

太平洋の両岸で

—ハロルド・ライト作品と戦後日本における他者化—

Otherization on Both Sides of the Pacific

—The Ozarks in Harold Bell Wright's Fiction and Japan After World War II—

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要旨

エドワード・サイードによるOrientalizationの分析は、東洋人を「魅力はあるが、劣った他者」とみなす西洋人の視点を浮き彫りにした。本研究ノートは、20世紀末に確立したポストコロニアル批評の立場から、ハロルド・ベル・ライトの作品を読み直す試みである。20世紀初頭にアメリカの都心部に住んだ者達が、自国内のOzarks地方に住む人々に対し、Orientalizationに類似した偏見を抱いていたことが洞察できる。この僻見は、20世紀後半以降ライトに与えられる評価が低くなっていった一因と考えられる。

本研究ノートでは更に、アメリカの支配層が第二次世界大戦後の日本において、Orientalizationに基づく行動をとった史実を示す。そのことが、日本的アイデンティティの喪失やself-Orientalizationにつながり、ひいては三島由紀夫ら知識人を悲しませたのである。

●キーワード：アメリカ文学 (American literature) / ハロルド・ベル・ライト (Harold Bell Wright) / 三島由紀夫 (Yukio Mishima)

Introduction

Harold Bell Wright's Ozark novels reflect his affection for southwestern Missouri as is evidenced by his words of dedication for *The Shepherds of the Hills*:

*To Frances, my wife
In memory of that beautiful summer in the
Ozark hills, when, so often, we
followed the old trails around the rim of
Mutton Hollow—
the trail that is nobody knows how old—
and from Sammy's Lookout watched the day
go over the western ridges.*
(11; italics in original)

Indeed, many passages in his Ozark novels portray the inspirational beauty of the region. Once he relocated to California and then to Arizona, he rarely visited the Ozarks, but he maintained an emotional attachment to the region. In a 1935 letter to a relative in Carthage, Missouri, he wrote he “would like to make a pilgrimage

back to the Ozarks” (qtd. in Ketchell 18).

Having said that, a close reading of Wright's Ozark novels reveals that he held a view of the Ozarkers reminiscent of the European objectification of Asia, North Africa, and the Middle East. In his landmark postcolonial study *Orientalism* (1978), Edward W. Said (1935-2003) analyzes the romanticized representation of the Eastern world by Eurocentric Orientalists, who approached the non-Western world in a patronizing, condescending manner. Said's postcolonial critique of Orientalism can be a useful tool in discussing Wright's objectification of Ozarkers who supposedly need improvement.

Specifically, this paper will define the postcolonial concept of Orientalism and then discuss how Orientalist thought is embodied in three of Wright's Ozark novels. In the final segment of the body, we will apply Said's critical theory to the phenomena of Orientalism and self-Orientalization in Japan after the country's defeat in World War II. Said conceived the idea of Orientalism focusing on the Middle East (that is, the Orient) vis-à-vis

imperialist Europe. This paper aims to show how an American version of Orientalism is played out in the Ozarks in the early twentieth century and in Japan in the mid-twentieth century.

Orientalism in a Nutshell

Said's *Orientalism* is considered the key text in postcolonial literary criticism. The author was a man of what W.E.B. Du Bois calls "double consciousness"—a man of "two-ness" (para. 3): a Palestinian and an academic elite in the United States.¹⁾ A basic definition of Orientalism is "the representation of Asia, especially the Middle East, in a stereotyped way that is regarded as embodying a colonialist attitude" (*Oxford Languages*). According to the Orientalist view, the West is the universalized Self, and the Orient is the silent Other, who is represented through the Western eye. In this "us vs. them" mindset, the West is masculine, rational, and moral, whereas the Orient is feminine, irrational, and immoral. Oriental men are weak but dangerous, and Oriental women are seductive and crave domination by Western men. Being superior, the West has the moral obligation to save the Orient from barbarism, ignorance, and depravity. There are some redeemable natives who can serve as administrators, educators, and law enforcement officers under the supervision of the colonizers. Eventually, natives embrace at least part of the colonizer's culture, which results in what Homi K. Bhabha and other postcolonial scholars call "hybridity." In hybridization, the colonized Other adopts a compromising position toward the colonizer's culture. The Orientalist view of Asia also results in Asians' self-Orientalization, denigrating themselves as inferior to Westerners.

The Ozarkers in Wright's fiction are generally poor, uneducated whites who need the help of outsiders, who supposedly know better, in improving themselves and their communities. As a sentimental novelist who classifies people into two groups, good and bad, Wright tends to adopt a condescending posture toward natives that recalls the Orientalist view of Asians. His fiction otherizes the Ozarkers in two ways. First, many outsiders, typically from cities, serve as enlighteners of

the native Ozarkers. Second, some good locals tend to have descended from outsiders, and they can improve themselves quickly through proper mentoring. Three of his Ozark novels provide sufficient evidence for this observation: *That Printer of Udell's* (1902-03), *The Shepherd of the Hills* (1907), and *The Re-Creation of Brian Kent* (1919).

Dick Falkner's Social Activism and Heroics: *That Printer of Udell's*

The title of the novel is the nickname of Dick Falkner, the main character of the story. He initially appears as a tramp looking for employment in Boyd City, which is modeled after Lebanon, Missouri. He used to work in Kansas City but was fired because of his labor rights activism. When he arrives at Boyd City, he expects decent treatment from its residents, most of whom are Christian. However, he is considered a nuisance, even a danger, to the community. Instead of trying to help him, the people want him to move on. After enduring hunger and cold for days, he is employed by a printer, who is a non-Christian called an "infidel" by the pious community. Thereafter, he becomes a leader of the community, exemplifying "applied Christianity" (Wright, *Printer* 80).

Dick's faith in applied, or practical, Christianity is strengthened when he hears the Reverend James Cameron's social gospel message at the Jerusalem Church. Cameron "wish[es] to see Christians doing the things that Christ did, and using in matters of the church, the same business sense which they [bring] to bear upon their own affairs" (43). Dick fully agrees with him. When he came to Boyd City, he sought assistance from a local church, which gave him nothing but good wishes. He felt that the church was an otherworldly institution that disregarded the basic needs of humanity: "And the house of God stood silent, dark and cold, with the figure of the Christ upon the window and the spire, like a giant hand, pointing upward" (33). Once employed as a printer, Dick leads the charge to help the needy by providing space, resources, and care. His idea, which gains Cameron's support, is for the church to offer the tramps in Boyd City a house where they can stay

temporarily, working for food. Sanctimonious lay leaders, such as Deacon Wickham, oppose the idea, deeming it an “unscriptural thing” and “the strange teaching of an outcast and begging infidel” (117, 118). However, Cameron and Dick push the proposal forward, and the church becomes a haven for those who have fallen on hard times.

In addition to his moral courage, Dick is represented as a gentleman-knight in the novel. His appearance is conspicuous: he is a “tall, handsome man with the dark hair” (83). He also deeply admires Amy Goodrich, who has a “beautiful face” (155), and her feeling is mutual. In the second half of the book, Wright traces the two characters’ budding romance and the obstacles they overcome before they marry each other. Jim Whitley, a local scoundrel who has an eye on Amy, takes her to Cleveland, Ohio, where she is about to work as a prostitute. Promising to “fix” the villain (226), Dick takes the train and miraculously rescues her—a damsel in distress—out of his evil clutches. In other words, Dick serves as an outsider-turned-savior in Boyd City. Later, Whitley is killed at the hands of Jake Thompkins, a fellow tramp in Boyd City to whom Dick gave his last nickel years ago. Wright assures his readers that Amy’s purity has not been compromised by Whitley. Before he dies, Whitley tells Jake in a gasping voice, “Tell—Falkner—I—lied—Amy—is—innocent—and—tell—” (241). In *That Printer of Udell’s*, Wright highlights the virtues of Dick—a hero from outside the Ozarks—by using Jim, a native Ozarker who is portrayed as unredeemable.

Dad Howitt as a Mentor: *The Shepherd of the Hills*

The main character of *The Shepherd of the Hills*, Dad Howitt, comes from Chicago to the Ozarks to expiate for his son’s sins against a local girl, whom he impregnated and then deserted. In Chapter 1 of the novel, the title character appears as a man of dignity, authority, and learning. He exudes “the unconscious air of one long used to a position of conspicuous power and influence” and “an intellect unclouded by the shadows of many years” (21). His face is that of “a scholar and poet”; it is “marked deeply by pride; pride of birth, of intellect,

of culture” (21). His voice is clearly different from that of the locals, and a boy from the area, Jed Holland, is awestruck by his presence:

The voice was marvelously pure, deep, and musical, and, like the brown eyes, betrayed the real strength of the man, denied by his gray hair and bent form. The tones were as different from the high keyed, slurring speech of the backwoods, as the gentleman himself was unlike any man Jed had ever met. The boy looked at the speaker in wide-eyed wonder; he had a queer feeling that he was in the presence of a superior being. (21-22)

In the novel, good natives are descendants of outsiders. One of them is Old Matt, who says, “Our folks all live back in Illinois. And if I do say so, they are as good stock as you’ll find anywhere” (41). Young Matt is a “young giant”—a “big man [...] with almost superhuman strength” (91, 92). Although Sammy Lane—one of the Shepherd’s mentees—“kn[ows] nothing of the laws and customs of the, so-called, best society,” she is of “good stock” as well (47). Before they moved to the Ozarks, her father was a plantation owner, and her mother was a Southern belle. Her father tells Sammy, “When you get to be a fine lady, you ought to know that you got as good blood as the best of the thoroughbreds” (54). These “good” locals adore, follow, and learn from the transplanted Ozarkers with supposedly superior intellect and cultural tastes.

Like the Asians as seen through the Orientalists’ eyes, Ozarkers of bad stock are weak, crafty, and evil. Wash Gibbs, the leader of the Baldknobbers, is one of them. He is “distinguished by his gigantic form” (85). He and his gang are “lawless” and rowdy men who burst into laughter over vulgar remarks. However, Wash Gibbs—“a bad man” who has “a devilish cunning”—is not a match for Young Matt, who humiliates him in a duel (99, 127).

Interestingly, good natives speak Standard English whereas bad ones speak in heavy rural accents. An example can be found in Chapter 14, where Sammy and Wash Gibbs—a villain romantically interested in her—

have a conversation:

“Howdy, Sammy.” Gibbs leaped from the saddle, and, with the bridle rein over his arm, came close to the girl. “Fine evening for a walk.”

“Howdy,” returned the young woman, coolly, quickening her pace.

“You needn’t t’ be in such a powerful hurry,” growled Wash. “If you’ve got time t’ talk t’ that old cuss at th’ ranch, you sure got time t’ talk t’ me.”

Sammy turned angrily. “You’d better get back on your mule, and go about your business, Wash Gibbs. When I want you to walk with me, I’ll let you know.”

“That’s alright, honey,” exclaimed the other insolently. “I’m a goin’ your way just th’ same; an’ we’ll mosey ’long t’gether. I was a goin’ home, but I’ve got business with your paw now.”

“Worse thing for Daddy, too,” flashed the girl. “I wish you’d stay away from him.”

Wash laughed; “Your daddy couldn’t keep house ’thout me, nohow. Who was that feller talkin’ with you an’ th’ old man down yonder?”

“There wasn’t nobody talkin’ to us,” replied Sammy shortly. (76-77)

Sammy’s speech style may reflect her ongoing education from Dad Howie, but good Ozarkers tend to speak without much accent throughout *The Shepherd of the Hills*. This reveals Wright’s perception of the Ozarks as a culturally inferior region. As Appalachian English has been stigmatized as substandard in the minds of some Americans, so the Ozark dialect is represented as undesirable in Wright’s novel.

Good People from the Outside: *The Re-Creation of Brian Kent*

Like the two previous novels, *The Re-Creation of Brian Kent* was one of Wright’s bestsellers.²⁾ The novel concerns the regeneration of the title character, a bank embezzler who tries to commit suicide in the river. When his attempt fails, his little boat carries him down the raging river until it reaches where Betty Sue, a

retired schoolteacher from Connecticut, lives. When washed ashore, he is found by Judy, a deformed local girl, who contacts Betty Sue. Betty Sue rescues him, helping him reform himself. Soon, he finds his new love, Betty Jo, Betty Sue’s stenographer from Cincinnati. Finally, Homer T. Ward, the bank president in Chicago and Betty Sue’s former student, decides not to press charges against him and pays back the money for Brian. Brian’s wife, whose lavish lifestyle caused him to steal money from the bank, comes to the Ozarks to find him but drowns in the river. Free now, he and Betty Jo are happily married. In this novel, Judy, who loves Brian, and her abusive father are used as cardboard characters who highlight the feel-good story about a group of civilized, refined characters from the outside. The native-born people are largely a caricature of stereotypical Ozarkers—ignorant, violent, and rowdy. To use Said’s term, they are Orientalized in their own land. Homer T. Ward is a native Ozarker, but he has been able to educate himself outside the region.

Not surprisingly, the title character of the novel is someone from outside the Ozarks. When Brian comes to the Ozarks as a criminal, he looks like a “wretchedly repulsive creature” (104). Yet, Betty Sue recognizes something noble in him: “The face which looked back from the mirror to the man was, without question, the countenance of a gentleman” (26). Seeing the potential in him to turn his life around, Betty Sue suggests that he settle down as her hired hand. After pondering her advice, he accepts it, beginning life in the Ozarks. Gradually, he regains his masculine charms:

As the days of the glorious Ozark autumn passed, Brian’s healthful, outdoor work on the timbered mountain-side brought to the man of the cities a physical grace and beauty he had lacked,—the grace of physical strength and the beauty of clean and rugged health. (133)

Like Dick Falkner in *That Printer of Udell’s* and Young Matt in *The Shepherd of the Hills*, he is an ideal white man: strong, charming, and vigorous.

Orientalism in Japan after the Second World War

Said's postcolonial theory of Orientalism is useful in understanding not only Harold Bell Wright's otherization of the Ozarks but also Japan after its defeat by the Allies in 1945. Orientalization and self-Orientalization in Japan are not issues to be discussed indiscreetly. General Douglas MacArthur's General Headquarters (GHQ), established in Tokyo in 1946, was instrumental in orientalizing Japan and its people.³⁾ The GHQ wrote Japan's new constitution based on MacArthur's view that the Japanese were incapable of doing so (Gilbert 30). According to the intelligence appendix of the U.S. Army's Blacklist Operation Order, every Japanese was a potential enemy, unlike obedient natives such as the New Guineans and the pro-American Filipinos (Eto 160-161).

By directing Japanese media, such as newspapers and broadcasts, the GHQ's War Guilt Information Program exerted tremendous influence on the Japanese psyche. Only the Allied point of view was acceptable in postwar Japan, and, feeling embarrassed about their own country's downfall, numerous Japanese felt disheartened. The Shinto Directive made it difficult for public officials to visit shrines, and parts of textbooks that had formed the Japanese identity, such as Japanese mythology, were deleted. Separated from their own traditional culture and Shinto, the Japanese public was invited to seek entertainment from the Western world.

Self-Orientalization was manifested in the behavior of Japanese people, especially in the immediate decades after the war. The public lost their pride and sense of identity connected with their ancestors. Many Japanese underestimated their traditions and tried to imitate Western ways of life. Unsurprisingly, Lee Teng-hui, a Taiwanese politician, was saddened by the self-denial and self-subjugation of Japanese people. In his later year, he wrote that he wanted the Japanese to regain their pride and Bushido which he had loved since his childhood (316).

Meanwhile, Japanese intellectuals continued to make strides without being distracted by the misguided, masochistic view of Japanese history. Their energy burst in a quarter century after the Second World War.

In March 1970, people marveled at the giant Tower of the Sun, called the Jomon Monster, built at the Japan World Exposition, Osaka. The theme of the Expo was to enjoy Western-style development for convenience and economic prosperity. Nevertheless, Taro Okamoto—the creator of the Tower—emphasized the gratitude for nature and the praise of life as inspired by the ancient Jomon pottery of Japan. Okamoto expressed a return to the spirit of ancient Japan and how the path that the Japanese were trying to take at the time could lead to emptiness (“An Interview”).

In November of the same year, Yukio Mishima committed *seppuku*—ritual suicide—after giving a speech, which stressed the spiritual independence of the Japanese, to the Japan Self-Defense Forces personnel. Earlier, in 1969, he had a debate with students at the University of Tokyo. When a student argued, “You can't exceed your limits as a Japanese,” he shot back, saying, “That's fine. I was born a Japanese, and I want to die as a Japanese” (Toyoshima Keisuke Direct). Several months before his *seppuku*, Mishima wrote that he did not feel like exchanging words with the Japanese people who were only wishing material development. Mishima feared that, if things did not change, Japan would disappear soon (Inoue 94-95).

Even after the passing of Yukio Mishima, it is hard to say that the Japanese who profoundly value the Japanese spirit are the majority. This is because the Japanese have not been given a well-balanced education in public settings since the end of the Second World War. The public continues to be led astray by the words of internationalization and globalism, losing sight of the true value of Japan. There are too few true international figures like Inazo Nitobe, who understood Japanese culture correctly while deeply touching foreign cultures.

Still in 2022, Japanese myths are not allowed to appear in Japanese textbooks, and the Japanese continue to be criticized even for singing the national anthem (Gilbert 240). On the other hand, more and more young Japanese people today are fond of the cultures of other Asian countries without worshiping the West. They often eat Chinese, Indian, Korean, and Thai food,

enjoying entertainment, such as K-POP, Bollywood movies, and Chinese idols. If the economic power of a country increases, the spread of that country's culture will spread to the world. As the economic power of the countries of the East increases, it can be expected that the term *self-Orientalization* will become completely a thing of the past, but it is clear from what was written in this essay that it is still in a transitional period and could be a long way to go. The psychology of Orientalization and self-Orientalization is complex in relation to history, especially in a Japanese context.

Conclusion

In his fiction, Wright praises the beauty and restorative nature of the Ozarks; Dick Falkner finds the Ozarks “very beautiful and restful” (Wright, *Printer* 280), and the Shepherd finds healing for his soul in the Ozarks. However, Wright's appreciation does not seem to extend to the native-born people, who, he finds, lack education, cultural refinement, and inspirational leadership. Despite some locals' desire to improve their lot, they do not know how to do it until someone comes from the city and initiates social and spiritual change.

Wright's Orientalist view of the Ozarks can be attributed to his idea of the “law of *inequality*,” as expounded in his autobiography *To My Sons* (1934). Saying that he has descended from an illustrious bloodline that originates in County Essex, England, in the early sixteenth century, he expresses his “confidence in good breeding” (28). According to him, some people are “well-born,” but others are not. Those who are well-born “[live] in honor and [serve] God and their country” (24). He claims,

Much of the talk about human equality is ill-considered and empty. There is no such thing as equality among human beings or anywhere else. [...] One man is not as good as another, any more than one horse or one dog is as good as another. There are human plugs and mongrels and ill-bred vicious beasts enough, Heaven knows. [...] A gold-mounted harness never yet transformed an ill-bred scrub into a thoroughbred. (24)

Here, Wright's tone is somewhat akin to the Orientalist view that Asians are less than human. The German philosopher Hegel opined that once a European crosses Persia and visits India and China, it is hard to find humans who are like Europeans, the supposed barometer for all human races. In Persia, one can find himself or herself “still somewhat at home, and meets European dispositions, human virtues, and human passions,” but in India and China, one “encounters the most repellant characteristics, pervading every single feature of society” (qtd. in Tchen and Yeats 144). The outsiders' superior attitude in Wright's fiction echoes the Orientalist attitude toward the Ozarks, who are unable—and not allowed—to represent themselves.

Said's *Orientalism* focused on the British (broadly European) condescension toward Asians. The attitude is found in the works of Robert Louis Stevenson, Rudyard Kipling, Bram Stoker, Sax Rohmer, and other Orientalists, in which whites feel superior to non-whites. In Wright's novels, so-called cultured, refined, and educated city people move to the Ozarks as saviors for the local whites. In this regard, Wright was a white Orientalist prejudiced against rural whites in the Midwest.

Whereas the Ozarkers were otherized by their fellow nationals based on regional prejudice, postwar Japan is otherized by an occupying force from the West. The conquering force neither recognized the Japanese people's capacity to draft a new constitution nor the importance of traditional Japanese—and by extension, Asian—culture for them. The attitude of “we know better than you do what is best for you” was manifested in the policies the American occupants enforced. As happens in otherized populations in general, many Japanese have accepted their subservient position vis-à-vis their supposedly superior Orientalists.

Notes

- 1) Said was born in Jerusalem when it was part of Mandatory Palestine. After earning his B.A. in English from Princeton University and his M.A. and Ph.D. in English Literature from Harvard University, he taught in the Department of English and Comparative Literature at Columbia University from 1963 to 2003. He died of leukemia at age 67. In addition to *Orientalism*, he authored *Nationalism, Colonialism, and*

Literature: Yeats and Decolonization (1988) and *Culture and Imperialism* (1993), among others.

_____. *To My Sons*. Harper, 1934.

2) Eudora Welty's "Moon Lake"—part of her short story collection set in Mississippi, *The Golden Apples* (1949)—was inspired by *The Re-Creation of Brian Kent* (Gordon 115).

3) During World War II, the anthropologist Ruth Benedict was commissioned by the U.S. government to analyze the spirituality of the Japanese. Benedict had studied under Franz Boas who regarded all cultures as of equal value. (Prior to Boas, anthropologists regarded the Orientals as just inferior.) *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword*, written by Benedict, contains many analyses that even Japanese people can agree on. Through her analysis, the U.S. government came to understand that the Japanese Achilles tendon was an extreme fear of dishonor and shame. As a scholar, Benedict maintains a balanced view of Japan and its people. The GHQ's actions, however, were largely based on Orientalist assumptions about the conquered land.

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