


Rewriting Canonical Love Stories from the Peripheries

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**Karen Ya-Chu Yang,**  
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**Abstract:** In her article "Rewriting Canonical Love Stories from the Peripheries" Karen Ya-Chu Yang compares postcolonial and postmodern intertextuality in Taiwanese and the Caribbean texts. Hsien-Yung Pai's "Wandering in the Garden, Waking from a Dream" (1966) and Tien-Hsin Chu's "Breakfast at Tiffany's" (1997) are two short stories which depict identity crises of first generation and second generation 外省人 (waishen gren, mainland immigrants). In these two texts disillusionment towards the center's romantic prospects is the lived reality for those compelled to accept their currently marginalized status and adopt hybrid flexibility as a practical survival strategy. In comparison, Jean Rhys in *Wide Sargasso Sea* (1966) and Maryse Condé in *La Migration des coeurs* (1995) deconstruct the love prospects from within for purposes of disenchanting the passing down of particular romantic fallacies. Rhys and Condé highlight race and ethnic hybridity to problematize love formulas. As rewritings from the peripheries, Rhys and Condé explore problematic and creative places and spaces of hybrid reconstructions providing insight into the hidden restrictions and possibilities of border crossing.

**Karen Ya-Chu YANG**

### **Rewriting Canonical Love Stories from the Peripheries**

In *Wide Sargasso Sea* Jean Rhys and in *La Migration des coeurs* Maryse Condé rewrite aspects of love as romantic fallacy from Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* and Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*. Rhys and Condé narrate (post)colonial points of views by highlighting race and ethnic hybridity in order to problematize love formulas in the novels of Brontë-s. *créolité* was used for both Native-born White colonizers and Black slaves. With regard to the former, White Creoles often encountered dilemmas of being despised as non-White by Europeans and excluded as White-skinned by the local Black population. This is the principal perspective of Rhys's *Wide Sargasso Sea* in which she rewrites Brontë's *Jane Eyre* by centering on White Creole voices to subvert stigmatizations of European colonialism. In Rhys's rewriting, the heroine changes from Brontë's British governess, Jane Eyre, to the mad Creole wife of Antoinette Rochester. By giving voice and depth to Rochester's wife, Rhys portrays the situation of British/Caribbean Creoles during the post-1834 emancipation of slaves in Jamaica. Rhys's protagonist is subjected to a loveless marriage and tragic consequences: Antoinette's narrative creates an internal and eternal wound to re-reading of Jane Eyre's romance. Different from Rhys's narration Condé rewrites the story of *Wuthering Heights* narrating skin color and race in postmodern heteroglossia. By moving Brontë's novel to the Caribbean, *Wuthering Heights*'s love obstacle, class becomes complicated by and intermixed with issues of race and ethnicity in Condé's rewriting. The darker skin of Razyé — Condé's Heathcliff character — is set in contrast to the fairness of Cathy's brother, Justin and her future husband Aymeric de Linsseuil. In *La Migration des coeurs*, the love attraction between Razyé and Cathy the mulatto is reasoned as a natural bonding of their Black blood. The novel's concentration on race as the main reason for revenge and tragedy does not dismiss the original work's focus on class, but underscores the analogy between hierarchal conditions of race and class. In addition to factors of racial hierarchy, the novel's fragmented narrative strategy also adds to the work's complexity and ambiguity diverging attention away from the original text's predominant theme of love and romance. In comparison to *Wuthering Heights*, *La Migration des coeurs* presents the multiplicity of narratives through a mosaic of various first person narratives by minor characters, some of which are from the original whereas others are newly included. By writing her novel in French and spanning her narrative across various Caribbean islands, Condé's text de-centers Brontë's novel not only through Francophone Creolizations, but also through trans-Atlantic geographical and racial fragmentation of its European roots (on this, see also Lionnet). Whereas Rhys argues for the uncovering of Creole voices in English literary narratives, Condé attempts to perform cultural hybridity in its heterogeneous diversity and ambivalence (on hybridity and literature, see, e.g. Sturm-Trigonakis). I posit *Wide Sargasso Sea* and *La Migration des coeurs* execute Brian McHale's "transworld identity" to temporally extend and geographically expand the original texts' fictional ontologies, as a means to foreground parodic indeterminacy, but to explore specific spaces of intertextual and intercultural hybridity (see McHale). Rhys and Condé demonstrate Homi K. Bhabha's notion of "third space" as the location of culture existing within "in-between" spaces which exhibit features of ambivalence, ambiguity, and hybridity and narrate racial and cultural struggles to propose different possibilities for the future of Creoles and Creole communities.

Whereas in Caribbean studies attention is paid to Creole identities and Creoleness and their concomitant issues of (post)colonialism, in Taiwan the political dominance 外省人 *waisheng ren* (Mainland immigrant, Mainlander) — people who moved from the Mainland to the island after 1945 to the 1950s — remained substantial until the democratization of the country in the 1990s and this situation impacted also on literature (see, e.g., Chang). Hsien-Yung Pai's short story "遊園驚夢" ("Wandering in the Garden, Waking from a Dream") from his 1966 台北人 (Taipei People) and Tien-Hsin Chu's "Breakfast at Tiffany's" from her 1997 古都 (*The Old Capital*) are two short stories which depict identity crises of first generation and second generation *waisheng ren*. In "Wandering in the Garden, Waking from a Dream," Pai's characters seclude themselves in Madame Tou's garden party and indulge in romantic yearnings for and sentimental recreations of their Mainland Chinese past. Compared with Pai's text which portrays *waisheng ren* nostalgia, Chu's second generation *waisheng*

*ren* narrator's identity crisis is fragmented through influences of transnationalism and postmodern self-reflexivity. For Chu's protagonist, romantic fantasies for unity and belonging are overwhelmed by practical considerations of individualism and postmodern destabilization.

The rewritings of *牡丹亭* (*The Peony Pavilion*) — written by 湯顯祖 (Xianzu Tang) — by Pai and "Breakfast at Tiffany's" — Truman Capote's 1958 short story and its filmic adaptation — by Chu are intertextual narratives not to subvert their texts of reference within, but underscore their roles as subjects of the periphery, that is, Taiwan. In Pai's and Chu's texts disillusionment towards the center's — Mainland China — romantic prospects is the lived reality for those compelled to accept their marginalized status. Pai's protagonists cannot physically return to the Mainland nor retrieve participation in its former glories. Pai's depiction of *waisheng ren* losses soon became a reality when the United Nations recognized the People's Republic of China as the legal government of in 1971 and this relegated Taiwan to the periphery of the international political landscape. Twenty years later, Chu's protagonists' sense of homelessness heightens by Native Taiwanese's consciousness in the 1990s. At the time when many Taiwanese writers and cultural activists turned their attention to reviving Native Taiwanese culture, the *waisheng ren* embarked on a new identity formation. In the case of Chu's protagonists, this means a crisis. Different from the original "Breakfast at Tiffany's" where love eventually champions capitalism, Chu's protagonists persist in dreaming of the life-changing possibility of a Tiffany diamond. Both Pai's and Chu's rewritings take up anticipation of the original love stories to highlight conflicting discrepancies between desires and realities as *waisheng ren*.

Chong-Jing Ou's metaphor of "fortress" — "those outside of the fortress become excluded as foreigners, while those inside the fortress become the real Taipei people" (235; unless indicated otherwise, all translations are mine) — is a presupposition of limited and illusory aspects of an artificial paradise which exists outside of the real world and as illustrated in Pai's short story. Pai's story follows Madam Ch'ien through the luscious garden of the Tou villa and into the party hosted by Madame Tou. During the gathering, guests perform "Wandering in the Garden" and "Waking from a Dream" (昆山 [*kunshan*] opera from the late sixteenth-century play *牡丹亭* [*The Peony Pavilion*]). Written by 湯顯祖 (Xianzu Tang) during the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644), *The Peony Pavilion* is set in the ending days of the Southern Song Dynasty (1127-1279) and centers on the love story between Li-Niang Du and Meng-Mei Liu, a young scholar. Du is the daughter of an official, who after being persuaded by her maid to take a walk in the garden, has a dream about Liu. After being interrupted in her dream by a falling flower petal, she becomes lovesick for the young man and dies. Three years later, when Liu comes into the city for his exams, Du appears in his dreams and asks him to resurrect her and the two lovers eventually live happily together. In Pai's narrative, the opera induces Madam Ch'ien's recollection of her own marriage at the young age of twenty to the sixty-year old General Ch'ien and her affair with Colonel Cheng.

During the performance the audience is swept up in nostalgia for their days in Mainland China, even if recalling memories appears to be as tormenting as leaving them: desires for the past are what dominate the narratives of *waisheng ren*. At Madame Tou's party, attempts for a joyous recreation of the good old days through classical opera leads to the stirring of Madame Ch'ien's haunting past. Rather than admiring the music, she becomes swirled into painful recollections of her own past: her singing career, her early marriage, her extramarital affair and betrayal by her lover, and the anxiety of losing her singing voice. When the narrative switches back to the present with Pi-Yueh Chiang finishing her singing of "Wandering in the Garden" and handing the performance over to Madame Ch'ien to sing "Waking from a Dream," Madame Ch'ien rejects the request and upon Chiang's persistence blushes to reveal that her voice has become too hoarse to sing. The abruptness of the past-present transition, as well as Ch'ien's reiteration of the recalled past pictures her as continuing to wander lost in her garden of memories and unable to wake up or perhaps unwilling to wake up. The song remains unsung and the banquet of dreams persists in its blissful triumph.

In discussing the symbolic conventions of garden imageries in traditional Chinese plays, Xiao-Yang Zhang writes that gardens usually "serve[s] as a symbol of secluded earthly paradise, in contrast with the harsh outside world" (59). In *The Peony Pavilion* the garden is the place where the female protagonist visits the lover of her dreams. In Pai's rewriting, the garden still symbolizes

a place for dream-fulfillment; however, the relationship between dream and reality is no longer interchangeable, but has become confrontational and non-negotiable as seen in the disillusionments which later take place. Not only does the opera conjure memories of the past for Ch'ien, her eventual return to the outside world persists in melancholy. In Pai's text the recalling of the classical Chinese love romance is not so much an imposition of the past onto the present, but more a grievance of its loss in both China and Taiwan at the time. The militant conditions of twentieth-century China is a far from the secluded enclosure of Tang's sixteenth-century opera which is itself removed in its reference to a thirteenth-century setting. Displaced to Taiwan, *waisheng ren* experienced hope in terms of carrying out their grand mission as the legitimate preservers of a Han Chinese tradition as opposed to the People's Republic. For the *waisheng ren* community, losing the mainland to the communists signified losing not only their homeland, but also their traditional Han Chinese roots. Whereas Tang's *The Peony Pavilion* is about the power of love and its abilities to realize dreams and revive the dead, Pai's story is about the disillusionments of love fantasies in real life. While Tang's young female protagonist dreams of the future, Pai's middle-aged characters dream of a past long-gone. In "Wandering in the Garden, Waking from a Dream" — while former conditions in China are set in contrast to present situations in Taiwan — past memories of traditions continue to play important roles in the present lives of the characters. Lost circumstances may prove physically irretrievable, yet emotional connections with the past remain the central desire and quest for the characters.

The stories in Taipei People suggest the re-orientation of *waisheng ren*: during the first fifty-five years of Kuomintang rule — the political party whose members were *waisheng ren* — Chinese-oriented Sinicization policies were implemented to take over Native Taiwan languages and cultures. At the time of President Chiang Kai-Shek's Kuomintang governance from 1950-1975, Chinese ideologies were transposed onto the people of Taiwan and enforced that the Kuomintang was the only legitimate government of Taiwan and Mainland China. Published during the height of the government's promotion of Chinese consciousness, Pai's text seems to disclose the irretrievable loss of the Chinese past for the Kuomintang government and its followers, a past which can only be revived through fragmented memories and nostalgia. Thus the revival of Taiwanese consciousness and redefinitions of Taiwan's national identity continue to diminish previously established ethnic segregations and hierarchies. After Shui-Bian Chen — leader of the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) — took the presidency of Taiwan in 2000, radical Taiwanization and national independence became the new government's top priorities. As Tony Fu-Lai Yu and Diana Sze Man Kwan describe, "Taiwan has evolved into a society based on its own environment and culture ... Many of the new generations of Taiwan now have two overlapping identities: Chinese and Taiwanese" (44). While Taiwanese school education continues to incorporate readings of traditional Chinese history and literature, the geographical and political separation between Taiwan and the People's Republic fostered unique qualities for Taiwanese culture. Flexible hybridity has become an ethnic reality, as well as a political strategy. In *The Old Capital* Chu illustrates effects of globalization and postmodern aestheticism which have become influential to contemporary reconstructions of Taiwanese identities (see, e.g., Lin). In "Breakfast at Tiffany's" Chu de-romanticizes Hollywood romantic comedy through the use of encyclopedic references and focus on the materialist and consumer world. Chu's postmodernist text is less concerned with the content of its originals — whether film or novella — than with its influence to financially less-privileged women around the globe. For the text's second generation *waisheng ren* narrator, diasporic sentiments central to her parent's generation have given way to the rush of global and transnational possibilities: "how to identify myself. Taiwanese? Chinese? Taiwanese and Chinese? Chinese, but in Taiwan...? In all honesty, if I could choose right now, I'd rather be Japanese, or spend the year in London with nothing to do, or go to Vancouver or Seattle for the summer. Or why not go to California, for no reason, like Faye Wang in the movie *Chungking Express*?" (52). Chu's narrator demonstrates the flexible mind-frame of a postmodern subject, one whose identity is in flux among multifarious influences which spam across the globe, across history, and across the erased line of fiction and nonfiction. She is not bothered by the fact that she is either/or, neither/nor, and both/and; rather, she is annoyed at others who expect her choose a side and define who she is. Different from Pai's characters who seek connection with their country of origin and thus result in isolating conditions of

neither/nor, Chu's narrator attempts to reconstruct her identity in a more flexible hybrid manner. Nevertheless, she still confronts a discrepancy between acknowledging the freedom of possibilities and successfully executing a carefree transcultural and transnational identity.

The narrator's crisis is financial owing primarily to economical inequalities and consumerism. The epitaph of the story reads "Renting out one's labor / Begins the life of slavery / I have been a female slave for nine years— / I need a diamond/ To set me free" (87). The narrator's naïve and materialistic notion that a diamond can free her from this burden aggrandizes her continuation of contemporary consumerism. Whether the diamond reads as a symbol of marriage or money, the critique still rests on her inability to free herself from conventions of social realities of gender and capitalist hierarchies. As Masao Miyoshi argues, if colonialism is carried out on the basis of the logic of nationalism, colonialism is even more active in the form of transnational corporations which serve as "a nostalgic sentimental myth that offers an illusion of a classless organic community of which everyone is an equal member" (744). The narrator exclaims that "We've already become a hereditary serf class without knowing it. And still we consider ourselves to be freemen, in spite of the fact that we are fated to be no better than the Russian serfs, who were inextricably tied to the land for life" (65). We are not free, the narrator argues, but slaves with no escape because global capitalism's supremacy is world-wide and all-encompassing. Chu's story opens with desires for a Tiffany diamond ring and ends with dreams of the discovery of diamonds in Africa. The content in-between proliferates with self-reflexive discussion and criticism on diamond fetishism and related issues.

In an instance of intertextuality, the narrator makes an analogy between her situation and Hans Christian Andersen's story of the "Little Match Girl" who stands barefoot outside gazing longingly through a window at the festive Christmas celebration taking place indoors. This critique attacks not only the narrator's endeavors, but more so the domineering systems of transnational capitalism which have distorted values of being. The narrator personifies Fredric Jameson's attack on the typical postmodern figure who culturalizes and aestheticizes everyday life, randomly cannibalizes the styles of the past, and remains hopelessly caught in consumer capitalism. However, Chu further complicates Jameson's critique of the postmodern condition by having her narrator participate in the flow while at the same time demonstrating a critical distance from carefree oblivion. The last two passages of the story exemplify this interesting parallel: "Nonetheless, my Star of the South did bring incredible brightness into my basement room. I picked it up with my right hand and slid it onto the ring finger of my left, slowly, the way a lover would do it, and my heart filled with tranquil joy, like that of the little boy who was playing on the bank of South African Orange River when he picked up Eureka. Eureka originally weighed in at 21.25 carats, and was sparrow yellow; its discovery attracted a flood tide of greedy visitors to South Africa, vying with one another to mine for diamonds" (66). Whereas the first passage is romanticized in its dream-come-true language and imagery, the closing line forebodes the reality of this money-driven competition. By intermixing fiction and real life, the result shows the real impacts of capitalist commercial enterprises and its problems. For the narrator — despite being drawn into dreams created by Tiffany — the event demonstrates a biting awareness towards the discrepancies between diamond propaganda and happily-ever-after illusions. Chu's rewriting features ambivalent juxtapositions of illusions and disillusion, past and present, local and global, fiction and reality. Her practices of intertextuality mark her text as being multiple-voiced in time and space. In Chu's depiction, this is the lived reality for the postmodern in an increasingly globalized Taiwan.

Hybridity has become less a diasporic or postcolonial marker than a transnational one (see, e.g., Sturm-Trigonakis). As a second generation *waisheng ren*, Chu's rewritings are not nostalgias for the past, but the narration of problems of the present and worries about the future: "As our society develops towards becoming a truly democratic civilization, shouldn't we be all-inclusive towards different kinds of people? Everyone deserves to live here" (Chu and Wu 145). Chu argues for multiculturalism and transnationalism as an alternative to nationalist concepts based on exclusiveness and Native root-seeking. In "Breakfast at Tiffany's" transnationalism does not imply the erasure of the local or national, for the global has become a part of the local as has the local become global. Chu criticizes both the influence and domination of US-American culture in contemporary Taiwan and consumerism. While her story is about love, this love is criticized as self-

love rather than the triumph of romantic passions. It de-romanticizes the US-American version by having the female protagonist stick to her decision of choosing jewelry over love.

Compared with the Taiwanese texts, Rhys and Condé narrated the de-centering of European imperialism by the re-location of creativity to postcolonial hybridity and postmodern heteroglossia. Rhys's narrator Antoinette elaborates the critical state of British West Indians who suffer as despicable ethnic outsiders both locally and diasporically. The novel's revelation of Bertha's original name as Antoinette signifies the White Creoles' rejection of identity imposed by European patriarchy and the demand for identity formation by employing Antoinette's first person narrative: the effect is not an overthrow or usurpation of the original, but a de-centering and fragmentation of the nineteenth-century novel's canonical impact to allow for formerly repressed and marginalized voices to participate in the reconsideration and reconstruction of dominant narratives. Antoinette's point of view also highlights her narrative limitation, which exemplifies the Caribbean Creoles' difficult position of marginalized "in-betweenness" and "outsideness." For the Creoles — regardless of being "in-between" or "outside" — both states represent the subject's inability to fully belong to racial/ethnic communities derived from hierarchally polarized histories of European colonialism. Mary Lou Emery argues for this condition of "living in between two cultures, belonging to neither" as signifying the doubled homelessness of Rhys's characters (10). This marginality of living defines Antoinette's struggle for physical and emotional belonging and her identity crisis is not a matter of choosing sides, but of being denied belonging.

During her conversation with her servant, Christophine, Antoinette recalls a song a little girl sang, "It was a song about a white cockroach. That's me. That what they call all of us who were here before their own people in Africa sold them to the slave traders. And I've heard English women call us white niggers. So between you and I often wonder who I am and where is my country and where do I belong and why was I ever born at all" (61). Derogative names like "white cockroach" and "white nigger" indicate the European view towards White Creoles as merely having the white skin of the English while being the inferior Black in nature, since "white" is only used as a color adjective whereas "cockroach" and "nigger" are the noun subjects. Spurned by their British ancestors, Afro-Caribbean society also rejects their identities: "Old time white people nothing but white nigger now, and black nigger better than white nigger" (14). Vivian Nun Halloran identifies this name calling as taking place only in private, hence they "neither confirm the predominant social stereotypes at work in the respective nineteenth century societies they depict, nor ... overtly challenge commonly held assumptions about racial purity" (89). By imagining insults such as "black Englishmen" and "white niggers," the coexistence of opposing values becomes "viable though admittedly marginal cultural identities in nineteenth century England and the Caribbean ... critique ... the exclusionary rhetoric of contemporary English nationalism and Caribbean Creoleness" (Halloran 88). Black locals shame Antoinette's White ancestry for their exploitation of Black people in the past and their loss of their former financial and social status. While in Victorian England successive colonial victories continued to propagate notions of White European supremacy, Antoinette's diasporic status demarcates her as being too colored for her British other: "Long, sad, dark aliens eyes. Creole of pure English descent she may be, but they are not English or European either ... If I saw an expression of doubt or curiosity it was on a black face not a white one" (39). Antoinette's marriage to an Englishman and "coming home" to England do not bring happiness and the result is insanity. Antoinette and her husband highlight the limits of their mutual exclusion and lack of communication. The Englishman marries Antoinette for the exotic sexuality under her white skin, while Antoinette succumbs to patriarchal pressures and false promises. Similar to the characters in Pai's "Wandering in the Garden, Waking from a Dream" disillusionment is bound to shatter dreams. Rochester becomes frustrated and repulsed by Antoinette's Creole "impurity" labeling her as demonstrating signs of madness due to genetic "contamination." Ascribing insanity to Antoinette's family line predestines the British Creoles' inescapable, incompatible, and perpetual otherness. Locked away in Rochester's mansion, Antoinette cries "They tell me I am in England but I don't believe them. We lost our way in England. When? Where? I don't remember, but we lost it ... This cardboard house where I walk at night is not England" (107). For Antoinette London no longer functions as a dream, but a nightmare.

When Carolyn Vellenga Berman criticized Rhys's text for "subtly reserving the Creole name for the whites ... [hence] follow[ing] the lead of white supremacist redefinitions of 'Creole' in the late nineteenth century," her statement underscores the isolation of White Creoles and their marginalization in colonial and anti-colonial discourses' focus on color binaries (171). For White Creoles who carried the historical role of being both the colonizer and colonized, their reactions towards colonial power dynamics invite investigation into conflicting experiences of identification and alienation towards both sides of hierarchy. Antoinette's continual confinement to her status in Rhys's novel is not a disqualifier of anti-colonial sentiments; rather, it raises awareness of the necessity of recognizing developments of Creolization which rejected fixed identities based on oppositions between races and places. In *The Location of Culture*, Bhabha regards "in-between" spaces as challenges to colonial authority: the location of culture lies in spaces of hybridity where moments and processes of cultural difference present circumstances of negotiation (or translation) rather than negation. Contingency and indeterminism represent counter-hegemonic strategies which mark "the conflictual yet productive space in which the arbitrariness of the sign of cultural signification emerges within the regulated boundaries of social discourse" (246). While *Wide Sargasso Sea* exemplifies Bhabha's notion on contingency and indeterminism of cultural hybridity as the means to destroy negative polarities — as in Antoinette's resistance to Rochester's definition of normality — the novel details even more the wretched and forlorn circumstances of being under such conditions. In the novel's denouement Antoinette wakes from a dream in Rochester's house and remarks that "Now at last I know why I was brought there and what I have to do ... I shielded it (candle fire) with my hand and it burned up again to light me along the dark passage" (112). Rhys's choice of ending her novel invites for intertextual rereadings of Brontë's novel with Antoinette's story in mind. Antoinette/Bertha now haunts Jane Eyre's narrative in Rochester's mansion from the beginning, not just as a silenced mad ghost-figure, but as a fleshed out character suffering in her own terms. Her death comes less as a relief for readers expecting the happy reunion and marriage of Brontë's lovers, for Antoinette is no longer just the mad wife of Rochester, but Antoinette from the West Indies who also has her own story to tell.

Whereas Rhys gives voice to the marginalized British/Caribbean Creole, Condé's rewriting of *Wuthering Heights* features the continuation of dark-skin prejudices in the Caribbean. Condé's *La Migration des coeurs* extends Brontë's class issues to matters racial and ambivalent demarcations of skin color signifiers with regard to the Caribbean islands during the latter half of the nineteenth century and early twentieth. During the scene where Cathy informs her house servant Nelly of Aymeric's proposal, both characters rationalize the accepting of the marriage. Because whiteness equals richness and social status, mulatto Cathy eventually chooses her White ancestors over her African "vices," for "living with him [Razyé] would be like starting over as savages from Africa!" (41). Being White was the only possible means for financial and social success in her world and if she had not had the privilege of being born White, she could at least become whiter through association with White people. Desires for racial flexibility and mutation launched her dreams for a new life, but Black blood proved to be too vigorous for the white mask. Razyé accuses Cathy of rejecting her Black nature in exchange for White culture and regards this as her tragedy. Not only does Cathy fail to become White through marital union, her skin becomes even darker after her death. In contrast to her pale complexion during her wedding, the mysterious darkening of skin appears to signify her return to her African origins: it is her external darker complexion which defines her internal African Blackness rather than the other way around.

Similar to Rhys's protagonist, spatial intimacy fails to generate feelings of racial belonging, for Black locals hate Antoinette and White Creoles disdain Cathy. Carine M. Mardorossian's readings on the possibilities of transformations and retransformations problematize cultural naturalizations of race and root: "Cathy's epidermal mutation points to a racial logic in which the issue is not whether but when one is 'black.' What matters to the author of the statement 'there are no races, only cultures' is not the recognition of Cathy's 'rightful' racial identity but the capacity of her identity to shift in the first place" (40). Rhys and Condé criticize effects of European colonialism which stigmatized people: White superiority based on racial purity and cultural exclusivity was reserved solely for White Europeans born to European parents and bred in Europe. As a result, Rhys's heroine remains excluded in neither/nor margins where she remains an outcast as does Condé's



protagonist who performs possibilities of being either/or at the price of giving up her love and life. For Cathy, her change from a darker skinned mulatto to a girl marked by her African descent whose "black blood could no longer be contained" during her wake is less a release of her "true" self than a call for explorations of who she can become (84). This quest continues in the lives of the novel's second generation characters who continue to complicate developments of hybridity and Creolization.

For both *La Migration des coeurs* and its original textual reference, the passing of time does not bring about resolution, but entangles its tragic members. Yet, whereas Brontë's denouement closes with hopeful prospects, the fate of Condé's characters remains unsettling. In *Wuthering Heights*, the union of second generation characters, Cathy Linton and Hareton Earnshaw, indicates the possibility of resolution and new beginnings for the young lovers. Previous interruptions of ethnic and class chaos return to order after Heathcliff and his son Linton pass away and the family estates are handed back to their rightful inheritors. Whereas Brontë's novel ends with the physical death of the revolutionary romantic individual, Condé's denouement features decline and uncertainty. After the death of Cathy II, Razyé II degenerates into oblivion no longer showing any care towards his appearance and his life and contemplations on ill family fates close the novel. In contrast to *Wuthering Heights* — which concludes with young descendants retrieving social and cultural inheritance and upgrade — *La Migration des coeurs* ends with degradation and burdens of familial ancestry for the darker skinned younger generations whose endeavors fail. Condé explains her reasons for choosing a girl for Razyé II and Cathy II's child: "I believe that I wanted it to be a girl because they always say that the inheritor should be a man in order to prolong the name, to prolong the lineage. There I wanted it to be a girl to show that it's like a flower, you never know how it'll turn out" (Condé qtd. in Alcocer 185). It remains unclear whether the novel's last line "Such a lovely child could not be cursed" reads as a determination for active change or as worries of passive inheritance (348). In ending with Razyé's thoughts, the novel's practice of equivocation opens up possibilities for different answers and new creations while refraining from reserving any attempt to claim single truths or inherited practices.

In conclusion, while Pai's and Rhys's rewritings and de-romanticization reflect marginalized diasporic subjects' inability to attain love and return to their dreamed home, Chu's and Condé's late-1990s works exemplify the transnational postmodernist individual's refusal and inability to love in the classic way. Different from their original texts, all four rewritings close with unsatisfactory endings for their protagonists delineating love and its narrations as a luxury for post-war diasporic generations. In Pai's and Rhys's texts split desires of love push diasporic minorities to the edge of society and in Chu's and Condé's rewritings love becomes marginalized in the postmodern overflow of fractures and flexibilities. On the one hand, being culturally hybrid generates anxieties of fragmentation and ambivalence, as well as complex intersections of the past and the present. On the other hand, hybrid reformations also produce creative spaces and enlarge scopes of cultural and national possibilities through the intermixing of differences. On the Caribbean scene flourishing explorations on Creoleness and Creolization continue to de-center and deconstruct ethnic and racial segregations, as well as work to propose more hybrid identity performances. As for Taiwan with its various colonial histories and current political situation, identity flexibility has become important in serving as a delicate survival strategy for nationalism and economic development owing to transnationalism and globalization. As rewritings from the peripheries, these texts explore productive and problematic practices of border-crossing tracing various intersections and disconnections taking place in modern developments of hybrid identity deconstructions and reconstructions.

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