any trace of the male impersonator that characterised her earlier novels had dissipated. Carter's ideas of female emancipation culminate in the excessive figure of Fevvers, the six-foot winged Cockney Venus in *Nights at the Circus* (1984). The

novel, which finds its conclusion in the bare white landscape of a Siberian winter, creates a metaphorical representation for the celebratory and utopian focus of Carter's work. Marking a 'new departure' (Palmer, 1987: 180), Fevvers delivers an uplifting dialogue with her surrogate-mother Lizzie in the final pages of *Nights at the Circus*. She imagines a world in which 'the brothels will spill forth their prisoners, the cages, gilded or otherwise, all over the world, in every land, will let forth their inmates singing together the dawn chorus of the new, the transformed –'. Although Lizzie remarks that 'It's going to be more complicated than that' (*NC*, 339), the scene nevertheless marks a literary shift in Carter's work which sees the author embrace a future that sees feminism at the forefront of change.

A brief comparison of the two authors side by side reveals a number of similarities across their literary *oeuvres*. Both writers respond to a historical and social shift that was taking place at the time of writing: In 'Notes from the Front Line', Carter comments that 'there was a brief period of public philosophical awareness that occurs only very occasionally in human history; when, truly, it felt like Year One' (1983: 25). Reflecting on the rise in a feminist-consciousness that grew from social change in the sixties, Carter goes on to comment on the new opportunities for women writers during the time:

> The sense of limitless freedom that I, as a woman, sometimes feel *is* that of a new kind of being. Because I simply could not have existed, as I am, in any other preceding time or place. I am the pure product of an advanced industrialised, post-imperialist country in decline. But this has very little to do with my ability to work as I please, or even to earn a living from writing. At any time up to the early twentieth century, I could have told as many stories as I wanted, and made them as wonderful and subversive as I wished, had I survived the births of my children or the hazards of working-class or peasant life to a sufficient age to have amassed a repertoire of orally-transmitted fiction […] But I could *not* have combined this latter with a life as a sexually active woman until the introduction of contraception, unless I had been lucky enough to have been born sterile (1983: 27).

Carter was very much writing as a response to the time and to the environment she was living in. In Carter's obituary, Marina Warner emphasises the pivotal role that Carter held in the British feminist movement, particularly through her work in helping establish the publishing house Virago. Warner highlights Carter's role in helping to establish 'a woman's voice in literature as special […] as a crucial instrument in the forging of an identity for post-imperial, hypocritical, fossilised Britain' (1992: 25).

Both Tanizaki and Carter can be interpreted as writers who were writing as a reaction to the period. Much like Carter's time in Japan can be interpreted as a point on which her later stories seem to turn, so *Some Prefer Nettles* encapsulates a pivotal moment in Tanizaki's literature, encapsulating the moment in which he explores Japanese traditions in collision with Western modernity. His earlier novels trace the lead up to this movement, in which he openly explores and embraces a Western*esque* way of living – before turning back to Japan.

Representations of the women in Tanizaki's *Naomi* and Carter's 'Flesh and the Mirror'

Throughout his literature, Tanizaki experiments with representations of feminine beauty. His treatment of women in his stories depict his changing style, with differences between his earlier fiction (for example, 'The Tattooer') and his later works (such as *Some Prefer Nettles*). Reflecting in an essay entitled 'Love and Lust' (1931) on the representation of women in his fiction, Tanizaki comments that

> The influence that Western literature has exerted on us has taken many forms, without any question. One of the most important, in my view, has been the "emancipation of love," or, to take it one step further, "the emancipation of sexual desire" […]
>
> While literature reflects its age, there are times when it moves one step ahead and points the way for the will of the age. The heroines of *Sanshirō* and *Gubijinsō* [1907 and 1908 by Natsume Sōseki] are not descended from the women of old Japan, who, according to the ideal, were to be gentle and demure; somehow they are like characters in a Western novel. While in reality there may not have been many women like them in Japan at the time, society hoped for – dreamed of – the appearance, sooner or later, of the "awakened, self-aware" woman. In greater or lesser degree, all of my contemporaries who aspired to literature had this dream in their youth.
>
> Yet dreams and reality rarely coincide. The elevation of Japanese women, encumbered by centuries of tradition, to the position of Western women would require many generations of spiritual and physical cultivation. It could not be accomplished in our generation…I will confess now that, in my youth, I as one of those who embraced this preposterous dream and felt a terrible loneliness at the realisation that my dream was not about to become a reality (Tanizaki, 1931, cited in Chambers, 2001: viii-ix).

Tanizaki's reference to the 'awakened, self-aware' woman influenced by Western literature is a direct reference to the phenomenon of the Modern Woman that came

about at the turn of the twentieth century in Japan. Whereas the western New Woman 'could be blamed on nothing but ourselves and our own moral decline', the Japanese equivalent, the Modern Woman, was an import, 'not their fault but squarely *our* fault' (1997: 267). She was a

> glittering, decadent, middle-class consumer who, through her clothing, smoking, and drinking, flaunts tradition in the urban playground of the 1920s […] The Modern Girl was a highly commodified cultural construct crafted by journalists who debated her identity during the tumultuous decade of cultural and social change following the great earthquake of 1923 (Silverberg, 1992: 239-40).

Both Carter and Tanizaki suggest that the Modern Woman phenomenon was directly linked to the increase of Western influences in Japan at the turn of the century (for example, through Hollywood films starring actresses such as Mary Pickford, from whom Tanizaki would later draw on in his depiction of Naomi) with Carter suggesting that an increasing moral decline in Japan was the fault of the West: 'Europe and the United States shipped [the Modern Woman] there between the covers of foreign novels. Most contagiously of all, she leapt into vivid life upon the cinema screen out of the spools of American movies' (1997: 267).[118] Yet there is evidence to suggest that at least some traits of the Modern Woman weren't new ideas at all, with earlier versions appearing in Japanese literature published long before the turn of the twentieth century. For example, Murasaki's *The Tale of Genji*, (1021) and Ueda Akinara's *The Lust of the White Serpent* (1776) both explore female sexuality that denotes a strong and seductive woman figure in direct opposition to a reckless, weak male. In *The Tale of Genji*, the titular character moulds the young girl Murasaki to his own fantasies and desires; in Akinara's tale, the male protagonist Toyoo is seduced by the young widow Manago, who is eventually unveiled as a thousand-year-old white serpent. The men in these stories follow their head over their heart, making themselves vulnerable and weak to the *femme fatale* characters.

In *Sirens of the Western Shore* (2006) Indra Levy suggests that the Modern Woman was 'neither ethically nor culturally "Western" per se, yet distinguished by physical appearances, personal mannerisms, lifestyles, behaviours, and ways of

[118] Carter slips into an imperialist narrative here, speaking as a representative of the West in her use of the phrase 'our fault'.

thinking' that were seen to be 'particularly evocative of the West'. For Levy, the 'Westernesque femme fatale comes into being in modern Japanese literature as a siren who inhabits the interlingual gap between reading Western literature and writing in Japanese (2006: 2). Of notable interest in Levy's analysis is the reference towards the Western*esque* nature of the evolved Modern Woman figure that started to appear in Japan in the 1920s. Western practices that occur abroad are typically labelled as 'Western*ised*: however, Levy provides a coherent and convincing argument to claim that we should not be using this term, and that the suffix '*esque*' is a far more appropriate term. Levy explains her coining of the term Western*esque* as a neologism to trace a 'distinct lineage' (2006: 5) for the *femme fatale* character that starts to appear within Japanese literature. Perhaps one of the most redeeming features of the Japanese version of the *femme fatale* is the fact that they essentially *remain* Japanese: despite the painted skin, the Western clothes, the 'Europeanised' lifestyle and influence upon personal mannerisms, there is safety in the knowledge that the woman *is not foreign*. Rather, they perform the idea of a foreign identity, slipping into a mask of the Other that can be taken off. As Levy comments, these women were 'more familiar than actually Western women, yet endowed with an exotic cachet that set them apart from images of Japanese women that resonated with pre-established gender conventions' (2006: 5).

Shortly after moving to Osaka in 1923, Tanizaki starting writing *Naomi*: originally published as a serialisation with *Osaka Asahi* and then later *Josei*, the novel was published in 1924, although the first English translation (by Anthony H. Chambers) reviewed by Carter in *New Society* was not published until 1985. The novel explores the possibilities – and limitations – of cross-cultural social codifications, experimenting with representations of the female body as a way to explore Japanese perceptions of femininity. Much like *Some Prefer Nettles*, the direction of the novel is informed by Tanizaki's personal experiences, and it is perhaps by no means a coincidence that Joji, the central male figure, seeks more traditional ways of living when he finds himself over-exposed to the Western way of life. It is in *Naomi* that Tanizaki first starts to retreat back to his Japanese roots, turning away from the temptation of the Western aesthetic.

Carter's review of the belated English translation of Tanizaki's novel situates 1920s Tokyo as 'a city in effect the bed in which Japan is consummating its ecstatic honeymoon with the twentieth century […] There is a heady, fizzy feeling in the air, a

sharp appetite for […] things and ideas from the West' (1997: 267). In *Naomi*, this 'appetite' is personified through the beautiful, yet conceited and arrogant Naomi who 'is in some sense the embodiment of Tokyo' (Carter, 1997: 267). *Naomi* marks the beginning of the end of Tanizaki's love-affair with the Western aesthetic.

The novel owes much of its success to Tanizaki's portrayal of the Modern Woman. Often depicted as an entirely Western import, the phenomenon of the Modern Woman was 'received enthusiastically by the young progressive readers' (Chambers, 2001: ix), who went on to coin the term 'Naomi-ism' as a term to describe the newly sexualised, confident women that walked the streets of Japan. However, this enthusiasm was not shared by all of Tanizaki's readers, and the characterisation of Naomi was deplored by those considerably more conservative. Coming under intense pressure from government censors, *Osaka Asahi* stopped the first serialisation of the novel in June 1924 after having published around half of the novel. Publication was resumed just five months later in the magazine *Josei*. The novel (in particular its titular character) clearly provoked emotions in its readers, be it aspiration for a new level of female emancipation, or disgust at the representation of Japanese women.

Described as having an 'intelligent Western look', and a 'sophisticated name', Joji confesses that Naomi 'excited his curiosity' (*N*, 4), purely based on her Eurasian looks. Reflecting Tanizaki's fascination with the Western aesthetic, Joji indulges the young girl, making sure she learns how to speak and write in English, providing her with lessons in dance and music. Naomi's rejection of traditional Japanese culture is encouraged through Joji's own actions and through her hedonistic lifestyle whereby she ends up takes several lovers behind her husband's back. Tanizaki's own acceptance and willingness to assimilate Western values in his youth is mirrored through Joji's relationship with Naomi. It is this relationship that is ultimately his undoing, and that sees Joji yearn for a simpler, more traditional way of living towards the end of the novel. *Naomi* can be interpreted as a novel that reflects the evolving nature of notions of femininity (and the resistance against it) and what it meant to be 'Woman' in 1920s Japan. Yuji Huang suggests that:

> The duality of the Modern Girl image, both enticing and fatal, serves as a double-edged sword. It illuminates male Japanese positive sentiments towards Western civilization, which are ambiguous, layered, fragmented and often contradictory, but at the same time is seen as a dreadful graveyard that buries Japanese tradition (2007: 77).

However, for all of her allure of the exotic that Naomi stands for, Carter points out that she is exactly that: 'she only *stands for it*, she does not embody it' (1997: 268). Naomi's identity raises some complexities in the identification of the modern girl: what does she stand for? In what way does Tanizaki distinguish her as a Modern Woman?

The evolving characteristics of Naomi are primarily dependent on her exposure to Western cultures and practices throughout the novel. Her love of dancing, her taste in fashion, and her lessons in English are all indicative of an increasingly Europeanised Japan. Ideas of femininity during the early twentieth century were becoming increasingly complex, and Huang suggests that the figure of the Oriental woman 'caters to the colonial fantasy in a much more ambiguous way; she can represent the idealised femininity, as in the example of Madame Butterfly, or the deviant femininity of a promiscuous savage' (Huang, 2007: 81). Naomi's journey encapsulates both of these ideas of femininity: from her younger days where she is pampered and treated as a 'rare precious doll and an ornament' (*N*, 39) by Joji; to her maturity where she is conscious of her overt-sexualisation, exploiting men's weaknesses for her own personal pleasure. As Carter comments in her review of the novel, '[t]he power and strangeness of the West has been eroticised; possessing the foreign woman would be to eat the very fruit of the tree of knowledge', and so Naomi evolves into a caricature figure of this power and strangeness, turning into a 'lithe, heedless, sexy, venal, gauche, a new kind of new woman' (Carter, 1997: 237). Despite these distinctively feminine qualities, Naomi also displays masculine characteristics throughout the novel, exemplified through her changing fashion choices and through her choice of language, which becomes progressively more dominant and demanding of her husband Joji.

Tanizaki explores the transgressive nature of Naomi's behaviour through two main avenues: language and appearance. Joji's ultimate fantasy for Naomi is not unlike Kaname's desire for a doll-like wife in *Some Prefer Nettles*, and Joji confesses that 'all I wanted was to cherish her like a doll,' (*N*, 40), a fantasy that is at odds with his desire for Naomi to adopt the mannerisms of a Western woman. However, Naomi turns into a figure that is instead all too empowering. The shift that takes place throughout the narrative, notes Huang, is an indicator in the transference of power in the couple's relationship (2007). At the beginning of the novel, Naomi adopts child-like characteristics and at one point Joji describes how she 'sobbed all the while like small child' (*N*, 21) when she falls down playing games. For his own part, Joji adopts a

fatherly, patriarchal role early on in the relationship, teaching Naomi how to swim during the summer months, and bathing her on a daily basis. This position is further inscribed between the two characters in their references to one another: Naomi calls Joji 'Papa', and she herself is referred to as 'Baby'. It is of no coincidence that Joji's diary in which he 'tracks' the girl's progress, is entitled 'Naomi Grows Up' (*N*, 33). And Naomi *does* grow up, although not into the sophisticated woman that Joji wants her to be. Instead, she evolves into a 'polymorphously perverse heroine' (Silverberg, 1992: 244), insisting that she be referred to as '*Miss* Naomi' (*N*, 83, italics own) in front of other people. The lexical shift that Huang refers to is at its most effective during Naomi's interaction with other people, particularly men. After an evening of socializing at their first dance event together, Joji recalls that Naomi appeared 'offensive', 'proud', 'vain' and 'conceited', drawing attention to her use of language commenting that she 'may put on the airs of a *lady* but she talks like a roughneck' (*N*, 101, italics in original). Naomi's most controversial successes in her domination through language however, are those carried out in her interactions with Joji. She manages to successfully silence her husband through denying him the agency to refer to her as his wife in front other men. She only responds to 'the young lady', or to 'Miss Naomi' in front of others. Perhaps most concerning about these scenes is the fact that Joji is fully aware of the implications of such addresses. He comments that 'she wanted people to think that were just living together, or perhaps engaged' (*N*, 135), not realizing the full extent of Naomi's control over the use of his (and others') language. It is these terms of address that ultimately lead to the belief that Naomi is a free agent, consequently resulting in her adulterous relationships with other men: this behaviour contributes to her characterization as a Japanese Modern Woman.

This shift in language has a detrimental effect on the traditional values that Joji pursues in a bid to make Naomi the 'precious doll' (*N*, 39) that he desires. His failure to deter Naomi away from ideas of modernity ultimately culminates in a lexicon that is representative of a colonial discourse embedded within the narrative. For example, Naomi's language towards others is commanding and domineering: in one instance when she is scolding Joji he notes that '[s]he used the English words' (*N*, 81), highlighting the association of punishment and shame with Western modernity. In the most extreme case Naomi actively denies Joji vocal agency when she rides him around the house like a horse with a towel for reins inside his mouth. A male discourse adopted by the young girl as she grows up is intrinsically linked to an increasingly Westernised

(and colonised) approach that questions not only gender identity, but cultural identity as well.

Herein lies the tension of the Modern Woman: through analysing the different elements that create this figure, in what way is she to be perceived? In her attempt to assimilate herself with Western practices (and rejection of Japanese heritage) does she become any *less* Japanese? Whilst Naomi attempts to establish herself as an exotic creature practiced through her love of the Western aesthetic, she also remains that which is *familiar*: a 'Japanese woman with a Western flavour' (*N*, 67). Ultimately, the Modern Woman encapsulated the idea of the West, without becoming so far removed that she became Western herself – hence, we return to the idea of the 'Western*esque*'. There is an issue of familiarity versus exoticism, and Levy suggests that the Modern Woman 'embodies a form of exoticism that appears to stay at home, yet […] traverses one of the most confounding of all foreign spaces: the uncharted and unruly expanse that stretches between languages' (2006: 2). This tension between that which is familiar and that which is unknown indicates a fragmented, broken space that Naomi personifies.

As the use of language evolves throughout Tanizaki's novel, so Naomi's identity becomes increasingly complex and unstable. Tanizaki employs the imagery of mirrors in order to highlight the fragmented and distorted behaviour of Naomi's character. Her image that appears in mirrors throughout the novel is a metaphorical representation of the two personas that her character embodies: '"What do you think?" she'd say, trying out different expressions in the mirror. "Don't you think I look like a Westerner when I do this?"' (*N*, 36). The reflection in the mirror is that of an inauthentic would-be Western woman, a construction that Naomi can never fully embody; on the other side, the reality that the reader is presented with is a young woman participating in a ritualised performance that sees her attempt time and time again to absorb herself (and those around her) into a predominantly Western lifestyle. The mirror thus reflects the fantasy 'Europeanised' version of Naomi, and an acknowledgement to this cultural indicator is highlighted when she comments "Who is the fairest of them all? I am" (*N*, 82). Tanizaki's reference to the Grimms' fairy tales further demonstrates European influence in the novel, and it is telling that Naomi responds to herself/ her reflection when she asks who is the fairest of them all. This self-affirmation demonstrates a split self in which Naomi is actualised through Joji's desires. Huang argues that Naomi can be read as the alter ego of Joji, and is a symbolic representation of 'the schizophrenic

Other of the Self, an externalisation of his internal desires and fears' (Huang, 2007: 81). Joji, an almost comedic male protagonist made possible through his complete lack of self-confidence ("I'm only five feet two inches tall; I have a dark complexion, and my teeth are snaggly" [*N*, 67]), thus creates his own counter-character through the figure of Naomi. Torn between the thrills of modernity and the safety that a traditional way of living is able to offer him, Joji is permitted to 'move' between the two worlds throughout the novel: from his obsession with the dream world (as represented by Naomi), into reality (symbolised through his reputation as a hard-working engineer, and through his relationship with his family).

Joji's over-indulgence in his Western fantasies eventually moves beyond his control. His failure to successfully separate the two elements of his (now fragmented) identity eventually comes to a head within the final stages of the novel. Joji must lose part of his old identity – that which represented Japanese traditional cultures – to be fully absorbed into his world of fantasy. His unstable and broken identity is torn apart and constructed as new, as Joji becomes 'George', a Japanese man amongst foreigners.

In Carter's 'Flesh and the Mirror', a similar strategy is employed in order to highlight a discourse of colonial language that contributes to the fragmented identity of the tale's narrator. The story of an English woman returning to Japan after being away from her lover for several months, the tale starts by using the first-person pronoun. The young woman arrives in Japan aware of her own actions, and the reactions of those around her: 'I was searching among a multitude of unknown faces'; 'I think I know, now, what I was trying to do' (FM, 78); 'I eyed the most marvellous adventures' (FM, 80). However, the narrator rejects the image that the city has presented to her – that is, a city in which her lover does not fit in to her imagined *idea* of her lover. The narrator admits that she 'was always imagining other things that could have happened, instead' alluding to her difficulty in sustaining an identity which she is comfortable with. She later projects this imagination on to her lover as she searches for 'the face that corresponded to my notion of the unseen face of the one I should love (FM, 85). Claiming that she was always 'rummaging in the dressing-up box of the heart for suitable appearances to adopt in the city' (FM, 79), the narrator's sense of estrangement is enhanced by the city's refusal to collude with her expectations. Although the heroine tries to 'subdue the city' she realises that the foreign metropolis will remain indecipherable.

Halfway through the tale, the narrator shifts to the third person narrative, disorientating her own (and the reader's) perspectives. This deliberately 'destabilis[es] the narrative voice to such an extent that it cannot be fixed to a clearly defined subject position' (Gamble, 2006: 112). The shift can be isolated within a single line wherein Carter writes: 'On the night I came back to [the city], however hard I looked for the one I loved, she could not find him anywhere and the city delivered her into the hands of a perfect stranger who fell into step beside her and asked why she was crying' (FM, 80).

Michelle Ryan-Sautour suggests that Carter's 'preoccupation with the theme of displacement' throughout her short stories results in the reader witnessing 'significant split in the narrative I in 'Flesh and the Mirror', in the dual consciousness of believing one's role and watching oneself play it' (2007: 67). The varied use of pronouns through the short story is part of a much broader identity crisis for Carter, in which she found herself isolated and alienated in an unknown foreign country. Ryan-Sautour goes on to comment that the altering use of pronouns 'reveal[s] a subtle reflection on the themes of identity, alienation, and play-acting' (2007: 58) which seems to be reflective of Carter's personal circumstance at the time of writing. Jeff van der Meer agrees with this, commenting that '[n]ever again would Carter commit such a personal account to fiction, certainly not in a manner that would so perfectly mirror her own situation at a particular time: a female, first person narrator coping with loss, with the ironies and inequalities of relationships' (2001). Michele Ryan-Sautour argues as much in her essay 'Autobiographical Estrangement in Angela Carter's "A Souvenir of Japan", 'The Smile of Winter" and "Flesh and the Mirror"' and claims that Carter's identity 'flickers throughout the text in a "now you see me now you don't" dynamic' (2007: 58). Ryan-Sautour continues her analysis of Carter's own performance dynamic, commenting that 'the "I" is not what it seems, or perhaps is only what it seems' and in Carter's 'literary landscape […] "I" self-consciously "stages" a struggle with language, world, and self' (2007: 58, 69).

One of the most successful devices employed through Carter's story 'Flesh and the Mirror' that explores and (quite literally) reflects the fragmented identity of the Western woman is the mirror. In the story, the narrator returns to a hotel room with a 'perfect stranger […] She went with him to an unambiguous hotel with mirror[s] on the ceiling and lascivious black lace draped around a palpably illicit bed' (FM, 80). The controlling metaphor of the tale, the use of mirrors further demonstrates the fragmented, unstable identity of the narrator: as Ryan-Sautour comments, '[t]he disintegration of

the "I" into the "she" of repeated scenarios is amplified in the reflected mirror, metonymically suggestive of an identity crisis' (2007: 59). Mirrors 'annihilated time, place and person' (FM, 81) and reflect the tropes of 'invention and fantasy' that are inherently linked to 'reveal a troubling series of surfaces that defy penetration to authentic identity' (Ryan-Sautour, 2007: 52). As the narrator is unintentionally 'defined by the action reflected in the mirror. I beset me. I was the subject of the sentence written on the mirror' (FM, 82), so the reader begins to question the authenticity that is presented in front of them. Instead of being able to ascertain the nature of the reality of the situation, the audience instead comes face-to-face with a multitude of identities: the 'masks ascribed to the author fluctuate between the real Angela Carter, Angela Carter the reader, an anonymous narrator who is unrelated to the author, an anonymous writer, a lonely woman in Japan' (Ryan-Sautour, 2007: 63). The mirror imagery is consciously used to highlight the splintered and split masks of both Carter and the narrator, resulting in an effect that leaves the reader unable to trust the text presented before them.[119] The mirror metaphor also serves to 'illuminate the self as Other' alerting oneself to the 'instability of identity' (Chanth, 2015: 177).

The mirror presents to the narrator a 'modification of [her]self' (FM, 81), and she claims that 'she could not come to terms with the sight' (FM, 82). She has become an altered state, a version of herself that she does not recognise. Murakami Murai suggests that it is at this moment that the narrator becomes a foreigner to her own body, realising that there is 'no natural self to return to' (2015, 13). Thus, the city of Tokyo no longer appears to be as exotic as it once: 'it ceased, almost immediately, to be a magic and appalling place' (FM, 88).

Carter was fully aware of Tanizaki's 'return' to Japanese values, and acknowledges that his work is a hybrid of Japanese traditionalism and Western modernity: whilst he was rediscovering 'with profound pleasure' the *kabuki* and *bunraku* theatre he continues to 'love the movies and kept big scrapbooks of his favourite stars' (1997: 268). Although Tanizaki's work moved towards a more conservative stance, Carter seemed to take great pleasure in reading his work. In her review of *Naomi* she writes that the 'most interesting thing […] is that it is very very funny' and that part 'of the joke of the novel is its narrator's lack of self-awareness'

[119] Carter would return to this motif in later years in *Nights at the Circus* (1984). The running theme of the text revolves around the scrutiny that its female protagonist is laid under, demanding to know 'Is she fact, or is she fiction?' (*NC*, 5).

(1997: 269). Yet, Carter's reflection that Naomi would be 'alive and kicking, today'[120] is a sobering thought – with 'fascism, militarism, victory, defeat and economic triumph' lying before Naomi and Joji, Carter reminds us of the rate at which Japan raced through the twentieth-century, squeezing in 'more history in a lifetime than many nations manage in a millennium' (1997: 270). The phenomenon of the Modern Woman is just one step towards changes experienced in Japan in the last one hundred and fifty years.

Images of the Grotesque: Tanizaki's 'Pink Lady' in *Naomi* and Carter's 'Glumdalclitch' in 'A Souvenir of Japan'

Challenges to heteronormative gender roles are not just realised through the use of language and alterations in lexical discourse in *Naomi*. Clothing plays a prominent part in Naomi's evolving identity, acting as a signifier for transgressive behaviour and cultural preferences towards Western superficiality. Naomi revels in the attention that she receives when she dresses in her 'outrageous' clothes, demonstrating an explicit refusal to conform to Japanese social expectations. When Joji takes Naomi out to the theatre, for example, passing spectators question her identity – "I wonder who *she* is"/ "An actress, maybe?"/ "A Eurasian?" (*N*, 39). These comments have a purpose that is two-fold; firstly, Naomi's conscientious attitude towards fashion is rewarded through the arousal of public interest, demonstrating her ability to assimilate with Western dress. Secondly, through the suggestions that Naomi may be an actress or a Eurasian seeks to imply that the behavioural traits Naomi adopts throughout the novel are essentially a *performance*, and that Naomi can only aspire to become Western through language and clothing; the best she can hope for is to be, as Levy calls it, Western*esque* (2006).

As demonstrated by the shift in Naomi's use of language, so too does her choice in clothing suggest a shift towards a more masculine identity. Joji recalls that '[Naomi's] most expensive indoor outfit was a three-piece, black velvet suit that she said was inspired by a costume she'd seen a man wear in an American movie. When she put it on with her hair rolled up under a sports cap, she was as sensuous as a cat' (*N*, 39). Not only does Naomi demonstrate a willingness to actively engage with Western aesthetics through imitating appearances of actors and actresses that appear

[120] Carter's review was written in 1986.

Hollywood films, but she also shows no preference to male or female clothing styles, evidence of a liberal ideology that is fitting with the figure of the Modern Woman. The fact that she also wears the three-piece suit *indoors* in this instance is meaningful. Firstly, it may indicate a reluctance to show-off her androgynous look in public in acknowledgement of the disapproval that may reflect on her as an individual. The fact that Naomi primarily wears feminine clothes to social occasions may actually suggest that she is not entirely comfortable overtly portraying such masculine characteristics, particularly through her choice of fashion. However, this reading does not seem to sit comfortably with how Tanizaki portrays Naomi. As a Modern Woman, she 'epitomises a material world devoid of culture, spirit and family' (Huang, 2007: 84), and as such, it seems naïve to suggest that she would be concerned with general public opinion.

However, Naomi's choice to imitate the actors that appear in American movies *within* the space of the home serves to demonstrate the intensity of Western cultural invasion upon the landscape of Japan. The home in this sense (that has already been indicated as being Western-esque) is transformed into an oblique space whereby tradition is eradicated and replaced by Westernised modernity. *Naomi* 'must be one of the first novels to describe the sensibilities forged by Hollywood and, perhaps, the first to depict the precise nature of the cultural imperialism disseminated by Hollywood' (Carter, 1997: 268). Clothing serves as a subtle acknowledgement of Western superiority; its ability to penetrate the domestic sphere shows that the landscape of the foreign body (symbolically represented by the body of Naomi) is pliable and can be altered to keep in line with Western expectations.

Two years before she went to Japan, Carter wrote the essay 'Notes for a Theory of Sixties Style' for the *New Society*. In it she remarks that 'Clothes are so many things at once. Our social shells; the system of signals with which we broadcast our intentions; often the projections of our fantasy selves' (1997: 105). Naomi's evolving fashion style that includes masculine garments such as the trouser is symbolic of a protest against conventional female dress codes. Moreover, Naomi's style of clothing is not just representative of her own individual attempt to rebel against tradition: it is an expression of the environment and of the era in which she was living in. Carter goes on to claim that 'Clothes are our weapon, our challenges, our visible insults' (1997: 105), and this is no more-true for Naomi than at the end of the novel when she returns to Joji's home after a period spent away pursuing young Western gentlemen. Tanizaki's description of Naomi's hair, clothes and her make-up create a cumulative effect that is

antithetical to conservative Japanese representations of female beauty, and are instead aligned with the Modern Woman.

> Whipping off a black garment and tossing it aside, an unfamiliar young Western woman stood there in a pale blue French crepe dress. The exposed arms and shoulder were as white as a fox. Around her fleshy nape, she wore a crystal necklace that glowed like a rainbow; and beneath a black velvet hat pulled low over her eyes, the tips of her nose and chin were visible, terrifyingly, miraculously white. The raw vermilion of her lips stood out in contrast (*N*, 207).

The pale blue French crepe dress and the unfamiliar look of the Western woman that Naomi now wears seeks to reinforce the complete detachment of Japanese tradition from European modernity. Naomi has made the transition from a young, uneducated Oriental girl, to a hyper-sexualised Western*esque* woman. The exposed arms and gaps between her garments give tantalizing glimpses of the figure underneath. The impenetrable nature of the clothes, in contrast to the potential of what lies beneath Naomi's apparel, that 'excite[s] layers of surmise' (Lee, 1997: 98).

The positive response to Naomi's choice of clothing is indicative of her success in mimicking a Western style of dress. However, this level of success is not shared by all the women in the novel that aspire to non-Japanese modes of fashion. When Naomi and Joji attend their first social dance together they see a young lady in a pink dress dancing with one of Naomi's male friends, Ma-chan. Joji describes the Pink Lady as

> tall and plump, and her long, voluptuous arms were fully exposed. Her thick, raven black hair – not simply abundant, but heavy and oppressive – was chopped shoulder length, frizzled in a negligent sort of way, and adorned with a ribbon wrapped round her head and over her forehead. Her cheeks were red, her eyes large, and her lips thick, but the oval outline of her face, with its long, thin nose, was in the pure Japanese style of the *ukiyoe* prints (*N*, 83).

Called a 'whore', 'vulgar', and 'fake' (*N*, 84-87), the Pink Lady acts as a metaphorical representation of the unsuccessful assimilation between two distinct cultural practices. The Pink Lady's attempts to reconcile her body with the idea of the Modern Woman with her 'thick raven hair' chopped at shoulder length is ultimately unsuccessful. Her face, described as being in the style of the *ukiyoe* prints,[121] provides a stark contrast

[121] *Ukiyoe* prints were a genre of woodblock prints and paintings that were popularised during the 1600s and often depicted images of beautiful women, myths and folklore.

against the Westernised rouged make-up, a representation of tradition fighting against modernity. Furthermore, it seems that the ruination of a symbolically classical face ("If she wore normal make-up, she'd be attractive enough" [*N*, 84]) connotes images of the grotesque, a visual trope employed by Tanizaki to exacerbate the incompatibility of two very different and distinct cultural practices.

Mary Russo depicts the image of the grotesque as 'open, protruding, irregular, secreting, multiple and changing' (1994: 8). Exploring ideas that are originally looked at in Mikhail Bakhtin's *Rabelais and his World*, the grotesque is imagined in an exaggerated, hyperbolic form and is characterised by a 'brimming-over abundance' (1965: 19). Most strongly associated with the female form due to its refusal to be contained through a strict set of boundaries via the abjection of menstruation and pregnancy, the grotesque prefigures as a criterion for the monstrous, and that which cannot be controlled. Described by Russo as 'a repository of unnatural, frivolous, and irrational connections between things which nature and classical art kept scrupulously apart' (Russo, 1994: 3), the Pink Lady becomes a symbolic representation of the clashes between cultures. The female body acts as a site on to which the grotesque and the monstrous are formulated and personified: the Pink Lady is 'abjected from the bodily canons of classical aesthetics' (Russo, 1994: 8) through her refusal to conform to the traditional image of the *ukiyoe* print.

The use of make-up in *Naomi* is indicative of how successful the bearer is able to align themselves with a Western aesthetic. The Pink Lady adopts a manic and desperate style in a bid to appear like a Western woman. However, instead of adopting a method that sees her facial features completely transformed, the young lady takes on a grotesque appearance, looking like a 'whore' on account of all the 'slop' on her face. Her looks, as aforementioned, become almost barbaric appearance, made evident through Naomi's taunting jeers of 'monkey' and 'ape' (*N*, 84; 87-89; 91; 94). A failed attempt to depict herself as a Westerner, the Pink Lady's lack of success correlates with over-indulgence: she is described as 'working overtime' applying her make-up, over-compensating by putting on green and blue gaudy looking colours on her face. Joji comments that, '[s]he'd whitened every bit of exposed skin until she looked as though she's been dusted with rice flour, and applied shiny, blue-green pigment around her eyes. The bright red on her cheeks was obviously rouge […] she looked like a monster' (*N*, 84). Her colourful face is testimony to the clash of cultural styles; the Pink Lady becomes a caricature, a parody of her own attempts to adopt a Western style.

The Pink Lady fails to assimilate a Western aesthetic because she does not adhere to normalised expectations of female beauty. Her over-indulgence and enthusiasm for cosmetic products results in a gaudy appearance that fits with neither Western nor Japanese styles of beauty. In 1975, two years after Carter had returned from Japan, she wrote an essay for the *New Society* magazine entitled 'The Wound in the Face'. Lamenting the continuously fluctuating fashions of women's make-up, the essay highlights the constantly changing nature of cosmetic trends. Carter opens by commenting, 'I stuck twenty or thirty faces on the wall and tried to work out from the evidence before me (a) what women's faces are supposed to be looking like, now; and (b) why' (1997: 109) Examining a similar thread to Tanizaki's work, 'The Wound in the Face' analyses the exploitative nature of cosmetics that seemingly works in conjunction with an idealistic and conformist expectation that society condemns its women to adhere to (as is experienced by the Pink Lady). Carter goes on to say that the 'basic theory of cosmetics is that they make a woman beautiful. Or as the advertisers say, more beautiful' (1997: 111). At the end of the Tanizaki's novel when Naomi returns home to Joji, her lips are described as 'raw vermilion' contrasting against the whiteness of her nose and chin. Tanizaki's use of the vivid vermillion mimics a woman's sex, a red open wound on display for the whole world to see. The rawness of Naomi's lips again reasserts her overt sexuality, and is symbolic of the countless lovers the young woman has been with. The normalisation of this image, argues Carter, means that 'we no longer see [the lips] as the wound it mimics, except in the treacherous lucidity of paranoia […] Women are allowed – indeed, encouraged – to exhibit the sign of their symbolic castration, but only in the socially sanctioned place' (1997: 112) When Naomi presents her lips in front of Joji, she deliberately draws attention to her sexual availability, expressing her willingness to engage intimately with him. Naomi's painted lips highlight her negated (castrated) female form in order to accentuate her lover's positive (phallic). Despite her husband's attempts to reinstate a traditional Japanese life, the couple end up moving from one foreign hotspot to another, with Naomi taking Western lovers as she pleases. Once transformed, Naomi cannot turn back: 'the open wound will never heal' (Carter, 1997: 114).

Not only do images of the grotesque associate themselves with the abject and the vulgar, but for Russo and Bakhtin, they are also indications of 'non-official "low" culture or the carnivalesque' and often used to conceptualise 'social formations, social conflict, and the realm of the political' (Russo, 1994: 8). The experience of a new way

of living in Japan, as introduced through the increase of foreign imports (for example, film, literature, and fashion) would certainly be categorised into a prominent social transformation, as would the figure of the popular Modern Woman. A fragmented and evolving identity, the social transformations of the Japanese at the time of Tanizaki's writing fit perfectly into ideas of the grotesque which is 'incomplete, unclosed unit, something that is growing towards something new' (Bakhtain, 1965: 26). The Pink Lady, described as 'monster' and a 'monkey', and someone looks like 'a western doll with the head of a Kyoto doll, her clothes and features just didn't go together' (*N*, 84), symbolises the difficulties in visual assimilation between East and West. Playing with the idea of the image/limitations that are imposed on the surface of the body – "she'll never look western with that face – it has 'Japan' written all over it" (*N*, 87) – Tanizaki projects the image of the grotesque on to the Pink Lady as a political and social statement. Deliberately employed to invoke anxiety over the female form, the grotesque appearance of the Pink Lady ensures that a symbolic representation of both East and West reconciliation is, difficult to achieve.

Carter also explores images of the grotesque in her short story 'A Souvenir of Japan', wherein the narrator seeks to understand her own identity as a foreigner in Japan. The first story in Carter's *Fireworks* collection, 'A Souvenir of Japan' is a reflective commentary on an English woman's experiences in a foreign country, specifically drawing on her relationship with her foreign lover. The lovers watch a firework display before returning home together. The narrator is ostracised in the neighbourhood they live in, writing that the 'entire street politely disapproved of me' (SJ, 4). Reflecting on her relationship with her lover, the narrator tells the story of their first night together in one of Japan's love hotels. She describes a sense of strangeness about her lover, a strangeness she equates with Japan – he is 'almost goblin, as if he might have borrowed another person's head, as Japanese goblins do' and she believes it is possible that her lover has 'practised an enchantment on me, as foxes in this country may' (SJ, 7). This sense of strangeness is heightened in the narrator's interpretation of how Japan appears. She describes it as a 'world of icons' and that 'the appearance which was the reality' (SJ, 13), a superficiality that the narrator finds difficult to comprehend 'What terrible discipline it takes to live harmoniously' (SJ, 13).

It is the narrator's own understanding of her position as a foreigner that is most pertinent to this story in a reading alongside Tanizaki's *Naomi*. Although the narrator in Carter's story calls herself as a 'female impersonator', she also describes herself as

a ‘fabulous beast’, an ‘outlandish jewel’, recognizing the beauty in her perceived exoticism. Just as Tanizaki ‘iconoclastically invert[s] the gendered relationship between East and West’ (Huang, 2007: 81) so Carter too challenges the standardised forms of exoticism by deliberately inverting its core values. The West is exoticised, and constructed as an ‘imagined, sexualised other’ (Huang, 2007: 81) and the East acts as a template against which all other behaviours are comparable.

Echoing Tanizaki’s description of the Pink Lady, Carter too invokes ideas of the grotesque and monstrous to depict images of the Other. Whereas Tanizaki employs images of the grotesque to demonstrate the harshness of combining Japanese and Western aesthetics, Carter uses similar imagery as a narrative strategy that accentuates her difference. To refer to one of the most oft-quoted pages of the text, in which the narrator comments that she feels like a ‘female impersonator’ who is made inherently self-conscious about her lumbering size as she makes her way through a Japanese department store, where

> there was a rack of dresses labelled: “For Young and Cute Girls Only”’. When I looked at them, I felt as gross as Glumdalclitch. I wore men’s sandals because they were the only kind that fitted me and even so, I had to take the largest size (SJ, 9).

The terms ‘young’ and ‘cute’ become synonymous with femininity, a quality that the narrator is denied due to her androgynous traits. Furthermore, the grotesque as a ‘cultural projection of an inner state’ (Russo, 1994: 9) brings the reader round once more to the semi-autobiographical elements that litter Carter’s short stories. When analysing the figure of the grotesque as a projection of an ‘inner state’ of being then, it can be argued that Carter’s own sentiments and experiences are being drawn upon in ‘A Souvenir of Japan’, highlighting the cultural differentiations between ideas of Western and Japanese femininity.

The outward appearance of the narrator ensures that she cannot escape from the identity as foreigner. It is through this language and these symbolic gestures of appearance that Carter purposefully unveils the complexities involved when deriving a narrative that looks to construct relationships across the East/West divide. And, much like the dancing scene in *Naomi*, so Carter also adopts the figure of the grotesque in this passage: the narrator’s body is ‘gross’, a ’perpetual fanfare’ (SJ, 9), reminding us of the descriptions used for the ‘monstrous’ Pink Lady. The two bodies act as

representations of an unsuccessful attempt at merging cultural boundaries, and for Carter this sense of the monstrous and being something 'Other' certainly contributes to a sense of alienation and estrangement throughout the narrative.

However, despite the descriptions that appear in 'A Souvenir of Japan', Carter's/the narrator's exotic appeal is still highlighted throughout 'A Souvenir of Japan'. Despite (or rather, *because of*) the narrator's non-conforming body type, and her inability to fit in with the Eastern landscape, she sees herself as a 'kind of phoenix, a fabulous beast' (SJ, 8). The narrator's robust (and grotesque) appearance contrasts starkly against her lover's fragile body, 'so delicately put together'. And, although the woman is afraid that she 'might smash him', her lover tells her that 'when he was in bed with [her], he felt like a small boat upon a wide, stormy sea' (SJ, 9). The lovers' difference in size and the narrator's large body adds to the eroticism of the scene. The Pink Lady's lumbering size is symbolic of her inability to fit in: yet the narrator in 'A Souvenir of Japan' deliberately utilises her alienated status to invert the idea of the Oriental exotic thus becoming the *Occidental* exotic: 'I had never been so absolutely the mysterious other' (SJ, 8). It is the very 'foreign-ness' of the narrator's body, argues Ryan-Sautour, that allows her to embody the space that is simultaneously grotesque and exotic, helping maintain the power dynamics between herself and her Japanese lover. The 'narrator's self-conscious masochism is complicated by her ambivalent fascination with herself as other […] her grotesqueness actually placed her in a position of power' (Ryan-Sautour, 2007: 65). In an interview for the *Guardian* newspaper in 1972 Carter goes on to claim that 'Japanese men pursue European women […] One is the object of a quite incredible erotic curiosity, bordering on the hysterical, it is our size, our bigness, our fairness which drives them wild' (Stott, 1972: 9). Carter comments elsewhere that 'the power and the strangeness of the West has been eroticised; to possess the foreign woman would be to eat of the very fruit of the tree of knowledge' (1997: 268). In a position of privilege, Carter subverts the conventional gendered narrative in 'A Souvenir of Japan' by inverting 'racialised narratives of white men describing the bodies of their exotic lovers' (Chanth, 2015: 176). Her approach is a 'self-conscious feminist strategy to subvert the male appropriation and subjugation of the female exotic body in racialised narratives developed as part of Europe's ideological program of colonisation' (Chanth, 2015: 176). As Said lays out:

> The relationship between Occident and Orient is a relationship of power, of domination, of varying degrees of a complex hegemony […] The Orient was Orientalised not only because it was discovered to be "Oriental" in all those ways considered commonplace by an average nineteenth-century European, but also because it *could be* – that is, submitted to being, *made* Oriental (Said: 1978: 5-6; italics Said's).

Carter ultimately adheres to Said's thesis of an overarching representation of the Occident over the Oriental figure. The narrator in 'A Souvenir of Japan' is permitted to dare to perceive herself as a fabulous beast, despite her Amazonian-like features. However, if the Eastern woman does not comply with Western ideas of how the foreign woman should appear (i.e. beautiful, mysterious, and exotic), then she is automatically cast aside, relegated to the realm of the monstrous and the grotesque.

However, the Pink Lady who seeks to imitate the appearance and dress of a Western woman is *not* permitted the same concessions as the narrator in 'A Souvenir of Japan'. Carter's protagonist retains a privilege that both allows her body to act as a site of exoticism whilst simultaneously maintaining power over her Japanese lover due to her Western origins. The attempts of the Pink Lady to successfully figure her body as a site of exoticism are ultimately unsuccessful because she cannot escape from the very 'Japaneseness' that permeate her features.

The art of *irezumi*: a comparative reading of Carter's *Heroes and Villains*, *The Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor Hoffman* and Tanizaki's 'The Tattooer'

The social codification of the human body is a theme that both Carter and Tanizaki explore, specifically in reference to the use of body modification. As demonstrated through the analysis of *Naomi*, 'A Souvenir of Japan' and 'Flesh and the Mirror', both authors utilise the body as a site which is to be read, and make up and dress are just two of the ways that Carter and Tanizaki do this. Both authors also use tattoos as a means of experimenting with gendered, social and cultural norms. Tattooing is used to denote power (and the shifting of this power between the master (the tattooer) the victim (the tattooed) and the image of the tattoo itself is a site of privileged meaning. Modification of the flesh further seeks to demonstrate the ways in which cultural and sexual histories are constructed and experimented with. The use of tattoos in Carter's *The Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor Hoffman* and Tanizaki's 'The Tattooer' (1910) acts as a

'powerful narrative, a text written on the body awaiting decoding and deconstruction' (Ikoma, 2005: 32).

Inscriptions on the body are littered throughout Carter's fiction: in *Several Perceptions* (1968), Viv tells Joseph about her father's tattoo, an image of a fox-hunt etched onto his back 'with the fox disappearing down the hole'. The family's bad luck, she explains, only started when her father had a fall, hurting his back, indicating an irrational belief that the fox tattoo was somehow keeping their troubles at bay. *Heroes and Villains* (1969) uses the image of The Fall painted on the barbarian boy Jewel's back as a means of sustaining religious and social histories; in *Love* (1971), Annabel brands Lee with her name after she discovers his infidelity. Her role as instigator and owner of the Lee's tattoo image is confirmed as she proclaims ''You'll never deceive me again […] what other girl would make love to you now?" (*L*, 68). In *Wise Children*, the seaside performer George is decorated with a full-bodied tattoo of the map of the world: he is described as an 'enormous statement', his skin a 'prime spectacle' (*WC*, 66).

Carter's time abroad heightened her interest in tattooing as a form of body modification as she further understood its transformative process that turns its victims into a 'genre masterpiece' (1997: 234). Her 1970 essay 'People as Pictures' for the *New Society* and her 1972 novel *The Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor Hoffman* both reveal Carter's interest in the Japanese art of *irezumi*, the painful and prolonged process in which the Japanese ink their bodies. A communal act, *irezumi* has traditionally been identified with a certain occupation (carpenters, labourers, gamblers, gangsters) and is perceived almost as an initiation rite given its painful and lengthy process (Carter, 1997; Ikoma, 2005). At the hands of the tattoo artist, the body suffers from what Carter calls the 'rigorous and ineradicable cosmetology of the awl and gouge (for the masters of the art do not use the needle) until unique and glorious in his mutilation, he becomes a work of art as preposterous as it is magnificent' (1997: 234). A man who has been 'comprehensively tattooed […] can hardly be said to be naked, for he may never remove this most intimate and gaily coloured of garments' (1997: 236). Painting with 'pain upon a canvas of flesh', Carter refers to the process as one of the most 'exquisitely refined and skilful forms of sadomasochism in the mind of man ever divined' (1997: 238).

The first reference to *irezumi* in Carter's work can be traced back to her journals from 1970 (Add. MS 88899/1/93; Add. MS 88899/1/80). A picture of a tattooist

drawing on the back of a Japanese woman is glued to one of the pages: alongside the picture Carter writes,

> The tattooed man is designed as a whole and so he becomes a work of art, unlike the merry and eclectic tattooed men of Europe […] the Japanese is rendered as a total tattoo experience, with a vivid sense of style, for the irezumi is like a snug ~~lace jacket~~ garment he can never take off. The design covers the back, the buttocks, both arms to the forearm and the upper thigh – sometimes as far as the knee so that the effect is something like that of an Edwardian bathing suit. But the middle of the chest, stomach and abdomen are usually left free, so that the bare skin itself becomes involved in the design. Operations in the genital region, where a peach or gourd decoration is favoured, are often exquisitely painful since the victim must maintain tumescence during the actual tattooing so that the finished design is perfectly detailed (Add. MS 88899/1/80).[122]

The images that Carter describes here – the garment-like fitting of the tattoo in particular – would eventually find their way into *The Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor Hoffman*, in the fifth chapter 'Lost in Nebulous Time'. Having fled from a carnivorous tribe, Albertina and Desiderio find themselves living amongst a tribe of centaurs, a group of creatures whose lives centre around the worship of the horse-god, the Sacred Stallion. They have 'deeply masochistic streak' not only using pain as a tool to demonstrate their loyalty to their god, but also as a means of obtaining pleasure: they whip themselves 'continually […] making the slightest real or imagined fault the pretext for a beating […] They loved to feel the hot steel on their fetlocks when the priest shod them' (*DH*, 214). The centaurs' masochistic desires are also realised through their full-bodied tattoos, similar to the type that Carter describes during her discussion of *irezumi* in her journals.

In their first encounter with the centaurs, Desiderio describes their bodies 'gleaming bronze […] almost as if spiders had woven webs all round their shoulders for they were covered with many decorations with hug-me-tights of lace' (*DH*, 203). As the centaurs approach, their exquisite bodies are described as thus:

> As they came closer, I saw that they were entirely naked for what I had taken for clothing was the most intricate tattoo work I have ever seen. These tattoos were designed as a whole and covered the back and both arms down as far as the forearms; and the middle of the chest, the upper abdomen and the throat and face were all left bare on the males though the womenfolk were tattooed all over, even their faces, in order to cause them more suffering, for they believed women were born only to suffer. The colours were most subtly woven together

[122] 'Lace jacket' appears crossed out in Carter's notebook.

> and the palette had the aesthetic advantages of limitation for it consisted of only a bluish black, a light blue and a burning red. The designs were curvilinear, swirling pictures of horse gods and horse demons wreathed in flowers, heads of corn, and stylised representation of the mammiform cacti, worked into the skin in a decorative fashion that recalled pictures in embroidery (*DH*, 203-4).

The image of the centaurs in *Doctor Hoffman* echoes Carter's description of *irezumi* that appears in her Japan journals, even going so far as to the leave the abdomen, stomach and chest of the centaur tattoo-free. The embroidered designs of the centaurs mimic the lace-like image of *irezumi* that Carter describes in her journals.

Body modification for the tribe of centaurs is treated like a ritual-act, with tattooing performed on young centaurs (both male and female) coming into adulthood. The more complicated designs (for those of a higher social standing in the tribe) take up to a year to complete: this draws directly on the art of *irezumi* whereby larger and intricate designs 'take as long as a year of weekly visits to a tattooist [to] complete. These visits will last as long as the customer can endure them' (Carter, 1997: 237). The bays are described as 'victims' and are inked with an awl and gouge in a series of 'stylised passes over their exposed flesh' (*DH*, 223). As Desiderio watches the tattoo-master mark the flesh of the young bays he finds the 'art was as remarkable as the method was atrocious' (*DH*, 223). This form of body decoration serves as a means of maintaining religious ideologies within the tribe, creating a communal belief that centres around the existence of the mythical Sacred Stallion.

The use of religious iconography and body modification is also explored in *Heroes and Villains*, and it is worth drawing comparisons between the two texts in order to further understand the function of body decoration in Carter's work. The bodies of the centaurs depict an array of horse gods and demons, with one of the bays described as a 'work of religious art as preposterous as it was magnificent' *(DH*, 224). Similarly, in *Heroes and Villains* the renegade doctor Donally inscribes the image of The Fall on to the back of the barbarian boy, Jewel.

> He wore the figure of a man on the right side, a woman on the left and, tattooed the length of his spine, a tree with a snake curled round and round the trunk. This elaborate design was executed in blue, red, black and green, the woman offered the man a red apple and more red apples grew among green leaves at the top of the tree, spreading across his shoulders, and the black roots of the tree twisted and ended at the top of his buttocks. The figures were both stiff and lifelike; Eve wore a perfidious smile. The lines of colour were etched with obsessive precision on the shining, close-pored skin which rose and fell with

> Jewel's breathing, so it seemed the snake's forked tongue darted in and out and the leaves on the tree (*HV*, 93-4).

Carter's use of religious iconography functions as a tool to bring the tribe of barbarians together. A 'visual, material representation of The Fall' (Gass, 1998: 151), Jewel's tattoo symbolises the contradictions between primitivism and civilization. Yoshioka suggests that the tattoo 'represents a social semiotics of the native which is not to be decoded by the Western system, standing aloof of the civilization based on text' (2006: 77): yet, Carter's choice of the Genesis image in *Heroes and Villains* suggests that some forms of body modification are used as a means of sustaining social and religious beliefs reliant on the very idea of civilised practices. Tattoos reflect 'concepts of social order and disorder [which] are depicted and legitimised, or specific power and class structures confirmed or concealed' (Reichel-Dolmatoff, 1997: 12). Contradicting this reading, however, the bearer of the tattoo, Jewel, has never been taught to read in order to keep him beautifully savage and excluded from the 'fallen' textual civilization. The location of Jewel's tattoo on his back also means that he has never been able to see it – the tattoo is kept 'out of sight [and] out of mind' (*HV*, 94). So, although tattoos depicting religious iconography are employed in *Heroes and Villains* and in *Doctor Hoffman*, it is not necessarily an indicator of civilizing practices: in fact, it invokes quite the opposite and Carter deliberately deploys such imagery as marks of tribalism and primitivism.

There is a danger of associating body modification practices with operating within fixed stereotypes, which ultimately fetishises other cultures. Promoting the 'reproduction of repressive gender and racialised stereotypes' (Featherstone, 2000: 5) notions of tribalism are bound up with ideas of primitivism, a theme explored in both *Heroes and Villains* and in *the Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor Hoffman.* The use of a primitive discourse (with specific reference to body modification) 'has been foundational to the Western self and other' (Featherstone, 2000: 34). Carter's Othering of the centaur tribe, although not wholly dependent on the practice of *irezumi*, is enhanced through its similarities with Japanese tattooing practices. As Susan Benson explains,

> for many, to inscribe upon the skin the marks of the primitive other is "anti-repressive" a way of releasing the savage within […] the identification with the primitive and the exotic is thus no longer abjected, but is reconfigured as

> identification with the authentic, the uncommodified, the pure, in opposition to the corruptions of mainstream society (2000: 242).

For Ikoma, such attitudes 'transforms other cultures for service to Western culture' and is a 'residue of Orientalism' (2005: 28). A cross-cultural exchange that sees non-Western cultures and traditions (such as tattoos) permeate the West are thus subjected to commercialization 'where Western capitalism manipulates the vulgar concept of the Orient' (Ikoma, 2005: 28). Ikoma goes on to suggest that the commercialization of the tattoo also seems to occur 'alongside the commodification of the body in consumer society' (2005: 28). Although Ikoma is referencing contemporaneous practices of body modification, there is a clear crossover with Tanizaki's *Naomi* and the consumption of the Western aesthetic in order to keep up with the idea of the 1920s Modern Woman in Japan. The body's transformations, 'though assumed to be in the intended image of individual desire, are actually subject to all of the pressures of social and cultural constructionism' (Ikoma, 2005: 28).

Interpretations of body art and how we read the flesh – if indeed, it is intended to be read – certainly aligns itself with a Carter-esque ethos. Body modification – tattooing in particular – can be understood as a means of creating a collective amongst a group of people. By nature, tattooing is a consumer and copy-culture (Kuwahara, 2005: 138), unveiling our desire to imitate others, and for others to imitate us. It is a desire for duplication and a need to confirm our experiences as the same as others, and opting for the same or similar tattoo as peers can be interpreted as a reassurance of our own place in society. The unity of the centaurs in *Doctor Hoffman* is highlighted not only through their ritualised act of body modification, but through their refusal to give one another personal names: 'for they felt themselves all undifferentiated aspects of a universal will to become a horse' (*DH*, 206). Their worship of the Sacred Stallion is an 'impassioned recital of their mythic past' (*DH*, 206), adhering to a singular narrative that is shared and vocalised amongst its members.

On the other hand, tattoos can be understood as a means of self-assertion and as a way of developing individual identities: words and images that are drawn on the body are based on difference. Paul Sweetman suggests that this reading can be seen as an attempt to fix and anchor the self by permanently marking the body, although this 'does not imply that the *meaning* of such forms of body modification is also fixed' (2000: 63). The flesh is marked with a reminder of difference and of individuality; history and meaning is inscribed and reiterated through our chosen images. Tattoos are a means of

expressing a certain kind of history, and the social context in which a person receives a tattoo can just be as important as the tattoo itself. Therefore, body art can be seen as a way of reclaiming the body, of taking ownership and of maintaining difference from others:

> A tattoo is more than a painting on skin: its meaning and reverberations cannot be comprehended without a knowledge of the history and mythology of its bearer. Thus, it is a true poetic creation, and is always more than meets the eye (Vale and Juno, 1989: 5).

The primary source of a tattoo's power, argues Margo DeMello (2000), is the literal ability to write ourselves and to create our own narrative; the downside being that this opens us up to being read by others and perhaps not always in the way that we want to. In *Heroes and Villains*, Jewel's tattoo functions as a dual image that separates him from the rest of the barbarians whilst simultaneously serving as a reminder that he is the bearer of an iconographic image that inscribes religious and social histories. In other words, Jewel's tattoo is not a reflection of his *own* narrative and his body only serves as a negated space onto which the tattooer, Donally, is able to construct his masterpiece.

Tanizaki's 'The Tattooer' explores the complex relationship between the tattooer, the tattooed and the symbolic privilege of the tattoo. Set in the 1840s in the late Edo period, 'The Tattooer' tells the story of a young tattoo artist, Seikichi, who finds pleasure in the pain that he inflicts on his customers as he tattoos them: 'His pleasure lay in the agony men felt as he drove his needles into them, torturing their swollen, blood-red flesh; and the louder they groaned, the keener was Seikichi's strange delight' (T, 162). However, as much pleasure that Seikichi's derives from the pain inflicted on men, his ultimate fantasy is to inscribe the flesh of a beautiful woman. Seikichi finds an innocent young girl, within whom he recognizes the potential powers of evil: he anaesthetises her and while she sleeps he draws on her back an enormous black widow spider, transforming her into a 'diabolical woman' (Lippit, 1977: 231). After awaking from her slumber, the young woman equates her sense of self with the symbolic man-eating black spider on her back. Although Seikichi assumes 'you must be suffering. The spider has you in its clutches' (T, 168) the young girl declares her tattooer to be her first victim, thus fulfilling Seikichi's 'secret masochistic desire to be devoured by a beautiful and cruel woman' (Lippit, 1977: 231). Tanizaki's portrayal of Seikichi also aligns with Anthony Chambers's argument that Tanizaki's male

characters are 'abject and masochistic women worshippers whose primary object in life is to be dominated, even mistreated, by the women they love (1972: 36).

Fetishistic and sadomasochistic practices are a familiar theme in Tanizaki's work, and a 'characteristic trait in a Tanizaki novel is a [male] abject figure whose greatest pleasure is to be tortured by the woman he adores' (Keene, 1971: 172). The themes of the 'discovery of perversity in human nature and the masochistic desire for self-destruction are intertwined', suggests Lippit, and are related to Tanizaki's other major theme of his early works, 'the pursuit of the *femme fatale*' (1977: 229).[123] A theme that also appears in *Naomi*, 'The Tattooer' explores the transformative nature of the woman, a shift that sees her challenge traditional gender roles, superficially shifting from victim to master. Her 'transformation is fundamentally a construction of Seikichi, in the same way that the character of Naomi is a construction of her mentor Joji' (Morton, 2009: 117). Lippit suggests that the creation of the 'cruel beautiful woman is the externalization of the hero's desires and in actuality she is his puppet' (Lippit, 1997: 230). This isn't entirely true – although Joji successfully creates a Western*esque* woman in Naomi, and Seikichi fulfils his fantasy of tattooing a beautiful woman, both tales end rather badly for the two men. Joji sacrifices his own Japanese way of living (and even his name) in order to keep Naomi happy, and Seikichi is devoured at the end of 'The Tattooer'.

Moreover, the inscription of flesh alters the way that the bearer of the tattoo perceives themselves. The 'weird malevolent creature' that Seikichi draws on the back of his victim 'stretched its eight legs to embrace the whole of the girl's back' as he proclaims that "all men will be your victims" (T, 168). The bearer of the tattoo 'cannot but be influenced by it internally since the tattoo has […] a powerful transformative power, with or without regard to the bearer's intention' (Ikoma, 2005: 32). The

[123] Tanizaki depicted strange forms of desire. For example, his obsession with feet appears in *The Man with the Mandoline* a blind man drugs his wife so he can fondle her feet while she sleeps. In *Diary of a Mad Old Man* (1962), the old man puts his daughter-in-law's toes in his mouth to suck. Tanizaki's bizarre interest in toilets and excremental matter was also referred to earlier in this chapter. Carter is a kindred spirit in such forms of fetishisation. For example, in *The Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor Hoffman*, the Count (who is modelled on the Marquis de Sade) not only finds perverse pleasure in the pain that he inflicts upon others, as when he is boiled alive by the primitive tribe of carnivores, Albertina reflects that he 'died a happy man, for those who inflict suffering are always most curious about the nature of suffering' (*DH*, 199).

narrative of the body inscription can affect the receptor so fundamentally that it has the power to alter the perception of the self, and subsequent power that comes with that reading. It is 'very difficult not to be influenced by a story, even about yourself, when everyone else is insisting upon it' (Sinfield, 1992: 31). Thus, it can be argued that the tattooed girl in Tanizaki's story has no choice but to personify the black widow spider etched on her back: her story has already been written for her, tying in with Seikichi's sadomasochistic urges to be devoured by a beautiful woman.

Moreover, there is an added layer of complexity when considering the nature of *irezumi* and the role it plays in establishing a gendered discourse. Ikoma suggests that in spite its associations with masculinity (demonstrated through its association with typically male-gendered workforce such as carpenters, tradesmen and the Japanese *Yakuza*) the 'most striking aesthetic feature of *Irezumi* is its feminine qualities' (2006: 33). It is perhaps contradictory, Ikoma goes on to argue, that the tattoo that is thought to function to 'boast of the bearer's masculinity, actually exhibits the very representation of femininity which society normally associated with women' (2006: 33). The key difference between the two approaches lies within its reception. Mary Douglas observes that the 'more personal and intimate the source of the ritual symbolism, the more telling its message. The more the symbol is drawn from the common fund of human experience, the more wise and certain its reception' (1976, 114).

The intricate artwork that appears on the centaurs' bodies in *Doctor Hoffman* reveals a gendered discourse in which women are forced to undergo extreme pain (more so than the men) in the tattooing process. A practice adopted by the centaurs in order to cause the women 'more suffering', females in the tribe have tattoos drawn on their faces and on their neck, reminiscent of the Ainu women of the region Hokkaido who, until the practice was banned by the Japanese government in the early twentieth century, had powdered charcoal rubbed into cuts made in the skin with small sharp knives, giving them a blue-black tattoo tapering to the point at the side of the mouth (Gröning and Anton, 1997: 219). A full body tattoo for the Ainu was a characteristic of marriage, and thus evidence of status – such forms of body modification can therefore be understood as a means of sustaining a power dynamic that seeks to differentiate hierarchies.

Although forms of body modification may function as a means of expressing individualism, tattooing raises some questions in regard to the extent to which the body

can be truly autonomous and able to tell a story of its own. Moreover, the significance of the tattoo itself often aligns with a cultural and social history: thus, the tattoo takes on a privileged meaning that provides meaning to its bearer, rather than the other way around.

Conclusion

Representations of female beauty in Carter and Tanizaki reflect the times in which they were writing. Tanizaki's exploration of the Modern Woman in Japan in the 1920s is personified through the character Naomi; his subsequent rejection of the Western aesthetic and his 'return' to traditional Japanese values are captured in *Some Prefer Nettles*, one of his more semi-autobiographical pieces that reflects his perceptions of the West. A figure of 'reinvented tradition' (Huang, 2007: 84) the Modern Woman of twentieth-century Japan reflected changes of the period. She became an imitation of Hollywood glamour, a distorted mirror image of Mary Pickford, Pina Menicheli, of Geraldine Farrar, and all the actresses who led the way marking out European and Hollywood (or, the *only*) standard of beauty at the dawn of cinema. Likewise, Carter's representations of women evolved with her literary *oeuvre* and her post-Japan work (in particular her fiction published from 1979 onwards) foregrounds a New Woman character that shared characteristics with the Modern Woman.

Carter and Tanizaki both use images of fashion, make-up and the inscription of the flesh to explore representations of feminine beauty. These forms of ornamentation function as markers of cultural and social histories; although they may be used to express individual identity they are more frequently used as ways of reading the Other. For example, Carter uses tattoos as a means of Othering the tribe of centaurs in *The Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor Hoffman*; in *Heroes and Villains* Jewel's tattoo is used to exemplify the savage nature of the barbarians, as well as to Other Jewel as the tattoo-bearer.

The theme is also continued in Tanizaki's work, and the Pink Lady's unsuccessful attempts to be adhere to the Western aesthetic creates a grotesque image that highlights her inability to assimilate with popular conceptions of female beauty. Although Carter suffers from the same problem – she describes herself as grotesque and consistently draws attention her large size in her Japan short stories and in her journals – she is permitted to transform the negated image of the grotesque into a site

of exoticism. Her position as a white Westerner, although defining her role as a grotesque Other in Japan, affords her to transform her body as a site of privilege.

Chapter four

Cinema

A comparative analysis of 'Flesh and the Mirror', 'The Smile of Winter' (both in *Fireworks*, 1974), *The Passion of New Eve* (1977) and 'John Ford's *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*' (1993), alongside Akira Kurosawa's *Seven Samurai* (1954) and *Throne of Blood* (1957)

Angela Carter's visits to the Granada cinema as a child sparked a life-long curiosity with the big-screen. A pleasure she shared with her father, a young Carter indulged in the cinematic experience, 'the unexpected, the gorgeous, the gim-crack, the fantastic' (Carter, 1997: 400), relishing in images that would later emerge throughout her novels and short stories. With a tendency to 'think first in images, and then grope for the words' (Paterson, 1986: 42-5), her writing abounds with 'the exaggerated, the overblown, and the iconic' (Gamble, 2006b: 43). The cinema symbolised unlimited possibilities for Carter, a place where she 'came to value artifice and extravagance as artistic values', where 'anything might materialise in those velvety depths' (Gordon, 2016: 22). This final chapter looks at the representation of cinema within Carter's stories, in particular 'Flesh and the Mirror' (1974), 'The Smile of Winter' (1974), her post-Japan novel *The Passion of New Eve* (1977), and the short story 'John Ford's '*Tis Pity She's a Whore*' (1988), re-published posthumously as part of the short story collection *American Ghosts and Old World Wonders* in 1993, and again in *Burning Your Boats* in 1995.[124] This chapter specifically draws upon the work of Akira Kurosawa (1910-1998) whose films Carter was greatly interested in. A comparative analysis of Kurosawa's *Seven Samurai* (*Shichinin no samurai*, 1954) and *Throne of Blood* (*Kumonosu-jō*, 1957) alongside Carter's texts provides a new insight into how cinematic techniques are translated and negotiated from screen to page.

Carter's journal entries from 1963 suggest that she was visiting the cinema at least once a week, watching a diverse range of films that showcase her interest in film. For example, during the early 1960s she watched *Le Crime de Monsieur Lange* (1936) by Jean Renoir; *Vanina, Vanini* (1961) by Roberto Rossellini, which she critiques as

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[124] 'John Ford's 'Tis Pity She's a Whore' was originally published in *Granta* 25, Autumn, 1988. *Burning Your Boats* is the full collection of all of Carter's short stories, including *Fireworks* (1974), *The Bloody Chamber and Other Stories* (1979), *Black Venus* (1985) and *American Ghosts and Old World Wonders*. It also includes three of Carter's earlier stories written between 1962-1966, and three of her uncollected stories written between 1970-1981.

having an 'unimaginative use of zoom lens which could be a great innovation' (Add. MS 88899/1/88). She also watched *Mutiny on the Bounty* (1962) by Lewis Milestone which she disliked, and awarded only 2 out of 10 marks 'only grudgingly awarded for some lovely ship shots'; *The Last Day of Summer* (1958) a Polish film by Tadeusz Konwiki and Tan Naskowski, and *Christo Prohibito* (1951) by Curzio Malaparte which she describes as 'Bad'. Carter also lists *Zazie dans le Métro* (1960) by Louis Malle – 'Funny. Needs coming back to' (Add. MS 88899/1/88).

In an interview with Lisa Appignanesi in 1987, fifteen years after she had returned from Japan, Carter refers to her interest in Japanese films as a factor in her decision to travel to the East. Carter comments that,

> Well, you know the way that somebody sometimes calls one's bluff? I was very fond of Japanese movies. I spent most of my childhood, boyhood and youth at the movies. I saw, I think, everything. The period at which I stopped is quite a cut-off point, but I saw virtually everything. I was very fond of Japanese films, and when I won this prize somebody said to me, "Now you can go to Japan". So, I had to (1987: 16).

Although calling someone's bluff seems an offhand comment to make in relation to her decision to travel to Japan, Carter's choices never seem to be made in an impulsive or spontaneous way: her manner was often direct and deliberate, which gives credit to her comments made in Appignanesi's interview and certainly allows for further exploration of her words. Indeed, evidence from Carter's journals at the British Library show that Carter was watching Japanese films just a few months before she travelled to Japan. In her journal from 1969 she lists the films she watched at the cinema:

> April 25th – *Alone on the Pacific:* Kon Ichikawa
> May 9th – *Rashomon*: Akira Kurosawa
> March 24th – *Seven Samurai*: Akira Kurosawa
> March 28th – *Throne of Blood*: Akira Kurosawa
> March 30th – *Kwaidan*: Masaku Kobaynishi (Add MS 88899/1/92).

Furthermore, Carter's journals also suggest that she was watching Japanese films – Kurosawa's in particular – from as early as February 1963, six years before she would embark upon her journey to Japan. Carter describes Kurosawa's *The Hidden Fortress* as an 'Oriental fairy tale with some lovely, very stylised bits, e.g. the bit with the long spears. Very smooth, unobtrusive cutting and directing. 6 out of 10, as far as I can remember' (Add. MS 88899/1/88). The films she watched during her time in Japan,

however, 'were nothing like the artsy ones that received awards at European film festivals', and instead she preferred to watch 'rather tawdry ones featuring mafia, detectives, or love stories' (Araki, 2018: 68-9). According to Sozo Araki, she also enjoyed watching blue-movies, including the 'Nikkatsu Roman Porno' series: Carter 'was very curious about the morality and aestheticism peculiar to Japanese people exhibited in these unsophisticated vulgar films […] and the more raw culture unique to Japan she could discover' (Araki, 2018: 71). [125]

Carter's interest in Japanese cinema continued beyond her time spent abroad, as evidenced in her 1978 review of Nagisa Oshima's *In the Realm of the Senses* (*Ai No Corrida*, 1976).[126] Carter's review takes on a typically sardonic tone, as she retells the tale of a young housemaid Sada running off with her master Kichizo, before strangling him during the course of a sexual game '(Accidents will happen)' (1997: 354). Carter's interest in the boundary between the real and the unreal align with the pornographic nature of the film as the audience considers whether or not the actors are really having sexual intercourse with one another. For Carter, it is 'the appearance of realism which is, per se, unreal […] And, even if they are doing it, we are not watching them do it. We are watching the people they are pretending to be do it…' (Carter, 1978: 356).

Despite the volume of critical writing on Carter and cinema, few critics have addressed her interest in non-Western films, a surprising omission given the extent to which Carter's interest in Japanese cinema is captured within her journals and her essays. Sarah Gamble's essay on Jean-Luc Godard suggests that Carter's earlier novels (such as *Love* [1971] and *Shadow Dance* [1966]) 'echo Godard's tactic in films like *Vivra sa vie* – that of showing female victimisation in the process of construction and,

[125] Refers to hundreds of pornographic films produced by Japanese film company Nikkatsu between 1971 and 1988. Nikkatsu was a major film company in the sixties, but slowly declined as the number of viewers fell. Nikkatsu concentrated on producing low-budget pornographic films to save the company, which temporarily succeeded as the Roman Porno series gained a huge audience. Nikkatsu stopped production when mass-produced porn videos came into fashion (Ikoma, 2018: 71).

[126] *Ai No Corrida* translates literally to *The Bullfight of Love*, which is the translation that Carter uses in her essay for in *Shaking a Leg*. Oshima's film is based on the true story of Sada Abe, a young woman living in Japan in the 1930s who had an affair with her master, Kichizo. Sada killed Kichizo during sexual intercourse through strangulation, before severing his penis. She was found by police three days later wandering the streets of Tokyo, still carrying his penis. Sada served six years in prison, but was acquitted on the grounds of insanity. She later achieved 'folk hero status' as a direct result of the 'reported orgiastic nature of her sexual relationship with her lover' (Standish, 2007: 357).

in doing so, laying the mechanisms of oppression open to subversion and revision' (2006b: 51). Helen Stoddart (2001) turns to Carter's interest with Hollywood films, suggesting that *The Passion of New Eve* is a 'specific investment in hysteria, fetishism, transvesticism and transexuality' (2001: 113). Laura Mulvey's essay 'Cinema Magic and the Old Monsters' moves beyond a focus of Carter's literature, instead focusing on the film adaptations Carter's 1967 novel *The Magic Toyshop* and her 1979 short story 'The Company of Wolves'. Charlotte Crofts' *Anagrams of Desire* (2003) seeks to bridge this gap through investigating Carter's cinematic influences and practices, as well as looking more broadly at her interest in stage-plays and radio dramas. Carter's commitment to cinema, argues Crofts, was a practice that allowed her to 'explore and demythologise […] structures of looking within the mainstream' (2003: 91).

Specifically focusing on Carter's references to Japanese cinema, this chapter assesses the extent to which Carter adapts and translates images from the screen onto the pages of her novels and short stories. To note, this chapter is not a comparative analysis of the content used in Japanese films (specifically Kurosawa's) and in Carter's stories (a somewhat intertextual approach), but rather, it evaluates the ways in which visual representations on the screen are negotiated and transferred on to the page. The big screen, suggests Gamble, can not only be used as a means of exploring what Carter was writing about, but also serve as a way of influencing *how* she writes (Gamble, 2006: 43).

To provide a foundation for an analysis of Carter's engagement with Japanese cinema, I first set out how ideas from the big-screen weave themselves through Carter's literary *oeuvre*. Carter's 1977 novel, *The Passion of New Eve* is a tribute to Hollywood cinema, in which Carter explores the role of the preservation of film, and invokes feelings of nostalgia with the cinematic experience. There is a sense of 'returning' and of historicity associated with the cinema, a key feature which is also embedded within the origins of Japanese film. At the turn of the twentieth-century there was an exponential increase in the number of Western goods imported to Japan (such as literature and films). However, Japan introduced more 'Japanese' elements to the movie-goers' experience, integrating elements of traditional *noh* and *bunraku* theatre in to the cinema. The techniques adopted by the Japanese ensured the continuity of, and a returning to, traditional techniques from stage onto screen.

There is a cultural osmosis that permeates global cinema: images from the West influence the East; ideas from the East inform the West, *ad infinitum*. The second

section of this chapter looks at the ways in which cinematic techniques are exchanged, translated and adapted across culture and form. For example, Kurosawa's *Throne of Blood* is a Japanese adaptation of Shakespeare's *Macbeth* (1606): yet, the distinctiveness of Japanese cinema is still retained in Kurosawa's work – the integration of elements from Japanese *noh* theatre; the use of the wide frame to capture a broad landscape, replicating the view of a play being enacted on stage. Kurosawa's work, much like Carter's, can be interpreted as a *bricolage* that draws upon elements of the traditional, the modern, the East and the West, in order to construct a distinctive cinematic style. This cross-fertilisation fosters an environment in which different approach all lend from one another – something which Carter was already doing in Japan, when she used European theorists to inform her way of thinking.

Moving on to specifically analyse Kurosawa's cinematic techniques, I suggest that he deliberately employs the use of a wide lens and long, unedited shots in order to enhance an alienation effect in his films. This technique is particularly effective in both *Throne of Blood* and *Seven Samurai*, and seems Brechtian in its design. Kurosawa's (and Bertolt Brecht's) alienation effect can also be found in Carter's short stories 'Flesh and the Mirror' and 'The Smile of Winter'. The use of mirrors in 'Flesh and the Mirror' and the painterly composition of 'The Smile of Winter' create a sense of estrangement that is consistent with Carter's writing of the period.

Juxtaposing the unobtrusive, long and unedited scenes, Kurosawa also deliberately employs the use of montage – sharply-edited, fast-moving scenes that are used to heighten tension. Kurosawa's use of montage is particularly effective in the final battle scene of *Seven Samurai* and the furious pace and short, alternating scenes contrast sharply to the wide (and alienating) frames used earlier in the movie. Replicating the use of montage in her fiction, Carter's short story 'John Ford's *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*' (1988) is a hybrid tale which adapts John Ford's Western films and John Ford's seventeenth-century play. Although not written during her time in Japan, 'John Ford's '*Tis Pity She's a Whore*' serves as an excellent example of how Carter quite explicitly employed cinematic techniques in her fiction.[127] The story itself is composed in a montage-like way, constantly moving between the two 'texts', with the

[127] Carter powerfully draws on cinematic techniques (specifically from the Spaghetti Western genre) in her short story 'Gun for the Devil', which was originally published in *American Ghosts and Old World Wonders* (1993) and republished as part of *Burning Your* Boats collection (1995).

reader assuming continuity throughout the tale. The final scene of the story, in which Johnny kills his sister and her husband before killing himself, uses montage to its full effect, echoing the frenzied and furious pace of the final scene in Kurosawa's *Seven Samurai*.

During an assessment of Carter's works it is difficult to define influential attribution to Japanese cinema. She was deeply interested in the big-screen, and remained interested with the cinema all of her life. The very nature of cinema as a global activity means that there is a permeation of influences across East and West, and across screen and page. Films borrow, adapt and evolve from other sources. This chapter formulates an assessment of how Japanese cinematic techniques are translated and adopted in Carter's fiction.

Representations of cinema in Carter's work

To date, a number of critics have reflected upon the cinematic motifs in Carter's literary works (Gamble, 2006b; Sage, 1994; Mulvey, 1994; Stoddart, 2001; Crofts, 2003). For example, in *The Magic Toyshop* (1967) when Melanie kisses her cousin Finn for the first time, she muses that 'they must look very striking, like a shot from a new-wave British film, locked in an embrace beside the broken statue in this dead fun palace' (*MT*, 106). *The Magic Toyshop* gave Carter an opportunity to 'take her fascination with the cinema into the real world' (Mulvey, 1994: 233). She became heavily involved in the adaptation of the novel into a film, which was produced by Stephen Morrison (dir. David Wheatley) in 1987. This was not Carter's only foray into the film industry – her short story 'The Company of Wolves' (1979) was adapted from its radio play version to a full feature-length movie in 1984. Directed by Neil Jordan, the film was developed into a 'Chinese box structure, using the dream of Rosaleen, and the thread of Granny's storytelling as the connecting points, thereby enabling [them] to integrate other stories and themes of Angela's own' (Carter, 1996: 507). In a chapter dedicated to the (re)animation of *The Company of Wolves*, Crofts claims that the body 'of the original text is '"brought back to life" using a variety of animation techniques, from old fashioned stop-frame photography to high tech-animatronics' (2003: 108). Carter's final novel, *Wise Children* (1991) likewise adopts a cinematic-like narrative, and is littered with references to movies in its approach with the 'cast' listed in 'order of appearance' at the end of the novel (*WC*, 233). When Dora is describing her memories,

she puts a ‘Freeze-frame’ on current events, as she ‘rewinds’ the story in order to tell the family history (*WC*, 11). At the end of *Wise Children*, twin sisters Nora and Dora Chance, who have recently celebrated their 75th birthday, watch past versions of themselves appear on the television screen. In this instance, the medium of television reinforces a repetition of events which reinforces nostalgic undertones associated with returning to film time and time again (much like Carter did with her visits to the Granada with her father when she was younger).

The episodic narrative of *The Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor Hoffman* is akin to a ‘tableau of organised space’ (De Certeau, 1984: 119) and there is almost a cinematic quality to the chapters as a series of *tableaux vivants*. Cinematography is further explored in the peep-show proprietor who once toured the country with a ‘peep-show cum cinematograph’ (*DH*, 24). The blind proprietor talks to Desiderio about the history of visual technology, and the invention of ‘cinematography [which] enabled us to corral time past and thus retain it not merely in the memory [...] but in the objective preservative of a roll of film’ (*DH*, 116). The peep-show itself consists of Doctor Hoffman’s samples, selected through a randomised process because the proprietor is blind. As Desiderio partakes in the peep-show he puts on a ‘a pair of glass-eye pieces jut[ting] out on long, hollow stalks’ (*DH*, 44). Desiderio thus becomes part of the spectacle, and the exhibitions laid out before him act as a foreboding of his journey to come. The giant phallus in exhibition six is analogous of the Count’s sexual rapaciousness; the bed of horsehair in the final exhibition tells of the centaur’s rape of Albertina. Each of the novel’s chapters, suggests Ali Smith ‘functions as its own seductive and terrifying peep-show “desire machine”’ (2010: x).

Identifying cinematic motifs within Carter's work is not always obvious *per se*, and there are some more subtle references to cinema in Carter’s literary *oeuvre*. Laura Mulvey suggests that ‘Transformations and metamorphoses recur so frequently in Angela Carter's writing that her books seem to be pervaded by this magic cinematic attribute even when cinema itself is not present on stage’ (1994: 230). For example, Sage describes Carter’s first three novels as ‘moving from one tableau to another “still” after “still” that is quickened into movement by a kind of optical illusion – as in a flicker book, or of course a film’ (Sage, 1992: 169). Likewise, *The Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor Hoffman* is also loaded with rich, excessive imagery, and Desiderio describes the inability to articulate the extremities of Doctor Hoffman’s experiments, remarking

that there is 'so much complexity – a complexity so rich it can hardly be expressed in language' (*DH*, 3), instead drawing on the visual, the excessive and the obtuse.

When Carter does use cinema in her stories, it is the big-screen writ large. *The Passion of New Eve* (1977) is a celebration of, and a tribute to, Hollywood film. The novel's setting, Gamble suggests, was influenced by the road trip Carter made with her first husband after she won the Somerset Maugham prize in 1969 (2006: 144). It was after this trip to America that she left Paul, and ended with Carter travelling to Japan on her own. In an interview with Appignanesi (1987), Carter situates the novel in its biographical context commenting that

> *The Passion of New Eve* was written, oh, ten, twelve years ago, and the vision of America was based on a Greyhound trip I took through the States – forgive me, the vision of the United States: one has to be very specific – was based on a Greyhound trip I took with my then husband in the summer of 1969, when one really did feel that it couldn't hang on much longer, when the war had been brought home. The feeling of New York there is only slightly exaggerated. A picture not of how it *was* in New York, but of how it *felt i*n that summer of 1969 (Appignanesi, 1987).

Set in a post-apocalyptic America, Carter uses *The Passion of New Eve* to explore the ways in which gender is performed, investigating the social constructs that guide us towards assumptions of both masculinity and femininity. Critical reception to *The Passion of New Eve* has focused on whether or not the novel 'inscribes viable alternatives to the hegemonic conceptions of gender and femininity' (Jegerstedt 2012: 130) as it explores mythical representations of gender norms. Speaking to Kim Evans in for a BBC Omnibus programme, filmed just months before she passed away, Carter goes on to say that she 'wanted to write what seemed to [her] a deeply serious piece of fiction about gender identity, about our relation to the dream factory, our relation to Hollywood, our relation to imagery' (Evans, 1992).

Exploiting cinema as a form in which to portray the social construction of femininity, *The Passion of New Eve* follows Evelyn, a misogynist lecturer from England, who is captured by a group of renegade women who transform him into a woman. After Evelyn's literal castration, he is transformed into Eve, a woman 'constructed according to the specifications of male desire' (Wyatt, 1998: 64). The new Eve describes looking at herself 'how can I put it – the cock in my head, still, twitched at the sight of myself' (*PNE*, 75). Eve undergoes an intense process of social

conditioning: she is forced to watch video tapes intended to 'subliminally instil the maternal instinct'; she must listen to a sound track of babies gurgling; she must watch tapes of 'non-phallic imagery' (PNE, 72). The specifications of male desire in the novel are personified through Evelyn's child-hood crush, the movie-star Tristessa, 'Enigma. Illusion. Woman?' (*PNE*, 6) Revealed to be a man in drag at the end of the novel, Tristessa adopts femininity as a masquerade: the ultimate 'movie-goers ideal of femininity, hides a male body beneath her veils' (Wyatt, 1998: 64).

The gendered complexities of Carter's apocalyptic American novel have been extensively explored (Mulvey, 1994; Wyatt, 1998; Stoddart, 2001) and this chapter does not intend to revisit the arguments laid out in previous work.[128] However, a brief analysis of the novel is useful to develop an understanding of the extent of Carter's fascination with cinema: littered with references to film, it provides scope for exploration into Carter's work. The image of feminine beauty in the novel, 'highly stylised by cinema's conventions, and styling them in turn – for instance in the prevalence of huge close-ups celebrating the merging of the cinema screen and feminine masquerade' (Mulvey, 1994: 232). Following Laura Mulvey (1975), Mary Ann Doane notes that all the 'cinematographic resources of the apparatus, the framing, lighting, camera movement and angle are precisely those aspects of the film which combine to align the figure of the woman with the surface of the image' (1982: 76).

The novel alludes to cinema's ability to defy time and to preserve the past within the present: the image of the movie-star Tristessa remains embalmed within a by-gone era and 'would always be so beautiful as long as celluloid remained in complicity with the persistence of vision' (*PNE*, 15). The reels of film that appear in the opening frames of the cinema in *A Passion of New Eve,* ensures that the text (or the film) can be viewed time and time again, instilling an artificial quality that allows it to transcend the natural limits of time. The act of 'returning' to the cinema is made apparent in the first chapter of the novel when Evelyn visits the cinema with a woman he barely knows in order to

> re-experience, through one of her classic movies, his pre-adolescent fantasies of Tristessa. Transported back in time with the aid of a choc-ice, but now no longer accompanied by a Nanny, he still hopes for an uncomplicated, nostalgic return to his fantasy of Tristessa (Stoddart, 2001: 113-14).

[128] See chapter two of this thesis for a discussion on representations of gender in *The Passion of New Eve*.

The novel deliberately utilises the repetitive motion of the cinema (the projector spilling out the same film over and over; the nostalgic undertones of returning to the same movie in adulthood as the one watched in youth) and this cyclic narrative is carried through to the end of *The Passion of New Eve* when Leilah, who has been forced to undergo a back-street abortion after falling pregnant with Evelyn's child during his time in New York, re-emerges as Lilith, the biblical antithesis of Eve. The novel's overarching structure mimics cinema's cyclical framework, reaching 'back into the past and forward to the future, trying to synthesise these two "imaginary places" in narrative fashion' (Degli-Esposti, 1998:4).

The Passion of New Eve focuses on a sense of 'returning' to a key moment or place in time and reliving history. In a story that alludes to the illusionary power of the cinema, Carter plays with the concept of historical resonance. The theme of constantly returning, or throwing back to a previous age is highlighted within the final pages of the novel, as Eve/lyn fears 'Time is running back on itself', believing that she is 'inching my way towards the beginning and the end of time' (*PNE,* 183-5). These nostalgic undertones of historical continuity are not just limited to Eve/lyn's sense of self and her interpretation of time as non-linear construct; it is also echoed in Carter's discussion of the natural world that situates Eve/lyn in her time and place: 'Rivers neatly roll up on themselves like spools of film and turn in on their own sources. The final drops of the Mississippi, the Ohio, the Hudson, tremble on a blade of grass; the sun dries them up, the grass sinks back into the earth' (*PNE,* 185). This is, of course, just one interpretation of the ending of the novel, and Carter sheds some light on the symbolic nature of the sea in her journals, exploring the meaning of 'the waters in flux, the transitional and mediating agent between the non-formal…and the formal and, by analogy, between life and death'. To return to the sea is 'to "return to the mother", that is, to die' (Add. MS 88899/1/102).

The idea of returning to the past, history, and the culture in which that history is embedded, plays an intricate part in the evaluation of Japanese cinema, and it is only through an understanding of early Japanese cinema that we can truly start to make the connections between Carter and Japanese cinema. Despite the film industry being dominated by French, British and American film at the beginning of the twentieth-century, the evolution of Japanese cinema was distinctly un-Western. Rather than choosing to directly imitate Western cinematic techniques, Japan instead adapted ideas from traditional stage theatrics, drawing upon the art of *kabuki* and the puppet theatre

of *bunraku* (McDonald, 2006). From the outset, Japanese cinema demonstrated a desire to avoid large, distracting narrative pieces. This resulted in what Richie and Joseph Anderson coin as an 'eventlessness' in early Japanese film (Anderson and Richie, 1982: 23). Focusing on traditional Japanese figures, such as the geisha and samurai, early Japanese cinema lacked a directive and narrative focus which was prominent in foreign imports. Whereas the West interpreted cinematic technology almost as an extension of photography, creating series of animated 'stills' (Richie, 1990: 9) in which narrative, plot and a viable conclusion were paramount, Japan saw cinema as a medium in which to extend its theatrical traditions.

Initially carrying on the traditions of *kabuki* by using male-only actors, early Japanese cinema also used a story-teller known as a *benshi*, a 'film commentator, *lecturer compère* – a master of ceremonies whose appearance was an assumed part of early Japanese film showings' (Keene, 1990: 89). The *benshi*'s role was to consolidate the emergence of Western films with typical Japanese practices; during a film viewing he would stand by the side of the screen and describe what was going on (particularly important given that this was the silent era for both Western and Eastern films). This ability to combine elements of traditional *kabuki* and *bunraku* theatre with imported films from the West created a unique experience for Japanese cinema goers in the early part of the twentieth century. Film acted as a new form of theatre for the Japanese, creating a paradoxical relationship as Richie observes, 'it was a new means of expression, but what it expressed was old' (2005: 27).[129] The theatrical-like presentation of the cinema was certainly appropriate for the use of the *benshi*, imitating the staging of *bunraku* puppet in which the chanter is located to the right hand side of the stage: in cinematic terms however, 'the image on the screen is the puppet and the *benshi* is the narrator' (Chieo, 1977, cited in Richie, 1990: 3). With sound-technology still decades away from being developed, and the import of foreign films on the rise, it was crucial that some form of narration was provided to audience. The incorporation of an external narrator worked to supply a dialogue (called a *setsumei*) to contextualise and explain foreign concepts to the audience. Although Richie argues that

[129] Richie's comment closely aligns with Carter's reflections on her own writing in 'Notes from the Front Line' (1983) when she says, 'I am all for putting new wine in old bottles, especially if the pressure of the new wine makes the old bottles explode'. See: *Critical Essays on Angela Carter*, ed. Lindsey Tucker. New York: G. K. Hall & Co., pp. 24

a *benshi*'s success was marketed on the fact that Japanese cinema-goers were 'constantly afraid of missing a point' (Anderson and Richie, 1982: 23), Jeffrey Dym (2000) suggests that their role goes far deeper than such simple psychology, and links back to the audio-visual experience that *bunraku* puppet theatre offered. The chanter and *shamisen* player supplied the vocal narration for the action on stage. The aural and visual were kept as separate entities, a practice that was retained throughout silent Japanese cinema.

Early Japanese films were heavily influenced by the more traditional aspects of theatre and this subsequently impacted upon the directive strategies adopted by movies produced by Japanese film companies. The focus on samurai and geishas not only came from traditional theatre plots, but also from the Japanese tendency to have a low regard for originality. Since the public were accustomed to seeing lengthy theatre shows, a number of short imported films were often put together to form longer programmes, which were then placed on repeat, making them even longer. It is this repetitive motion that forms one of Tanizaki Jun'ichirō's earliest memories of the cinema, as he recalls visiting the movies when he was ten years old:

> The ends of the reel would be joined together so that the same scene could be projected over and over. I can still remember, endlessly repeated, high waves rolling in on a shore somewhere, breaking, and then receding, and of a lone dog playing there, now pursuing, now pursued by the retreating and advancing waters (1988: 97).[130]

This technique of physical repetition is known as *tasuke*, which means 'continuous loop' (Richie, 2001: 19). Repetition for its own sake, suggests Richie, is such an accepted element of Japanese dramaturgy that 'its cinematic equivalent seems quite natural' (2001: 20).

These forms of physical continuities and repetitions – the use of *benshi*, the samurai and geishas, as well as the cyclical motions of the reel stuck together – create a distinctiveness to Japanese cinema. Moreover, there is an element of 'returning' to the past through Japanese film – for example, Kurosawa's *Seven Samurai*, *Throne of Blood* and *The Hidden Fortress* take place in a historical rural setting of Japan,

[130] This excerpt is taken from Tanizaki's *Childhood Years: A Memoir*. Tanizaki's memoirs were first published in the literary magazine *Bungeishunjū* in serialised form from 1955 to 1956.

something Prince suggest is a 'framing of the much-reminisced Japanese past' (Prince, 1999: 11). This is significant to Kurosawa's work: 'When I look at Japanese history – of the history of the world for that matter – what I see is how man repeats himself over and over again' (cited in Richie, 1965: 117). This form of returning and repetition serves to function as a means of merging Japanese historicity (and thus a distinctiveness of Japanese film) with Western modernity.

Cross-cultural adaptations in Kurosawa's work

In *The Distant Observer* (1979) Noel Burch describes Kurosawa's films as portraying elements of 'disjunctiveness, pathos and excess' (296). His film style 'stresses the transgressive, the flamboyant' (Prince, 1999: 11) and 'are dramas of violent emotions, their traumatic effect heightened still further by exaggeration, emphasis and extremes' (Iwasaki, 1972: 29). Mirroring a similar mode to Carter, whose work Salman Rushdie describes as 'formal and outrageous, exotic and demonic, exquisite and coarse, precious and raunchy, fabulist and socialist, purple and black' (Rushdie, 1996: ix), Kurosawa has himself admitted to working in a manner of extremes, commenting that 'I am the kind of person who works violently, throwing myself into it. I also like hot summers, cold winters, heavy rains and snows, and I think my pictures show this. I like extremes because I find them most alive' (quoted in Richie, 1964: 111).

Kurosawa's *oeuvre*, much like Carter's, can be read as a bricolage that weaves traditional discourses in with modern techniques drawing upon literary, cinematic, and theatrical modes in order to construct a distinctive style. It is, Ian Bowyer suggests, impossible to talk about Kurosawa's films without mentioning 'the osmosis of Eastern and Western cultures permeat[ing] his work' (2004: 44-5). Kurosawa was 'educated both in Japanese tradition and in Western knowledge' (Martinez, 2007: 113) and consciously employed a mode of address in his films that 'suspended in dialectical tension a mix of Eastern and Western values' (Prince, 1999: 11). The techniques Kurosawa used were typically Japanese, and he was heavily influenced by Japanese *noh* theatre in his films; and yet, he also integrated images from Hollywood movies into his work, refiguring the Western cowboy as a Japanese samurai. As Prince argues, the image of the samurai as a recurring theme within Kurosawa's work is not necessarily always tied to a historicity of meaning, nor should it always be read as an icon of Japanese cultural heritage. Although both the samurai and the cowboy types of film

depict men of violence 'the characters and stories are embedded in networks of different social structural values, which firmly separate the two classes of film' (Prince, 1999: 15-16). Prince goes on to highlight the importance of such tensions within world cinema, as a means of understanding cultural histories:

> Western and samurai films are structural expressions of differing cultural perceptions of what constitutes the social self. The gunfighter is skilled and pure in his isolation from society, while the samurai may be diminished or destroyed when attempting to escape the constraints of social obligations. Thus, Kurosawa cannot simply make Westerns, since the social perceptions and the national tradition that they express are quite foreign (1999: 16-17).

Moreover, Kurosawa's 'self-acknowledged debt to the American Western, particularly John Ford's, helped determine the shape of *Seven Samurai*' and Joseph Anderson even goes so far to claim that without American cinema 'there would be no Kurosawa' (1962: 58).

In turn, Kurosawa's films went on to influence Sergio Leone (1929-1989), the Italian director credited for creating the spaghetti Western genre, a subgenre of the American Western used to refer to its Italian counterpart. For example, Kurosawa's *Yojimbo* (1961) informed Leone's *A Fistful of Dollars* (1964), starring Clint Eastwood.[131] The films have a remarkably similar plot: in *Yojimbo* a samurai without a master (Toshiro Mifune) arrives in town where two opposing crime lords try to buy the samurai's protection; in *A Fistful of Dollars* a stranger (Eastwood) plays two feuding families off against one another in order to make money from them. Leone's film style is also characterised by juxtaposing lengthy long-shots with extreme close-ups, not unlike Kurosawa's own approach. *A Fistful of Dollars* has come under scrutiny for its undeniable similarities with *Yojimbo* and (unofficially) is a spaghetti Western re-make (or transformation) of Kuorsawa's original. It is fitting then (and perhaps not surprising) that Carter enjoyed watching Western films (including spaghetti Westerns): she was a fan of Sergio Leone and Clint Eastwood (Frayling, 2015) as well as the American film

[131] The film was released in Italy in 1964 and then in America in 1967. *A Fistful of Dollars* is the first instalment of the *Dollars Trilogy*, with *For a Few Dollars More* (1965) and *The Good, the Bad and the Ugly* (1966).

director John Ford (1894-1973), whose work is discussed in further detail in this chapter. [132]

On an intertextual level, Kurosawa also drew on European literature as an influence for his work and (much like Carter) refers heavily to Shakespeare, although the images in his films often have a Japanese 'take' on them. For example, Kurosawa's *Throne of Blood* is a Japanese adaptation of William Shakespeare's *Macbeth*. Actors Toshiro Mifune (as Taketoki Washizu) and Minoru Chiaki (as Yoshiaki Miki) play Macbeth and Banquo respectively, with Isuzku Yamada as Lady Asaji Washizu (or Lady Macbeth). Although Kurosawa's film is broadly within keeping with the overarching narrative of *Macbeth*, there are some instances in which the 'Japaneseness' of the film are apparent. For example, Kurosawa replaces the witches of *Macbeth* with a singular haunting ghostly apparition, more fitting with traditional Japanese *noh* theatre. The image of the witch is 'too far removed from the Japanese imagination', whereas 'spirits are common and ghosts abound' in the plays of *noh* (Richie, 1965: 117). The Macbeth in Kurosawa's film version is also 'not grand. Rather, he is possessed from the very start, he is so profoundly afraid that he kills to ensure that he himself is not killed. He is a little man, lacking in grandeur precisely because he is not torn between desires' (Richie, 1965, 117).

The opening scene of *Throne of Blood* (Figure 2, below) sees Washizu (Macbeth) and Miki (Banquo) attempt to navigate their way through the forest to Cobweb Castle through 'a fog in which men have literally lost their way rather than one that is a tickling nuance at the edges of our vision' (Braudy, 1976: 39). The first scene of the film is repeated a total of twelve times, the 'limitation of technique is only matched by the restriction of images that fills our screen' (Richie, 1965: 120) and the framing is 'strongly reminiscent of the strategies of the Oriental theatre in general' as it attempts to represent long journeys 'within the avowedly here-and-now of scenic space' (1979: 313). Kurosawa could have used an expanse of space in this instance, but instead chooses to invoke a cyclical narrative that is claustrophobic, and haunting, mimicking the restricted space of traditional Japanese theatre.

[132] One of Carter's close friends, Christopher Frayling, has written extensively on Leone's work. In a letter written to Frayling in October 1977, she calls him 'an authority on Leone' (Frayling, 2015: 42).

Figure 2 Toshiro Mifune (as Taketoki Washizu) and Minoru Chiaki (as Yoshiaki Miki) in the opening scene of Throne of Blood (1957).

Turning 'Shakespeare's words into Japanese images' (*Time*, 1961) Kurosawa creates a cross-cultural and a cross-medium reimagining of the tale. Kurosawa's film

> stages a historically specific negotiation between traditional Japanese and imported Western Culture. Situated between the Japanese stage and the American screen, the Japanese image and the English drama, *Throne of Blood* allows Kurosawa to interrogate both Japanese and Western cultural traditions through his manipulation of *Macbeth*, Japanese theatre, and contemporary film conventions (Suzuki, 2006: 93-4).

For Suzuki, *Throne of Blood* successfully synthesises Western realism and Japanese formalist techniques. Rather than 'simply juxtaposing one against the other, Japanese against Western form, written text against filmed image, stillness against motion […] *Throne of Blood* unites them' (2006: 101). The film is not an attempt to turn away from the West and celebrate the Japanese past; nor does it function to solely embrace the 'universality of Shakespeare'. Rather, it 'represents a particular stage of liberal

disillusionment in a Japan caught between the hard-learned lessons of its militaristic past and the unfulfilled promise of a democratic future' (Suzuki, 2006: 101).

Throne of Blood is not the only Kurosawa film influenced by Shakespeare, and *Ran* (1985) can be interpreted as a cinematic adaptation of King Lear set in sixteenth-century rural Japan. Although it holds 'little narrative' of the original play, Kurosawa's recreation still manages to retain much of 'poetic infrastructure' of the original' (Kane, 1997: 146). Kurosawa did not take the cinematic translations of these texts lightly however, and admits that 'I would never let them lead me into making a film until I have thoroughly assimilated them. Only then can I let it come out naturally, as if part of my own writing' (Elley, 1986: 18). Furthermore, Kurosawa wholly recognised that the 'price of adapting literature to the screen is not one of translation but one of transformation […] the verbal texture of the play is transformed into a dense, elaborate patterning of imagery and sound (Prince, 1999: 142).

It would be incorrect to assume that influences worked one way – that is, the West only influenced the East, and Hollywood film remained unaffected by its Oriental counterparts. Kurosawa's *The Hidden Fortress* was one of the driving influences for George Lucas' *Star Wars: A New Hope* (1977), who employs the kidnapped Princess story line and is accompanied by two peasants (who are replaced by robots R2D2 and C3PO in Lucas' film). Furthermore, *Seven Samurai* (which was influenced by John Ford's Westerns) in turn then went on to influence John Sturges's *Magnificent Seven* (1960), with Antonie Fuqua's remake of the film released in 2016. The American Western comes full circle, returning to the West having been transformed by the East.

These cross-cultural exchanges are by no means limited to Kurosawa's work. For example, Oshima's *Ai no Corrida* is also referred to as *Empire of the Senses*, or *L'Empire des Sens*, a deliberate reference to Roland Barthes commentary of Japan, *Empire of Signs* (1970).[133] Oshima can be likened to a Japanese Jean-Luc Godard, with Richie suggesting that the influence in *Ai No Corrida* 'is not Japanese […] It derives,

[133] What distinguishes the movie from others made at the same time is its pornographic nature: the actors actually have sexual intercourse with one another during filming. Because of Oshima's refusal to negotiate on this key aspect of the film, *Ai No Corrida* was edited and produced in France as strict censorship laws in Japan stopped this process from happening. As Richie comments 'In *Empire of the Senses* [Ai no koriida, 1976] freedom of sexual expression was put to the test […] The answer of the Japanese authorities was resoundingly affirmative: the film was mutilated before local showings' (1990, 67). Although it was made over 35 years ago, an uncensored version of the film has never been screened in Japan.

rather, from the films of Jean-Luc Godard, often overly theatrical, which Oshima had studied, and the eclecticisms of which he admired' (Richie, 1990: 68)

There is clearly a cross-cultural exchange between Japanese, Hollywood and European cinema, and Shakespeare's influence on Kurosawa's films also suggests that this exchange moves not only across cultures, but across mediums as well. The films that employ these 'active transformations' argues Prince, 'should be regarded as investigations of the boundaries of different communicative modes and as a series of mediations on the possibilities of a cross-cultural aesthetic creation' (1999: 125). It is also rather fitting that some of the influences that have shown themselves to shape Japanese cinema (Shakespeare, Barthes, and Godard) are also prominent influences of Carter's fiction, and find themselves woven into her literature. For example, references to Ophelia are mentioned in *Love* during Annabelle's suicide, and Carter invests heavily in a 'Shakespearean design' (Bailey, 1991) in her final novel *Wise Children*. After watching Godard's 1960 film *Breathless* (*A bout de soufflé*) at the Classic Cinema in South Croydon, Crater declared it a 'revelation' and that '[her] whole experience of the next decade can be logged in relation to Godard's movies as if he were some kind of touchstone' (Gordon, 2016, 48).[134] And of course, Carter's short story 'John Ford's '*Tis Pity She's a Whore*' (which is discussed later in this chapter) is a direct reference to John Ford's Western in a hybrid tale that merges play and cinema.

Carter and Kurosawa's work are both littered with allusions and images which have been borrowed from other sources. They both indulge in practices that transform cinema to the page, and literature to screen, assembling a bricolage reflective of their own *oeuvre*. Carter's role as author is transformed into one as a director, and the selecting and editing process of her intertextuality is bound up with negotiations in order to decide what to transform. Although Kurosawa and Carter practise across two different mediums, both consider the cultural, artistic and pragmatic implications for their translations. The overarching editing process, the assembly and the composition of Kurosawa and Carter's films and fiction are underpinned by a number of compromises and negotiations relevant to the novels ad films they were creating.

[134] Also see Sarah Gamble (2006b) 'Something Sacred: Angela Carter, Jean-Luc Goddard and the Sixties', in *Revisiting Angela Carter: Text, Contexts, Intertexts*, ed., Rebecca Munford. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 42-63.

The alienation effect in Kurosawa's *The Throne of Blood*, *Seven Samurai* and Carter's 'Flesh and the Mirror' and 'The Smile of Winter'

Cinematically, there are clear differences between Eastern and Western films. For example, a typical characteristic adopted by Japanese directors is the use of an unbalanced frame that appears to have 'too much space' at the top of the picture (Richie, 1990: 7). This technique mirrors Japanese printed form, in which the upper third of the page is often left blank. Moreover, actors are (deliberately) made to appear visually distant, with very few close-ups. Films are taken up with long scenes, with a distinct lack of editing in a single connective sense: this approach contrasts with the frequent use of close-ups in Western film, which is often linked to empathy and feeling. Kurosawa's work is most well-known for the use of wide frames, long lens, and an adaptation of long edits (Richie, 1965; 1990; McDonald, 2005; Prince, 1999). Discussing the defining characteristics of Japanese cinema, Keiko McDonald highlights that '[t]he centre-front long shot was a natural outcome of cinema's first view of itself as a camera-eye spectator of ongoing stage performance. Most early footage showed what theatre audiences saw: entire scenes shot in one take showing actors full-length' (2005: 2).

The approach adopted by Japanese filmmakers (and by Kurosawa) – that is, one that rejects an empathetic representation of its protagonists, instead favouring long shots taken from far away – is reminiscent of Bertolt Brecht's (1898-1956) *Verfremdungseffekt*, or the distancing effect, more contemporaneously referred to the 'alienation effect' in John Willett's translation of Brecht's essays into English (1964).[135] The distancing effect first appears in Brecht's essay 'Alienation Effects in Chinese Acting' (1949)[136] and suggests that such an effect is produced when 'corresponding fluctuation of feelings are portrayed economically' (1949: 92-93). Brecht goes on discuss the techniques of employing what he coins the 'A-effect' in his

[135] Brecht, B. (1964) *Brecht on theatre: the development of an aesthetic*, trans. John Willett. London: Eyre Methuen. The edition is a collection of Brecht's essay written from 1918-1956.

[136] Translated into English by John Willett (1917-2002) in 1964. Although unpublished in German until 1949, Brecht's essays appeared (in Eric White's translation) in *Life and Letters*, London, in the winter of 1937. A pencilled note on the typescript (Brecht-Archive 332/81) says 'This essay arose out of a performance by Mei Lan-fang's company in Moscow in spring 1935'. Brecht had seen the performance that May, during his Moscow visit, though the essay itself cannot have been completed till after his return from New York.

1940 essay 'Short Description of a New Technique of Acting which Produces an Alienation Effect'. Brecht suggests that the aim of the alienation technique is to make the spectator 'adopt an attitude of inquiry and criticism' (1940: 136). Drawing on the topic of empathy, Brecht explains that

> It is a well-known fact that contact between audience and stage[137] is normally made on the basis of empathy. Conventional actors devote their efforts so exclusively to bring about this psychological operation that they may be said to see it as the principal aim of their art. […] the technique which produces an A-effect is the exact opposite of that which aims at empathy. The actor applying it is bound not to try to bring about the empathy operation (140: 136).[138]

According to Brecht there are a number of conditions for the alienation effect to be successful. The first condition for the 'A-effect' is to purge the stage and the auditorium of everything 'magical'; this should rule out any attempt to make the stage 'convey the flavour of a particular place'. The actor must also play the incident as historical. Historical incidents are, argues Brecht, 'unique, transitionary incidents associated with a particular period' and the acts of those who have been before us (and those who will never meet) are 'alienated *Entfremdet* from us by an incessant evolution' (1940: 140-41). Characters, time and place must be detached from us, and familiarity (through location, for example) distorts the distancing effect. Alienating these key components 'make them seem remarkable to us' (1940: 141).

A brief overview of Kurosawa's work and his directing style seems to indicate that his approach aligns with a Brechtian style of alienation. Although Brecht was writing about theatre, there is a crossover in the likeness of Kurosawa and Brecht's aesthetic, made pertinent by the fact that Japanese cinema explicitly drew on visual influences from traditional theatre – indeed this is where ideas of Kurosawa's 'alienation' effect would have originated from, given that audience members in a theatre would not have been permitted close-ups of the actors' faces.

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[137] Brecht's alienation effect refers to theatre, but is used in the context of cinematic audience and screen in this regard.

[138] That is not to say that the actor should renounce the means of empathy entirely. 'This showing of other people's behaviour happens time and time again in ordinary life […] without those involved making the least effort to subject their spectators to an illusion. At the same time, they do feel their way into their characters' skins with a view to acquiring their characteristics' (Brecht, 1940: 136).

In *Throne of Blood*, Kurosawa deliberately avoids the use of close-ups in order to refuse an empathetic reading of Washizu. If being exposed to a full array of facial expressions exemplified through a zoom lens serves to heighten empathy with protagonists within a movie, then, as Richie argues, moving the camera back and utilising a wide frame and a long lens achieves the opposite effect. The resultant effect from this is that both audience and character remain estranged from one another, producing an alienating effect that refuses to demonstrate the true intentions or motives of the character. Kurosawa skilfully executes this technique, and in a scene which sees Washizu contemplate murdering the Lord of Cobweb Castle, we are consistently denied any close-ups of his face:

> The full shot reveals everything […] In the *Throne of Blood* the camera is always furthest away from its characters when they are undergoing the most strain. Washizu sits, struggling with his conscience, wishing to kill his lord, and Asaji glides behind him. His face is contorted and he is sweating. The scene calls for a close-up but this is rigorously denied. It is though we have no wish to involve ourselves with them (Richie, 1965: 121).

The paradoxical relationship between the full shot that 'reveals everything' yet refuses any level of viewer empathy is destroyed in the final scenes of the movie. After the death of Miki (who has been killed under the orders of Washizu) Miki's son and his army march through Cobweb Forest, launching an attack on the Castle. Fulfilling the ghost's final prophecy that Washizu would only be usurped 'when the forest is at the castle gate' (Kurosawa, 1954), Kurosawa finally employs the use of the zoom lens (Figure 3).

Figure 3 Toshiro Mifune as Taketoki Washizu in the final battle scene of Throne of Blood (1957)

In a climactic ending that focuses solely on the movement of Washizu, the audience is permitted a close-up of his contorted and pained face as he is shot through with arrows from his enemies. In his dying moments, we are granted a view of the anguished look on his face as the prophecy is fulfilled. Although Kurosawa's film doesn't meet all of the conditions of *Verfremdungseffek* – the inclusion of the ghost in the opening scenes coupled with the illusion of a moving forest before Washizu's death are both 'magical' in their appearance – the employment of a Brechtian-like approach throughout the majority of the *Throne of Blood* serves to alienate both Washizu and the audience. The distancing effect that has been built throughout the film serves to heighten the final moments of Washizu's life in which the audience is permitted a close-up of his face.

The use of the long lens in Kurosawa's *Seven Samurai* (1954) is also another example wherein the alienation effect is also employed. Set in sixteenth-century rural Japan, the film tells the tale of a village of poor farmers who constantly have their crops stolen from them by a group of renegade bandits. Determined to stop this injustice, they decide to employ a group of samurai to defend their village during the next attack. Led by Kambei Shimada (played by Takashi Shimura), seven masterless samurai come together in order to help the poor villagers. Often viewed as a 'social epic' (Richie, 1965: 99) the samurai are victorious against the bandits in a battle that sees four of their troupe killed. In a film that spans over three hours in length, it is Kurosawa's technical approaches which are the stand-out quality of the film: from the long, landscape filled

frames; to a chaotic frenzied climatic finale, *Seven Samurai* draws upon a range of specific stylistic techniques that can be seen to inform Carter's work.

The deliberate use of the wide frame in *Seven Samurai* enhances the alienation effect. For example, Figure 4 below shows Toshiro Mifune (Kikuchiyo) and Takashi Shimura (Kambei), two of the seven samurai, walking together.

Figure 4 Toshiro Mifune as Kikuchiyo and Takashi Shimura as Kambei in Seven Samurai (1954)

Kurosawa's deliberate use of the long lens refuses access to a close-up of the two characters, denying the audience a view of the facial expressions of Kikuchiyo and Kambei. The silhouettes of the two central figures draw the gaze of the cinematic voyeur, as they interrupt the emptiness of the landscape that surrounds them. Kikuchiyo's facial expressions are exposed as he slightly tilts his head to the direction of the camera and gazes towards Kambei, whose face for the most part remains hidden. Much like his technique employed in *Throne of Blood*, Kurosawa refuses audience access to actors' faces, reinforcing an alienated narrative, refusing the audience permission to empathise with the characters. The framing and the deliberate placement of Kikuchiyo and Kambei see the two men mirror one another in an almost symmetrical stance, as they cut across the landscape of the screen. The clear, crisp line of the samurai sword held by Kikuchiyo slices across the top third of the frame, a space entirely reserved for the emptiness of the cloudy haze of the sky in the background. Certainly,

one of the most striking elements of this scene is the deliberate use of empty space; the well-trodden track underneath Kikuchiyo and Kambei's feet sits in proportionate opposition to the sky above: this is a scene of symmetries. The effect of filling a screen with 'nothingness' creates a paradox that sees a complex relationship emerge between spectator, the characters within the scene, and the landscape that surrounds them.

Although not directly related to Brecht's alienation effect, Kurosawa's use of the long lens also allows him to experiment with broad landscape shots, as described above. In turn, this led to scenes in which the geometrical positioning of both actors and landscape achieve a harmonious balance. For example, the penultimate scene in the film sees the three-surviving samurai bury their four deceased comrades following a dramatic battle with the bandits. As can be seen in Figure 5 (below) the three samurai stand precisely between the four grave mounds that lie above them. As in Figure 4, the viewer is refused access to the faces of the samurai, a tactic Kurosawa uses to deliberately draw attention to the graves that lie in the upper space of the shot. Emphasis is placed on the deceased, a point exaggerated through the dramatic use of the samurai swords slicing through the top third of the screen. The use of a deliberate geometrical composition in Japanese films is designed to convey more than a narrative message that can be carried through dialogue alone: instead they speak 'of and for themselves'. Choosing an aesthetic narrative rather than one that is 'logical' (Richie, 1990: 8), Japanese cinema displays an aesthetic that is a sum of its parts, reflecting a deliberately staged and articulate arrangement of its framing that relies on a compositional narrative rather than an explicitly verbalised one.

Figure 5 Daisuke Kato (Shichiroji), Takashi Shimura (Kambei) and Isao Kimura (Katsushiro Okamoto) in Seven Samurai (1954).

The cinematic techniques employed by Kurosawa in order to achieve an alienation effect are also embedded within Carter's work, particularly her short stories written during her time in Japan. For example, in the short story 'Flesh and the Mirror' the nameless narrator wanders the streets of Japan looking for her lover, 'walking through the city in the third person singular, my own heroine' (FM, 78). When she cannot find her lover, the narrator instead goes back to a love hotel with a stranger, in an act that sees her reject the self and transforms her infidelity into a performance; a performance that she is not complicit with and can refuse responsibility for. The transition from the first person to the third person singular can be pinned down to one sentence in which she decides to completely alienate her 'performing' self from her 'authentic' self – 'however hard I looked for the one I loved, she could not find him anywhere and the city delivered her into the hands of a perfect stranger (FM, 80). The transition to the third person escalates the alienation effect, bringing into like a 'clash between two tones of voice, alienating the second of them, the text proper' (Brecht, 140: 138). By transposing the actions into the third person and into the past, suggests Brecht, the 'style of acting is further alienation […] after having already been outlined and announced in

words' (138). For Carter's narrator, the act of infidelity has already taken place, thus the act which is in the past becomes alienated and beyond our capability of understanding.

Timelessness and instability of self-identification permeate the story, the lovers spend a 'durationless time' making love, where they were 'not [them]selves' (FM, 81). With a mirror on the ceiling as they make love, the narrator does not recognise the self in the mirror, as she sees herself looking at the performance, so on *ad infinitum*: 'the magic mirror presented me with a hitherto unconsidered notion of myself as I' (FM, 82). Carter utilises the alienation effect as a means of comprehending her own place and space in Japan, and the reflective nature of 'Flesh and the Mirror' (the narrator is writing about the series of events once they have already taken place) exaggerates the distancing effect employed by Carter. The sentences are alienated and detached, as the speaker (narrator) already knows how the scene will play out. Unlike the spectator (reader), the speaker 'has read the play right through and is better placed to judge the sentence in accordance with the end, with its consequences, than the former, who knows less and is more of a stranger to the sentence' (Brecht, 140: 138).

The short story 'The Smile of Winter', the fourth tale to appear in Carter's *Fireworks* collection, also demonstrates a range of visual aesthetics that can be likened to Kurosawa's use of the long lens in his films, bringing about feelings of alienation and estrangement. The story depicts a small fishing village in Chiba, where Carter lived for three months while she wrote *The Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor Hoffman* (1972). Carter recalls arriving in Chiba in December 1970, writing in her notebook, 'we crossed a mountain, went down the other side and found ourselves in a perfectly strange, low lying country flooded with that hallucinatory light, issuing from an excess of sky' (Add. MS 88899/1/81) drawing attention, much like Kurosawa does in his films, to the burdening weight of the sky above.

'The Smile of Winter' opens with a panoramic view of the coastal region, a landscape described as 'quite flat, so that an excess of sky bears down with an intolerable weight' (SW, 47), echoing the language used in Carter's journals and imitating the framing of some of Kurosawa's scenes in *Seven Samurai* (see Figures 4 and 5). Carter's use of the wide framing shot is deliberately used, and the short story is purely cinematic in its composition, as the narrator describes the 'hallucinatory light floods the shore and a cool, glittering sun transfigures everything so brilliantly that the beach looks like a desert and the ocean like a mirage' (SW, 47). The transformations

of the landscapes that take place serve as an exaggeration of the visual senses of the observer: the lighting is used to highlight, exaggerate, transform and transfix the observer's gaze.

The short story distinctively lacks any discernible plot, and is instead characterised by a nothingness of events: rather, its central narrator wanders around the village woefully, reflecting on the visitors, the villagers, and on her own state of self. As we move around the village with her, so we are permitted to look upon the lives of others with a voyeuristic and cinematic gaze. The narrator's indulgence in the voyeuristic practices may be explained by Carter's own attempts to situate herself within the places she found herself estranged in. Cast into another unfamiliar and unknown landscape, the narrator attempts to establish herself. In *Ways of Seeing* (1972) John Berger suggests that it is through seeing 'which established our place in the surrounding world; we explain that world with words, but words can never undo the fact that we are surrounded by it. The relations between what we see and what we know is never settled' (2008: n.p.n). If we are to read 'The Smile of Winter' as semi-autobiographical (which, given the references to Chiba and the crossover in language between Carter's journals and the final version, is a fair interpretation to make) then Carter's deliberate alienating effect employed in the story can be reconciled with her own physical estrangement during her time in Japan. The implied use of a wide frame is expertly employed by Carter in the opening paragraphs of 'The Smile of Winter' and is analogous to Kurosawa's own style of filming. This technique is then disrupted as Carter weaves the narrative through the crowd, investigating the composition of the tale by refocusing her frame to its finer, more humane elements. The 'well-muscled, intimidating women' wear 'dark or drab-coloured trousers' (SW, 53) and the children are dressed in 'peaked, yellow caps; their heads are perfectly round' with faces Carter describes as 'perfectly bland, the colour as well as the shape of brown eggs' (48). This description was originally intended for a piece on 'Women in Japan' in which she compares the women in a fishing village in Scotland:

> But the women [in Chiba] are by no means flowers unless they resemble some spiny ocean-bottom-growing flora. My father came from a fishing village in the north of Scotland where the women who kippered herring had similar weather-lacquered, inexpressive faces, squat, durable bodies and hands as hard as those of old-style prize fighters, and also used to pickle their knuckles in brine (Add. MS 88899/1/81).

Carter's descriptions travel beyond the human aspects of the tale and down to the miniscule, inanimate objects: the narrator describes the round sculpted shells with their 'warm, creamy insides', and the 'rasping sediment of sand' that lines her pockets. If Kurosawa's frame refused the audience permission to gaze upon the finer elements of the screen, then Carter as a textual director (i.e. author) utilises the long lens as a comparative device in order to juxtapose the finer points within her frame. The scope and breadth of framing in 'The Smile of Winter' is such that Carter is able to draw attention to the most minute of detail in the narrative – take for example, the sediments of sand that the narrator finds lining her pockets.

The compositional elements of 'The Smile of Winter' have a cinematic quality, and adhere to an 'aesthetically patterned narrative' (Richie, 1990: 8) often found in Japanese film, demonstrating Carter's own awareness of the structure and framing of the scenes within the story. The narrator's movement between each of her compositions are also film-like in their approach, as she moves from peering down a long lens at the vast landscape before her, cutting to the image of the roaring motorcycles, announcing their presence 'with a fanfare of opened throttles' (SW, 48) before zooming in to the garbage left on the beach 'translucent furls of polythene' and 'chipped jugs' (SW, 49) and zooming in again to the fine details of the shells on the beach, akin to moving from one frame to the next. Much like the narrative that runs through Japanese cinema there is no logical or rational movement between these scenes: 'the idea that each unit of scene should be pushed through to its conclusion is not one to which Japanese literature, drama or film subscribes. Rather, separate scenes can be devoted to separate events' (Richie, 1990: 8). Richie goes on to explain that the use of separate scenes 'might halt the narrative but they also contain […] moments of beauty, contemplation, familiarity, which it finds appropriate and satisfying (Richie, 1990: 8). Indeed, as such narrative logic is 'not always deemed structurally necessary' (Richie, 1990: 9) we are permitted to jump from one scene to the next.

In one scene, as the narrator peers into the houses of Chiba, she describes glimpsing 'endlessly receding perspectives of interiors' ('SW, 50), echoing the scenes in 'Flesh and the Mirror' whereby the narrator peers at a version of herself in the mirror on the ceiling; an act that is returned by the reflection of her own gaze *ad infinitum*. Thus, we are never truly exposed to the narrator's true intentions or her motive, and it is through Carter's deliberate alienation strategies that she invokes this sense of strangeness, or Othering in her writing during her time abroad. For Kurosawa, this

alienation effect plays on approaches used in Japanese traditional theatre, heightening tensions between audience and actor in a move that refuses empathy.

Images of intense alienation are further enhanced through the cinematic-like approach she adopts in her writing – the distancing technique that she employs in 'The Smile of Winter' and 'Flesh and the Mirror' for example achieves a paradoxical effect. Whilst Carter refuses to situate herself within the text (through the alienation effect) she consequently become bound up in her own story: the tale becomes semi-autobiographical because of the narrator's sense of estrangement. Carter is at once both within and out of her stories.

Cinematic montage in Kurusawa's *Seven Samurai* and Carter's 'John Ford's *'Tis Pity She's a Whore'*

Kurosawa's preferred use of long, unedited scenes with smooth unobtrusive cutting is a persistent feature of *Throne of Blood* and *Seven Samurai*. However, when appropriate, he also employs the use of montage, an effect used to place two scenes side by side that assumes continuity between the two. Montage cinema demands the 'audiences continually searc[h] for the meaning created by the juxtaposition of two shots' (Nelmes, 2003: 395) and is used by Kurosawa in the penultimate scene of *Seven Samurai* to exacerbate the frenzied attack between the bandits and the villagers. This next section assesses how Kurosawa and Carter utilise the effect of montage, deliberately employing the technique to create a heightened tension in their narratives. This section sees a departure from Carter's Japanese writing, focusing instead on her work written post-Japan, specifically her short story 'John Ford's '*Tis Pity She's a Whore*' (1993), a hybrid tale that merges images from John Ford's films with John Ford's seventeenth-century play. And, whilst montage theory is used to discuss the (very deliberate) cinematic effects that Carter invokes in this work, it also draws back to Kurosawa's *Seven Samurai* in order to compare and contrast the impact of montage in both Kurosawa and Carter's work.

Editing techniques that first created the formal effect of montage came about in the 1920s, following the victory of the Russian Revolution in 1917. Tasked with convincing the population of Russia of the negative aspects of the Tsarist regime and the positive points of a new Communist one, a handful of young filmmakers made the initial move that would result in the 'development of a national cinema movement'

(Bordell and Thompson, 1993: 467).[139] Sergei Eisenstein was one of the first filmmakers to formalise the use of montage in 1920s, challenging the long, unedited shots that characterised Hollywood cinema. The technique put into practice the theory that when two pieces of film are shot side by side the audience immediately draws the conclusion that two scenes are linked.

> [W]hen two shots were joined together meaning could be made by emphasising the difference between shots, that is, instead of trying to cover up graphic similarities between shots, as with Hollywood cinema, the difference could be emphasised and indeed become the main way in which meaning could be created (Nelmes, 2003: 395).

Kurosawa's work is strongly associated with unobtrusive and unedited long takes, and the use of montage appears to be contradictory to this effect. Noel Burch suggests that Kurosawa's use of montage 'reactivat[es] Eisenstein's all but forgotten dialectics of montage units' and the final battle scene in *Seven Samurai* between the samurai and the bandits culminates in Kurosawa's use of 'frequent and sharply contrasting juxtapositions of close-ups and long-shots, of moving and fixed shots' (Burch, 1979: 298-99). In a scene that sees the bandits close in on the centre of the village and launch their attack on the remaining samurai, we see Kurosawa start to cut the film 'very freely, successfully breaking the rules of the new aesthetic that the wide-screen image cannot lend itself to swift montage' (Richie, 1965: 138). Riche goes on to comment that:

> even on a technical level, quite removed from the context from which gives it its final meaning, this last reel is one of the greatest of cinematic accomplishments. It is chaotic but never chaos; disordered but orderly in its disorder. The rain pours down; bandits dash in; horses neigh and rear; Shimura poses, bow ready; Mifune slashes; an arrow thud home and we glimpse it only for a fraction of the second necessary; riderless horses rear in terror; a samurai slips; Mifune grabs another sword (1965: 104)

[139] For example, Soviet filmmaker and film theorist Lev Kuleshov (1899-1970) performed a series of experiments by editing footage from different sources into a whole in order to create an impression of continuity. He was trying to systemise principles of editing similar to continuity practices of the classical Hollywood cinema.

Figure 6 Toshiro Mifune as Kikuchiyo (left) during the final battle scene in Seven Samurai (1954)

The speed of the scene, filled with 'short-cuts and telescopings' works in direct opposition to the unedited long shots that Kurosawa employs in the rest of the film, creating a juxtaposition that heightens the frenzied nature of the final battle scene. The montage effect, exacerbated through the use of tighter close-ups and shortening of shot length 'the action directly into the laps of the audience' (Richie, 1965: 140), demands a level of engagement from the audience.

Kurosawa's preference to use a long lens means that the montage sequence in *Seven Samurai* contains a wide frame of the action taking place on screen. Kurosawa was particularly interested in the use of the long lens for this reason – that is to emphasise the 'dynamic of motion on screen'. Prince suggests that this 'syntax of moving and framing' was informed by American films, most notably John Ford's Westerns (1999: 17-18). The Western's ability to 'integrate figures and landscapes in a in a long shot in ways that describe relations between humans and their environment' (Prince: 1999:18) appealed to Kurosawa. The final battle scene of *Seven Samurai* takes place in the centre of the village, with the rain thrashing down on Kikuchiyo as he defends the villagers. The pathetic fallacy invoked in this scene portrays the furious and

passionate will of Kikuchiyo, a portrayal which is heightened through the swift movements of the montage sequence.

Carter was aware of the montage effects used by Russian filmmakers (and by Kurosawa) and her journals include references to Eisenstein's films just before she went to Japan in 1969. Watching 'Time in the Sun' (1940) in March 1969, Carter describes the film

> So visually beautiful it was almost unbearable. Tiny details – like the sexual rocking of the hammock as the two Indians got in it – beauty instinct with terrific meaning. Close-ups, loving landscaping of human faces, strong and tender, oh superb (Add MS 88899/1/88).

The granularity of the detail in Eisenstein's film the – 'close-ups' of human faces, the 'tiny details' – juxtapose against the use of the wide lens employed in Kurosawa's work. A purveyor of cinematic techniques, Carter was interested in European, Japanese, Russian and Hollywood movies. For example, the cross-cultural Italo-Western genre weaves its way into Carter's short story 'Gun for the Devil' (1993), which originated from a screen play she developed with David Wheatley in 1987. A man sells his soul to the devil for a magic gun which will never miss its final target save for the final bullet which belongs to the Devil himself (Crofts, 2006: 195). Described by Crofts as a film in which 'Sergio Leone meets Jan Svankmayer'[140] the film combines elements of the 'spaghetti Western (recreating the traditional flyblown border town) with supernatural elements of Svankmayer's *Faust* (with its animated devil and disturbing transformations)' (Crofts, 2003: x). Although the story is set in Mexico (a 'tortilla rather than a spaghetti Western' [Webb, 2010]) Carter employs very clear camera angles, 'revealing a growing competence in writing directly for the medium' (Crofts, 2003: 195). Kurosawa's own influence on Leone's film style (and Carter's interest in both Kurosawa and Leone) also adds another layer of complexity in which European, Japanese and American cinematic techniques are all inextricably tied up with one another.

However, it is Carter's 1988 short story 'John Ford's '*Tis Pity She's a Whore*' that demonstrates the manifestation of cross-cultural and cross-medium intertextuality, marrying Soviet montage, Japanese cinema, American Westerns, the spaghetti Western

[140] Czech filmmaker.

and of course, a seventeenth-century play. In her tale, Carter draws on influences from John Ford who wrote the tragedy '*Tis Pity She's a Whore* (1633), and his twentieth-century namesake the American film-maker, whose filmography includes *Stagecoach* (1938), *My Darling Clementine* (1946), *She Wore a Yellow Ribbon* (1949). Carter experiments with a series of long, unedited shots of the landscape (much like Kurosawa's landscape used in *Seven Samurai*), culminates in a frenzied, sharply cut climactic ending that is reminiscent of the cinematic techniques employed by Kurosawa. Yet, the cinematic techniques used by Carter in 'John Ford's *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*' cannot be directly attributed to Kurosawa's *Seven Samurai*. Indeed, the story (and the remainder of the *American Ghosts* collection) are widely informed by Carter's time in America during the 1980s. Yet, it is striking to note that both Kurosawa's *Seven Samurai* and Carter's 'John Ford's '*Tis Pity She's a Whore*' were influenced by John Ford's cowboy Westerns. Both Carter and Kurosawa were informed by Ford's films and they both transformed and adapted ideas from his movies to fit in with their own distinctive styles. Cinematic intersectionality crosses culture (American Westerns and Japanese epics) and of media and genre (the play, short story, and film) we experience a recurrent layering of influences that Carter, Kurosawa, and Ford find themselves bound by.

John Ford's seventeenth-century play tells the tale of brother and sister Giovanni and Annabelle who, raised by their father and isolated from society, form a sexually incestuous relationship that is reminiscent of Carter's 1974 short stories 'Penetrating to the Heart of the Forest', and 'The Executioner's Beautiful Daughter'. Finding herself pregnant with Giovanni's child, Annabelle marries the nobleman Soranzo, who plans to raise the child as his own. Overcome with jealousy, Giovanni stabs his sister and her husband, before he is killed by Soranzo's own men. Carter translates John Ford's seventeenth-century play onto a Western landscape reminiscent of John Ford (the director)'s films, thus creating a hybrid narrative that seeks to coalesce the two forms. Carter moves between cinema and play by providing stage directions for her characters, setting the scene for her audience, and implementing the use of an imaginary camera forming a 'field of diverse textual "cuts" assembled into a composite form that places modes of narrative and visual representation in tension with each other' (Ryan-Sautour, 2011: 5). Annabella and her new husband leave town for a new life together but, in a concluding scene that is articulately chaotic in its series of

movements between scenes and framing of characters, both husband and wife are killed by Johnny/Giovanni before he turns the gun on himself.

Carter's version of John Ford's '*Tis Pity She's a Whore* is a deliberate hybrid narrative that juxtaposes prose and script alongside one another, whilst drawing on specific influence from cinema and stage; it is a form of literary montage. The two forms sit alongside one another; with two distinct ways of expressing a narrative, Carter demands that the reader assume continuity between the two as she tells her story. Even the names alternate in reference to the two John Fords: the young girl is Annie-Belle and Annabella; the boy is referred to as Giovanni and Johnny. Carter's text sees historical and contemporaneous material reimagined, creating news ways in which to imagine old tales:

> Through a studied placement of fragments of the original text in a new version inspired by a film-maker of the same name, she allows for resonances to emerge between texts and creators, and brings the reader to "see" the two John Fords in a different light (Ryan-Sautour, 2011: 9).

Writing on intermediality and the cinematographic image in Carter's short story, Michelle Ryan-Sautour argues that the hybrid nature of the text creates an underlying 'playful superposition of creators and genres as the playwright's name is blurred on to that of John Ford, the American film maker' (2011: 2). Much like Kurosawa uses the screen in order to enhance the theatrical elements of *noh* through the integration of music and the geometrical framing of his actors, so Carter uses the medium of literature to evoke images of both stage *and* film. For Ryan-Sautour, 'Carter's version transposes the original plot details into the realm of the prairies of the United States, as portrayed in Ford's Westerns, in a semi-serious juxtaposition of fragments from the 1633 play, and a narrativised intermediality' (2011: 2). Yet, there is not a great deal on the second John Ford, and Carter's focus is on John Ford the filmmaker – a skewed hybridity that brings out the form of one over the other.

Carter's short story opens with the death of the Giovanni/Johnny and Annie-Belle/Annabelle's mother, who dies 'of the pressure of that vast sky, that weighed down upon her' (JF, 332). The image this invokes is uncannily similar to the framing strategy that Kurosawa adapts, and we see ourselves return to the image of the Japanese print, a swathe of blankness bearing down on the image below. Compare Carter's description

here with Figure 4 in which the vast emptiness of the sky that hangs over Mifune and Shimura creates a blankness of space that detracts from the human aspects of the scene.

The opening scenes of Carter's short story are directed in such a way that the as the audience are commanded to imagine 'an orchestra behind [the children]: the frame, the porch, the rocking-chair endlessly rocking' (JF, 334). The deliberate staging of the tale lends itself to a cinematic reading. Much like Kurosawa created a hybrid narrative through the use of *noh* theatre, so Carter intersects both play and an imagined Western film into a 'narrativised account of screen play' (Ryan-Sautour, 2011: 3) The 'play' opens with the use of the long lens, as we see Annie-Belle undress:

> EXTERIOR. PRAIRIE. DAY.
> (Long shot) Farmhouse.
> (Close up) Petticoat falling on to the porch of the farmhouse
> […]
> [Music plays]
> Giovanni: Let not this music be a dream, ye gods.
> For pity's sake, I beg you!
> [She kneels] (JF, 334-5).

Carter's staging of scene/screen adheres to a theatrical vision that places the viewer behind the lens of the camera. The excessive attention to detail – such as music playing in the background as the audience is granted a long sweeping shot of the farmhouse from above before zooming in to join Annie-Belle and Johnny – akin the start of Kurosawa's *The Hidden Fortress* in which processional march music accompanies the opening sequence. The montage that Carter creates between prose and script is continued throughout the text and this hybrid structure ensures that a degree of tension is maintained, an effect which culminates in composed chaos. The hybrid narrative manages to simultaneously create a furious and frantic tale that is indecisive in its approach, yet successfully manages to construct a tale that is exacting and articulate in its movements both on and off the screen.

There are notable similarities between 'John Ford's '*Tis Pity She's a Whor*e and the works of Kurosawa, particularly when considering the use of space and the role the characters play *within* that space. As has already been considered in this chapter, Kurosawa's deliberate framing of the scenes in his films adhere to a rather 'staged' approach, and the positioning of his characters fitting in amongst the landscape around

them was often considered in relation to its geometrical structure (see Figures 4 and 5). Carter too, adopts this strategy in order to highlight key moments in the text.

> ANNIE-BELLE: I think he likes me, Johnny
>
> Pan blue sky, with clouds. Johnny and Annie-Belle, dwarfed by the landscape, hand in hand, heads bowed. Their hands slowly part.
>
> Now they walk with gradually increasing distance between them (JF, 338).

Carter explicitly draws upon a cinematographic projection of the image of the brother and sister, utilising the surrounding landscape and the growth in physical distance between the two characters in order to convey their increasing emotional estrangement from one another. The absence of dialogue creates a growing unease that is heightened by the parting of their bodies. Carter's use of stage directions, and the use of space within the frame ensure that which remains unsaid can still be accurately understood by the reader, even without the relevant narrative.

The narrative jumps from prose to script and even offers camera shots that invade the domestic space: 'Annie-Belle in bed, in a white nightgown, clutching the pillow, weeping. Minister's son, bare back, sitting on the side of bed with his back to camera, head in hands' (JF, 340-1). As a result of these jumps in narrative style, Carter's refuses compliance with the normative 'linear reading pattern', but instead 'with the disruptions caused by shifts in style, narrative interjections, mimetic stage dialogue, and screen/film direction, fosters disjointed modes of visualisation' (Ryan-Sautour, 2011: 4). This style of montage often jumps from one scene to the next and is used to show a quick succession of events over a period of time. And so, the story is pushed along through a hybrid of mediums (prose and play) and a juxtaposition of these two, fast-forwarding into the future. This form of linkage editing is used to build up scenes, and although the shots are not in collision with one another, they are used as fragments or as part of a whole scene.

However, a more effective means of employing montage cinematically is a means of 'intellectual montage' in which shots are placed together to emphasise difference (Nelmes, 2003: 396). In the final scene of 'John Ford's *'Tis Pity She's a* Whore', Carter employs fast cutting montage in order to build suspense. The scene in which Johnny kills Annie-Belle and the mayor's son before turning the gun on himself

is constructed in a hurried and frantic motion. The final scene of Carter's hybrid narrative reads:

> EXTERIOR. FARMHOUSE. DAY.
> Johnny mounts house. Slings rifle over shoulder.
> Kicks horse's sides.
>
> EXTERIOR. RAILROAD. DAY.
> Train whistle. Burst of smoke.
> Engine pulling train across prairie.
>
> EXTERIOR. PRAIRIE. DAY.
> Johnny galloping down track.
>
> EXTERIOR. RAILROAD. DAY.
> Train wheels turning.
>
> EXTERIOR. PRAIRIE. DAY
> Hooves churning up dust […]
>
> And see them, now, as if posing for the photographer, the young man and the pregnant woman, sitting on a trunk, waiting to be transported onwards, away, elsewhere, she with the future in her belly […]
>
> (Long shot) Engine appearing round bend.
>
> EXTERIOR. STATION. DAY
> Johnny tethers his horse.
>
> ANNIE-BELLE: Why, Johnny, you've come to say goodbye after all!
>
> (Close up) Johnny, racked with emotion (JF, 346-7).

Carter swiftly moved from the use of the long shot as the train approaches, to the excruciating contortions of Johnny's face, racked with emotion as he commits his final murderous acts. The crossover between prose and script creates a rushed and hurried narrative that disrupts the natural flow of movement between frames, creating an effect that makes the scenes appear considerably more fragmented and disjointed than they have been so far: for example, the frantic nature of the final scene compares starkly to the stillness of the frame earlier on in the story when Annie-Belle and the mayor's son

sit 'as if posing for the photographer' JF, 347), a still which harshly contrasts against the climactic ending in the narrative. [141]

Carter's own employment of the lens and, in some instances, situating the camera in the rooms of the characters, also demands a certain level of voyeuristic activity from her readers. Ryan-Sautour suggests that the 'predominance of stylistic variations in the farming narrative […] along with the incomplete paratactic sentence fragments in the screenplay sections […] accentuates the process of "filling in the blanks" on a structural and visual level' (2011: 5). The final scene of Carter's narrative depicts a 'Crane shot' (JF, 348), as the camera zooms outwards over the three bodies lain on the ground. In true cinematic fashion, the 'Love Theme' rises over a pan of the prairie, a fitting way in which sees the close of Carter's hybrid narrative.

Informed by Carter's time in America in the 1980s, 'John Ford's '*Tis Pity She's a Whore*' draws heavily on Western films. There is a difficulty then, in reconciling attribution back to Kurosawa; certainly, the 'Americanness' of the story is more prominent than the Japanese, and there is a crossover in Carter's stories (such as 'Gun for the Devil') with the spaghetti Western. Yet, Kurosawa was also informed by American Westerns – specifically the films of John Ford. Both Carter and Kurosawa transform ideas from Ford's movies: Kurosawa by incorporating Japanese elements; Carter by creating a hybrid narrative with a seventeenth-century play. Moreover, a comparison between Carter's short story and Kurosawa's work does not hinge on their connection through John Ford's films. Rather, it serves to demonstrate the extent to which Carter continued to indulge in the cinematic in her fiction. She remained interested in Japanese cinema long after she had left Japan in 1972, doubtless still watching the films of Kurosawa.

Conclusion

Carter's literary *oeuvre* functions as a vehicle for a cinematic bricolage. Drawing on a range of cinematic motifs, Carter was interested in how stories translated onto the screen, and the process in achieving this. Carter's short stories written in Japan are

[141] Carter also uses montage in 'Gun for the Devil', jumping from one scene to the next in a quick successive motion from the 'dirty empty streets' to the 'scummy pool' and back to 'behind the bar' (1995: 361), heightening narrative tension as the central protagonist Johnny frantically kills the family who murdered his own parents.

abundant with illustrative images that are painterly in their composition and cinematic in their quality. Carter's sense of strangeness in Japan is enhanced through the alienation effect she employs in her short stories, deliberately Othering the places she was in, and deliberately Othering herself. Kurosawa likewise adopts this effect in his films, to the same end as Carter: through the use of wide frame and a long lens, Kurosawa doesn't allow his audience to empathise with the characters in his films. His characters remain estranged, alienated, much like the narrators of Carter's short stories (and like Carter herself).

Kurosawa's use of montage in his films contrasts against his persistent use of the alienation effect. Certainly, the distancing effect is employed to create a sense of tension throughout the film, a tension which is snapped apart through the employment of a quick sequence of frames, such as in *Seven Samurai*. Likewise, Carter's 'John Ford's *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*' employs a montage effect at the end of the tale served to heighten anticipation over whether or not Annie-Belle will escape from her brother, Johnny.

Most pertinently, in this chapter we see a cross-cultural, intertextual exchange of ideas and images that shift from screen to page (and from page to screen). John Ford's Westerns informed both Carter and Kurosawa's way of thinking; Kurosawa interested Carter; Carter's work was informed by Shakespeare and Shakespeare influenced Kurosawa. The fact that Kurosawa also informed Leone's work, whose films Carter was interested in (and was influenced by, as demonstrated by 'Gun for the Devil') serves as further evidence for the mutual exchange of ideas between European, Japanese and American cinema. This borrowing, entangling and meshing of ideas ensures that cinematic techniques and themes are reused, transformed and preserved both on and off the screen.

Conclusion

The Legacy of Angela Carter

As Angela Carter's time in Japan drew to a close, she spent her time considering how her experience abroad had changed her. In a letter to Carole Roffe, Carter reflects how her sojourn in Japan 'really has been the most extraordinary experience. I've packed so much into it' (Add. MS 90102; n.d). Her fiction reflects the vast array of experiences: from the estranged feeling of living in a non-Judeo-Christian culture for the first time; to feelings of desire and passion experienced in her 'First Real Affair'[142] to exploring notions of the familiar and the unfamiliar in a foreign land; to pushing boundaries between fact and fiction, the real and the unreal. Carter's encounter with Japan made her a compelling commentator of its culture and by the end of her stay she had become 'a keen and discriminating student' of the Japanese way of life (Gordon, 2018: 171). For the next two-decades she was the "go-to" Japan expert for *New Society* and the Guardian contributing reviews and articles on a range of cultural and social topics.

Carter's time in Japan marks a transitionary moment in her writing. Although she continues to explore many of the themes she was writing about in her earlier novels of the 1960s (for example incest, gender and puppets) her time spent in the far-east exposed her to new aesthetic possibilities and new ideas on how to frame her narratives. For example, in her post-Japan fiction she continues to explore broader themes around understanding her own identity, as noted through her movement towards a more personal writing style in her essays written during the mid-1970s. After her time in Japan, Carter 'put' herself in her stories more often: she adopts the first-person pronoun in her fiction and takes up a story-telling narrative that pushes forward a sense of oral agency – take for example, *The Bloody Chamber* collection. Moreover, Carter uses intertextuality in a considerably more sophisticated and nuanced way and as a means of questioning our own social and gendered expectations (for example, in *The Passion of New Eve).* Japan confirmed the ideas that Carter was already writing about, and provided her with a new way of exploring her aesthetic in more detail: Carter's ideas

[142] Letter to Carmen Callil, undated, PC Carmen Callil.

of the 1960s are intensified, exoticised and mystified – they become strange because of their far-eastern setting.

Significantly, Carter's time in Japan allowed her to step back from her own culture, and to step in to the role of the other. Othered by the colour of her skin, by her gender, and by her size, Carter was exposed to a new way of seeing things – and of seeing herself. The polarity of the sexes in Japan and the inferior treatment of women also heightened Carter's interest in feminism, and what it meant to be a woman. She became intensely interested (or, even more interested) in how women were represented in her fiction, and her time in Japan marks a caesura in her writing in which the heroines of her novels and short stories shift towards a more autonomous agency. Her time in Japan also coincided (but not coincidentally) with her love affair with a man named Sozo Araki. From Japan, Carter emerged having been changed emotionally, sexually and politically, and her encounters with this far-eastern culture continued to shape and inform her literature and her essays for years to come.

In this thesis, I have shown how Carter's time in Japan marks a departure away from her earlier novels. Chapter one explored how Carter represented the city of Japan in 'Reflections', 'Penetrating to the Heart of the Forest', and *The Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor Hoffman.* The landscapes in these stories are strange and unfamiliar, unlike the cityscapes of Bristol and London that are found in *Shadow Dance*, *Several Perceptions*, *The Magic Toyshop*, and *Love*. The environment in Carter's Japanese stories (forests and unknown cities) reflect her biographical alienation and estrangement in a foreign country. In 'Penetrating to the Heart of the Forest', the woods are analogous to the urban metropolis, with Madeline and Emile devising their own system of cartography to make their way to the centre. The centre is marked as a site of sexual maturation, and the story ends with an eroticised, sexualised and incestuous finale.

Cities and representations of desire also find themselves bound up in *Doctor Hoffman*. The architecture of Desiderio's city in the first chapter is clearly a reference to Japan and the novel has some of the most explicit references to Japanese culture, and the similarity to the language Carter writes in her journals to describe Japan appears to confirm this. Yet, Desiderio's city is not just drawn from Japan: indeed, it cannot be said that it is distinctly European, South American, or Oriental. Rather, the city (and the novel) draws upon an eclectic mix of intertextual references, mixing eastern and western influences. Carter's reading prior to her time in Japan (for example Borges,

Marquez, Hoffmann) would have informed some of her thinking (and her writing) during her time abroad. Carter's encounter with Japan from 1969-1972 also informed her writing, as well as her own imagined version of Japan after she had returned to England. *Doctor Hoffman* is, at its core, a tale about the conflict between rationality and desire and it is a conflict in which reason eventually triumphs after Desiderio murders the renegade Doctor and the Doctor's daughter, Albertina. The rejection of passion and sexual desire in favour of a rational existence echoes Carter's own journey to, and return from, Japan.

Chapter two looked at representations of traditional Japanese theatre in Carter's work, specifically in her short stories 'The Loves of Lady Purple' and 'The Executioner's Beautiful Daughter'. Drawing on evidence from Carter's notebooks, I argued that 'The Loves of Lady Purple' borrows ideas from Iharu Saikaku's seventeenth-century Japanese novel *The Life of an Amorous Woman* (1686). For example, Saikaku's narrator (who is now an old woman) falls into a life of wantonness during her days as a courtesan. Speaking of her successes with men she claims that she made one 'my own creature' (1963: 176) before confessing that 'the men whom I could remember having enjoyed as partners were more than I could count on my fingers' (1963: 178). Similarly, Lady Purple, who sleeps with scores of men, is the 'object on which men prostituted themselves' (LLP, 37).

The marionette in 'The Loves of Lady Purple' is not a new image in Carter's fiction, and it is one that Carter had extensively explored in *The Magic Toyshop*. However, there are some clear nods to Oriental theatre in the short story – the make-up and the dress of its leading lady, the trinity of puppeteers, the 'Asiatic' puppet-master. Yet, the play itself is not *bunraku*; instead Carter draws on a narrative framework that is informed by Saikaku's novel (so, it is still Japanese, in a way). Lady Purple is forced to perform the same play every night, acting out her own destiny in which she is transformed into a wooden puppet at the end of the performance. Her transformation (or return) to a real woman at the end of the story hints at an uncanny narrative in which inanimate creatures become autonomous animated humans.

The inclusion of 'The Executioner's Beautiful Daughter' deliberately seeks to assess the Japanese elements in one of Carter's stories that is often overlooked. The artful decapitation of the executioner's son creates a performance that both the executioner and the audience are complicit in sustaining. The audience derives pleasure from the spectacle, and the ritual act of performance (such as in *bunraku*) permits space

for violent acts. The incestuous relationship between the daughter / son and the daughter / father also lends itself to a Freudian reading of the tale. Although not a new theme in Carter's work, the strangeness of Japan pushed Carter to bring to the surface the sexual, the taboo, and the unmentionable.

The third chapter of this thesis looked at Carter's interest in Japanese literature, specifically the work of Tanizaki Jun'ichirō. Carter was clearly engaging with Japanese texts and materials, and her interest in these figures denotes a particularly original part of this research. Certainly, one of the most fascinating things about Carter's engagement with Tanizaki's literature is that she did not know about his work until she came to Japan, and it was her lover Araki who first introduced Carter to Tanizaki's work. Tanizaki clearly had a profound effect on Carter, who would go on to praise his work in future interviews (Bell, 1973). She continued to read his work until at least the mid-1980s, when she was writing reviews on *Naomi*, which had been translated into English for the first time in 1985.

Both Carter and Tanizaki were writing a response to the time in which they were living. For Tanizaki, his literature was, in part, a response to the increasing number of Western imports at the beginning of the twentieth century. Initially fascinated by the Western aesthetic (particularly Hollywood films), Tanizaki's earlier work contrasts against his novels written from the mid-1920s and beyond, as he retreated from the West and sought to return to traditional Japanese values. This retreat, and the dangers of Western modernity, are captured in Tanizaki's *Naomi* and *Some Prefer Nettles*: *Naomi*, in particular encapsulates how the Western *femme fatale* came into being in Japanese literature as the Modern Woman.

Carter's time in Japan was where she became radicalised, and this radicalisation is reflected in her evolving literary style. Her novels of the 1960s denote a male colonisation, a colonisation which dissipated towards a (female) first person narrative after Carter's stay in Japan. Carter's encounter with Japan gave her a new way of looking at herself as Other, as alienated – and as exotic. Although Othered by her gender, the colour of her skin, and by her size, Carter becomes the *Occidental exotic*. The grotesque appearance of the narrator in 'A Souvenir of Japan' is turned on its head, and she is still desirable to her Japanese lover, because of her foreign status. She is permitted an exotic privilege that is not afforded to the Oriental woman.

The final chapter looked at Carter's interest in Japanese cinema, which she claims was one of the reasons she decided to travel there in the first place. Kurosawa

was probably one of the few windows to Japan accessible to Westerners (living in the West), and Carter chose to peer through this window. Her interest in Japanese films dates back to (at least) 1963 when she first watched Kurosawa's *The Hidden Fortress* (1957). Her interest in Japanese cinema lasted well beyond her time spent in Japan, and she continued to review Japanese films, for example, Nagisa Oshima's *Ai No Corrida* (1976), in 1978.

Carter's sense of estrangement and otherness in her short stories is heightened by her use of wide frames and the long lens. For example, I showed that the compositional narrative of 'The Smile of Winter', has an almost cinematic quality to it: the 'lens' of the narrator pans over the beach, creating a hallucinatory image that is fitting for the big-screen. Likewise, the use of mirrors in 'Flesh and the Mirror' also fosters an alienation effect. Ambiguous references towards time, coupled with a lexical shift in the use of pronouns that sees the narrator refuse to identify with herself, the language and the images used in the short story deliberately foster an alienating effect. The narrator does not recognise her own self, or her own behaviour – the 'script had been scrambled behind my back. The cameraman was drunk' (FM, 86). This dislocation and disorientation adds to the alienating tensions within the narrative.

I argued that the alienation effect is also adopted by Kurosawa – much like Carter, Kurosawa employs this technique as a means of fostering a sense of detachment. Most significantly for Kurosawa, it is used as a means of denying empathy with his central characters: whereas Carter primarily uses the effect as a means of Othering and of estrangement, Kurosawa appears to use it on a more technical level, and as a means of heightening tension – it is particularly effective when this alienating approach is broken in the final scenes of *Throne of Blood*, for example. Although this effect seems Brechtian in its approach, it is highly unlikely that Kurosawa would have come across Brecht's work directly (although the same cannot be said for Carter). Moreover, the first English translation as not published until 1964 – and Kurosawa did not speak English. This means that although Carter may have engaged directly with Brecht's theories of alienation (and thus, they can be said to inform her way of thinking), the same cannot be said for Kurosawa.

Both Carter and Kurosawa adopt an intertextual narrative that borrow and blend ideas from other sources. For example, both borrow from Shakespeare; both were also informed by ideas from John Ford's Westerns. As shown in my analysis of *Seven Samurai* and 'John Ford's *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*', both Carter and Kurosawa use

montage as a means of assuming continuity between two fast-paced frames. Carter employs this particularly effectively, and her short story can be seen as one extended montage, moving between one form (play) to another (film). Just as Carter uses European writers and new ideas from Japan to inform her way of thinking, so Kurosawa, too, weaves Western modernity with a distinct Japanese style in his films.

One of the main themes that runs through this thesis is the extent to which Carter's writing is informed and developed by other writers. Her interest in foreign literature and languages prompted her decision to move abroad, where she developed her interest further. European thinkers such as Charles Baudelaire, Edgar Allan Poe, Jorges Luis Borges, E. T. A Hoffman, Japanese writers such as Iharu Saikaku and Jun'ichirō Tanizaki, Japanese directors Akira Kurosawa and Nagisa Oshima all contribute to Carter's literary *oeuvre*. Carter's time in Japan was a defining moment in which she specifically draws on Japanese texts and cultural ideas to inform her writing, and there is evidence of this in her journals (take, for example, Saikaku's novel). This level of intertextuality is not new to Carter's time in Japan. What *is* new is the way in which she was using and reusing material drawn from European thinkers and the new ways she was able to engage with their ideas. For example, 'Penetrating to the Heart of the Forest' infers ideas from Marcel Proust and Jean-Jacques Rousseau; Proust, E. T. A. Hoffmann and the Marquis de Sade all inform *The Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor Hoffman*, and the mention of 'the Bovary syndrome in 'Flesh and the Mirror' (79) is also a nod to Gustave Flaubert. Carter picked and chose ideas from Continental writers and other writers in Japan, synthesising Eastern and Western thought.

It is also useful to cross-reference Carter's Japanese stories with writers she encountered after she had returned to England in 1972: for example, Italo Calvino's *Invisible Cities* was not translated into English until 1974, but we are certain that Carter was reading his work by the 1980s at the very latest. A comparative reading of Calvino alongside Carter's Japanese writing provides a new interpretation of her work, heightening the 'foreignness' of some of the ideas she was exploring. Furthermore, Carter would not have watched Nagisa Oshima's *Ai No Corrida* which was released in 1976, nor read Tanizaki's *Naomi*, which wasn't translated until 1985. Although Carter would not have encountered these materials during her time abroad, her reviews of the work demonstrate her continued engagement in Japanese culture over fourteen years after her visit.

Carter's time in Japan signalled a transitional moment in the way in which she was writing. Her work in Japan, suggests Gordon, is 'light years' ahead of the fiction she was producing in the 1960s (Gordon, 2018). Carter returned to England more politically engaged and more alert to the feminist agenda. Yet, it does become increasingly difficult to directly attribute her later work to the images and ideas she encountered during her time in Japan. Rather than directly link her later work to a definite idea of Japanese 'influence' it is perhaps more helpful to understand how representations of Japan form part of Carter's wider *bricolage*. Take the similarities between Kurosawa's *Seven Samurai* and Carter's 'John Ford's *Tis Pity She's a Whore'*, for example, or the likeness between the male performers of *kabuki* theatre and Tristessa in *The Passion of New Eve*. There is a value in applying a comparative reading between representations of Japan to Carter's later fiction in order to understand how (or if) new interpretations of her work can be made and to understand changes of Carter's method and style of writing.

There is perhaps a limit to this study in that it has strongly focused on the fiction and on the essays Carter produced from 1969 to 1974. Yet this centralised focus has enabled the analysis of previously neglected texts – take, for example, the assessment of 'Penetrating to the Heart of the Forest', 'The Executioner's Beautiful Daughter' and 'Reflections'. There is an interrelationship between these texts, brought together by the strangeness of their settings, their encounters with Other, and their pursuit of sexualised themes. With a narrator that moves in and out of the tales, the short stories are bound up contextually, affirming their 'Japaneseness'. There is, of course, a danger of solely focusing Carter's more 'Japanese' tales in a scholarly reading of her time in Japan, and this work has deliberately broadened the literary selection from *Fireworks* in order to avoid falling into this trap. Further work can be done, however, to understand more specific references to Japan in Carter's later work and the inclusion of a handful of Carter's fiction from her post-Japan period in this thesis demonstrates that there are (hopefully) more comparative readings and new interpretations of Carter's work to emerge from her time in Japan.

Word count: 87,895

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