

國立中央大學98學年度碩士班考試入學試題卷

所別：英美語文學系碩士班 科目：英美文學與理論 共 2 頁 第 1 頁

\*請在試卷答案卷(卡)內作答

The following excerpts are taken from a book on history, memory, fiction, and psychoanalytic case-histories (U.K. 1986), and a book of essays written by a fiction writer (U.S.A. 2007). Carefully read the two passages and explain how each understands, or what each means by, "secret and impossible stories" (in the first excerpt), and "the hidden life" and "hidden clues" (in the second excerpt). Be sure to include as part of your explanation a brief account of the way in which each passage makes, or complicates, its point. Contrast and compare how the two excerpts represent similarities and differences in the relations among stories, novels, history, writers, characters, and readers; as well as the changing contexts in which these are embedded. Focus on at least two points of convergence and/or difference in your essay. (100 points)

Once a story is told, it ceases to be a story: it becomes a piece of history, an interpretative device. Long, long ago, the fairy-stories were my first devices. Thirty years after my intensest reading of Hans Andersen, I learned that he was an outcast, a poor man intent on pleasing his patrons and recording messages of embourgeoisement.<sup>6</sup> It is significant that Andersen, a working-class writer edgy in the upper-middle-class and gentry world of nineteenth-century Denmark should have presented so many dramas concerning women: the dazzling and powerful Snow Queen, Gerda who looks relentlessly for the cypher Kay along the edges of the world, the Little Mermaid, a thousand witches of the sea. Women are the final outsiders, and Andersen wrote his own drama of class using their names, thus demonstrating a rare reversal of a common transformation of gender in

reading, whereby girls have to read themselves as boys in order to become active heroines in the text.

Using devices like this, the story forms. I know that the compulsions of narrative are almost irresistible: having found a psychology where once there was only the assumption of pathology or false consciousness to be seen, the tendency is to celebrate this psychology, to seek entry for it to a wider world of literary and cultural reference; and the enterprise of working-class autobiography was designed to make this at least a feasible project. But to do this is to miss the irreducible nature of all our lost childhoods: what has been made has been made out on the borderlands. I must make the final gesture of defiance, and refuse to let this be absorbed by the central story; must ask for a structure of political thought that will take all of this, all these secret and impossible stories, recognize what has been made out on the margins; and then, recognizing it, refuse to celebrate it; a politics that will, watching this past say "So what?"; and consign it to the dark.

參考用

國立中央大學98學年度碩士班考試入學試題卷

所別：英美語文學系碩士班 科目：英美文學與理論 共 2 頁 第 2 頁

\*請在試卷答案卷(卡)內作答

In the "People" chapter of *Aspects of the Novel*, Forster writes: "A memoir is history, it is based on evidence. A novel is based on evidence + pr—x, the unknown quality being the temperament of the novelist, and the unknown quantity always modifies the effect of the evidence, and sometimes transforms it entirely.

"The historian deals with actions . . . He is as much concerned with character as the novelist, but he can only know its existence when it shows on the surface."

*(The evidence of who you were was me.)*

Forster knew a lot about the "unknown . . . temperament of the novelist." He knew that he could never publicly reveal the things he felt inside himself. He knew a lot about the difference between surface appearance and things that do not appear on the surface. He knew a lot about what he calls "the hidden life":

"The hidden life is, by definition, hidden . . . And it is the function of the novelist to reveal the hidden life at its source."

*(The only evidence of you was me.*

*If it would be revealed. But it would not.*

*Who were you really trying to hide from? Who were you really trying to hide? What was in me that hid itself in you?)*

Forster's own hidden life was a life in which he loved men passionately, not only the pretty privileged undergrads to whom he was delivering his lecture, but also to men of the "lower classes." (In a diary entry of 1935 Forster wrote: "I want to love a strong young man of the lower classes and be loved by him and even hurt by him." Forster knew all sorts of reasons to hide this part of his life. He took up with a policeman late in his life.)

You can almost hear Forster sadly bidding his work as a novelist adieu during his Clark Lectures. A couple pages after the passages cited above, he laments the following:

"In daily life we never understand each other . . . We know each other approximately, by external signs. . . . But people in a novel can be understood completely by the reader, if the novelist wishes; their inner as well as their outer

life can be exposed. And this is why they often seem more definite than characters in history or even our own friends; we have been told all about them that can be told; even if they are imperfect or unreal they do not contain secrets, whereas our friends do and must, mutual secrecy being one of the conditions of life upon this globe."

*(I wanted to break through all of that. I wanted to tell and hear and you wanted to tell me too and so you did. I was the only one who heard, the only one you told and though you tried to forget I didn't. I can't. I won't for both. A secret is a thing that we hold dear. This secret is the thing that holds us, dearie, still.)*

What strikes me here so sharply, so sadly is Forster's admission that a novelist can—therefore should?—expose the inner life. Forster suggests a kind of ideal knowingness between the novel and its writer. But he is not able, given the social era and his temperament, to write a *publishable* novel that reveals his own inner life too directly. It's not a coincidence that his novels are full of ingenue girls who find love that their society regards as improper with dark, handsome working or "lower" class men in foreign countries.

*(Digits and weeping. Fluid and tears. Whimpering noises and turning away.)*

*Aspects of the Novel* was, and remains, an intelligent, savvy study of the British novel up to the modernist movement. But *Aspects of the Novel* was also, when it was delivered in 1927, a swan song, an admission from a gay writer that he could no longer write the kinds of novels he wanted to write for publication. He couldn't risk revealing his hidden life. He could only ever refer to it, which he did for the rest of his life, by hidden clues.

*Adieu, my love! Adieu, adieu, adieu!*

參考用

注意：背面有試題