



# **EAST – WEST CULTURAL PASSAGE**

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## Foreword

The present volume is a tribute to the memory of Dumitru Ciocoi-Pop, outstanding professor of British and American Studies and former Rector of Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu (1992-2004). The twelve years in which he held the highest position in University administration have truly made a difference in the life of the institution which developed and flourished as never before. The University grew tenfold with regard to the number of students, it doubled with regard to the number of schools; it became an international partner, and started exerting a significant influence upon the life of the city in which it is located.

Dumitru Ciocoi-Pop was a leader who shaped the agenda for his institution and his community through value-based leadership. A humanist and creative writer, who suffered significantly during the years of oppression in his native Romania, Dumitru Ciocoi-Pop emerged from that period of national and personal suffering not bitter and self-centered, but open and giving. He understood very well the harmful things people can do to each other to preserve their positions of power. As a university leader, however, he did not reflect on the suffering of the past but on the potential of the young people around him. He inspired in them a vision of a better, freer, and fairer world where hard work and ethical behavior will be rewarded.

As Rector of “Lucian Blaga” University of Sibiu in Romania, he used his leadership platform to open the eyes of the students he served to a new world of opportunities and ideas. He had a vision for the future that inspired those around him as well as the capacity to feel the potential of each human being he encountered. He intuitively knew how to express humanity and thoughtfulness towards every fellow human being. His far-reaching vision that inspired confidence and hope in those around him together with the ability to command respect without demanding it as well as the talent to be unfailingly fair and just helped him move things in the

direction he considered right. The kind of strategic management Dumitru Ciocoi-Pop practiced as a Rector was based on his firm belief that Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu should start shaping its own destiny while adapting and keeping pace with its environment which meant increasing competition and financial challenges. He constantly foregrounded action and openness, acting according to the dictum “We do what we say and we say what we do.”

This volume also celebrates the scholar and the begetter of scholars that Dumitru Ciocoi-Pop was in his remarkable teaching career. While his lectures always had a mesmerizing effect on students, Dumitru Ciocoi-Pop managed to inculcate in his students the conviction that literature is not a pastime but a vital enterprise, one that can change not only one’s mind but one’s life.

The range of his scholarly interests and his encyclopaedic mind is evinced in the great variety of courses, undergraduate as well as graduate, he taught along the years. Thus, he taught a wide range of courses in the history of English and American literature with special emphasis on Modernism, as well as translation studies, twentieth-century Western culture and civilization, etc. He also supervised a large number of doctoral dissertations in fields ranging from Shakespearean drama through Postmodernism, from the Caribbean poet Derek Walcott to the African-American writer Alice Walker. While he was deeply respected for the wise guidance of his doctoral candidates’ work, he was also feared for the high but unobtrusive standards he set for them.

Dumitru Ciocoi-Pop will also be remembered for the books he authored along the years. His most important contribution to the field of literary criticism remains his exegesis of Aldous Huxley’s fiction entitled *Aldous Huxley’s Literary Ideology* (1994). He was not only an insightful critic, but also a very refined translator, whose rendering of Lucian Blaga’s poetry into English is one of the finest to date, his creative and recreative work rendering the poems a new and second voice worthy of their subtle nature. His remarkable translation of Blaga’s poetry should be viewed from the perspective of his being himself a poet, whose two volumes of poems written in *English – Doubting Certainties* (1994) and *Love*

*Never Fails* (1999) – point to his sensitivity as well as to his outstanding mastery of the English language. His translations of English prose (Aldous Huxley, Herman Melville) as well as his editing of *A Bilingual Anthology of Romanian Poetry*, together with the late Sever Trifu (1997) add to the image of a highly sophisticated intellectual.

As academic leader, teacher, scholar, poet and translator, and above all as a fascinating human being, Dumitru Ciocoi-Pop offered us the full measure of what a man can be. While living a life marked by severe ups and downs dictated by the unexpected turns of history, he found the strength ‘to endure and prevail.’

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The first part of this volume discusses food references in poems, novels and non-fiction, providing thought-provoking approaches to Food Studies, a relatively new area of academic research. Anke Klitzing offers a gastrocritical reading of Seamus Heaney’s poetry, with a view to uncovering perceptions about life, love and death, family relationships, as well as the connections between people and nature captured in the everyday activities expressed in his poems. Similarly, Clementina Mihăilescu and Stela Pleșa examine the role of the food references in Lesley Saunders’s poems, “from a phenomenological perspective that merges the exterior substantiality of food with the reality of imagination.” By analyzing contemporary aspects of the American Dream in Dave Eggers’s recent work of literary non-fiction, *Monk of Mokha*, Raluca Andreescu explores the transnational intersections between food/coffee, entrepreneurial endeavors and cultural identity. Estella Ciobanu proposes an intriguing examination of Virginia Woolf’s novel *To the Lighthouse* and two movies, *The Cook, the Thief, His Wife and Her Lover* and *In the Mood for Love* with a view to uncovering the intricate emotional connections between food and cooks. Furthermore, from a comparative approach, Estella Ciobanu and Carmen Martinaș Florescu analyze the complicated ties between the eroticisation of food and power relations in William Shakespeare’s *Titus Andronicus* and the movies *Chocolat* and *I*

*Served the King of England*. On a different note, Cristina Stanciu's in-depth examination of *Last Standing Woman*, a novel by Native-American author and social activist Winona LaDuke, illustrates the complex relationships between food sovereignty, recovery, community regeneration and survival, on the one hand, and issues of gender, the environment, and tribal resilience, on the other.

In the latter part of the volume, Najoua Stambouli looks at *West of the Jordan*, a novel by Jordanian-American writer Laila Halaby, in order to explore images of otherness – in terms of values, beliefs, and lifestyle – held and perpetuated by Arab- and Western communities. The volume ends with an article by Miruna Ciocoi-Pop and Emilian Tirban, who propose an analysis of Ernest Hemingway's novel *The Sun Also Rises* with a view to examining the absurdity of life captured in the novel, and the ways in which it impacts the characters' psychology and actions.

The Editors

In Memoriam  
A Visionary: Dumitru Ciocoi Pop (1943-2019)

C. PETER MAGRATH  
Binghamton University, USA



Dumitru Ciocoi-Pop was one of the two most memorable persons I have met in my life, and fittingly, both these encounters – and friendships – were internationally based. The first is a Chinese woman doctor, by now well into her eighties, whom I came to know through educational exchange travels in China. This remarkable woman, Dr. Shuhera, and her husband both suffered brutally during the period of intense repression in the People’s Republic of China known as the Cultural Revolution – a revolution that hardly advanced either culture or humanity! Because of her education and professional skills, she and her husband were exiled into a remote, rural, part of China and made to work in the fields, harvesting crops and doing heavy manual labor. At night, Dr. Shuhera performed her life-saving work, performing operations, often without anesthetics, on kitchen tables and working by candle and flashlight to save people, deal with wounds, and assist with pregnancies. Later, when the repression ended, she returned to Beijing and had a fulfilling career assisting in severely needed family planning work in China. The compelling thing about this human being was her undying enthusiasm for her work, her commitment as an internationalist to

develop strong ties with some of us in the United States, and, put most simply, her desire to do good things.

And, of course, the second truly memorable one was the person so appropriately honored in this volume. I met Professor Ciocoi-Pop in the early 1990's while serving as President of the University of Missouri. He came there with a delegation of Rectors from East European countries that had only recently become liberated from the dictatorships of their Communist governments. At a small ceremony, I welcomed this group of distinguished East European educators who were visiting the United States to observe our universities, how they operated, and to exchange ideas freely among themselves and with newly discovered American colleagues. Dumitru Ciocoi-Pop and I began a short conversation, and as we say in colloquial English, we "bonded" in an instant. And later that evening we spoke a bit more at a social event that I hosted.

All those who met Dumitru Ciocoi-Pop know he was a memorable person: his unquenchable love for education and learning and its dissemination; his lifelong efforts to promote learning even during a repressive, totalitarian dictatorship; his ability to endure when imprisoned and then later made to do meaningless technical work; his poetry and writings over the years which exemplify his spirit and love of learning and compassionate understanding of what truly matters in this troubled world; and, of course, his work in helping to revivify and energize and develop Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu into a distinguished university serving not only his beloved country of Romania, but serving the interests of international education.

All of us who know even a little about Romania – a country I truly cherish for many reasons, including in part perhaps my own ethnic background as a Latin – know the huge challenges that all of Romania's universities face in promoting learning and teaching and discovery and its application to useful social purposes. Dumitru Ciocoi-Pop was a visionary, but a visionary who moved toward his objectives by being practical and by working tirelessly, day and night, week after week, month after month, year after year.

But it was not only Rector Ciocoi-Pop's constant efforts to develop and improve Lucian Blaga University that warrant recognition. It was his commitment to decency and to education, the unquenchable spirit that animated him. This man, as we say in the United States, was an administrator or executive, but he was first and last a professor who believed in learning, promoted it in his literary work, and – not always the case in universities whether in Romania, the United States, or elsewhere – put students and their needs first.

Dumitru Ciocoi-Pop, moreover, was motivated by a profound commitment to international education. He believed passionately that universities in this twenty-first century must be not only for the people of their country but linked with universities and people in countries throughout the world. As a believer myself that the only universities that will truly count and be of value in the years ahead are those that are international in concept and practice, Dumitru Ciocoi-Pop exemplified what the modern university must become – and be – in a globalized world. There is no single model for universities with regard to their international involvements, but there must be a commitment fueled by a passion for learning as transcending national and cultural borders so that we may all learn from each other, understand each other as human beings, and strive to educate for a better world. This was Dumitru Ciocoi-Pop's commitment and life's work. It explains why, aside from his own literary and poetic work, which stands on its own great merits, Lucian Blaga is one of the universities that will be, long after his leadership as Rector ended, a significant Romanian university with an international reputation.

In recent years it has been my privilege to work in the programs of the Salzburg Seminar to learn about and to assist, where possible, with universities in Central and Eastern Europe and in Russia. The objective is that all of us, from different nationalities and educational cultures, can learn from each other and contribute to improving higher education. We work to assist universities that too often are stultified and restricted by outmoded past practices so that they can adapt to a new world that is more

democratic, more decentralized, and less controlled by some all-knowing “Center.” The universities of this century need to function flexibly in a world in which economies are interrelated and in which the emergence of the new information technologies holds the opportunity – if not the certainty – for better communication and collaboration among peoples.

Over the past decades a limited but important number of East and Central European and Russian universities have shown a willingness to change, to become as international as possible in deed and not just in word. They, I believe, while honoring the past and its best traditions, are the universities of the future. Among these, Lucian Blaga University stands out because of the leadership and commitment of Rector Ciocoi-Pop. It has shown that it can adapt to a new Romania and a changing world, collaborate with many universities around the world, and make international education in its curriculum and teaching and research a central, organizing force. That is why Lucian Blaga University with its Rector has been one of the stars of the reform efforts led by the Salzburg Seminar. That was, of course, very nice for Rector Ciocoi-Pop, but it is even more important for Romania that this university, and a few other universities in this important part of the world, are being made irrevocably international.

In short, Lucian Blaga University is, thanks to many individuals, but most especially to Dumitru Ciocoi-Pop, an international university that serves Romania, yes, but also serves the world. Without being naïve, education and understanding are a significant part of the answer to the myriad social and economic problems that all countries face. Education alone is never simply “the” solution, but without education no solutions are possible. And equally essential is the necessity of humanity and understanding.

I conclude with a story about Dumitru Ciocoi-Pop, which I hope is accurately portrayed from my memory of a conversation about twenty-five years ago. We talked about some of the hard moments he experienced during the worst period of the dictatorship, and how, finally, he emerged to again be a professor at

the university he loved and to serve it as Rector. I asked him whether or not he was bitter about what had happened. His answer in effect was no, because bitterness did not accomplish anything. And he then told me a story about a young student at his university who was bright, had promise, and was seeking a fellowship or an opportunity to pursue his studies in the United States. The student came to him, and Dumitru Ciocoi-Pop knew that the father of the young man had been his jailer, when he was unjustly imprisoned. I asked him, “Well what did you do with this young man?” He answered, as I knew he would, “Well of course I helped him; he was a fine young man, a good student, and, after all, he was the son – not the father, and even the father was not an inherently evil person but caught up in executing the orders that came from superiors in the dictatorship.”

He went on to say, “Hatred has to end somewhere; we cannot continue it and let it perpetuate, for then it never ends. At some point we must understand, try to forgive, and move on.” I trust that I have captured the essence if not every detail in this story, correctly. But the point is clear: the ultimate value is understanding and humanity – and promoting education. And to me that says it all about Dumitru Ciocoi-Pop. He was a human being of compassion, understanding, and sensitivity, an internationalist who was truly a citizen of the world as well as of Romania, and was one of the two most memorable people I have ever encountered. His educational legacy as an internationalist not only defined Dumitru Ciocoi-Pop and his remarkable and wonderful humanity, but it influenced and defined the university that was his life.

Farewell, dear Dumitru!

“My Palate Hung With Starlight” –  
A Gastrocritical Reading of Seamus Heaney’s Poetry

ANKE KLITZING  
Technological University Dublin, Ireland

**Abstract**

Nobel-prize winning poet Seamus Heaney is celebrated for his rich verses recalling his home in the Northern Irish countryside of County Derry. Yet while the imaginative links to nature in his poetry have already been critically explored, little attention has been paid so far to his rendering of local food and foodways. From ploughing, digging potatoes and butter-churning to picking blackberries, Heaney sketches not only the everyday activities of mid-20th century rural Ireland, but also the social dynamics of community and identity and the socio-natural symbiosis embedded in those practices. Larger questions of love, life and death also infiltrate the scenes, as they might in life, through hints of sectarian divisions and memories of famine.

This essay proposes a gastrocritical reading of Heaney’s poetry to study these topics in particularly meaningful ways. Gastrocriticism is a nascent critical approach to literature that applies the insights gained in Food Studies to literary writings, investigating the relationship of humans to each other and to nature as played out through the prism of food, or as Heaney wrote: “Things looming large and at the same time [...] pinned down in the smallest detail.”

**Keywords:** gastrocriticism, Seamus Heaney, food studies, Ireland, foodways, georgic poetry



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## Food Imagery in Lesley Saunders' Poetry

CLEMENTINA MIHĂILESCU

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and

STELA PLEȘA

University of Craiova, Romania

### **Abstract**

The essay entitled “Food Imagery in Lesley Saunders’ Poetry” expands upon various food issues that will be approached via Gaston Bachelard’s aesthetic theory which situates us in the proximity of a sensible point of objectivity further enlarged upon from a phenomenological perspective that merges the exterior substantiality of food with the reality of imagination. The acquired intimate connotations of the poetess’ food environment are tackled in terms of the inner/outer opposition and the Platonic dialectics that involves old versus new, good versus evil, plenty versus scarcity, revealing the dynamic virtues of “roots,” the emblem of the diversity of food. Our approach to the house, where various types of food are being prepared, in relation to its pivotal functions of dwelling, preparing food and sharing it, turns both the house and food into the unfailing commonality and sociality constructs of all places and ages.

**Keywords:** Saunders, Bachelard, food, house, commonality and sociality constructs



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“Very much alive and very much under threat”:  
Chasing the Coffee-Flavored American Dream in  
Dave Eggers’s *Monk of Mokha*

RALUCA ANDREESCU  
University of Bucharest, Romania

“Oh coffee, / Oh story of lovers, / You help me repel my sleep, /  
You help me stay awake and worship my lord while people fall  
asleep. / Don’t blame me for my intense love for coffee./  
It is the drink of the righteous people.”  
(Shaykh Ali Ibn Omar Al-Shadhili qtd. in Tai)

**Abstract**

This essay examines the manner in which Dave Eggers’s recent work of literary nonfiction, *The Monk of Mokha* (2018), sets out to amplify the voices of the marginalized by chronicling the adventures of a young Yemeni-American in search of the best coffee in the world. This takes the protagonist from the infamous neighborhood of his birth in San Francisco, “a valley of desperation in a city of towering wealth,” to his trials and tribulations in the war-torn homeland of Yemen. I will argue that the narrative, which blurs the lines between fiction and nonfiction and combines history, politics, biography and thriller, highlights the American entrepreneurial zeal and contagious exuberance which still feed the

immigrant American Dream and proves that social mobility in the United States is still attainable, sometimes as a result of chasing the world's most dangerous cup of coffee. Moreover, I argue that the protagonist's endeavor can be read within the larger context of contemporary political consumption as an example of social justice activism and ethics-driven buying.

**Keywords:** coffee, immigrant, American Dream, social mobility, civil war, Yemen, ethical consumption.



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Not Just Eating, but Consuming:  
Food and Cooks in  
*To the Lighthouse, The Cook, the Thief,  
His Wife and Her Lover* and *In the Mood for Love*

ESTELLA CIOBANU  
Ovidius University of Constanța, Romania

**Abstract**

This essay examines the perspectives on food, cooking and commensality offered by three highly dissimilar works: Virginia Woolf's novel *To the Lighthouse* (1927), Peter Greenaway's film *The Cook, the Thief, His Wife and Her Lover* (1989) and, as a cultural foil for the two British works, a Chinese film, Wong Kar-Wai's *In the Mood for Love* (2000). Food or eating is not the central topic of any of them, save Greenaway's film. Rather, their common denominator is the interplay of visibility and its implicit or explicit social reference, for all three works engage, however differently, with the *class differential* entailed in scenes featuring food or eating. I use Edmund Husserl's phenomenological concept of orientation – amended in intersectional terms – to examine the cook figures and instances of representing food or eating in the three works. My working hypothesis is that such representations may reveal both the permanent negotiation of cultural values attached to culinary practices, including to the agents involved, and what they conceal socially.

**Keywords::** *To the Lighthouse* (Virginia Woolf), *The Cook, the Thief, His Wife and Her Lover* (Peter Greenaway), *In the Mood for Love* (Wong Kar-Wai), food, cooks, commensality, intersectionality theory, philosophy, orientation (Edmund Husserl)



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Food Porn in *Titus Andronicus*, *Chocolat* and *I Served the King of England*  
(*Obsluhoval jsem anglického krále*)

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and

CARMEN MARTINAȘ FLORESCU

“Constantin Brătescu” National Pedagogical  
High School, Constanța, Romania**Abstract**

This essay studies scenes that focus on food and eating in the films *Chocolat* (2000) and *I Served the King of England* (*Obsluhoval jsem anglického krále*, 2006). To assess whether or not they constitute food porn we compare and contrast such scenes with the description of an unwholesome recipe for cannibalistic eating in *Titus Andronicus*, which anticipates our contemporary food obsession. At its most basic (and controversial), food porn names the alluring visualisation of certain foodstuffs, which renders food the object of erotically tinged desire. Serving different purposes in the two films, such eroticisation of food can be more than self-referential insofar as it indicates human interactions framed as power relations. Showing chocolate making and eating, in *Chocolat*, actually visualises a woman's exertion of power over the women and their husbands in a bigoted French village in 1959, intended to awaken the people's benumbed desire. Not food proper

is the object of desire in the Czech film, but the young woman served up as ocular side dish to the moguls dining in a stylish Prague restaurant before the outburst of WWII. By contrast, food eroticisation is completely absent in Shakespeare; at stake is a verbal (and implicitly visual) concern with the transformation of flesh and body parts into ingredients for seemingly festive consumption. Visualising food, in *Titus*, implicitly visualises the reclaim and exertion of power in the fictional Roman polity. In all these cases, the concern with food vectorises power relations and may fluidise gendered hierarchies, an issue which food porn scholarship rarely addresses.

**Keywords:** *Titus Andronicus* (Shakespeare); *Chocolat* (director Lasse Hallström, 2000); *Obsluhoval jsem anglického krále* (*I Served the King of England*, director Jiří Menzel, 2006); food porn



10.2478/ewcp-2019-0015

“The Recovery of the People Is Tied to the Recovery of  
Food”: Food Sovereignty and  
Winona LaDuke’s *Last Standing Woman*

CRISTINA STANCIU  
Virginia Commonwealth University, USA

“The lifeway that spoke to our people before,  
and gave our people life in all the generations before us,  
is still the way of life that will give us life today. How it will manifest  
itself and find expression in this new time comes as a part of the  
responsibility of how we go about revival and renewal.”  
(Jim Dumont, Fish Clan elder,  
qtd. in LaDuke, *All Our Relations*, 132)

**Abstract**

This essay turns to LaDuke’s literature and activism to explore ways in which contemporary Native American writers center their work around issues of food sovereignty, environmental protection, and economic self-determination as essential platforms for community regeneration, renewal, and survival. I argue that *Last Standing Woman* (1997), Anishinaabe writer Winona LaDuke’s first novel, dramatizes many of these concerns at the heart of her activist and political work. Central to the novel *Last Standing Woman* is the significance of wild rice for the White Earth Anishinaabe (Ojibwe) people of Minnesota. In *Last Standing Woman*, wild rice is not only a traditional and sustainable crop but also one that can ensure the livelihood of the community. At the heart of a feminist and activist novel like *Last Standing Woman* –

as well as Winona LaDuke's activist work, more broadly – is a two-fold challenge, which resonates across much Native American writing: on the one hand, the challenge to preserve (existing resources, cultural practices, etc.); on the other, to recover the losses Native communities have suffered historically through colonization and its many consequences, such as the enormous loss of land suffered by the White Earth community. The turn to literature provides Winona LaDuke with a powerful site of political engagement, where she foregrounds issues of gender, tribal politics, and the environment at the same time as she tells a powerful story about Anishinaabe continued resilience.

**Keywords:** Indigenous Literature, food sovereignty, sustainability, dispossession, food insecurity, Winona LaDuke, Anishinaabe literature.



10.2478/ewcp-2019-0016

Images of non-Arabs in *West of the Jordan*  
by Laila Halaby

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University of Sfax, Tunisia

**Abstract**

The Jordanian-American novelist Laila Halaby is perceived as one of the most well-known contemporary Arab-American writers whose hyphenated identity raises questions regarding which side of the hyphen she belongs to. In this respect, one way to determine whether Halaby identifies herself as an Arab or an American is to examine how she perceives and explores Arab and American cultures and to investigate the different images she constructs about Arabs and Americans. In *West of the Jordan* (2003), throughout the tales of the four female cousins, this American writer of Arab descent explores the Arab communal values and conventions, as well as the Western beliefs and ways of life. Most importantly, Halaby depicts different images of Arabs and non-Arabs in the context of social, political, and economic conflicts and relationships. In this article, the focus will be mainly on the images of non-Arabs in *West of the Jordan*. My study, accordingly, draws on Edward Said's *Orientalism* and its counterpart *Occidentalism*, which offer theories of communal and identity construction, as well as practices that lead to stereotyping discourses about the other. This article will consequently start with a definition of the term *Orientalism* and its counterpart *Occidentalism*, moving on to deal with the different images of non-Arabs in the second part. Indeed, this latter section investigates how Halaby, who belongs to the Western and Eastern worlds, produces knowledge of the Western

society and culture, by offering interesting representations of the two worlds. The third part will shed some light on Halaby's attitude toward the American world and toward the Arab-American relationships.

**Keywords:** Orientalism, Occidentalism, image, schema, Arab-American, Arabs, non-Arabs

Absurdity in Ernest Hemingway's  
*The Sun Also Rises*

MIRUNA CIOCOI-POP  
Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu, Romania  
and  
EMILIAN TÎRBAN  
Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu, Romania

**Abstract**

The purpose of this essay is to capture and convey, through the use of different works of philosophy that encapsulate thoughts on the same idea, the motif of the absurdity of life in Ernest Hemingway's first novel *The Sun Also Rises*. The concept of the absurd will be, first and foremost, examined through absurdist criticism of the novel, using the philosophical thought of Albert Camus, Soren Kierkegaard, Friedrich Nietzsche and other philosophers who captured the essence of the absurd in their philosophy, all in order to represent this concept in Hemingway's novel and to show how it truly manifests itself upon some of the most important characters' psychology and their actions, portrayed throughout the three parts of the book. Mention will be made of the concept of "Lost generation" as it is the cornerstone to understanding, firstly, the characters' background and current psychological status and the effects that the war had on an entire generation, leading them to an unwilling search for meaning in what this essay strives to present as a meaningless life.

**Keywords:** absurdity, alcoholism, trauma, psychology, emasculation, resentment, meaninglessness

