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**THESIS SUMMARY**

**ROMANIAN-AND CAMBODIAN-BORN WRITERS IN ENGLISH**  
**LITERATURES: FACTORS AFFECTING LITERARY**  
**DEVELOPMENT AND TEACHING**

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## ABSTRACT

**Key words:** postcolonial studies, migrant, testimonial, trauma, English literatures, literary texts, case studies, teaching techniques, Romania, Cambodia, Central Eastern Europe, and Southeastern Asia

The research studies take high consideration to history, social sciences, anthropology, and sociology through postcolonial studies in Central Eastern Europe and Southeastern Asia, migrant literature, testimonial literature, trauma literature, and bilingualism. The research goal is to arouse students, teachers, researchers, and others' interests to a diversity of histories and literatures to help them understand the past well, avoid something bad and do something good at present, and shape a better future; and to propose teaching techniques for both universities—Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu, Romania and Svay Rieng University, Cambodia to get the students involved in reading more literary texts enjoyably and effectively, for they are confined to their homework, assignments, and projects.

Romania and Cambodia are non-English speaking countries, where the students speak their native languages officially for business, education, communication, traveling and work. They are confined to localization, not to regionalization or globalization, where English is an international language. According to Ahmad et al (2013:189), English language runs like blood through the veins of nations worldwide, and the world bilingual population outnumbers the world monolingual population. Hasman (2001), therefore, proposed three possible future linguistic scenarios for developing Asia: (1) English remaining the preferred language for international communication within Asia, but not replacing another language in the region; (2) Mandarin, a lingua franca in greater China, becoming regionally more important for business communication in South East Asia; and (3) no single language becoming a dominant lingua franca in Asia and regional languages becoming foreign languages.

Literature is a mirror of a society of a writer. The students need cultural competence and communicative practices to understand English literature, which contains a lot of examples of language in use, needed by the students to express a reality of the society of the writer. Cultural competence is composed of knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes. Knowledge and skills are built in at least four domains: (1) specific literary knowledge and capacity to apply in the texts, (2) textual knowledge and skills to understand and interpret the texts, (3) contextual knowledge and skills to analyze and interpret the texts, and (4) the skills of writing literary texts. The students with high communicative competence participate actively in non-literary and literary texts. Low competences of cultures and communication result in no interest in reading literary texts.

Modern-day students in Romania and Cambodia do not like reading literary books in their free times, but like browsing internet or social media—Facebook. Researchers, scholars and teachers play a function role of changing their habits from hatred to love of literary books by introducing some hints and techniques for analytical works and reading. They are guided through diverse historical phenomena in Central Eastern Europe and Southeast Asia and case studies of the stories of both countries, which are analyzed through postcolonial studies, migrant literature, testimonial literature, trauma literature, and bilingualism.

Romania, situated in East-Central Europe, was colonized by the Soviet Union and carried out anti-Semite campaigns, resulting in mass migration of Jews, who sought shelters out of the country. Romania, known as a non-migrant country, becomes a migrant country due to Nazi Germany, the Holocaust and communism. Thousands of Romanians were on their moves out of the country rather than within the country as they sought better lives in other countries, especially the United States of America. Three amongst others, for instance, are Romanian-born writers of English literature, who drew on their own experiences and knowledge of Comparative Literature, English, West European Studies, short stories in Romania, theatre, novels, and European cultures to write many books, including *Five Faces of Modernity* (1987) by Matei Calinescu, *The Hooligan's Return* (2003) by Norman Manea, and *Train to Trieste* (2008) by Domnica Radulescu, being feature primarily in the Romanian case studies of the following chapters which analyze the lives of the writers as well as the people in communism, the communist political system, and the lives of diaspora in the third country and of people in their home country.

Comparatively, Cambodia, located in Southeast Asia, was colonized by the French and went through its Dark Ages between 1975 and 1979, which involved mass migration after 1979. Hundreds of thousands of Cambodians migrated to Thailand, where they sought shelters in the camps along the Cambodian-Thai border and for political asylum in third countries, especially the United States of America, where thousands members of the Cambodian diaspora live today. Amongst many are three Cambodian-born writers of English literature who fled to America and shared their own experiences and memoirs of their family history, national politics and the atrocities of the Khmer Rouge Regime, turning the country into 'Killing Fields' and massacring over three out of the sum total of eight million Cambodians, to write many books, including *When Elephants Fight* (2000) by Vannary Imam, *The Price We Paid* (2005) by Vatey Seng, and *Sunset in Paradise* (2010) by Bo Khaem Sokhamm Uce, being featured in the Cambodian case studies as telltale examples illustrating the terrible lives of the writers as well as the people of the Cambodian Dark Ages and its communist political system.

This thesis is structured into five chapters. Chapter One is *Recent Approaches to the Study of Literature*, dealing with postcolonial studies, migrant literatures, testimonial literatures, traumatic

literatures, and bilingual theories. These theories were used to hypothesize the analysis of the stories—two Romanian stories and three Cambodian stories and to make the analysis more interesting. The World History, according to Ashcroft et al (1995), moves from Asia—the East (the beginning) to Europe—the West (the end). In *Culture and Imperialism*, Said (1993) argues that Postcolonial studies—through the diversity of imperial pursuits of European powers in the sixteenth through the twentieth century—are concerned with the institutions where the pursuits were advocated by and generated the diversity of colonial responses and most importantly the impressive ideological formations, including notions of certain territories and people’s demand, imploring domination as well as forms of knowledge, affiliated with domination. Post-colonialism is a consequence of colonialism, and there is no single period of colonialism in the world history, as Childs & Williams (1997) noted, “Clearly, there has not been just one period of colonialism in the history of the world.” Kelertas (2006) adds that postcolonialism includes not only the period of colonialism but also the period since liberation. Russia and the Soviet Union imposed its colonial hegemony on the Caucasus, Central Asia, the Baltics, and East-Central Europe for fifty to two hundred years. Yet the enormous twenty-seven-nation post-Soviet sphere—both the former Soviet Republics and East Bloc states—is never mentioned in the Western discourse of postcolonial studies. The term ‘postcolonial’ began to be used in the 1980s, with massive growth by the middle 1990s, in the United States and several other Anglophone countries.

The term ‘Post-communism,’ according to Andreescu (2011), was used in 1989 when revolutions in East-Central Europe overthrew the communist regimes in seven countries—Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, Poland and Romania. The process of dismantlement of the USSR was completed in 1991 when eighteen erstwhile Soviet republics declared their rejection of communism along with their commitment to democratic political models and free market economy. What is even more interesting is that post-communist studies went along with postcolonial studies without any points of intersection. An introduction of a comparative thorough exploration of the studies based on the communist heritage of all former communist states, their comprehensive attempts at transition, and the global context of this process would be helpful. Kelertas (2006) explains the fact that the Three-World diagram of Postcolonial Studies initially relied on the Marxist idea of the First World as the agent of the Third World ills and exploitation; the collapse of the Second World in 1989-1991, that the theorists were somewhat at a loss as they were left without a teleological term of reference, with their confusion resulting in silence; and a strategic avoidance of approaching the studies that had suddenly changed its signified.

It is argued that little attention has been paid by Postcolonial Studies scholars to Soviet Russia and its Central-Eastern European satellites, as Soviet Russia or the USSR is not construed as an empire, but only refers to ‘Soviet imperialism,’ except the US during the Cold War, according to

Andreescu (2011). Colonial domination, according to Kelertas (2006), takes various modalities depicting important facts about colonialism with different empires, needs, strategies, trajectories of expansion or contraction, and levels of territorial penetration, control and exploration. He notices that some areas—the Middle East and China—were not colonized, but were impacted more by “colonialism” than many countries that were colonized. Some countries—Ghana, Nigeria or Senegal—were relatively swift and generally peaceful, but others—Algeria, Kenya, Mozambique or Vietnam—were protracted, vicious, and bloody. Russia acknowledges only old ‘capitalist’ empires—England, Germany, Spain, France, Holland, and Portugal—as colonizers, without looking at itself as colonial empire. The notion ‘postcolonial’ has transcended its initial range. Western academic postcolonial theory was initially a critique of Western colonial power. The West, therefore, hardly monopolized colonial activity. The only situation where the West has colonized itself is when England’s citizens colonized what are now Canada, Australia, New Zealand, the United States, and Ireland, and they then fought to free themselves from England. The contemporary literatures of Ireland, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and more hesitantly the United States have been acknowledged into postcoloniality.

Ashcroft et al (1998) define ‘Ecological Imperialism’ as dealing with the environments of the colonized societies that have been physically transmuted by the acts of colonial occupation. The term not only changed the cultural, political and social structures of colonized societies, but also destroyed colonial ecologies and traditional subsistence patterns. Unknowingly spread to other parts of the globe with biological and ecological component, European diseases annihilated indigenous populations and then facilitated European military and technological conquest. They, moreover, introduced crops and livestock, supporting not only the conquering armies and the colonized population, but also the Neo-Europe (settler colonies), radically altering the entire ecology of the invaded lands in ways that ultimately disadvantaged indigenous people, and annihilated or endangered native flora and fauna on which their cultures relied on. Individuals, in the implicit assumption of cultural analyses, share an essential cultural identity—race or nation. Race is particularly pertinent to the rise of colonialism as the division of human society is inextricably linked to the need of colonialist powers to establish dominance over subject people and thus justify the imperial enterprise. Race thinking and colonialism are imbued with the same impetus to draw a binary distinction between the civilized and the primitive and the same necessity for the hierarchization of human types. European race thinking, however, initiated a hierarchy of human variation, which has been difficult to dislodge.

Chapter Two is *Socio-Political, Economic and Educational Factors to Migration in Romania and Cambodia* and it studies impacts of colonization and communism on society, politics,

economy, and education in Romania and Cambodia. These impacts act as a push-factor for Romanian and Cambodian migration to third countries, especially to the United States of America, acting as a pull-factor. Socially, the colonizers bring in the colonized countries cultures, health care, education and religion. They introduced technology, architecture, and art. They maintained or improved health through diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of disease, illness, injury and physical and mental impairments in human beings. They introduced their languages in the school curriculum by highlighting their contributions. Economically, they exploited natural resources, human resources, and economy. Natural resources were brought out; human resources were employed with low wages. Economy was exploited by increasing taxes for imports and decreasing taxes for exports. Politically, they instilled political ideology to work hard and obey the communist party and created artificiality of colonial borders in two ways—creating landlocked states and likelihood of civil wars.

Chapter Three comprises the Case Studies on *Romanian-Born Writers of English literatures* and it analyzes the stories against the background of Soviet Russia's colonization, which led to the ruin of the country, exploitation, starvation, and proselytization. For example, Mona of *Train to Trieste* leaves Romania for the United States of America through Italy due to the communist regime persecuting and starving the people, who live under surveillance by the secret police. Manea of *The Hooligan's Return* leaves Romania through Germany because of the regime dismissing his father from OLC Metalue as a cashier and putting him in prison under suspicion of illegal activities. The people are starved and put in high alert by the secret police. More interestingly, many important theories and literatures have been used to analyze the stories.

## **Train to Trieste**

*Marxism is undoubtedly a theory of progress. It sees historical development as an overall forward movement based on the gradual accumulation of contradictions and sudden qualitative leaps onto new and higher levels: in broadest outline, from animal to man, from primitive communism to civilization, from the cycle of class societies based on natural economy to capitalism, based on generalized commodity production; and eventually, from capitalism to communism (Cohen 1991:7).*

***“I feel sad as deep as death,”*** (Radulescu 2008:29). Death waits for time, and time is a permanent reminder of death. Historical periods are analogous to living individuals, whose existence is ended by death. Whenever one faces serious problems, they utter ‘die’ as their last solutions. Luck is unstable to the time and activities, as Calinescu from *Five Faces of Modernity* points out, “Time

had to coexist in a state of growing tension with a new awareness of the preciousness of practical time—the time of action, creation, discovery, and transformation” (1987:19). Problems piled up from day to day are unsolved; some are left behind by socialism, which deprives people of freedom of speech, travel, and a better life; some are caused by her studies in the university, where Mona is under surveillance by secret police; and others are from her love for Mihai, who is suspected as secret police by the villagers. These issues are similar to what is explained in the poetry of Neruda, quoted by Ashcroft et al of *Postcolonial Studies Reader*:

there are so many dead,  
and so many dikes the red sun breached,  
and so many heads battering hulls  
and so many hands that have closed over kisses  
and so many things that I want to forget (1995:372).

Mona, from *Train to Trieste*, spends two weeks at the Black Sea and two months of summer in her aunt’s house in Brasov—the city at the foot of the Carpathians. She feels hungry for the cool, fragrant air and sparkling sunrises at the mountain, as she argues that, “I need to cool off my sunburned body in the fresh mountain air” (Radulescu 2008:12). Up here, she finally feels at home, not in a fairy tale, not in a place she wants to run away from, but in a place where her body feels whole and where her heart has a steady beat. She steps down the staircase and runs into her childhood friend, Christina, who has two chestnut plaits, wrapped around her head. With no introduction, Christina asks: “Do you hear about Mariana? Mihai killed her,” (Radulescu 2008:13). Mona breaks into sobbing, as she is a good friend of Mariana, who is a girlfriend of Mihai. Christina adds, “The two of them went on a three-day trip at the end of April. They were coming down the Rock of the Prince, trying to get back to their tent before dark. He was walking behind her, and he accidentally kicked a rock loose. It hit her in the head and killed her, just like that,” (Radulescu 2008:13).

Mona tries to picture Mariana the way she blows rings of cigarette smoke, throws herself carelessly into her boyfriend’s lap, and swirls her gypsy skirt. She also pictures her boyfriend—Mihai Simionu—who has green eyes and long lashes. On the way back to the neighborhood, she sees Mihai walking around the circle, where he and Mariana used to kiss and sing until late at night. He smokes and walks furiously, hurting from his loss. Her heart aches for him, and she approaches him. They go along together in the street, where there are many men in black leather jackets with small eyes watching at every corner, every floor, and every building in 1977 Stalinist style, as Manea of *The Hooligan’s Return* raises the poet Mugur’s that, “The trembling got worse, and so did the panic and the cold and the gloom and the terror around him. The messages became rarer,

constrained, fearful, and ever conscious of eavesdroppers,” (2003:31). The state, under socialism, is the absolute owner of people, goods, initiatives, justice and transport, stamp collecting and sport, cinemas, restaurants, bookstores, the circus and the orphanages, the sheep pastures, trade, tourism, industry, dairy farming, and cigarette and wine production, as Manea of *The Hooligan’s Return* writes, “All now belonged to the state” (2003:156). The journey of the world history starts from Asia in 1511 (Malaysia) and ends in Europe in 1991 (18 erstwhile Soviet Republics), as Ashcroft et al of *Postcolonial Studies Reader* cite, “The history of the world travels from Asia to Europe” (1995:15). Many countries in the Caucasus, Central Asia, the Baltics, and East-Central Europe are colonized by Russia and the Soviet Union, but it is never recounted in Western Postcolonial Studies until 1980s and with massive growth in mid-1990s in the United States and Anglophone locations, as Kelertas of *Baltic Postcolonialism* clarifies, “Russia and the Soviet Union imposed colonial hegemony over the Caucasus, Central Asia, the Baltics, and East-Central Europe for between 50 and 200 years” (2006:11). Radulescu of *Train to Trieste* explains Mihai’s feeling of the death of Mariana and the shave of beautiful brown curls that he feels depressed to look at the hole in the back of her head and asks himself, “Why did they have to do that?” (2008:18). Mona has a chimera of sitting on the suitcase, under the two moons in the sky, with Mariana appearing in the fog, coming and smiling with no teeth, and grinning frightfully at them. She feels heartsick for heartbroken-Mihai and reborn-Mariana. When passing through her aunt’s house, they keep walking even a call from her mother. They stop at a shop where they can drink under the full moon, exchange ideas, and understand each other. They fall in love, as Mihai says, “I’ll kill you if you die,” and Mona says to herself that, “I want to erase the memory of Mariana from his heart forever,” (Radulescu 2008:28).

### **The Hooligan’s Return**

*... Marx sets out to show that the origins of alienation too must be located in the labour process and more specifically in the capitalist labour process, in which the producer of wealth, the proletarian, is totally dispossessed, not only of the means of production and the products of his labour, but of his very life-activity (Cohen 1991:5).*

**“Could this be the reason I did not deem myself capable of returning to the motherland, even for a visit?”** (Manea 2003:12). Norman Manea is born in 1936 in Bukovina, Romania. In 1945 he is repatriated from the Transnistria labor camp and rediscovers foods, clothes, schools, furniture, books, and games; he obliterates the horror of the past—ghetto disease. He is healed, thought and determined to share with his fellow countrymen in all the splendors of the present—the communist motherland serving in equal portions to each of its citizens. He leaves “Jormania” in 1986. In Ioan

Petru Culianu's literary work, *Jormania* is a fictional depiction of Romania, which is made up of two tales: (1) the Maculist Empire of the Soviet Union collaborated with the spies of Jormania to assassinate the local dictator and his wife, founded a banana republic style 'democracy' of pornography and execution squads and (2) a fictional review of a fictional book of memoirs by a fictional author, described the false revolution followed by the false transition to a false democracy, as he certifies, "The Romania he had loved, in whose language he had been educated, had gradually become Jormania" (Manea 2003:14). Deletant from *Ceausescu and the Securitate* identifies Romania is a communist state from 1945 to 1989, first under Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej and then under Nicolae Ceausescu. Romanian population is terrorized to accept the introduction of communist legislation into Romania. Peasants of 80,000, who oppose the land reform of 1949, are arrested; six Greek Catholic bishops and 600 priests, who refuse to accept union with the Romanian Orthodox Church in 1948, are imprisoned and tortured. Hundreds of miners from the Jiu Valley after their participation in the strike of August 1977 are deported during Ceausescu's time (1995:ix). Uniformity of clothing, symbolizing the conformity during communist regime, is interpreted as authorities and as aliens, whom people do not share their values. They are eavesdroppers adjacent to people (Deletant 1995:xvii). People are tortured, starved, sleepless, terrified, trapped, alone, at the edge of death but not allowed to die (Deletant 1995:35). Comparatively, Cambodia, between 1975 and 1979, is a huge killing farm, where 3.3 million of people are executed in different ways—1.7 million of intellectuals by killing, and the rest by starvation, hardship, overwork, torture, and diseases, as Khamboly et al of *A History of Democratic Kampuchea* argue, "Estimates of the number of people who died during Democratic Kampuchea vary; the People's Republic of Kampuchea (1979-1989), which had conducted a national survey, claimed that 3.3 million people died" (2007:69). Mona and her father (Miron) from *Train to Trieste* visit Florida a few years after their arrival in America and her father's former university colleague, who emigrates from Romania and settles in Florida. One year after their visitation, he is assassinated at the dinner table in front of his wife and children. Two years after 1989 Revolution, a Romanian university professor is shot dead in a lavatory at a Chicago university, as her father testifies, "It was still the secret police in agony" (Radulescu 2008:348).

Professor Ioan Petru Culianu has been assassinated by a professional killer on May 21, 1991, in broad daylight, in one of the buildings of the University of Chicago. A speculation made after the mystery of the assassination has not been solved. It deals with the relations between the young Culianu and his mentor, the famous Romanian historian of religion Mircea Eliade, his Romanian community in Chicago, Romania's exiled King, his interest in parapsychology, and the Iron Guard connections—the movement of extreme-right-wing nationalists, whose members are known as the

Legionnaires, as Manea quotes, “It was said that Culianu was on the verge of a major reassessment of his mentor’s political past” (Manea 2003:9). Pol Pot, the absolute dictator, introduces communist ideology of autogenocide from children to elderly, leading to confusion and misunderstanding each other amongst parents, children and relatives. Taking revenge of those instilled with the communist ideology still exists even inside or outside the country. Pol Pot, after the fall of revolution, lives in exile near Cambodian-Thai border, fighting against the government. Assassination still exists inside and outside the country; for instant, Haing S. Ngor, a Cambodian American gynecologist, obstetrician, actor, author, and refugee, is shot dead on February 25, 1996 in Los Angeles, California, the United States. The conclusion of the murder is drawn in two ways—robbery and political reason. The evidence has not been proved for the political reason, and Pol Pot has not claimed for the responsibility. Pol Pot dies on April 15, 1998 two years after the assassination (Wikipedia, 2017, Romania). Why has Culianu migrated? He wants to stay away from communism and live happily, peacefully, prosperously, with freedom of speech and travel. He wants to live in a pleasure of exile and longevity, as Ashcroft et al of *Postcolonial Studies Reader* point out “To exile is to be alive” (1995:12). With this context, Manea is threatened by an anonymous letter from Canada, with a postcard without message, but with a crucifixion a year after the cessation of FBI protection, which has been asked by the university to protect him. He is popular for his writing, which is published in the press in Romania prior to 1989 and the post-communist, as he elaborates, “The Romanian Communist press had honored me prior to 1989 and the post-communist epithets” (Manea 2003:12). The death of Culianu is concerned with the suspicions of Iron Guard, especially of Alexander Ronnett, Eliade’s doctor, and a fervent Legionnaire. In the year before his death, Culianu condemns “[t]he terrorist fundamentalism of the Iron Guard, as well as vilifying the Communist secret police, Romanian communist in general, and the nationalistic trends in Romanian culture” (Manea 2003:13). Additionally, a friend of Mona’s father, a university colleague in Bucharest, settled in Florida, is assassinated one year after her parents visiting him. Two years after 1989 Revolution, a Romanian professor is shot dead in a lavatory at Chicago University, as Radulescu of *Train to Trieste* points out, “It appears that the government actually sent some of their secret police abroad to follow people who were denouncing the abuses taking place in Romania” (2008:348). Manea is still working at the University of Chicago, where he is a professor and a writer. There are no any threats and no FBI protection many years after the anonymous letter. He normally performs his duties and travels with no hesitation, as he argues, “Six years went by; I had not been threatened or assassinated” (Manea 2003:12). Therefore, political ideology, especially in socialist and communist countries, has been used to rule the countries, where people are instilled with communist ideology, serving people both positively and negatively. Those who are against the

political ideology are murdered or arrested. In modernism, political ideology needs to be revolutionized, as Calinescu of *Five Faces of Modernity* illustrates:

Practically, as a revolutionary political doctrine, it can and does promote its own ideology, and consciously so. This ideology is supposed to oppose bourgeois ideology, and for tactical purposes it can use whatever weapons it may consider fit, including humanism, but certainly a new kind of humanism, purified of all its bourgeois and petit bourgeois elements (1987:128).

Chapter Four encompasses the Case Studies on *Cambodian-Born Writers of English literatures*, describing the analysis of the stories against the backdrop of French colonization and the Khmer Rouge regime, resulting in millions of people dead, the ruin of the country, starvation, torture, work overload, and persecution. For example, Seng and her family of the *Price We Paid* flee to Cambodian-Thai border to seek for political asylum to the third country after 1979 revolution because they have stigma of auto-genocide, carried out by the Khmer Rouges between 1975 and 1979, resulting in more than 3 million of Cambodian people dying, including 1.7 million of intellectuals. Imam of *When Elephants Fight* seeks for political asylum during her studies in Australia between 1972 and 1974, when Cambodia becomes turmoil by civil war and regional war against Vietnam, but her parents are still in Cambodia. General Kharn Khemra of *Sunset in Paradise* dies during Khmer Rouge regime because he is a former regime's soldier, who is an enemy to the Khmer Rouge Organization. Most former regime's soldiers still survive due to hiding their identities except General Kharn Khemra. Kamsot Veasna, General Kharn Khemra's youngest son, of *Sunset in Paradise* dies due to starvation and a lack of medicine for treatment. Moreover, many important theories and literatures have been used to make the analysis more interesting.

### **The Price We Paid**

*“The discrimination against the bourgeoisie was unimaginable,”* (Seng 2005:xxii). After the big change of April 17, 1975, Cambodian city dwellers are forced to evacuate from their houses to the countryside, where they are oppressed to work in the fields. All Cambodian city dwellers hide their identities to protect themselves from danger or murder due to Khmer Rouges' policy, which destroys its enemies—soldiers, teachers, engineers, and other educated people of the previous regimes. Some can hide their identities, but some do not because of their appearances and complexions, as Seng mentions, “Well educated people, teachers and professionals were the targets of the execution and imprisonment because their knowledge would be a threat to the new

Communist Revolution” (Seng 2005:xxii). The big change of April 17, 1975 manifests the growing tension throughout Cambodia, leading to famine, starvation, torture, imprisonment, and death. Creating agrarian society and growing tension simultaneously exist in Cambodia, where the killing field is well-known all over the world, as Calinescu of *Five Faces of Modernity* expresses, “Time had to coexist in a state of growing tension with a new awareness of the preciousness of practical time: the time of action, creation, discovery, and transformation” (1987:19). Evacuation not only exists in Cambodia but also in other countries around the world before World War I and after World War II, but what difference in Cambodia is evacuating all city dwellers to countryside, working in the fields, and mobilizing of hatred ethnics or religious ‘other’. Deportation of Jews from Spain starts in 1492 and 1614, and 14 million Germans, after 1945, are driven home, as Tully of *a Short History of Cambodia* writes:

The Romans scattered the Jews from Palestine in the Diaspora of 70 AD. Ferdinand and Isabella deported the Sephardic Jews from Spain in 1492 and the last of the Muslim Moriscos followed them in 1614. Stalin expelled the Crimean Tartars, the Volga Germans and the Chechens to Siberia during World War II, and after 1945 some 14 million Germans were driven westwards from their homes in Central and Eastern Europe (2005:176).

Seng’s family, the writer’s family, hide their identities to prevent from execution or imprisonment. Those who can read and write both Khmer and language pretend to be illiterates, and those who work as former military officers pretend to be taxi drivers, as she illustrates, “Since my father was a former military officer, my family had to disguise our identities so that we could live peacefully like other civilians. My dad reported his previous occupation as a taxi driver” (Seng 2005:xxiii). She is broken heart from the loss of everything, including possession, freedom, friends, relatives, and beloved ones. She is one of survivors living in shock and no relief from the trauma of the Khmer Rouge regime. She prefers death to the Khmer Rouge regime, traumatizing the rest of her life, as she adds, “Well, I would rather die if such thing happened to me” (Seng 2005:xxiv). Officials, teachers, mechanics, engineers, doctors, nurses, and other professionals are called to cooperate to rebuilding the country. Those who try to hide their identities are seriously condemned by the Khmer Rouges. This is a pretext made by the Khmer Rouges to identify one’s status. After identifying as intellectuals, they are taken to the huge killing farm without any trials, as she explains, “This enforcement led some of those people reveal themselves, and then they were taken into the city; no families allowed; no one knew or heard from them ever since” (Seng 2005:19). With this regard, those who hide their identities are alive, and those who tell the truth of the association with the former regime as well as their families get killed. Thus, the people disguise their identities to survive, as Calinescu of *Five Faces of Modernity* delineates:

To be fully aware of this complexity, one has to realize first to what an extent the spirit of decadence is deceptive, that it tries to pursue its destructive work under the most reassuring and healthy appearance. For Nietzsche, the strategy of decadence is typically that of the liar who deceives by imitating truth and by making his even more credible than truth itself (1987:180).

### **When Elephants Fight**

*“They have made a discerning choice for you”* (Imam 2000:48). During twenty years of business exchanges with one Vietnamese family, who live in Tan Chau 20 km south of Prek Dek, near village border in Vietnam, Dara has good relationship with this family. They have been associated from the early days of his mulberry trade. They have planned for their children—Heng, Dara’s son and Kim, his partner’s daughter to get engaged. Before the young people are aware of the elders’ plan, the arrangements are set for their wedding, as she points out “My grandfather was taken by surprise at the news of his own marriage” (Imam 2000:48). Historically, the Vietnamese have been living along with Laos and Cambodia upstream on the Mekong before the French colony in Indochina, as Tully of *a Short History of Cambodia* writes:

Once the French naval officers had established a beachhead at Saigon, they gradually wrested control of the surrounding districts from the Vietnamese authorities. In 1863, they set up a protectorate in neighboring Cambodia. By 1893, after a bloody war of conquest, they would control all of the Vietnamese territories from the Chinese border in the north to the tip of the Cape of Camau in the south, along with Laos and Cambodia upstream on the Mekong (2005:80).

Kim is told by her grandfather to be ready for her new life in Prek Dek, where the wedding is to be taking place. After her marriage, her father-in-law, Dara, asks her husband, Heng, to keep an eye on his estate. He bonds the villagers with string debts and treats them badly, as she says, “Dara had extended it to more than just holding lands; he owned the souls of men by bonding them with a string of debts; the villagers could not begin to imagine a day when they would be free; from the fields to the timber yard, my grandfather witnessed their misery” (Imam 2000:50). Being a family likes teeth and tongue. Quarrel sometimes happens between husband and wife. Heng dismisses home a month without any explanations or reasons. Kim returns to her home in Tan Chau, where she is born, with her family. They ultimately return to Phnom Penh with their children, as Imam continues, “They eventually slept, my father huddled in her lap, when the towering shadow of my grandfather, Heng, fell over them” (Imam 2000:61). Arrived in Phnom Penh, Kim feels shocked due to uncertainty of her husband, who has dismissed her for a month in Prek Dek and plans of

being abandoned in a place, where she knows no one to support her, as Imam explains, “She unpacked and cleaned some of the rooms, all the while plagued by uncertainty; was she going to be abandoned in a place where she knew no one?” (Imam 2000:62). Traditionally and practically, Cambodian elder children, according to family duty, are required to leave home for work. The main reason is political-economic issues rather than socio-cultural ones of urban living. Wars, natural disasters, landlessness, and poverty are the main push factors for migration, as UNFPA of *Socio-Cultural Influences on the reproductive health of migrant women* demonstrates, “The political economy of rural-to-urban migration is a stronger driver of migration in most instances rather than the socio-cultural dimensions of urban living” (2011:5-6).

### **Sunset in Paradise**

*Immediately upon liberation on 17 April 1975, there was a Special Centre Assembly for Cabinet Ministers and all Zone and Region Secretaries. Eight points were made at the Assembly, by Pol Pot:*

1. *Evacuate people from all towns.*
2. *Abolish all markets.*
3. *Abolish Lon Nol regime currency, and withhold the revolutionary currency that had been printed.*
4. *Defrock all Buddhist monks, and put them to work growing rice.*
5. *Execute all leaders of the Lon Nol regime beginning with the top leaders.*
6. *Establish high-level cooperatives throughout the country with communal eating.*
7. *Expel the entire Vietnamese minority population.*
8. *Dispatch troops to the borders, particularly the Vietnamese border*  
(Tully 2005:178).

***“Life was a sad joke after that (liberation); the most righteous people do the most wrong in our human affairs”*** (Sokhamm Uce 2010:2). Cambodia has been ruined since Lon Nol’s coup in 1970 and sent down the road to disaster. People are about to starve, and infrastructure is about to destroy. Roads and railways are in bad conditions. Money transaction, bank, market, public transportation, postal system, telephone, telegraph, clean water supply, sanitation service, electricity, school, hospital, and consumer goods are eliminated, as Tully of *a Short History of Cambodia* proves:

The enormity of what Cambodia had suffered is beyond the imagination of most of us. A staggering 30 per cent of the population had died since Lon Nol's coup in March 1970...its citizens pauperized and all most all the infrastructure of civilized society destroyed... The people were in rags (2005:199-200).

Khmer Rouges—pro-China defeat Lon Nol—pro-America in 1975. King Norodom Sihanouk is under house arrest after liberation, and later he is an exile in China, a Khmer Rouge leader and a propagandist. There is, however, neither banner nor emblem of Marx-Engel-Lenin Trotsky, of Dr. Sun-Yiat-Sen, of Mao-Tze-Tung, of Chu-Enlai, and of Ho-Chi-Minh on display ubiquitous. Little white flags—the symbol of peace, forfeited cowardice, and virtuous innocence—are wiggling from nervous and agitated hands, marking the end of Vietnam war and civil war—war between Marshal Lon Nol and Khmer Rouges. Peace, therefore, prevails throughout the fatally injured Cambodia, as **Socheat Siek**, an allied soldier of the deposed Khmer Republican Government, replies excitedly, “Good! Good!” (Sokhamm Uce 2010:4). King Norodom Sihanouk is an exile to China and a supreme flip-flop, who Khmer Rouges trust on, as Ashcroft et al of *Postcolonial Studies Reader* quote, “To be an exile is to be alive” (1995:12). King Norodom Sihanouk, furthermore, seeks for assistance from China while being an exile to form his support groups and to prevent the country from Vietnamese invasion, as Ashcroft et al of *Postcolonial Studies Reader* point out, “Displacement involves the invention of new forms of subjectivity, pleasure, intensity, and relationship, which imply the continuous renewal of a critical work that looks carefully and intensively at the very system of values to which one refers in fabricating the tools of resistance” (1995:216). Khmer Rouges—Pol Pot, Noun Chea, Ieng Sary, Khiev Samphan, Son Sen, Thiounn Prasith, Tak Mok, Ke Pauk and their puppets are holy people, as Sokhamm Uce says, “These Khmer Rouges are the holy warriors; his majesty, King Norodom Sihanouk is their righteous leader” (2010:6). Pleasure of liberation lasts only few hours for city dwellers, and then becomes panic with the firing by Khmer Rouge soldiers, who dress in black pajamas and Ho-Chi-Minh sandals and force people to move out three days and then come back. The Roudohs (the Liberated) Brethrens—Socheat Siek and Chomroeun Sek, for instance, get panic with their hearts throbbing out of harmonic rhythm. Black ants (Khmer Rouge soldiers) move in the city, starting shooting into the naked heaven, not only turning all the celestial gods and angels into their insomniac reveries, but the city dwellers in their chaotic movement, as Sokhamm Uce points out, “Their hair suddenly stood on end like the quills of a porcupine, and the porcupine was being chased by both a tiger and a crocodile” (2010:9). The city dwellers of more than 2,000,000 are forced to move out of the city to countryside, where two kinds of people are formed—17 April people (new people/city dwellers) and basic people (Moulethanns)—and return in three days due to

the threats of American bombardments, as Sokhann Uce points out, “Everybody leaves the city now! At Angkar’s order! Move out! In three days...come back” (2010:9). Dream of coming back to the city in three days extends to three years, eight months and twenty days—starting from April 17, 1975 to January 7, 1979. Evacuating city dwellers from all towns to the countryside is made at the Assembly by Pol Pot, the top Khmer Rouge leader, as Tully of *a Short History of Cambodia* quotes one of the eight policies, “Evacuate people from all towns” (2005:178). The Khmer Rouges treat city dwellers as parasites, the losers of the war, and the prisoners. They, therefore, are forced to work hard, put in prison, tortured, or killed, as Khamboly et al of *A History of Democratic Kampuchea* say, “17 April people are parasitic plants; they are the losers and prisoners of war; to keep you is no gain, and to lose you is no loss” (2007:31). After this terrible time, more than half of the city dwellers never come back forever, for diabolical and satanic Khmer Rouges turn Cambodia’s time into ‘zero year,’ as Sokhann Uce raises, “No single Khmer could escape their random and discriminate onslaught” (2010:10). The worst ever, all schools are closed throughout the country. Some are completely destroyed, and others are turned into prisons. The Khmer Rouges do not use the capitalist legacy, for they consider the school as farm, the land as paper, and the plow as pen. The city dwellers, therefore, are forced to move out of the city to countryside to work in the fields, as Tully of *a Short History of Cambodia* writes:

We don’t need the technology of the capitalist. Under our new system, we don’t need to send our young people to school. Our school is the farm. The land is our paper. The plow is our pen. We will write by plowing. We don’t need to give exams or award certificates. Knowing how to farm and knowing how to dig canals—those are our certificates...We don’t need doctors anymore. They are not necessary. If someone needs to have their intestines removed, I will do it...There is no need to learn how to do it by going to school (2005:184).

Chapter Five is *Factors Impacting Teaching English Literature in Higher Education in Romania and Cambodia*. This chapter is included to improve teaching-learning situation by proposing four teaching techniques—two for each country to help students learn more effectively and enjoyably with the examples from chapters III and IV and many more. Under the influence of the formalists and structuralists, the words of ‘teaching a language’ and ‘teaching English literature’ are synonymous. After the establishment of functional approach, literature is eliminated from teaching-learning English, for it takes a long time to meet the needs of the learners. Its popularity lasts only a short time after communicative approach appears and gains popularity in language learning because it focuses on problem-solving and tasks, but it does not last long due to the use of native languages in environment or any setting, not the target language. The function of literature in

language and teaching, according to Abdullah et al (2007), has evolved from being the model for excellent language usage to an avenue for aesthetic reading, where readers could interact with the literary texts, read by bringing in their own experiences to create their own interpretations of the texts. The students in both countries—Romania and Cambodia—are facing some challenges with reading literary texts, including no interest, passive habits, native languages, and low language competency, as Ruis Zafon (2001) quoted, “If one’s reading skills are not well developed, and if the meaning of a book is not clear to the adolescent reader, then words are the struggle for reading.” Not every reader, according to literary development, is able to appreciate the same level of books, but readers can develop themselves to become more competent readers of literary texts. With regard to Tamura (2006), teaching takes part in a continuous analysis of one’s own work, the experiences of other teachers, and the search for new methods to enhance teaching-learning situations. The history of education could not be ignored for the great future, with the understanding of the present and holding a view for the future. Additionally, Crawford et al (2005) delineate that teaching likes a move in sports. Failure to transform knowledge effectively to learners likes a loose in sports in front of audience. Learning a new teaching method as well as a new move in sports needs to be trained and practiced in front of someone who knows how to do it. The teachers and players get suggestions for improvement. Crawford et al (2005) also add that a teaching technique cannot be applied effectively to every school setting, at any time, and to every group of students. The four teaching techniques, therefore, have been proposed for Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu, Romania and Svay Rieng University, Cambodia to improve quality and teaching-learning situations.

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