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The Notion of Otherness in Contemporary American Drama and Development of Intercultural Competences in the EFL Classroom/Pojam drugosti u savremenoj američkoj drami i razvoj interkulturalnih kompetencija u nastavi engleskog kao stranog jezika

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## Introduction

Art and literature of the 20<sup>th</sup> century America mirror social and political turbulences of the century. As one of the effective means used to convey the ideas and to give people insight into the problems of society, American literature of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was also marked by new approach to literary theory and development of new movements. The aforementioned turbulences were a reaction of marginalized social groups, living on the verge of existence, to years of social and political oppression, but also to the erroneous interpretation of the lives of the oppressed through media. Authors who did not belong to minority groups took the liberty to write and speak on behalf of minorities and about their way of life, their sentiment and opinions. These works were filled with stereotypes, resembled parodies and thus were rather insulting (Gates 11).

Initially, the most prominent category in stereotyping through art was that of the African Americans and their way of living. They were shown as lazy, simple-minded, addicted to chicken and watermelon (“Blackface: The Birth of An American Stereotype“). In the early stages of American theater, in 1830, Thomas D. Rice created Jim Crow, a protagonist of his minstrel show, who was an elderly, black persona who sang and danced jig. Rice would put blackface and shabby clothes on, and represent African Americans as inferior to whites. This form of entertainment became very popular and more and more white actors would color their faces with charcoal to impersonate Crow (Little, “Who Was Jim Crow?“). Even though African American legacy proved to be a very interesting and attractive material, early plays thematizing it were mostly written by white authors who did not provide accurate representation of African American population – which is considered to be “one of the White America’s most heinous cultural crimes” (Barlow 473). Things changed somewhat during the period of 1920s and 1930s when Harlem Renaissance activists attempted to create art and drama which was: “For us ... About us ... Near us ... By us” (Du Bois qtd. in Bean 94), however the real incentive for African American topics was given in 1930’s as a part of Federal Theater project which resulted in creation of several theater companies such as American Negro Theater, the Negro Drama Group, the Harlem Showcase. In 1950’s, during the Civil Rights Movement, the Black Arts Movement was created to support the development of the black culture and legacy (Čirić 325-329).

The Black Arts Movement was beneficial not only for the African American men, but for women as well (Salaam “Historical Overviews of The Black Arts Movement”). Black female authors such as Sonia Sanchez, Maya Angelou, and Nikki Giovanni became popular in that period (“Poetry of the Black Arts Movement”). Furthermore, Ishmael Reed claims that the movement inspired many other socially marginalized groups, such as Asian-Americans (Maeda, “The Asian American Movement”) and Latinos to start creating works of art and literature (Ortiz and Telles, “Racial Identity and Racial Treatment of Mexican Americans”). Sadly, African American population was not the only target of stereotyping and discrimination. Thus, members of minorities wanted to present their cultural heritage and participate in anti-racist movement by writing about their culture, religion, identity, feminism, womanhood, motherhood and their respective origin (“Black Women in Art and Literature”). Anyone who differed from the “white, Eurocentric norm” in American society was classified as the “Other” (Lešić 102) and presented threat for the set standards of universality. Generally, in sociological analyses “Others” present minorities and marginalized social groups. Since a majority presents a standard of “normal/acceptable”, usual and right, the “other” presents something different which deviates from the norm established by the majority, as professor Lešić explains in his book *Nova Čitanja* (Lešić 97). Gayatri Spivak adds that the “Other” or subaltern can be further divided even inside of the marginalized group (Spivak 90).

The experience of the Other has permeated literary texts in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. The notion of Otherness has been one of the central themes of postmodernism, and postcolonialist and poststructuralist criticism, within which numerous authors tried to define the notion and its development. American heterogeneous society and culture have served as immensely rich source for the theorizing about Other(s). For example, Edward Said, an American of Palestinian origin, described his experience of the Other as a feeling of being in between cultures, as being both inside and outside of the matter at the same time, where nothing really belongs to him (Said qtd. in Lešić 99). Gloria Anzaldua, a Chicana poet and cultural theorist, stated: “They would chop me up into little fragments and tag each piece with a label” (qtd. in Lešić 138).

There are many aspects of otherness. Every generation and society has different standards of what the acceptable behavior is and who their Others are. American theater of 1960’s depicted this concept in the best possible way, as one of its characteristics was its insistent focus on revealing the world the experiences of the Others and their culture. Furthermore, it expanded the

range of topics while trying to adjust to the growing number of racially and ethnically versatile audience (Čirić 329).

This paper will discuss the notion of Otherness through the analysis of two selected plays about lives of marginalized groups in the post-war American drama. Moreover, the paper will then look into the development of intercultural competences in English language classes, using the aforementioned dramatic works. The notions of otherness and of the Other will primarily be defined through literary theory, to be more precise, through cultural studies. On the other hand, intercultural approach through drama in classes of English as a foreign language (EFL) will primarily be defined and demonstrated through possible activities used in classes.

The analytical corpus of this paper consists of dramatic piece written by an award-winning author Alice Childress, *Trouble in Mind*; and a play by an Asian-American author David Henry Hwang, *M. Butterfly*. Chapter discussing the development of intercultural competences will rely on the teaching handbooks *Literature* by Alan Duff and Alan Maley, and *Literature in the Language Classroom* by Joanne Collie and Stephen Slater.

Through her metadrama *Trouble in Mind* Childress exemplifies the complexity of American society from the perspective of a theater artist Wiletta Mayer, emphasizing the position of the black population, especially black women in the post-war American society. Wiletta's remarks mirror her opinion of the absurd way of portraying lives of black women in American drama. As the plot develops the author shows not only racial but also gender-based discrimination through the relationship and communication of director-cum-character Manners and Wiletta. Childress problematizes the role of a woman as an artist, emphasizing the universality of the issue through the character of a young (white) actress Judy, who is discriminated against because of her age and gender. In a unique way this African American artist, Alice Childress, in a brave and consistent manner, expresses her attitude against the double standards in the practices of 20<sup>th</sup> century American theater. Through the play that the cast has to perform in the piece and through the cast's respective reactions to it Childress shows the issues of stereotyping of Americans of African origin and their lifestyle in plays created by white authors.

On the other hand, Hwang's *M. Butterfly* plays with the relationship of the East and the West; more precisely, it reflects the problems in the West's perception of the East. Moreover, through examining the social and political context and relationship of Asia, America and Europe

throughout history the play foregrounds political problems and cultural diversities related to perceptions of race, gender, sexuality, national identity, and perceptions of moral and amoral. Hwang dramatizes the idea of Orientalism as described by Edward Said; Orientalism in which the Western colonizers stereotype everything related to the East which they consider their inferior. In this play Hwang reverses the wrongful assumptions and shows how these attitudes are perceived by the said “inferiors”.

The aforementioned works both discuss the definitions of “us” and “them”, where “our” is normal and acceptable, whereas “their” or “Other” is the one that deviates. These plays also attempt to define the value systems, create an identity, and speak for the Others. In the selected plays the protagonists who are in the position of Others, the African-American actress Wiletta Mayer and the postcolonial subject opera singer-cum-Chinese spy Song Liling, respectively try to reflect their perceptions of the world surrounding them; they strive to renew and show the forgotten and belittled history of the colonized people.

For a closer explanation of the process of creating literary characters, staging themes and dramatic presentations of the concept of Otherness I will use Fanon’s definition of the three phases of development of post-colonial literature and the idea of intersubjectivity in the subject where the subject seeks confirmation of himself in relation to others (Lešić 100). Additionally, to successfully interpret and discuss the theoretic part of the paper, the following works will be used: *Poststrukturalistička čitanka* by Zdenko Lešić, *Stilistika dramskog diskursa* by Marina Katnić-Bakaršić, *Contemporary American Drama (Edinburgh Critical Guides to Literature)* by Annette J. Saddik, *Modern American Drama 1945-2000* by C. W. E. Bigsby, *Drama, Metadrama and Perception* by Richard Hornby, *Orientalism* by Edward Said, “Can the Subaltern Speak?” by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, as well as critical anthologies *Literary Theory* (edited by J. Rivkin and M. Ryan), and *“Race,” Writing, and Difference* by H. L. Gates Jr. and Kwame Anthony Appiah.

Intercultural competences in foreign language classes have a great significance and achieving intercultural goals in education is highly encouraged. Interculturalism presents an encounter and communication of people from two or more different cultures on equal terms, which requires children to be prepared for this type of communication since the earliest years of age. School is more than just an institution for learning and education, it is also a place where children are taught how to behave, communicate and prepare for the challenges of life ahead.

Children spend most of their day in schools and communicate with a great number of people. By promoting interculturalism teachers expand the horizons of their students and additionally enrich their existing culture and knowledge.

The plays in the focus of this paper foreground specific troubles of minorities and hence, using these plays in classes aims to introduce the students to the aforementioned difficulties as well as to demonstrate the consequences of stereotyping. Performing the play (in full or in part) in an English class allows teachers to present all the great similarities and differences of people from all over the world through other cultures and problems of people from other cultures.

The selected plays will exemplify the concept of Otherness or the perception of cultures of the minorities through the inversion of established stereotypes, as well as through the opinion of the Others. Students will get an insight in other cultures, issues of minorities, learn what stereotypes are, how damaging they can be and how to fight them. Intercultural approach will be demonstrated through activities related to drama in EFL classes. As previously stated, in order to discuss the intercultural approach of teaching English as a foreign language I intend to rely on textbooks *Literature* by Alan Duff and Alan Maley, and *Literature in the Language Classroom* Joanne Collie and Stephen Slater.

### *Trouble in Mind by Alice Childress*

The concept of “race” has been widely discussed in literary theory and philosophy. Philosophers like Kant, Hume<sup>i</sup> and Hegel have debated on the impact of race on writing. Kant claimed that people of color have limited mental capacities; he even openly juxtaposed black with stupid (Kant 61), whereas Hume claimed that whites are superior to other races. Hegel (qtd. in Gates 11) even claimed that Africans cannot be considered civilized since they have not mastered the skill of writing, while according to him, without writing, there is no written history and hence if one has no history they cannot be considered human at all.

Even though slavery was abolished in 1865 and 15th, 16th and 17th amendments of American constitution officially proclaimed Blacks humans and ensured them basic human rights, their status in reality was very different and the idea that Blacks were not human was deeply rooted. As of 1865 the Blacks were allowed to vote, however the voting right was restricted to men only, so women, Black or White, were not allowed to vote.

The Black population responded to theories that they were not intellectually capable for the sophisticated human activities like writing by composing poetry, books, autobiographies, among which political and philosophical topics dominated from late 1700 (Gates 11). They produced authentic fictional and non-fictional texts providing the perspectives of both black people as individuals and as members of group. These actions revolutionized theories about black population who until then was regarded as the lowest forms of human or the closest cousin of the ape in the great chain of being (Gates 12). In his book *Writing Race and the Difference it Makes*, published in 1985, Henry L. Gates discussed issues regarding race and the established notions of Otherness. The book he composed consists of essays discussing different aspects of Otherness and problems the Others experience, from their own perspective, proving that race is not a *thing* (“Talkin’ That Talk” 205). In his critical response, “Talkin’ That Talk”, Gates criticized Tzvetan Todorov regarding the definition of “racism” and claimed that generalizing people by attributing them certain characteristics, good or bad, is racism (Gates 205). According to Gates, there are differences between races, and every race has its own traits, traditions and peculiarities, but these do not affect abilities and mental capacities (Gates 205–206). Gates emphasizes that African American literature has its own tradition which should be recognized and criticized by its own standards, not by the standards of European white literature. According



to Gates, Kwame Anthony Appiah best explained this through his term “Naipaul fallacy”, expounded on here: the writer V.S. Naipaul claimed that post-colonial legacy is the same as European and is thus worthy of studying (Morgan 85). Appiah responded to that claim by stating that African art should be perceived as different art and not to have it embedded into European traditions or rated by European standards (qtd. in Gates, “Editor’s Introduction: Writing “Race” and the Difference It Makes” 14–15).

African American authors attempted to fight the deeply rooted stereotypes against African Americans through their writing, either directly addressing the issue or by simply writing. The first poet of the African-American tradition and the first African American whose book of poems was published was Phillis Wheatley in 1773 (Michals, “Phillis Wheatley”). Phillis Wheatley came to America as a slave and was a property of Wheatley family, which is how she got her last name. Encouraged by the Wheatley family she published a book of poetry called *Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral* (Ward, “Poetry Matters”). This was the first book published by African American woman, and the second written by a woman, in American history (Michals, “Phillis Wheatley”). The poet caused the most eminent men of Boston to gather and test her knowledge to assure the public that this book had indeed been written by an “uncultivated Barbarian girl from Africa” (qtd. in Gates, “Editor’s Introduction: Writing “Race” and the Difference It Makes” 7). Additionally, writings of black authors such as John Marrant, Ottobah Cugoana, Olaudah Equiano, James Gronniosaw and John Jea were some of the first political reactions against stereotyping and discrimination. Such works attempted confuting the then established beliefs that black population was not intellectually equal to white because of their race (Gates, “Editor’s Introduction: Writing “Race” and the Difference It Makes” 12).

Phillis Wheatley was a slave, but unlike many others she was privileged to learn the skill of writing. Namely, teaching slaves to write was forbidden by law (Barlow 470). By keeping people financially dependent and deprived of education was the most common way to keep them under control. This did not apply only to African American slave population, but also to white women, who could not own property because of their gender (“Women and the Law”). Problems of gender based and racially based discrimination lessened through centuries but they still exist. Even today there is a substantial pay gap between men and women. Women in America are still paid only 79% for the same job as men, and this gap is wider for women of color (Miller 11). A

social activist and an artist, one of the African American authors who actively fought against racial and gender discrimination was Alice Childress. According to Judith E. Barlow “that [fighting racial and gender discrimination] is the project to which Childress has dedicated her long and distinguished career” (Barlow 469).

Childress was forced to leave school because of financial reasons but her education was not disrupted. She was a fervent reader and spent many hours in library, reading. She helped found American Negro Theater and spent years working and directing; however, she experienced racial discrimination when she tried to work for outside Black companies. She was particularly proud of her career because Blacks in previous eras had been forbidden by law to read and write and she was a successful Black woman whose writing skills contributed in war against racial and gender discrimination (Barlow 470). Furthermore, Childress used her writing to point out various problems of discrimination and the lack of support for young African Americans, particularly women. She wrote about ordinary people “because they are not ordinary” (qtd. in Barlow 470), and her first full length play *Trouble in Mind* was dedicated to “ordinary” people, like herself, trying to succeed in the career of their own choice.

The play *Trouble in Mind* won an Obie award, and even though it was optioned for Broadway it was never performed in Broadway because Childress refused to make changes they required. Ironically, this confirmed the problems Childress dramatized in the play (Childress qtd. in Barlow 471). The author uses metatheatrical structure to expose hypocrisies in American theaters of that day. Namely the theaters were controlled by White, mostly male, directors, who accepted the plays about Black experience mostly when written by and from the perspective of White male(s). Allegedly concerned for the problems of African Americans, while trying to appear generous, friendly and humane, by telling “their story”, these directors actually wanted to keep the Black authors under control and prevent them from presenting the realistic image of their true experience (Barlow 473). However, condescending attitude is not directed only towards the Blacks but towards the White women also. In her *Trouble in Mind* Childress presents this issue through the character of White actress Judy whose Yale acting degree is being mocked by the director, Al Manners.

In the play, Childress emphasizes how dangerous submissive behavior can be, and through the character of Wiletta Meyers the authoress fights the stereotype of a submissive and passive “mammy”, and points out major problems in modern society as well as the problems

women have experienced in the theatre business. In the first act of the play Wiletta meets a new actor, a young Black man, John Nevins, who is very enthusiastic about his future acting career, obviously unaware how little career of that kind has to offer to a young black man. In the very first dialogue between Wiletta and John Childress indicates the status of Blacks in the theater. Wiletta warns John not to reveal to have taken acting classes, because “they don’t like us to go to school” (Childress 487). Childress points out to the idea that “they” – the white people – do not want blacks to be educated, preferring them to be “*naturals*”—that is, born with the gift of good acting (Childress 487). This statement is very important because of the fact that black people were not allowed to educate themselves while slavery was legal in America. It was easier to control the blacks by keeping them illiterate, and thus dependent on the master. Furthermore, it was easier to fully dehumanize them and perpetuate the racial bias. Educated blacks only presented a potential problem for the whites. Childress tackles the topic of education and the fight for equality by mentioning what is known as *The Little Rock Nine* in the American history, when the nine black teenagers started attending the Little Rock High School in 1957<sup>ii</sup>. They had to be escorted and protected by the militia against the raging mob. Childress uses this incident to point out how strongly the white groups defied the idea of equality between the blacks and the whites, and to juxtapose it to the unrealistic ideas Manners presents in his staging of the “Chaos of Bellville”. “The Chaos of Bellville” supposedly contains anti-lynching theme and ideas of racial equality, however the plot proves otherwise which is demonstrated in lines “If we are superior, we should prove it with our actions” (Childress 501) and “let the darkies have their fun” (Childress 499). Furthermore, the actions of the play’s protagonists are opposite from the actions of the protagonists in African American playwrights stories (Barlow 473).

Namely, the paternal figure in the play within the play is Mr. Renard, whose approval and protection is necessary for the Black characters of the embedded play. His daughter, Carrie, is portrayed as a naïve, young, southern girl who protects the blacks like a mother. The characters of “Chaos in Bellville” can be juxtaposed to the characters of the *Trouble in Mind*. Namely, the director Al Manners is very much like Mr. Renard, a white, paternal, dominant figure who has to be obeyed. Carrie is very much like Judy, a naïve young white actress unaware of the problems around her. *Trouble in Mind* and “Chaos of Belleville” are both representations of the relationships between the blacks and whites as well as an insight in the lives of the blacks, shown

from different perspective. Childress's play dramatizes the story from the point of view of a black woman, whereas the play within the play is told from the perspective of a white man.

Judy, the young white member of the cast, is convinced that "Chaos in Bellville" is a good and socially beneficial play. She believes that it promotes general human values and interracial communication. She also states "I hope that people will learn something from this play" such as that "people are the same" (Childress 491), obviously unaware of condescending tone "Chaos of Bellville" has towards blacks.

In addition to the tone of the play, its plot, as well as the clothes and language intended for the blacks are part of stereotyping found in any play on African-Americans until then. Wiletta and Millie discuss this issue in order to explain to John the harsh realities of working in the theater. Wiletta suggests John should behave submissively – "Tommish" (Childress 488) – to agree and laugh to everything the director says, in order to survive in the business. She openly states that she does not like the play, but implies that the whites do, so it will be successful (Childress 488).

Wiletta and Millie continue to exemplify stereotypical roles, clothes and language the black women used to get. Even though the slavery had been abolished decades ago the black actresses describe how they usually have been given baggy cotton dresses and bandanas – clothes characteristic for slaves – to wear. They usually play mammies or similar roles of weak, silly and submissive women, named after a gem or a flower thus simplifying them to physical appearance. Childress refers to that in Wiletta's and Millie's discussion about the play "Chaos of Bellville", where Millie's character is named Petunia and Wiletta's Ruby (Childress 490–491).

The black cast also ridicules the language used for the black personae. Words like "iffen" and "stomp" are strange to the cast and Millie objects to them suggesting Sheldon that "Iffen if you forget one, just keep shakin' your head", implying that the words of black characters are not of importance and that he should only obey as he is expected to do (Childress 492). The dramatic language of "Chaos of Belleville" portrays blacks as illiterate, foolish, and submissive – it simplifies and thus dehumanizes them. However, they are not asked to understand but to obey. Wiletta's text consists of several frequently repeated sentences, among which the most frequently repeated sentence is "Lord have mercy, don't ask me 'cause I don't know nothin'..." (Childress 499–500). With this sentence Wiletta's character repetitively proclaims herself incapable of thinking and making decisions. Additionally, even during rehearsals Wiletta at first

behaves as a simple-minded, know-nothing actress, just as she has advised John to do. Yet, her acting while practicing for the play as well as her pretense to be simple-minded in front of the director start to affect her in due time. She finally recognizes the problem when she is asked for an opinion by Al Manners and she replies with the offensive line from the play “Lord have mercy, don’t ask me ‘cause I don’t know nothin’...” (Childress 499–500), which indicates that if they continue to act submissive they will eventually become submissive. At this point Wiletta realizes that she cannot accept the offensive language or the tone of the play and continue agreeing with the director. Judy feels uncomfortable using the language intended for her character as well, because of its offensive tone which provokes negative reactions from Millie and Wiletta. Judy’s character, Carrie, uses terms like “darkies” (Childress 499) and racist remarks such as “I can’t help feeling sorry for them, they didn’t ask to be born” (Childress 501) and “If we’re superior we should prove it by our actions” (Childress 501). Furthermore, Eddie’s character, Mr. Renard, openly calls blacks “niggers” (Childress 500), “rascals” (Childress 501), and claims that “none of ‘em’s worth their weight in salt, that boy would steal the egg out of a cake” (Childress 501) when describing Ruby’s son. The language issue eventually brings the crew to complete confusion, which in effect leads to a series of comic effects, and further exemplifies inaccuracy of the representation in the line of previously discussed simple and meaningless lines intended for the black characters. Namely, now Millie, by mistake, reads Wiletta’s “Lord, have mercy” line (Childress 500).

In a short break from the rehearsal Judy starts talking about her idyllic home and invites the cast to visit her; in contrast, Sheldon complains about not being able to find decent housing, since those intended for the “colored” (Childress 503) are not providing good living conditions. He also avoids white neighborhoods and nervously discards any idea of even trying to move to such place, claiming, with obvious discomfort, that he does not want to be the first black among the white neighbors. Sheldon’s lines refer to residential segregation, where Blacks, Latinos, Asians and other minorities, regardless of their income or education could only rent apartments in poor conditions in bad neighborhoods. This segregation was not mandated and enforced by law, but through civic measures and exploitation of economic power. This “color tax” worsened the financial state of already poor minorities and prevented them from improving their living conditions (Hartford, “Ghettos, Segregation, & Poverty in the 1960s”).

Wiletta's discomfort grows as the rehearsal continues. Al Manners keeps giving Wiletta the instructions on how her character should feel and behave, since the son of her character is about to get lynched. Ruby, her character, is sitting on the porch, worrying and singing. Manners tries to get the cast to immerse into their roles, unaware of the fact that his cast has already experienced similar events in real life. These roles made them experience them again which is why Wiletta replied on his instructions with "*I know exactly what you want*" (Childress 505). So when Manners says: "It's not simply a song, it's a summing up. You're thinking of Renard, the threats, the people and your son" (Childress 505), Wiletta replies with "Oh, I know the song, learned it when I was a child" (Childress 505) implying that either she or someone close to her experienced the similar emotion she is about to perform. Lost in her emotions and thoughts Wiletta continues and the cast is impressed by her performance unaware that she is not acting. Wiletta reminisces of the history of blacks, at the same time being miserable and vulnerable, but also angry and upset, since none of the white cast seems to understand that she is actually experiencing the moment and not acting.

As soon as Manners and Judy leave the room, black cast starts arguing. Everyone advises John not to get too close to Judy, and Millie accuses Sheldon for being "Uncle Tommish", that is, being too eager to please the whites. In this moment the observer can see the fears and dilemmas blacks had. Aware of the discrimination but also afraid to lose his job, Sheldon claims that "That ain't *tommin* ', that's common sense" (Childress 509). He believes that losing his job disputing over matter that seem unalterable will not help him in any way; in accordance with that he does not mind.

Aware of the fact that being patient and acting the way she is expected to act has not changed the poor life circumstances of blacks, Wiletta finally reacts to discrimination hoping that this method of resistance will bring at least some change. Even if the change does not happen she will not be a subservient black woman like the one described in the Manners' play. However, the lack of support from the black cast devastates her. With this scene Childress demonstrates that in order to get basic human rights one risks losing job, residence and being socially excluded which inevitably leads to rapid deterioration in living conditions.

When the cast left the stage Henry, an old Irish doorman, discusses the situation with Wiletta. Henry explains that his father was also an actor, but did not make any progress in

theater. The same happened to his son. They jointly conclude that it is almost impossible to make any progress, since nothing and nobody is protecting the socially marginalized groups.

Even though Henry appears for a brief moment in play his character indicates two important ideas – racism transfers on next generation and that immigrants, although white, are discriminated as well. Henry's story further implies that being subservient leads to raising subservient children. His father never fought for himself and so neither did Henry – submissiveness as well as racism transfers on the next generations. Teaching a child to be submissive makes as much damage as racism does, because if one does not fight for his or her rights or the rights of their children, who else will?

As the rehearsal continues the actors become more and more aware of the numerous issues in the script. At the beginning of the act two Bill, who plays Mr. Renard, delivers a speech which again expresses a supremacist attitude in several times repeated statement “If we are superior, let us show our superiority!” (Childress 512). Bill starts worrying about the offensive language in the speech of his character and points it out to Manners, but Manners simply shifts the attention to different topic. This reveals that Wiletta's protests did have results.

The language of the play is not the only problem as the main protagonist soon reveals. Wiletta points out that the end of the play is not consistent or logical, as no mother would willingly give away her son to be lynched. This implies that black mothers do not care about their children and that they give white men divine attributes by leaving their sons' lives in the hands of a white man. Her complaint gets a chauvinist response: “Darling, don't think. You are great until you start thinking” (Childress 514). Wiletta persists but Manners continues with the array of compliments and comments, calling her “beautiful” (Childress 514) and “dear heart” (Childress 515), objectifying her and reducing her qualities to mere looks, thus disregarding her intellect, humanity and acting experience. His behavior reflects that he is not interested in her opinion and that he does not consider her adequate to assess the play.

The cast moves on to rehearsing the third act. The issues of the play start to affect the actors profoundly, which reflects in their behavior, tone and acting. Judy tries to behave in a more formal manner, and John also asks a few questions regarding the third act. Sheldon, however, reveals that he did not read the play in full, but only learned his parts. As is obvious, he was not interested in the message of the play but only in the ways of keeping the job. Sheldon believes that they cannot change anything and that their protest will only worsen the already bad

conditions. He just wants to keep his source of income concluding: “Last thing I was in, the folks fought and argued so, the man said he’d never do a colored show again . . . and he didn’t!” Yet again, however, the director shows that he does not care about the opinion or the feelings of the cast, as he is distracted by his personal problems and the constant complaints of the cast only irritate him.

Even after the break, when the rehearsal is continued, the tension is present. The rest of the cast cannot see the problem Wiletta is trying to demonstrate, and they openly disagree with her. John Nevins starts to behave like Manners and is condescending towards Wiletta. However, the cast continues with the rehearsal of the *Chaos in Bellville*. They start to rehearse the part where Job, the son of Ruby (Wiletta’s character) is about to get lynched because he voted. His parents ask him to apologize to his boss and ask for protection. Furthermore, his own mother asks him to give himself up. His father is whittling a stick and the mother is singing and ironing. As stated before, she argues with Manners that this part is not logical and that a mother would not give her son up to a ranger or an angry mob. She also wonders what he should apologize for and what kind of crime is he guilty of. Wiletta is persistent in proving her point that the play is not a realistic image of black people’s lives. After the overly dramatic scene where black parents, while singing and repeating “Lord, have mercy!” (Childress 519) persuade their son to surrender to the white master, Mr. Renard, Wiletta decides to stop the farce. At that point Manners starts arguing with Wiletta, but she is determined to point out the entire unrealistic image created by the white people about blacks and their lives.

Her first point is that no mother would ever give her son up to a lynching mob, as she points out: “Writer wants the damn white man to be a hero and me the villain” (Childress 533). As foregrounded by the main protagonist African American parents are shown as people who are incompetent to think for themselves, obedient enough to let the white men decide about the fate of their son, and in the midst of that arising tragedy they are singing and playing with a stick. While the rest of the cast is trying to calm down the situation, mostly because they are afraid of the consequences and not because they agree with Manners, Wiletta continues with enacting all the clichéd sentences from the roles she has been given that reflect stereotyping and racism of the white authors typical for the drama of the period. Moreover, not only does she mention concerns related to African Americans, but to other minorities as well.



In American dramas Wiletta is referring to, the black people, women especially, are always confused and in distress, portrayed like children who need their master, or someone more competent than themselves, to tell them what the right thing to do is. Their children are always problematic and get in trouble, which is usually related to fighting for their rights, such as the character of Job of the “Chaos of Belleville”. The Black men are portrayed as lazy, irresponsible, problematic people who do not take care of their families and are not very intelligent. Wiletta also points out that black servants work because they need money and not because they enjoy doing so. Namely, black nannies are regularly presented as women who prefer and prioritize the children of their masters over their own. Finally, Wiletta points out that not only the plot is not authentic but the cast usually is not either. She highlights the fact that the same discrimination is apparent when Native Americans are presented: “Who gets to play the Indian chief? Look close and you’ll see he’s got blue eyes, and you gonna tell me ‘bout truth and justifyin’? And don’t dare be black ... than you got to scratch your hair every time you start to think ... plowin’ up thoughts” (Childress 535).

What Wiletta is referring to is the tradition in most 20<sup>th</sup> century Hollywood movies, especially those filmed in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, according to which the Blacks, Native Americans and other minorities’ roles were played by white actors. Most of such casting practices remind of the minstrel shows from 19<sup>th</sup> century when white actors painted their faces with charcoal in order to look black. Moreover, they adopted some of the “typical behavior” related to the ethnicity they embodied in a movie, which had nothing to do with reality. The stereotyping was common in animated movies as well. These issues are still present in Hollywood movies, and the phenomenon is known as “whitewashing” (Boffetta, “Crowe’s ‘whitewashing’ sparks criticism from advocates”). Some of the most popular and most profitable movies such as “Cleopatra” (1963), and “Othello” (1965) whose main characters are black, were played by white actors Elizabeth Taylor (Pfeiffer, “Cleopatra film by Mankiewicz (1963)”) and Laurence Olivier (Arogundade, “Olivier’s Blackface Othello”). American actor Johnny Depp was cast in a remake of “The Lone Ranger” (2013) as a Native American, and Angelina Jolie as Mariane Pearl, an Afro-Cuban and Dutch descent journalist whose husband was taken and killed by terrorists in Pakistan, in “A Mighty Heart” (2008). Furthermore, in Ridley Scott’s movie “Exodus: Gods and Kings” (2014) lead roles were given to white actors even though the story was about Moses and Ramses, people who are of African origin according to the plot. “I can’t

mount a film of this budget, where I have to rely on tax rebates in Spain, and say that my lead actor is Mohammad so-and-so from such-and-such, I'm just not going to get it financed", Scott stated for the magazine Variety (Foundas, "'Exodus: Gods and Kings' Director Ridley Scott on Creating His Vision of Moses"). Another few interesting samples of whitewashing are "Prince of Persia" (2010) and "Gods of Egypt" (2016). On the other hand, roles the "ethnic people", as the minorities are popularly called, usually get are the ones of villains and supporting roles. The list of ethnic roles awarded to white actors is long and continues to grow (Zaru, "News flash! The Oscars are still so white. Just take a look at the most excluded group"). One of the most popular racist movies in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century America was DW Griffith's *The Birth of a Nation*, which promotes the Ku Klux Klan and its activities. The movie was a form of a racist manifesto. It was made in 1915, and it was popular for innovative film-making techniques and narrative structure, but it is one of the most racist movies ever made. *The Birth of a Nation* was so influential that the KKK reemerged and by 1920's was greater and stronger than when it was first filmed. This piece of information verifies the power that popular culture, as well as other cultural institutions (such as theatre), have over the masses, which is why Wiletta is so persistent in demanding the change of the script.

Another problem Wiletta continuously points to is the so called the 'Messiah complex' that permeates the plays and the movies. Namely, Mr. Renard and his daughter are shown as superiors, the ones who have to help the poor blacks, not because the latter are not guilty or because they might be good human beings, but because they are not intelligent to differentiate the right from wrong- the idea of intellectual superiority upon which the white supremacist ideology was founded and kept for centuries.

The discussion between Wiletta and Manners escalates further when she calls him a prejudiced man. Manners finally tells her that white people are not ready for the other side of story, and whether she likes it or not they do not care about the truth, still considering themselves superior.

The confrontation between Wiletta and Manner reaches its peak as Wiletta asks Manner whether he would send his son to be murdered. His answer shocks the entire cast and proves Wiletta's point. Manners, irritated by Wiletta's question, replies:

Don't compare yourself to me! What goes for my son doesn't necessarily go for yours!  
Don't compare him [John]... with three strikes against him, don't compare him with my  
son, they've got nothing in common ... not a Goddamn thing! (Childress 537)

With this statement Manners confirms Wiletta's suspicions that the "Chaos in Belleville" is another patriarchal white supremacist play, disguised as a drama where friendly whites try to help the blacks in distress, whereas the source of the distress is completely omitted.

After realizing what he has just said Manners leaves the theater and John realizes how misled he has been by the nice words of the director, but the rest of the company turns against Wiletta for arguing with Manners. Now that the truth is out, everyone is afraid of the consequences. Sheldon is very upset with Wiletta, accusing her of being too aggressive. He is sick and concerned that he will not be able to find a new job so he tells her to apologize to Manners. However, John disagrees with him and claims "We all ought to show some integrity" (Childress 593), but Sheldon, taught by his own experience, replies with "Integrity ... got us in a big mess" (Childress 539). Even though he has been mostly silent throughout rehearsals Sheldon shows that he has been aware of the injustice and racism in the play from the beginning by saying "I am the only man in the house and what am I doin'? Whittlin' a doggone stick" (Childress 538). He desperately needs the money and does not see how their protesting could change anything, since the whites do not listen to blacks. Curiously enough, when Sheldon expresses his opinion about the whites, Judy starts crying, showing again how distant the racial inequality issue is to her.

The cast decides to go for a coffee break, but Wiletta remains in the theater. She knows she is right when demanding equal treatment for blacks. She has successfully proved that, though the play seemed to be about the equality of blacks and whites, their roles proved the opposite. Wiletta is fighting for everybody's rights, but does not receive any support for a great variety of reasons, amongst which the most dominant one is fear – the fear of unemployment, poverty or imprisonment. As she stands alone in the middle of the theater, crying, Henry, the doorman, approaches her. Henry is the only completely supportive character. He understands Wiletta and tells her that no matter what the next day will bring he will be her audience for whatever she wants to perform. The play finally ends with Wiletta reciting the Psalm 133 thus closing the play

with a hope of unity and better prospects for all people, regardless of race, ethnicity or gender: “How good and pleasant it is, when God’s people live together in unity!” (Childress 542).

Wiletta Mayer, as the voice of Alice Childress takes a great risk with her actions, such as losing her role and the source of income the same way Alice Childress risked when she refused to make changes and adjust this same play for the Broadway. Wiletta is a theater veteran who realizes that her acting experience and years of working in theater have not brought her any respect or appreciation amongst her white colleagues or the director. She has been and always will be just another black woman in theater if she does not stop it. Years have passed and she realizes that if she continues acting in typecast roles nothing will ever change. She always gets the domestic and submissive roles, created with the same pattern and she realizes that she is being treated as the characters she has been playing, for example when the director tells her to pick up the papers from the floor (Childress 497). Although aware of the political and racial incorrectness the cast remains silent throughout the rehearsals in order to keep their jobs, but the part where the black mother hands her son over to a lynching mob for disobeying the white supremacists forces Wiletta to protest. Wiletta is persistent in her demand for a script change, but although seemingly liberal, the white director refuses and admits to her in anger that the whites do not want to see a realistic play but the play in which they are superiors, revealing that he considers himself to be superior as well. *Trouble in Mind*, announced as a comedy-drama (Barlow 470), shows the consequences that the fight for basic human rights can have. Wiletta, although the cast agrees with her, is left alone, probably jobless, and she might even be arrested for her protests. Sheldon and the rest of the black cast do not believe that her protests will change anything but she is persistent and decides to come to the next rehearsal, whether or not the director calls her.

Theater and cinema proved to be a strong media in bringing together or dividing cultures, as shown in the example of “The Birth of the Nation”. Childress fought to present the image of Blacks as it really was, not as it was presented by the Whites, and not only through her plays but in her life. She worked on ending the image of a slow, incompetent, perpetually victimized Negro and creating an image of a competent black person, capable of solving their own problems.

Childress used the play within play structure to juxtapose the scene and behind the scene situations in theater, to efficiently compare the play and the reality, in her drama. Another

important aspect is that she, as a woman, stood up to white patriarchal society, in the same way Rosa Parks, or Willetta Mayer for that matter, did. She refused to be an inferior. The importance of her protest is even greater when one considers the fact that women (regardless of their race or nationality) were considered inferior to men to that extent that even blacks, whom whites did not consider humans, were granted voting rights before the white women were allowed to vote<sup>iii</sup>. In conclusion, Childress' main protagonist claims and manages to prove that the play she performs in is offensive and consequently challenges the white patriarchal society's portrayal of the black families in America.

### ***M. Butterfly* by David Henry Hwang**

*M. Butterfly*, a play written by David Henry Hwang, which won the Tony Award for Best Play in 1988, is a controversial play inspired by a true story of a French Foreign Service attaché, Bernard Boursicot, and a male Peking opera singer Shi Pei Pu. After reading the story in the newspaper Hwang thought of “Madama Butterfly”, Puccini’s opera, and used its plot for story about the West’s perception of East. Namely, he realized that the attaché fell in love with a stereotype, his idea of the Oriental woman, obedient and submissive, and not in the real person in front of him (Hwang, “Author’s Notes” 85). It reminded him of “Madama Butterfly”, Puccini’s opera about an American soldier Pinkerton, who married Japanese woman Cio Cio San – Butterfly, while he was on a mission in Japan. His intentions were never serious, as Hwang reiterated it in his play. The characters address the audience throughout the play. Brechtian techniques, such as the use of narration, breaking of “the fourth wall” and time shifts keep audience aware that the play is performance and break any illusion of reality (Saddik 156). The audience also gets a direct insight into the mind of the population of the other and Oriental.

One of the most prominent figures in post-colonial studies, problematizing the notion of otherness and the idea of Orient, was Edward W. Said. A scholar of Palestinian origin, raised in the United States of America, changed the perception of the notion of Oriental and view on the Eastern countries, people and cultures (Lešić 341). In his book *Orientalism*, published in 1978, Edward Said describes the West as patronizing and offensive in its descriptions of the Oriental (“Edward Said-American Professor and Literary Critic”). Throughout the book Said successfully points out negative connotations the term Oriental had in literary (and non-literary) works, in which East was depicted by Western imperialist. Said announced the issues addressed in his book by quoting Karl Marx before introduction: “They cannot represent themselves; they must be represented” (Said 14), explaining later in the book that people only see Western presentation of the East and accept these imperialist attitudes as the truth.

Said quotes descriptions of the Orient in politics, history, philology and art. Namely, when describing the British colonization of Egypt in his House of Commons’ speech on 13th June 1910, James Arthur Balfour claimed that the British presence was necessary in Egypt and that “[w]e are in Egypt not merely for the sake of the Egyptians, though we are there for their sake; we are there also for the sake of Europe at large” (Said 47). Said concludes that Balfour’s

report suggests that if the Egyptians were asked or if they could think for themselves they would probably conclude the same as the British who knew them and thus was able to speak in their name, suggesting that the British believed that colonization of Egypt was beneficial to Egyptians in every aspect. Said concludes that Belfour's presentation implies the following:

they [Egyptians] are a subject race, dominated by a race that knows them and what is good for them better than they could possibly know themselves. Their great moments were in the past; they are useful in the modern world only because the powerful and up-to-date empires have effectively brought them out of the wretchedness of their decline and turned them into rehabilitated residents of productive colonies. (49)

Gayatri Spivak deals with the same issue in India in her remarkable essay "Can the Subaltern Speak?". Spivak presents several levels of society and what colonization did to them. She mostly discusses the experience of Indian women and the traditional rites of some of the Indian people. The author also discusses the problems of investigating a different culture based on "universal" concepts and frameworks, and criticizes conclusions and actions of an array of western writers such as Marx, Foucault, Deleuze and Derrida. She poses the question if the Subaltern<sup>iv</sup> can speak, since none of the texts of the above mentioned authors include the opinion of the subaltern, that is, the colonized people. Spivak argues that the Western "academic opinion" works in favor of the colonialists; it even serves as propaganda. Texts describing Indian people and customs are very subjective, and represent, as the author says, just a discussion of a white man with white men about brown men/women, directed to white men. Seemingly, the white men are trying to protect brown women from brown men (Spivak 93–96).

Spivak particularly discusses the custom of ritual suicide such as sati and jauhar. The sati<sup>iv</sup> (also suttee), was the practice of ritual suicide performed in some Hindu communities by the recently widowed women (Spivak 93). This ritual was very popular and celebrated in Hindu communities, and the women performing it were praised, as well as their families. The ritual was performed soon after husband's death, mostly by widow's self-immolation on a husband's funeral pyre. However, women were coerced into committing this act (Banerjee "Cultural Imperialism or Rescue? The British and Suttee") and it was outlawed in 1829 by India's British rulers, following demands by Indian reformers (Spivak 93–97). Jauhar is a form of group suicide committed by women confronted with foreign conquerors in war, in order to avoid enslavement

and sexual violence. Spivak argues that sati and jauhar reflected “the group rape perpetrated by the conquerors [which] is a metonymic celebration of territorial acquisition” (Spivak 99). The importance of Spivak’s essay in understanding Hwang’s play is immense. Spivak concludes her essay stating that the subaltern (women) cannot speak or be heard. Men are there to speak in their name. Hwang makes several references to this idea in Act Two of his play. In the following quote Hwang demonstrates Spivak’s ideas regarding the voice of subaltern women, who cannot be heard or read, because they are always represented by men: “Miss Chin? Why, in the Peking Opera, are women’s roles played by men? ... Because only a man knows how a woman is supposed to act” (Hwang 49). As Annette Saddik points out that the “erotic and political desire for domination” (156) is shown in Gallimard’s treatment of Butterfly, as cited here:

The West has sort of an international rape mentality toward the East ... Basically, “Her mouth says no, but her eyes say yes.” The West thinks of itself as masculine—big guns, big industry, big money—so the East is feminine—weak, delicate, poor ... but good at art, and full of inscrutable wisdom—the feminine mystique. Her mouth says no, but her eyes say yes. The West believes the East, deep down, wants to be dominated—because a woman can’t think for herself. (Hwang 62)

In her work Spivak analyzed the idea of female body, particularly genitalia, as a symbol of possession and conquest reflecting to genital possession in warfare or, in this context colonization, as territorial acquisition (Spivak 99). The reason Spivak mentions the act of self-sacrifice by women is to emphasize the fact that women are perceived as (material) possessions and sexual objects. Thus the British colonizers, in their mission to save “brown women” from “brown men”, are persistent in this form of discrimination. Spivak thus concludes that the subaltern, especially women, cannot speak or be heard:

Between patriarchy and imperialism, subject-constitution and object-formation, the figure of the woman disappears, not into a pristine nothingness, but into a violent shuttling which is the displaced figuration of the “third world woman” caught between tradition and modernization (Spivak 102).



Spivak also provides evidence of the feminist oriented Hindu tradition and misinterpretation of the Hindu language and tradition, by explaining the origin of Sati in Hindu mythology, thus proving the inconsistency of the ritual and its interpretation (Spivak 100).

The issue of sexuality is an important factor in Hwang's play. For example, although Song has had a physical relationship with Gallimard in order to obtain the information which could help his career, he is condemned by Communist Chinese authorities and sentenced because: "Don't forget: there is no homosexuality in China!" (Hwang 39).

The Oriental used to be presented by colonists through numerous works as something primitive, distant, exotic, weak and submissive. Conversely through the play Hwang dramatizes Orientalism in the way Edward Said described it; Orientalism in which the western colonizers stereotype everything related to the East, whom they consider inferior. It deals with the possession of power, economic, political, religious, and cultural dominance, and the relation of these notions to the hegemony of western colonizers. In one of his articles on the topic, Said wrote:

Every empire, however, tells itself and the world that it is unlike all other empires, that its mission is not to plunder and control but to educate and liberate. These ideas are by no means shared by the people who inhabit that empire, but that hasn't prevented the U.S. propaganda and policy apparatus from imposing its imperial perspective on Americans, whose sources of information about Arabs and Islam are woefully inadequate. ("Blind Imperial Arrogance")

Said successfully argues that term Oriental is a generalization and is used to describe different cultures and races without scientifically proven facts. Also, it is inadequate and insufficient to describe an array of different people who belong to different cultures. Descriptions of the Orientals in the works of white colonist authors have exotic, mystical but also very offensive tone. Said emphasizes this idea and successfully defends it by quoting eminent writers and philosophers. He claims that the Orient is presented as contrast to the Occident: "Orientalism was ultimately a political vision of reality whose structure promoted the difference between the familiar (Europe, West, "us") and the strange (the Orient, the East, "them") (*Orientalism* 60). Here, Said discusses the definitions of "us" and "them", where "our" is normal and acceptable, whereas "their" or "other" "is the one that deviates. According to Said, the act of colonization is

easier if one simplifies a whole culture or subsumes a great variety of cultures to one essential idea. It is a form of manipulation. This idea is presented in *M. Butterfly* where a story from obviously Japanese culture is mistaken for Chinese. Namely, in Puccini's opera "Madame Butterfly", the main protagonist Cio Cio San – the Butterfly – is a geisha. Geisha<sup>v</sup> is a female entertainer of wealthy men typical only in Japanese culture. The mentioned geisha commits suicide in form of 'hara-kiri' or 'seppuku', which was a method of voluntary or obligatory honorable suicide practiced by samurai men. It was practiced in Japan, by men only, whereas women samurai performed jigai<sup>vi</sup>. Both rituals are performed in order for a warrior to die with honor; however the technique is different, which is another indicator of racial and cultural misplacement and simplification.

Many of the used terms and customs have been misinterpreted in the opera. However, Hwang uses the plot, and fits the story in Communist China in order to show that the West does not differentiate between China and Japan, or any other "Oriental" country or tradition.

In post-colonial criticism, authors question previous literary works and the dominance of the West. They fight the essentialist attitudes in the way Diane Fuss explains them: "(Essentialism) is most commonly understood as a belief in the real, true essence of things, the invariable and fixed properties which define the 'whatness' of a given entity" (Fuss "Essentially Speaking: Feminism, Nature and Difference"). Post-colonial critics advocate non-essentialism, not believing in essence, a group of stereotypes and traits which reduce a group of people to one and the same. Strategic essentialism, a term coined by Spivak in 1980, refers to a political tactic that minority groups, nationalities, ethnic groups mobilize on the basis of shared gendered, cultural, or political identity to represent themselves (Nate "Introduction to Strategic Essentialism"). It is the idea of labeling people with certain characteristics, in the way Gallimard labels Song Liling and Asian women in general. Hwang gives the voice to the "Other" in the Scene Six of Act One, when Gallimard interacts with Song for the first time and Song asks him:

It's one of your favorite fantasies, isn't it? The submissive Oriental woman and the cruel white man.

Consider it this way: what would you say if a blond homecoming queen fell in love with a short Japanese businessman? He treats her cruelly, and then goes home for three years, during which time she prays to his picture and turns down marriage from a young Kennedy. Then she learns he has remarried, she kills herself. Now, I believe you would

consider this girl to be a deranged idiot, correct? But because it is an oriental who kills herself for a Westerner! – you find it beautiful. (Hwang 18)

Next time Gallimard sees Song, she is completely different to him, like a true butterfly that transforms from a caterpillar into its proper form. Song even calls this new persona a Butterfly and “a modest Chinese girl” (Hwang 34). Song decides to indulge Gallimard in his arrogance by playing the given role and feeding his illusions by telling him things he wanted to hear.

Professor Lešić explains the theory of the perception of the other as inferior using Lacan’s concept of the Other. Namely, Lešić claims that every individual (a Subject) considers himself or herself a standard of normal, a norm for the usual and right, whereas the others exist outside this system of the common and standard, established by the Subject’s norms. He also points out that this type of stereotyping was common in ancient comedies, where the audience created images of themselves constructed as the opposites of the stereotypes shown in the comedies. This process of creating image of oneself by excluding the different, the other, escalates to that extent that if they do not conform to our standards, (in case) they deviate from the standard, that is, they do not matter. Sometimes one does not consider the other to be equal or even human, as it was the case with the American black population (Lešić 96–97).

According to Lacan (qtd. in Lešić 9), one creates a psychological mechanism by which the other stands as a contrast to its perfect self, whereas, Said claims that in order to develop and sustain a culture it is necessary to create an identity as well as its contrasting alter ego. Lešić refers to Freud’s and Lacan’s studies on the subconscious where Ego creates its needs and in relations with the other finds its own identity. A Subject subconsciously creates its own identity through the image the Subject created about the Other. The Other is the Subject’s dark side, it represents and projects everything the subject is not. This is known as the presence of intersubjectivity in the Subject and the Other serves as a mediator between oneself and its other “I” (Lešić 98).

The West created its own idea of the East, the Orient, without any scientific and logical confirmation; thus, according to above mentioned Lacan’s theory the West has been projecting its own contrasting image. Also, in order for the good and civilized to exist, one must have a contrast. For example, in order for Gallimard in the play to protect the Butterfly, the Butterfly

must be weak. Initially, Song is realistic about the role he plays, which surprises Gallimard as shown in Act One, scene six: “So much for protecting her in my big Western arms” (Hwang 19). But eventually, Gallimard’s arrogance and prejudice win, as Song explains in the trial: “You think I could’ve pulled this off if I wasn’t already full of pride when we met? No, not just pride. Arrogance” (Hwang 64). Many of the post-colonial critics, such as Edward Said, Homi Bhabha and Gayatri Spivak, due to their origins, have directly experienced this type of arrogance and exclusion. Namely, Said refers to the experience of being on the verge of Otherness as being between cultures, and not belonging to any of them. He explains it as being at the same time both inside and outside of the matter (qtd. in Lešić 99).

Hwang presents that Asian women are perceived in the Western society as worthless and submissive. For French standards Gallimard is not an attractive or interesting man; however, an Oriental woman is expected to fall in love with him:

We, who are not handsome, nor brave, nor powerful, yet somehow believe, like Pinkerton, that we deserve a Butterfly. She arrives with all her possessions in the folds of her sleeves, lays them all out, for her man to do with as he pleases. Even her life itself — she bows her head as she whispers that she’s not even worth the hundred yen he paid for her. (Hwang 13)

In Scene three, Gallimard and Marc embody Pinkerton and Sharpless from the opera. Pinkerton describes Butterfly to Sharpless: “Not like American girls. It’s true what they say about Oriental girls. They want to be treated bad!” (Hwang 11). Pinkerton’s racism continues as his friend Sharpless asks him whether he is planning to take his Japanese wife home: “You mean, America? Are you crazy? Can you see her trying to buy rice in St. Louis?” (Hwang 11). Gallimard discusses his relationship with Song in a similar manner: “But, unlike a Western woman, she didn’t confront me, threaten, even pout. I remembered the words of Puccini’s Butterfly: “I come from a people/ Who are accustomed to little/ Humble and silent” (Hwang 44). The author here problematizes gender issues and relationships of men and women, especially of men and women of different cultures. Namely, it is appropriate to have a foreign mistress, but not a foreign wife: “Toulon knows! And he approves! I was learning the benefits of being a man” (Hwang 38).

In the aforementioned citations and in the overall play, the author compares the image of a white Westerner to Asian men. Albeit being proposed by an Asian “prince” Butterfly waits for Pinkerton and refuses rich and handsome Japanese suitor, ready to die for her. The images of unrealistic white superiority imbue the play. One such has been shown in the discussion of Butterfly’s maid Suzuki and Butterfly: “But he is Japanese? What do you think you are? You think you’ve been touched by the whitey god?” (Hwang 15).

The image of a weak Oriental extends to Asian men as well. Through relationship of Gallimard and Song we can see the desire for conquest and domination, the right to exercise the power over the weaker. In this play one can see the implicit emasculation of Asian men. Song describes this notion in the trial: “I am an Oriental. And being an Oriental, I could never be completely a man” (Hwang 62). Conversely, the illusions of weak Orient are shattered when Song reveals his true identity by removing his clothes and repeating sentences used to describe the rape mentality in court: “You know something, Rene? Your mouth says no, but your eyes say yes. Turn them away. I dare you” (Hwang 65). In this way Song wants to verbally violate Gallimard and break every illusion of the weak and emasculated Oriental. Moreover, with this act Song demonstrates that he did not suddenly regain the power in this relationship; he has had it all the time.

Gallimard refuses to accept the reality and decides to embody his image of the Perfect Woman. He accepts that *he* was the Butterfly in this case, so he dresses in accordance with his role and commits hara-kiri. This last act depicts the magnitude of Gallimard’s illusion, and the blindness and lack of knowledge of the Westerners in regard to the East. He had been living in China for years, with Chinese lover, but has never learned the basics of Chinese culture, as mentioned, seppuku is Japanese tradition and that only men do it, whereas women have a different form of ritual suicide. Furthermore, with the death of Gallimard dressed as Butterfly Hwang implicitly kills the Occident’s idea of the Orient, or rather allows it to die with/out honor in ritual suicide.

Hwang has sparked many controversies with this play. However, he has tackled many forms of stereotyping and discrimination in it. He played with the term Oriental, in the way Said defined it, by blurring the distinctions between Japanese and Chinese customs, or at least exposing the Westerners’ poor knowledge of them. Through Song Liling’s comments the author points out gender-based discrimination thoroughly analyzed by Spivak. Hwang has given voice

to women, though paradoxically, through a man. Hwang's *M. Butterfly*, just like Said's *Orientalism* and Spivak's "Can the Subaltern Speak?" as the voice(s) of the Other have successfully changed the perspective the West has about the East.

## **Specific Activities, Techniques and Strategies to Teach ICC and the Associated Knowledge Skills, Values and Attitudes**

In order to describe techniques and strategies of teaching Intercultural Communicative Competences (ICC), one first has to explain what is being taught through the ICC and what a teacher wants to achieve with specific activities, techniques and strategies. Interculturalism poses a great challenge for teachers in Bosnia and Herzegovina because of the complex social and cultural structure of Bosnia and Herzegovina. It is crucial for any teacher to be very careful and patient with the students, to know them well, in order to avoid being offensive and to make sure that every student is comfortable with the ICC topics.

### *Intercultural Communicative Competences*

Intercultural Communicative Competences are in focus of many educational systems and the curriculum, as an immensely important part of education. These competences include an ability to understand the feelings and needs of other people, the knowledge of behavior, culture and customs of other people, but also the knowledge of one's own culture and one's own abilities, strengths and emotions. The competences can be divided into three groups, where 'cultural self: practice' stands for the awareness of oneself, 'culture-general information and skills' means having some general knowledge of other cultures, and 'culture specific information and skills' presents the knowledge and skills about appropriately interacting with people from particular different social and cultural background (Nagata "Three Spheres of Intercultural Competence").

Development of these skills is useful not only for education and business but also for better understanding of each other, for better understanding of the different and the other. Rampant globalization and internationalization has caused the demand for English speakers to increase, and consequently English teachers have even greater responsibility as the ambassadors of the English language and culture to promote interculturalism. Teachers in Bosnia and Herzegovina have a particularly difficult task because of the numerous conflicts this country went through and still feels the consequences. The country's complex social and cultural situation limits the choice of activities and ways to promote interculturalism. Furthermore, the problem of segregation in schools in Bosnia and Herzegovina is well known and it has been a

topic of many studies, disputes (Engelhart, “Bosnia-Herzegovina Court Orders End to Ethnic Segregation of Schoolchildren”) and documentaries (Sokolovic, “Under One Roof: Bosnia & Herzegovina, Twenty Years Later“). Many schools are divided on ethnic grounds, which makes the gap between the students even greater and prevents teachers from providing high quality classes. National and religious divisions in Bosnia and Herzegovina affect students the most, especially children from the so-called mixed marriage families, to whom the national and/or ethnic identity is very hard to determine. Children do not have proper history classes and have no idea how and why the war (“Perspektiva: Druga Epizoda – Kiseljak”) in former Yugoslavia started, and, since teachers avoid talking about it in schools, they look for answers on the internet and mostly use unreliable sources. Furthermore, some towns in Bosnia and Herzegovina are more nationally, religiously and ethnically homogenous than others, and children do not have much contact with customs of other ethnicities and religions from the country. Teachers in Bosnia and Herzegovina have almost an impossible task; however, that does not prevent them from reaching out for quality resources in trying to provide their students with best options, while simultaneously working toward de-segregation in schools and enabling the students to broaden their social and cultural scope.

One of the most important aspects of language learning and acquisition is motivation (Huitt, “Psychology Interactive: Motivation”), hence in order to engage students in learning about different cultures teachers should first motivate them and elicit interest in different cultures. In order to do so teachers should expose students to different cultures and different aspects of different cultures. Teachers should be very careful and avoid activities and techniques which could be perceived as offensive.

Professor Vicki Galloway, an expert in intercultural communication proposed in *Communicating in a Cultural Context*, from 1984, a framework for constructing a better cultural understanding. This framework, exemplified in the *Table 1.1* in the Appendix, consists of four types of understanding. The first type of understanding is ‘convention’, in which students need to know how people in given cultures behave in everyday situations. The second type is ‘connotation’. This type requires students to know the significant meanings that are associated with words. The third type is ‘conditioning’, where students need to know that people behave in accordance with their cultural frame of reference, and that all people respond in culturally conditioned ways to basic human needs. This type is very important, since here students learn



what culturally acceptable behavior is, and what it is not, and how the behavior of people from other cultures differentiates from certain established patterns of behavior in their culture. The fourth type is comprehension, where students should develop skills of analysis, hypothesis formation, and tolerance of ambiguity (qtd. in Bueno, 1999).

Even though there are many ideas and studies about cross-culture classes, teachers should be even more creative and constantly have new ideas about the classes. Furthermore, teachers should know how to introduce the aforementioned ideas into everyday classes and motivate students to learn about and appreciate people from different ethnic and/or cultural background.

### *Techniques and Activities*

There are many techniques and activities focusing on developing Intercultural Communicative Competences. In order to properly introduce interculturalism in the classroom the teacher him/herself must be well-informed about the culture he or she plans to present and discuss. Moreover, there should be enough information about the culture presented through various means, such as multimedia (videos, games, music), and/ or print material (such as posters, books, and alike), perhaps even artifacts if they are available. Mini dramas are also one of the best means to convey problems in ICC (“Developing intercultural competence through education”). Namely, through short/one-act dramas the most frequent misunderstandings can be demonstrated, and at the end of the enactment one character could explain what went wrong and how to correct it. Since one of the most attention-grabbing activities for students is a scavenger hunt, Culture Islands should elicit them to engage. This activity should prompt mental images of different cultures through posters, pictures, maps, signs and realia. Teacher should present the material from ‘the islands’ and perhaps even give them foreign names. Afterwards, teacher should organize a scavenger hunt for some of the material presented in the ‘islands’. In the Taylor and Sorenson’s model the authors advise using the so called ‘culture capsules’ (Taylor 350–354). This activity includes three culture capsules. Each capsule should have a reading passage, several questions for further discussion and ideas for activities after the presentation. Students should prepare these capsules at home and present them to the class in 5 to 10 minutes. This activity is intended for intermediate or upper-intermediate English speakers.

### *Potential problems*

Teaching ICC can be problematic for teachers for a number of reasons. One of the biggest problems is the overburdened curriculum. There is a lot of complex grammar and vocabulary to teach, and teachers themselves do not have enough time to adequately prepare the additional material the ICC demands. Furthermore, most of the teachers have not had a proper training related to ICC teaching and many of them are afraid of not knowing enough. However, the ICC can always be integrated into the existing curriculum and combined with the already planned lesson. Also, teachers are not all-knowing, therefore they do not have to know any and every fact related to the culture in focus; furthermore, this potential lack of knowledge can be used as a special task for students' homeworks or some other additional activity, such as presentations, intercultural workshops, researches, essays and similar. Students might have negative attitude about other cultures but the teacher should juxtapose the culture in focus with the culture of the local people and engage students in finding as many similarities as possible. The progress students are making can be measured through Hanvey's (1979) scheme for measuring cross-cultural awareness. This scheme operates on four levels, as follows. In Level 1, information about the culture may be superficial and consist primarily of stereotypes. Learners may see the culture as bizarre and the people as ignorant or rude. In Level 2 learners focus on expanded knowledge about the culture. They might find the culture bearers' behavior irrational and confusing. In Level 3 learners begin to accept the culture and accept its standards and the way it functions, and finally, in Level 4 the level of empathy can be achieved by living in and through the culture. The students should see the culture as the insiders (Taylor and Sorensen 350–354).

As the benefits of using mini-dramas and role playing have already been established in the part of this text describing the most beneficial activities for development of intercultural competences, an intercultural workshop containing two plays of a prominent African-American and an Asian-American author would be a proper way to provide an amazing context for development of intercultural competences. The plays by Alice Childress *Trouble in Mind* and D. H. Hwang *M. Butterfly* serve to point out some of the key problems occurring in a clash of cultures, that is, the issues people living between two or more completely different cultures experience. The plays expose stereotypes and the damages these might cause. The plays also give an insight into cultures to which most of the children in Bosnia and Herzegovina are not frequently exposed.

Because of the abundant historic and cultural background of the plays the workshop is planned for two school hours. The workshop consists of reading and exploring the plays as well as historic and social context out of which they emerged. The plays present two different cultures with same matters – discrimination and stereotyping. The idea of the workshop is to show to the students’ the lives of minorities from the perspective of the minorities, and to make the students experience the life of the “Others” by enacting scenes and acts of the plays and discussing them. The first play to discuss in the workshop is *Trouble in Mind* by Alice Childress. This play is used to provide social and political context of the Civil Right Movement and the most important names and terms related to fight for the rights of black people. Besides historical facts this play gives students the insight into the state of mind of people who went through the process of social and cultural adaptation to American society in which they grew up but to which they never belonged to.

The other play used in the EFL class, *M. Butterfly* by D. H. Hwang, presents the issues and effects of stereotyping and nationalism on an international level, and gives students a brief insight into perception of Asian culture and customs. It also shows discrimination based on someone’s gender and sexual orientation, therefore through these works students are exposed to different kinds of otherness from the perspective of the Other. In such a way, through the plays in this workshop, the students will be able to experience and discuss several types of discrimination and problems related to it.

Teaching Intercultural Communicative Competences is immensely important and demanding task for any teacher because some aspects of culture are regarded as taboo or are a sensitive topic. Even more so in Bosnia and Herzegovina, where the consequences of the war, such as ethnic and religious discrimination, are still present. It has to be mentioned that discrimination is not only present as a consequence of war. Integrating minorities, like Roma children (Byrne “The Status of Roma Children”), but also children with disabilities, into mainstream educational system presents a great problem (“Education of Roma Children in Europe”). Schools are not equipped with necessary materials and do not have required resources and teaching assistants. The above mentioned ideas and activities should be juxtaposed with local customs and behavioral patterns, both those of the contemporary and those of the past. Teachers might encounter obstacles but with good teacher-student cooperation a lot can be

achieved. It is important to have a clear and defined set of goals and aims, and to keep track on the progress the students are making.

To conclude, teaching about culture in culturally and religiously heterogeneous country such as Bosnia and Herzegovina is a very challenging task for teachers, no matter how many years of experience they have. Every student is unique and reacts differently to images and portrayals of discrimination. Children should know their own culture and customs to be able to understand the culture and customs of other people. This is particularly problematic in Bosnia and Herzegovina since the topics related to culture and customs, as well as to the history of the country, are avoided in many schools. However, presenting similar or the same problems through other cultures might make that process somewhat easier. Presenting these issues through other people's experiences might be the most neutral way to show the students the consequences of discrimination.

FACULTY OF PHILOSOPHY

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

**LESSON PLAN FOR INTERCULTURAL WORKSHOP**

**TOPIC: AMERICAN DRAMA**

<b>Teacher trainee: Ema Erlbek</b>	<b>Host school:</b>	<b>Host teacher:</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>Time: 90'</b>	<b>Class:</b>
<b>Class profile</b>	Approximately 26 students, age 17				
<b>Recent work</b>					
<b>Teaching unit</b>	Literature-American drama-workshop for development of intercultural competences				
<b>Type of lesson</b>	Presentation, discussion, questioning, brainstorming, collaborating, active listening, explaining, and demonstrating				
<b>Sources</b>	Childress Alice- <i>Trouble in Mind</i> Hwang, D. H.- <i>M. Butterfly</i>				
<b>Aims and objectives</b>	<p>-long term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• developing student's skills: reading, writing, communicating</li> <li>• eliciting interest in other cultures and customs</li> <li>• developing and expressing critical thinking</li> <li>• Learning American history and development of civil rights</li> <li>• Learning about civil rights Movement</li> <li>• Learning about slavery-how it developed, what are the consequences</li> <li>• to develop culture of accepting and embracing different</li> <li>• to learn about social phobias and how to avoid them</li> <li>• telling a story</li> <li>• to learn major terms in drama</li> </ul>				

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to learn major terms related to civil rights</li> <li>- short term:</li> <li>• to improve student’s vocabulary</li> <li>• to elicit interest in culture of African-Americans, Asian-American, to understand better different cultures, more precisely African and Asia</li> <li>• to motivate students to use English</li> <li>• to elicit communication about culture and history in the classroom</li> <li>• learn new social terms</li> <li>• fight social phobias</li> <li>• to describe and present the hate-talk, shaming and learn about consequences it has on society</li> <li>• to learn about stereotypes and gender roles</li> <li>• to talk about discrimination and the consequences it has</li> </ul>
<b>Teaching methods</b>	<p>Communicative – questioning, brainstorming, collaborating, explaining, and demonstrating.  OHE-Observe -Hypothesize-Experiment  ESA- Engage-Study –Activate  (*methods will be adjusted according to students’ prior knowledge of the presented lesson )</p>
<b>Classroom management</b>	Whole class, individual work, work in groups
<b>Teaching aids, materials and equipment</b>	board, notebooks, flashcards, audio and video material, magnets, chalk, marker, printed excerpts of drama, the plays
<b>Procedure</b>	Introductory part, main part, final part
<b>Contingency plan</b>	<p><b>-extra time:</b> discuss about people in the U.S.A. and their history  Write sentences using the new vocabulary  Give handouts with terms important in drama</p> <p><b>-short of time:</b> skip a few questions or activities</p>

Stage	Aims and objectives	Class organization, procedures and Activities	Interaction	Possible problems and solutions	Teaching aids and materials	Timing
Introductory part	Introducing the T to the SS and the SS to the T. T creates positive and encouraging atmosphere.	T greets the Ss and introduces herself. T distributes the cards and asks Ss to write their names on the cards. T asks Ss about the previous lessons from the Module they are learning and elicits interest in today's lesson. T talks to Ss about human rights, nationality, race, patriotism, chauvinism, sexism, nationalism.	T – S			2'
	Revising recent lessons about different culture. Eliciting ideas and suggestions to introduce the topic, encouraging Ss to speak and guess.	T asks Ss: Can anyone tell me what is drama? (The form of composition designed for performance in the theater, in which actors take the roles of the characters, perform the indicated action, and utter the written dialogue. (The common alternative name for a dramatic composition is a play.)) How would they define it? Name a few plays/playwrights? (Shakespeare/ Romeo and Juliet )	T – S S – T  T – S S – T	Ss cannot guess what is in the picture so T gives additional information.  S cannot guess so T gives additional information. Ss cannot explain so T helps them.	Pictures from the book	4'



<b>Main part</b>	T elicits discussion and critical approach.	T tells Ss that today’s workshop is about developing intercultural competences through two plays, and explains to them what the plays are about and provides the social and political context for them. T shares handouts with short explanation of the civil rights movement and the most important vocabulary related to it.	T – S	Ss cannot find the information in the text so T helps.		2’
	T introduces the new vocabulary.	T asks Ss to read the key words and translate. T asks Ss: Do you understand all of the mentioned words? Would you like to add some new words you might find useful? Do you need my help with translation?	S – T	Some Ss cannot find the proper words so T helps them individually.		8’
	T elicits further interest in the topic, and engages Ss in the lesson and communication.	T splits the class into four groups and hands each group a handout with biographies of prominent civil rights activists and activities – Rosa Parks and Montgomery Bus Boycott, Martin Luther King – excerpts from I have a Dream Speech, Malcolm X- biography and influence and Separate but Equal doctrine.	T – S S – S S – T	Ss cannot form the sentences T helps them individually or as a group.		2’
		T gives Ss 10 minutes to read and discuss the given material. T asks Ss to present the stories they were given.	Ss – T			10’
		T asks Ss to give their opinion on the activists and the Bus Boycott.	T – Ss Ss– T			5’
		When Ss complete this exercise T tells them about Alice Childress and provides them a short biography and excerpts from the Trouble in Mind with the short summary.				

<b>Main part</b>	T summarizes the lesson, emphasizing the major points- adjectives, verbs of movement and the strategies to describe and tell a story.	T asks: How did Alice Childress contribute to civil rights movement? What did she show?(She showed the everyday struggles of the African-Americans )	T – S S – T	Ss do not know. T helps them answer.		5'	
		What was new in her play?( She showed the perspective of African-Americans on American society )					
		T asks a few Ss to volunteer and play a few scenes from the play. (The idea is to make them experience the struggles the playwright is talking about and to recognize discrimination for themselves)	T–Ss Ss–T				8'
		T gives Ss an excerpt from the play and asks them to recognize discrimination in it.					
		T asks Ss to list a few types of discrimination and provide a few samples from something they experienced if possible.	T–Ss	If Ss answer <i>Yes</i> T helps them form the		5'	
		T presents D.H. Hwang and shares his biography to Ss.		sentences and explain their			
		T asks a student to read the biography.		answers. If the answer is <i>No</i> T helps them		5'	
		T presents the play M. Butterfly. T asks: <i>Have you ever heard of Puccini's opera Madam Butterfly?</i>	T–Ss	connect with the play and find the		2'	
		T provides the context of the opera on the handouts and asks Ss to read and explain it.	T–Ss	examples of discrimination in their		2'	
		T shares handouts with summary of the play and gives Ss 10 minutes to read it.	T	environment.		10'	
T asks: <i>Can you tell me the similarities and the differences between the play and the opera?</i>	T–Ss			10'			
T asks Ss to write down their answers.							
T also gives Ss a few excerpts of the play and asks Ss: What do you think about this play?	T–Ss						
T asks: <i>Have these plays affected you? Can you relate? How? Why? Can you outline similarities between the two mentioned plays?</i>							



Web sources:

<http://www.tesol.org/connect/tesol-resource-center/search-details/activities/2013/08/23/american-culture-capsules>

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## Conclusion

The central problem addressed in this thesis is the notion of otherness in contemporary American drama and the introduction of it in schools through ESL classes. The awareness of the existence of the *Other* has been brought to the attention of wider audience by many American playwrights in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, especially through post-colonial critic. In this paper the notion of otherness in contemporary American drama, the development of this notion and the impact it had in cultural studies has been discussed.

In the first part of the thesis, a play by Alice Childress, *Trouble in Mind*, was discussed. The issues presented in the play have been problematized by many authors through centuries. Namely, blacks had to prove that the ideas of some of the most eminent philosophers were wrong. Blacks had to prove that they are humans first, in order to be listened. Furthermore, they had to argue that the race does not affect intellectual capacities of an individual and defy numerous works of some of the greatest writers in order to prove so. In Childress' *Trouble in Mind*, the audience witnesses the staging of the play in which the despair of black parents, whose son is about to get lynched, is dramatized and they are expected to do nothing, but sing and let that angry mob do whatever it pleases, since the white man knows the best. The main character of *Trouble in Mind*, Wiletta Mayer, decides to stop accepting the aforementioned depiction of black population, because it is not only offensive, but in her mind agreeing to play these roles appears as if she is agreeing with the ideas of the play and perpetuating the message it carries. As presented in the text, it took centuries for black intellectuals to prove that blacks are competent and intelligent, that they are equal, and that they are human. Wiletta feels that plays produced by white men in American theater will reverse the years of fighting for basic human rights. Just like in her play, Childress refused to adapt to Broadway, and thus her play could not be staged on Broadway.

Already in the first dialogue between her characters Childress indicates the status of blacks in the theater. She points out that in order to keep a job an actor must be the way white man wants him or her to be – obedient, submissive and uneducated. This points out the ways whites controlled the blacks by keeping them dependent. Even when the Blacks were allowed to attend the same schools as the Whites, by law, it caused national outrage and demonstrations, which Childress referenced in the play, through the mentioning of “The Little Rock Nine”

incident, when nine black teenagers started attending the Little Rock High School in 1957. The author used metadrama to juxtapose the reality of everyday life of blacks with the play. She also juxtaposed characters from the play within play with the actors around her, such as Manners and Mr. Renard –white patriarchal figures; John – an idealistic young black; Judy – educated but naïve white actress, in order to better draw parallels between arts and life.

Another issue Childress addresses in her play is the clothes and the language intended for the blacks which were offensive, stereotyping and the same in every play. Moreover, another issue Childress tackles here is gender discrimination, where, although the actresses are educated and have established careers, they are not considered equal to actors, regardless of their respective race.

Childress also tackles the Messiah complex present in American theater and later cinema, according to which the good white men save the poor incompetent member of a minority. In the early 20th century, blacks, Native Americans and other minorities' roles were played by white actors. The stereotyping was common in animated movies as well. All these issues are still present in Hollywood movies, and the phenomenon is known as “whitewashing”. Childress also emphasizes the propagandic roles of theater, arts and (popular) culture as one can learn from the example of “The Birth of a Nation”.

The second chapter of the paper focuses on the representation of Oriental Other in the work of David Henry Hwang and in context of *Orientalism*. In 1978 the book *Orientalism*, one of the most important books of post-colonial literature was published. It was written by Edward W. Said, a Palestinian American scholar, whose intention was to change perception of the West on the Eastern countries and culture, and to indicate the racist connotations revolving around it. In his work Said examined texts of prominent writers and philosophers to support his claims. Although many have and still do contradict to his opinion and call him anti-Western oriented, Said made a great impact in post-colonial literature. In addition to Said, Gayatri Spivak also made a great contribution to post-colonial criticism with her essay “Can the Subaltern Speak?”, which deals with imperialism in India discussing famous westerners' perception of Indian customs and culture, especially regarding the practice of *sati*.

*M. Butterfly*, a play by an Asian American playwright David Henry Hwang, showed the audience in 1988 the other side of imperialism and imperialist attitudes by juxtaposing the Orient and the Occident. Hwang plays with stereotypes and the perceptions of the East by changing

their usual roles and the final outcome. Hwang uses explicit language and sexual imagery to shock the audience and to sometimes provoke a sense of disgust. As is known, Hwang was inspired to write the play when reading about the case of French diplomat's twenty year affair with Chinese male spy. It reminded him of Puccini's opera "Madama Butterfly", which he decided to deconstruct and create a majestic piece of art. He turned the submissive, dependent and helpless Oriental woman into a cruel, cunning and intelligent man. In the play Hwang demonstrates how arrogance and stereotyping of colonizers is so extreme that it makes them blind to the obvious. He also, on several occasions problematizes the notion of the Orientals and the fact that in Western culture and mind there is no difference between any of the Oriental cultures. Confusion regarding the national and sexual identity is of great importance in the play, especially when during the dramatized trial Song claims that Westerners possess rape mentality. Through Gallimard's desire for Song and through his remarks about the Orientals Hwang shows the character's desire for control and domination. On several occasions Gallimard claims that the Orientals want to be dominated and describe their women as submissive but shy. However, Song, intentionally embodying the fetish of Gallimard, uses his words against him in the final scenes when stripping out of clothes and revealing the truth – Song Liling, the perfect Oriental woman is actually a Chinese male spy. With this act Song takes all the power and control Gallimard believed he had. Hwang shows that this lie was necessary for Westerners to feel powerful. In order to feel strong they needed someone to be weak. It is also interesting that play does not have any weak female character, regardless of culture. Gallimard needed a weak Oriental in order to feel a strong man. He was frightened by Renee and insecure in his own marriage. In the character of Gallimard Hwang represents the imperialist West as weak and blinded by its own arrogance, and implies that the West is superior only in its own eyes.

Having examined the representation of two different images of Others, that of the African American and that of the Oriental, the paper then looked into the intercultural competences and special activities that can be used in the English language classes to develop the intercultural competences in students. In order to teach about intercultural competences it is necessary to present the audience directly with images of intercultural encounters and imaging, so that they can witness the experience of the other and be directly exposed to language, culture and mindset of different culture. Teaching interculturalism is a specifically sensitive topic in Bosnia and Herzegovina, because the effects of the 1992-1995 war are still felt in most of the social spheres.

However, teaching language and literature provides a great variety of resources to adequately address social issues without naming them directly. The chapter on the development of intercultural competences is focused on establishing respectful communication between people of different cultures or social backgrounds and to present different cultures to students. Some of the suggested activities like culture capsules and scavenger hunt give students more space to be creative and to choose what interests them the most. It also provides teacher an insight in their interests and helps teacher get to know students better and to adjust the classes in accordance with students' interests. Including plays like *Trouble in Mind* and *M. Butterfly* in classes can give students a direct insight into mind of people of different cultures and to enable them to directly immerse into their culture and emotions on stage. They enable teacher to include more students and to directly immerse them into character which is beneficial for learning language, social skills and team work.



## Notes

<sup>i</sup>For the purpose of this paper the text by David Hume “Part I, Essay XXI, OF NATIONAL CHARACTERS”, published in *Essays, Moral, Political, and Literary*, and edited by Eugene F. Miller in 1987 will be used.

<sup>ii</sup>Further details on the topic may be found at the NPS article titled “Little Rock High School National Historic Site”, at <https://www.nps.gov/nr/travel/civilrights/ak1.htm>.

<sup>iii</sup>The voting rights were regulated by the 15th Amendment for blacks and the 19th Amendment for women. However, despite the fact that African American men were entitled to voting rights as of 1872, the voting rights were denied to blacks by various means, until 1965 when the Voting Rights Act was implemented and the blacks were ensured their voting rights. Women on the other hand received voting rights only in the beginning of 20th century, after the Suffragette Movement fought a long battle for it. For more information see “Voting Amendments in the US”: <http://www.in.gov/judiciary/citc/museum/voting/index.html>.

<sup>iv</sup>The term “subaltern” was adopted by Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937), an Italian Marxist and Communist who was imprisoned for a long time by the fascist police. According to him the subaltern was the subjected underclass in a society on whom the dominant power exerts its hegemonic influence. Further information may be found in the entry on “Subaltern” of the Oxford Reference online.

<sup>v</sup>In Sanskrit sati means “good woman” or “chaste wife”, although Spivak does not fully agree with this translation (Spivak 100).

<sup>vi</sup>Geisha, a member of a professional class of women in Japan whose traditional occupation is to entertain men, in modern times, particularly at businessmen’s parties in restaurants or teahouses. The Japanese word geisha literally means “art person,” and singing, dancing, and playing the samisen (a lute-like instrument) are indispensable talents for a geisha, along with the ability to make conversation. Many geisha are also adept at flower arranging, performing the tea ceremony, or calligraphy. The main function of the geisha is to provide an atmosphere of chic and gaiety for her wealthy clientele. Geisha are usually exquisitely dressed in traditional kimonos and delicately mannered and have knowledge not only of the past but also of contemporary gossip. Further details can be found in the entry of “Geisha” of the Encyclopedia Britannica.

## Appendix A

### The excerpts from *Trouble in Mind* by Alice Childress used for the class activity

#### ACT 1

MILLIE: Last show I was in, I wouldn't even tell my relative. All I did was shout "Lord, have mercy!" for almost two hours every night.

WILETTA: Yes, but if you did it, so hush! She played every flower in the garden. Let's see, what was your name in that T.V. mess?

MILLIE: Never mind.

WILETTA: Gardenia! She was Gardenia! 'Nother thing ... she was Magnolia, Chrysanthemum was another...

MILLIE: And you've done the jewels ... Crystal, Pearl, Opal! (*Millie laughs*)

JOHN: (*Weak, self-conscious laughter*) Oh, now...

SHELDON: Do, Lord, let's keep peace. Last thing I was in, the folks fought and argued so, the man said he'd never do a colored show again ... and he didn't!

WILETTA: I always say it's the man's play, the man's money and the man's theater, so what you gonna do?

\*\*\*

JUDY: (*Starts hesitantly but picks up momentum as she goes along.*) Thank you, and er ... er ... I hope I can do a good job and that people learn something from this play.

MILLIE: Like what?

JUDY: That people are the same, that people are ... are ... well, you know ... that people are people.

SHELDON: There you go ... brotherhood of man stuff! Sure!

WILETTA: Yes, indeed. I don't like to think of theater as just a business. Oh it's the art ... ain't art a wonderful thing?

MILLIE: (*Bald, flat statement to no one in particular*) People aren't the same.

\*\*\*

WILETTA: Art! Art is a great thing!

MILLIE: It's all right except for a few words here and there ... and those Gawd-awful clothes...

JOHN: Words, clothes. What about the very meaning?

SHELDON: (*Startles everyone by reading out loud. His finger runs down the page, he skips his cues and reads his lines.*) Mr. Renard, sir, everything is just fine ... Yes, sir ... But, iffen, iffen ... (*He pauses to question the word.*) Iffen? (*Now he understands.*) Iffen you don't mind, we'd like to use the barn.

MILLIE: Iffen.

SHELDON: Hush, Millie, so I can get these lines, I'm not a good reader, you know.

MILLIE: Iffen you forget one, just keep shakin' your head.

## ACT 2

WILETTA: (*Indicating script*) I been reading this back and forth and over again.

MANNERS: (*Automatic sympathy*) Honey, don't ...

WILETTA: My neighbor, Miss Green, she come up and held the book and I sat there justifyin' like you said ...

MANNERS: Darling, don't think. You are great until you start thinking. I don't expect you to ...

WILETTA: (*Weak laugh*) I've been in this business a long time, more than twenty five years and

...

MANNERS: Don't tell it, you're beautiful.

## Appendix B

The excerpts from *M. Butterfly* by D. H. Hwang used for the class activity

### ACT 1

#### SCENE 10

Song Lilinng's apartment. Beijing. 1960

GALLIMARD: I returned to the opera that next week, and the week after that ... she keeps our meetings so short-perhaps fifteen, twenty minutes at most. So I am left each week with a thirst which is intensified. In this way, fifteen weeks have gone by. I am starting to doubt the words of my friend Marc. But no, not really.

In my heart, I know she has ... an interest in me. I suspect this is her way. She is outwardly bold and outspoken, yet her heart is shy and afraid. It is the Oriental in her at war with her Western education.

### ACT III

#### Scene 1

SONG: Rule Two: As soon as the Western man comes into contact with the East – he is already confused. The West has sort of an international rape mentality towards the East. Do you know the rape mentality?

JUDGE: Give us your definition.

SONG: Basically, “Her mouth says no, but her eyes say yes.”

The West thinks of itself as masculine – big guns, big industry, big money – so the East is feminine – weak, delicate, poor ... but good at art, and full of inscrutable wisdom – the feminine mystique. Her mouth says no, but her eyes say yes. The West believes the East, deep down, wants to be dominated-because a woman can't think for herself.

#### Scene 7

SONG: Miss Chin? Why, in the Peking Opera, are women's role played by men?

CHIN: I don't know. Maybe, a reactionary remnant of male-

SONG: No. (*Beat.*) Because only a man knows how a woman is supposed to act.

### Scene 8

JUDGE: What does this have to do with my question?

SONG: You expect Oriental countries to submit to your guns, and you expect oriental women to be submissive to your men. That's why you say they make the best wives.

JUDGE: But why would that make it possible for you to fool Monsieur Gallimard? Please – get to the point.

SONG: One, because when he finally met his fantasy woman, he wanted more than anything to believe that she was, in fact, a woman.

And second, I am an Oriental. And being an Oriental, I could never be completely a man.

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