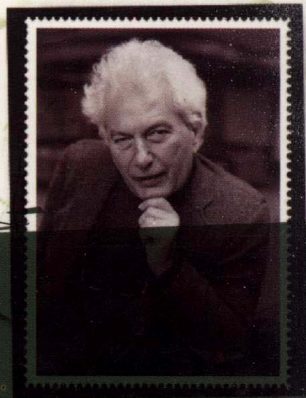


美国后现代小说论丛



后现代的怪诞:海勒小说研究

Postmodern Grotesqueness:

A Study on *Heller's* Fiction

By Zuyou Wang

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丛书主编/杨仁敬

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本专著为杭州电子科技大学学校科研项目“后现代的怪诞——约瑟夫·海勒小说研究”(项目代号:KYS115609061)和浙江省外文学学会2009年专题研究项目“约瑟夫·海勒后现代小说的艺术特色研究”(项目编号:ZWZD2009032)的成果之一,其出版得到杭州电子科技大学学校科研项目启动资金的资助。

序

秋风送爽,催人奋进。在欢庆祖国六十华诞的热潮中,王祖友同志的专著《后现代的怪诞——海勒小说研究》终于问世了,可喜可贺!

这是以他的博士学位论文《美国后现代社会的荒诞与约瑟夫·海勒后现代主义文本的怪诞》为基础修订而成的。它体现了几年来王祖友同志对海勒潜心研究的成果,也记录了他在美国文学研究征途上刻苦钻研的足迹。

王祖友同志原籍安徽文化风景名胜之乡——和县,1998年广西师范大学硕士生毕业后到广东佛山教育学院任教三年,2001年考取我校博士生,随我研习美国小说。入学后不久,佛山教育学院并入其他高校,他成了一个“无家可归的人”,但他情绪稳定,安心学习,成绩优良。他业余抽空写了中文论文16篇,英文论文6篇,刊于《东北师大学报》、《外国文学》、《山东外语教学》、《语言与文学研究》和《跨文化交流》等杂志。他多次参加全国性的学术会议。学术水准有了明显的提高。

在论文选题时,我与祖友同志多次沟通,共同分析了选择海勒的有利条件和各种困难。海勒是第一个划时代的美国后现代派小说家,他受到中美两国学界的重视。一方面,他的作品比较早就被译介到我国,国内对他的评论较多,已发表的论文比其他美国后现代派作家的论文多得多,要写出有自己创见的论文是不容易的;另一方面,美国学者至今仍不断有新的论著出现,资料浩如烟海,要系统收集和梳理确非易事。但这两个问题并不是不可克服的。祖友同志经过一年多的学习,已把握美国后现代派小说的特色、它的代表作家及其作品。读过海勒的代表作《第二十二条军规》后,他倍感兴趣,信心十足。选题就这么定下来了。

随后,王祖友同志开始收集相关资料。他一面细读海勒的原著,并详细地做些笔记;一面托亲戚朋友协助搜集参考资料,然后加以分类、复印、整理和阅读,对海勒渐渐有了较深的印象。他经常跟我保持联系,频繁交换意见。一年多以后,他完成了论文初纲,我帮他提些建议并补充了一些书单。他又改了几次,最后我确认了他的细纲,他才动笔撰写。初稿完成后又反复修改定稿。2006年6月他进行正式答辩,获得答辩委员会一致通过,受到校内外专家的好评。

约瑟夫·海勒是美国优秀的后现代派小说家。1961年,他的代表作《第二十二条军规》的问世标志着美国小说走进了后现代主义的新时期。海勒成了人们公认的黑色幽默小说家中的佼佼者。因此,对这样一位重要作家进行系统研究是十分必要的。王祖友同志的选题具有现实性和前瞻性。

总的来看,这部专著具有下列四大特色:

首先,专著将海勒小说中的怪诞与20世纪50和60年代美国后工业化社会的状况联系起来,阐明美国后现代派小说产生的社会因素:第一,国际上的冷战、麦卡锡主义的横行和新科技的出现和影响;第二,反文化思潮与语言学的转向;第三,存在主义的泛滥与后现代主义对社会的质疑。作者将海勒一生的创作联成一个整体,从中揭示美国社会荒诞的奥秘。这比从海勒某部小说的细节来论述他的黑色幽默要深刻得多。文学离不开社会生活。所不同的是,海勒用怪诞的艺术手法来折射现代美国社会官僚体制的荒诞。海勒在《第二十二条军规》和《出事了》这两部小说里分别解构了美国军队的官僚制度,团体机构、行政管理和家庭结构,其讽刺锋芒对准美国社会的方方面面。如果将社会现实与他的小说一对照就不难明白海勒的良苦用心了。专著这个切入点选得好,从社会生活的实践来审视和检验海勒的作品,视野就开阔了,其他问题就不难理解了。

其次,专著指出海勒建构的后现代主义文本怪诞性的五大表现,即黑色幽默、对话主义、狂欢化、非原则化和种类混杂,比较系统地论述了海勒小说的后现代主义艺术特色。作者运用詹姆逊、林达·哈琴、利奥塔和巴赫金等文论家的理论,结合传统的批评方法对海勒的

小说文本进行了细致的辩证的评析,揭示了海勒对美国后现代主义文学的开创性贡献。

作者认为海勒将黑色幽默作为一种反抗策略,表现人们对美国后现代生存状况的绝望。《第二十二条军规》的主人公约瑟连具有都市犹太人的感情。犹太幽默贯穿于小说始终,所以海勒的黑色幽默可以说是最荒诞的犹太幽默。这比一般关于黑色幽默的评论要具体而深刻得多。

在《不开玩笑》里,海勒与瓦尔格的叙述和对话之间有种种滑稽的对抗。诚如巴赫金所说,语言只能理解为一种文化交流。事实上,小说文本并不局限于作者的陈述,而是众多社会力量不同声音的组合。海勒将对话作为改善人际交流和折射社会现实的手段。

在《最后一幕》里,海勒广泛运用狂欢化手法,揭示笑声中狂乱无序的社会生活。小说展现了阿卡卡玛会议的杂乱、米洛轰炸机的横行和公交车终点站社会名流婚礼的怪诞。狂欢化吞没社会的一切丑恶,重建作者的一切愿景。它成了一种反叛的手段。

在《天知道》里,海勒重释《圣经》,质疑历史的真实性,让英明的所罗门王变为愚笨的施罗德,又通过大卫对所罗门的忠告揭示《圣经》里的种种矛盾,以此体现非原则化,对西方传统的权威和法规进行消解和颠覆,使《圣经》的光辉消失殆尽。

在《像高尔德一样好》里,海勒将严肃题材与通俗故事相结合,使小说、回忆录、传记和新闻报道并置。在《画画这个》里,他则让历史与虚构浑然一体。这些种类混杂增强了小说文本的活力和含意,达到了戏仿、滑稽模仿的目的,让读者透过小说的怪诞形式领悟作者的真实意图。

上述五大表现全面地概括了海勒后现代主义小说艺术的特点,加深了读者对海勒的理解。这体现了作者扎实的理论功底和丰富的学科知识。

其三,专著在评论海勒其人其作的过程中,始终贯串辩证法和批判精神。作者认真地梳理美国知名学者莫里斯·狄克斯坦、哈桑、索金、艾里奥特,斯茨列克、默里尔、鲁德曼、克列格等人对海勒的评论

和国内相关的资料,吸取了中外学者的某些研究成果,又不盲目接受一切,而是致力于提出自己的见解。这是一篇好论文或一部好专著的魅力之所在。

在评析海勒后现代主义文本怪诞性的五大表现时,作者没有采用平铺直叙的方法,而是夹叙夹议,时而引用原著加以论证,时而摘引伯顿·菲尔德曼、狄毛罗、柯亨、克列格、卡尔马、哈桑、莫里斯等人的话语来阐述,形成了多视角多层次的评述,显得深入浅出,有根有据,令人信服。

其四,深入比较了海勒与库尔特·冯内古特、托马斯·品钦和约翰·巴思等后现代派小说家的异同,加深了读者对海勒作品独创性的认识和理解。专著强调指出:海勒《第二十二条军规》所揭示的黑色幽默具有非理性和荒诞性;冯内古特在《五号屠场》里倾向于愤世嫉俗,生不如死;品钦在《拍卖第四十九批》里展现了美国社会的“熵化”,人类日益走向消亡;巴思在《飘浮的歌剧》和《道路尽头》里则用闹剧或戏仿古代神话来显露黑色幽默——虽然他的散文风格是比较传统的,与海勒的风格很不一样。

这些评述比较生动具体、通俗易懂,使专著对海勒作品的解读增添了活力。它展示了作者对美国后现代派小说的全面了解和把握,以及对海勒研究新方法的探索。

综上所述,我觉得王祖友同志这部专著资料翔实,内容丰富,视角新颖,立论公允,富有创见。它是对国内海勒研究的新贡献,具有较高的理论价值和现实意义。

荣获博士学位是很不容易的,它标志着人生旅途的新起点。王祖友同志毕业后继续在百忙中坚持研究,2007年至今又发表了11篇论文和译文,分别刊于《当代外国文学》、《英美文学研究论丛》、《外语研究》、《暨南学报》和《名作欣赏》等核心刊物。尤其是从他的5篇有关海勒研究的系列论文——《论海勒的后现代狂欢——以〈终了时刻〉为例》、《海勒后现代派小说的怪诞性》、《颠覆〈圣经〉之作——海勒〈上帝知道〉的非原则化》、《我国学者对海勒的解读和接受——纪念约瑟夫·海勒逝世10周年》和《褪不了黑色的黑色幽默

的终曲——读海勒的《今与昔》——从柯尼岛到这里》——不难看出：这5篇论文有的是根据原先他的博士学位论文的一部分扩展而成的，有的则是原先学位论文里所没有的。这说明他的海勒研究取得了新的成果，真令人欣慰。发表一篇论文或一部专著也许不太难，难的是做一个有真才实学的学者，扎扎实实地工作，不断有新作问世，与时俱进，开拓创新，勇攀学术高峰。科学研究贵在坚持，贵在创新。有了创新，有了新成果，就能不断为党和人民的事业作出新贡献。

艰辛而诚实的劳动是最可靠的成功之路。没有捷径可走。美国诗人爱默生说得对：“一个人如果想在任何事情上都成功，他必须为此付出代价。”急躁、自满、偷懒都是前进道路上的拦路虎。吹牛造假更是有害的障碍。一个年轻人要取得成功，必须有坚定的目标，顽强的意志，刻苦的钻研和不懈的努力。许多先辈已为我们作出了榜样，值得我们认真学习。

美国科学家爱因斯坦曾指出：“不要为做一个成功的人而努力，要为做一个有价值的人而努力。”这应该是人生奋斗的目标。什么是有价值的人？我认为应该是对人民对国家有益的人。有了这个目标，在学术道路上就能勇往直前，遇到困难和挫折时不灰心；有了成绩时不骄傲自满，能团结同事，不断前进，从成功走向新的成功，并从成功中获得无限的乐趣。这部专著的出版只说明祖友同志的过去。一切应从零开始。但愿他谦虚谨慎，继续努力前行，在海勒研究和美国文学探索方面有新建树，以此回报社会和关心他的人们。

杨仁敬

2009年10月于厦大

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Introduction

All over the world, boys on every side of the bomb line were laying down their lives for what they had been told was their country, and no one seemed to mind, least of all the boys who were laying down their young lives. There was no end in sight.

—*Catch-22*

Joseph Heller (1923—1999), one of the greatest and the most distinctive of twentieth-century American novelists, gained world fame with his satirical, anti-war novel *Catch-22* (1961). He once remarked, “the only freedom we really have is the freedom to say no.” While *Catch-22* effectively dramatizes a fictional instance of “saying no” to authority, the principle of resistance exists in the real world too, of course. Robert Brustein said that the character Yossarian in *Catch-22* “encouraged the rest of us [those outside the novel] to say no.”^①

Joseph Heller served in the US Air Force during World War II, and wrote a book about his experience in the war. This is the famous *Catch-22*, a novel, the title of which added a term to the English language. The phrase “Catch-22” has entered the English language to signify a no-win situation, particularly one created by a law, regulation or circumstance. In Jerry H. Bryant’s opinion, “[t]he principle of *Catch-22* is a metaphor of the ‘world’ of Husserl which must be bracketed, the ‘inauthenticity’ of Heidegger, the ‘bad faith’ of Sartre, the ‘false consciousness’ of Mannheim, the refusal of the scientist to acknowledge all the evidence” (qtd. in Riley and Mendelson 229). *Catch-22*’s fanciful manipulations of language and its sheer comic capriciousness establish Joseph Heller as a first-rate literary comedian.

Joseph Heller was born in Brooklyn, New York, as the son of poor Jewish parents. His Russian-born father, who was a bakery truck driver, died in 1927 when he was only four years old. After graduating from Abraham Lincoln High School in 1941, Heller joined the Twelfth Air Force. He was stationed in Corsica, where he flew 60 combat missions as a B-25 bombardier. In 1949 Heller received his M. A. from Columbia University. He was a Fulbright scholar at Oxford in 1949—50. Heller worked as a teacher at Pennsylvania State University (1950—52), copywriter for the magazines *Time* (1952—56), *Look* (1956—58), and promotion manager for *McCall's*. He left *McCall's* in 1961 to teach fiction and dramatic writing at Yale University and the University of Pennsylvania. His first stories during his student times were published in such magazines as *Atlantic Monthly* and *Esquire*. In the early 1950s he started working on *Catch-22* while he was employed as a copywriter at a small advertising agency. It took Heller eight years to write his first novel *Catch-18* the name of which was changed into *Catch-22* at the editor's suggestion.

Thirteen years had elapsed before Heller's second novel, *Something Happened*, was published in 1974. He considered it more significant, more timeless, than his first one. In 1979, Heller published *Good as Gold*, a critique of the U. S. government revolving around an English professor's absurd experiences in his ambition for a high position in the government. 1984's *God Knows* is Heller's return to the top of his form: a novel. This is a very funny look at the Old Testament, as told by King David. Only Heller could turn the wise King Solomon into Shlomo, the idiot. As David tells it, the famous story where Solomon suggested cutting the baby in half to find out who its real mother was had been twisted around. According to David, Shlomo was an idiot and actually wanted to cut the baby in half! In 1986, Heller published *No Laughing Matter*, an account of his struggle with Guillain-Barré syndrome, a

neurological disease that practically paralyzed the author for a period in 1981. *Picture This*, an amazing book published in 1988, but not really categorizable, is incredibly interesting and informative. It is a meditation on a painting by Rembrandt of Aristotle contemplating a bust of Homer, discussing the history and context of all three figures, relating them to modern life. Heller returns to the subject of his first novel, Joseph Yossarian, in *Closing Time* (1994). Yossarian and company lament the decline of New York City and American culture and look back nostalgically to the golden age of prewar Coney Island. Insofar as any sequel to a classic can, this novel succeeds. In 1998, Heller published his autobiography, *Now and Then*. Several months later, on December 12 of the next year, Heller died of a heart attack. Heller had been married twice, and had two children with his first wife. Heller's final novel, *Portrait of an Artist, as an Old Man* was published posthumously in 2000. The novel recounts an aged author's attempts to write what he realizes is his final book—an author whose recent work has been very much overshadowed by his early success.

Morris Dickstein declared that “I'd have to call *Catch-22* the best novel of the sixties” (116) and Robert Merrill also confirmed: “*Catch-22* is widely recognized as one of the most important books written by an American since World War Two. It has received extravagant praise, and become known to almost everyone. The book has been subject of more than two hundred discussions and is taught in most university courses that deal with contemporary American literature” (9). If Nelson Algren's judgment is sound, “*Catch-22* is the strongest repudiation of our civilization, in fiction, to come out of World War II” (358). He went on to conclude that the “novel is not merely the best American novel to come out of World War II; it is the best American novel that has come out of anywhere in years” (358). Those years were the transitional period when American society entered the postindustrial age

and its culture transformed into postmodern ethos.

In the postmodern era, science and technology, which had brought tremendous benefits in medicine, transportation and communications, had also enabled militaries to take the world to the brink of annihilation, as the dropping of the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki demonstrates. Joseph Heller pointed out: “[w]e are living in more dangerous times than the past because our techniques of annihilation have improved” (Sorkin 288). In a society like postmodern America, machines multiplied, fragmented, and transformed human contact. “Everything else in contemporary life...conspires to separate us from each other and makes it impossible to find anything that is permanent and reliable” (Elliot 1170). The faster science and technology is advancing, the more pressing the problem is: what is the use of the quickly developing science and technology? In his often-quoted *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, French philosopher Jean-Francois Lyotard exposes the legitimation of science and thus the transcendent status of scientific knowledge (Lyotard 3). In elaborating postmodern indeterminacy and immanence, Ihab Hassan emphatically mentions the new science. He states: “Einstein forced the universe of Galileo and Newton to reveal an entirely different face” (57). In 1927, Werner Heisenberg published his famous paper on the Uncertainty Principle: either the momentum of a particle or its position could be precisely determined, not both. In the same year, Niels Bohr formulated a similar principle—Principle of Complementarity: since light seemed to behave both as waves and as quanta of particles, logical contradiction could be heuristically viewed under the aspect of complementarity. In *Picture This* (1988), Heller adopts a stance like that of Heisenberg. Like Heisenberg, Heller affirms the paradoxical implication of this: human insight is, by necessity, limited no matter what propositional stance one assumes, in fact it is limited precisely because one assumes

such a stance. Hassan also thinks that Kurt Gödel demonstrated that every logical structure must be part of a larger and “stronger” structure (59). Gödel’s Theorem plays a part in modern linguistic theories, which emphasize the power of language to come up with new ways to express ideas. In his masterpiece *Catch-22*, Heller constructs *Catch-22*, which is a paradox, a conception bearing resemblance to quantum theory’s description of the nature of light or Gödel’s Incompleteness Theorem.

Throughout the 1940s and 1950s America was overwhelmed with concerns about the threat of Communism growing in Eastern Europe and China. Capitalizing on the national hysteria of Communism, Senator Joseph McCarthy set out on a paranoid hunt for “Reds” which destroyed the families and careers of many innocent people, and even lives in the process, for instance, the Rosenbergs. McCarthyism’s main impact is “until the early 1960s, effective public criticism of America’s role in the world was essentially nonexistent, the antidemocratic practices associated with it continued even after the anti-Communist furor receded” (Schrecker 105).

The subtle and pervasive stress of the 1950s was portrayed in J. D. Salinger’s *The Catcher in the Rye* (1951), Ralph Ellison’s *Invisible Man* (1952), Saul Bellow’s novella *Seize the Day* (1956), Jack Kerouac’s *On the Road* (1957), and Philip Roth’s *Goodbye, Columbus* (1959). Beat writers like Kerouac were offering outpourings of pure energy, physical and intellectual, meant to reflect the potential and power underneath. Regarded as literary outlaws, they gave dauntless expression to the subcultures or counterculture existing alongside the mainstream. The 1960s had loosened up American society, transposing the youth culture of the fifties into a more political and visionary context, which Allen Ginsberg helped to articulate. The early form of postmodernism was defined as the “attitude” of the 1960s counterculture, or, as the

“new sensibility” of the 1960s social and artistic avant-garde to the degree that, by the late 1970s, William Spanos began to see postmodernism as “a fundamentally and radically disruptive impulse, undermining that which has become official, that is, the cultural value system the State relies on to maintain its authority without having to resort to force” (qtd. in Bertens 51). The counterculture is “the direct descendents of the Beats of the 1950s” (Tindall and Shi 1447). As a member of the post-World War II era and successor to the Beat Generation, Heller developed a very satirical approach towards institutions, particularly the national government and the military. Heller’s *Catch-22* perfectly captured a mood in the United States at a time when blind obedience to authority was starting to be questioned. *Catch-22* has been called “the counterculture bible of the 1960’s” (qtd. in Ruderman 20). As the Vietnam War progressed, the military insanities and cynicisms of the time seemed to be best exemplified by the “black humor” of *Catch-22*. Heller once said: “I see the Vietnam War as an extension of the Cold War that began in the late Forties and ended with the decline of the domino theory after John Kennedy’s death” (Sorkin 152). In *Good as Gold*, which was hailed as “one of the important books of our generation” by the *Chicago Sun-Times*, Heller explored the Jewish-American experience in the postwar era in an often hostile world.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, a preoccupation with language began to dominate philosophy and gave it its linguistic turn. A salient characteristic of the 20th century philosophy is its overwhelming concern with language. Richard Rorty provides an excellent account of what is called the “linguistic turn” of philosophy and characterizes linguistic philosophy as “the view that philosophical problems are problems which may be solved (or dissolved) either by reforming language, or by understanding more about the language we presently