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“NOT THE TIME FOR FIGHTING BUT FOR TAKING CARE OF EACH OTHER”: PORTRAYALS OF THE SECOND WORLD WAR IN TWO ASIAN-AMERICAN PLAYS¹

Most of humanity’s recorded history has been indelibly marked by armed conflicts in various places around the world, yet the scale and effect of the two world wars in the first half of the twentieth century were unprecedented. Both wars remapped the geography, politics, economies, and consciousness of prior realities, and echoed deafeningly throughout the modern literatures of diverse nations. Anglophone literature overtly portrays wartime atrocities and human ordeals, and concurrently raises awareness of, and agitates against, the savagery of warfare. It does so through its poignant Trench Poetry, the anti-war novels of the Lost Generation, dramas of the Holocaust, and theater of genocide, among others. Another, relatively recent, subgenre of Anglophone drama also addresses the subject of armed conflicts and their consequences, although its critics and reviewers mostly focus on identity politics, minority and ethnic studies, and the mix of ideas and images that are features of Asian-American theater. Within it researchers can find arresting examples of how an English-speaking theater represents conflict-induced displacement and migration and other repercussions of the Second World War, while dealing with one of the most discomfiting events in recent US history. This paper examines Wakako Yamauchi’s representation of the state-controlled relocation of Asian-American citizens and their consequent experiences, in her play *I2-I-A*; and Velina Hasu Houston’s portrayal of the Second World War’s ideological and socio-economic repercussions in the Japanese community, in *Asa Ga Kimashita* (*Morning Has Broken*).

¹ An earlier version of the paper was presented at the 15th ESSE conference in September 2021.

Key words: Asian-American Drama; multicultural theatre; Wakako Yamauchi; Velina Hasu Houston; *12-1-1*; *Asa Ga Kimashita*

INTRODUCTION: IS THE HISTORY OF HUMANITY THE HISTORY OF WAR?

It does appear that the history of humanity is indelibly written by conflict, rather than by victories, amity, or (scientific and other) advancements. One look at the wars listed in Encyclopedia Britannica is enough to conclude that an account of humanity is a narrative of the wars it has fought, and that the number of armed conflicts and their casualties rises with the years. Thus, the aforementioned list displays only 11 wars fought over 14 centuries of ancient history, but a devastating number of 125 conflicts battled in the first 1001 years AD. Upon closer inspection, the list also reveals that as the Modern era progresses, the number of wars increases dramatically, with approximately 11 in the seventeenth century; 21 in the eighteenth; 36 in the nineteenth; and 37 in the twentieth (Pallardy n.d.). According to Chris Hedges, humans have been at peace for only 8 percent of the recorded history of our world spanning more than 3400 years (Hedges 2003). Our past may seem peaceful, but we have to comply with Max Roser who suggests that "one reason why some people might have this impression is that many of the past conflicts feature less prominently in our memories; they are simply forgotten" (Roser 2016).

My previous paper on two theater of genocide plays (presented at the Third Conference on English Language, Literature, Teaching and Translation Studies [CELLTTS] at the University of Sarajevo in 2018, and published in the corresponding Proceedings²) explains that the final century of the second millennium was predominantly marked by an unremitting epidemic of large-scale wars. The enormity of these conflicts is visible not only in the number of countries and regions involved, but also in the number of casualties and the range of atrocities committed: a direct consequence of the increased production and precision of war machinery, and the transformations in warfare strategy in the first half of the twentieth century. In the infographic "The 100 Worst Atrocities over the last millennia", Bill Marsh justly states: "The deadliest 'multicides' are more plentiful in recent centuries, given that there were

² Titled "Living, Reading, Teaching and Translating in a World Dominated by the Culture of War and War Cultures", editors Lejla Mulalić and Merima Osmankadić, *Dobra knjiga*, 2019. See Ifeta Ćirić-Fazlija, "Conveying the Horrors of War in Erik Ehn's *Maria Kizito* and Catherine Filloux's *Silence of God* (pp. 170–181).

more people to kill, and better ways to kill them on a grand scale” (Marsh quoted in Roser 2016). This is further supported by a comparative analysis of two of Max Roser’s infographics in his empirical perspective on the history of war and peace (Roser 2016). The first presents figures on the number of English males killed in battle in a period of approximately 700 years (1170s to 1900s), expressed per thousand; the second enumerates the number of deaths in international battles in the twentieth century only, expressed per 100,000. The infographics show that the number of casualties in even the bloodiest events of English history (such as the notorious War of the Roses or the horrifying 1642–1651 Civil War), remained far below the figures indicating sum total of people who lost their lives in the First and Second World Wars. In addition to the human cost, both wars had immediate effects on survivors. After the First World War, global economic, geographical and political lines were redrawn and pre-Great-War realities were shattered, causing changes that reverberated in the modern literatures of various nations.

THE DEPICTION OF WAR IN ANGLOPHONE³ LITERATURE

Like the modern literature of other nations, Anglophone literature has also overtly portrayed wartime atrocities and human ordeals, and concurrently attempted raising awareness of, and agitated against, the savagery of warfare. It has done so through its poignant Trench Poetry, the anti-war novels of the Lost Generation authors, dramas of the Holocaust and theater of genocide, to mention a few. As it befits the genre which is always “in the here and now”, and which, despite differences in specifics of the dramatic stories, individual dramatis personae, and the structural and technical aspects of the pieces performed, always casts a critical eye on the human subject and her/his destiny, Anglophone dramatic literature and its authors have labored diligently to reach out to their audiences and provoke an emotional response. The examples include John Osborne and his kitchen-sink realism; Arthur Miller’s anti-war plays; Edward Bond’s epic theatrical pieces; Shimon Wincelberg and George Tabori’s Holocaust dramas; Sarah Kane’s In-Yer-Face play *Blasted*; Christina Reid’s poignant anti-war *Tea in a China Cup*; and Kitty Felde, Erik Ehn and Catherine Filloux’s genocide pieces. In most cases, these authors dramatize either the general tropes of war,

³ In this article the term “Anglophone literature” is used in its widest sense to refer to literary texts composed in the English language in Britain and the US, but not exclusively by (male) authors of the white Anglo-Saxon Protestant tradition.

or specific victims' point of view, and openly or obliquely present imagery of hostilities in order to champion peace.

Asian-American drama, a relatively recent example of "ethnic"⁴ dramatic literature, also tackles the subject matter and imagery of the Second World War. It generally focuses on the predicaments of the Issei or Nisei population in the US, and is critically examined through the lens of (world) migrations; cultural and identity politics; racial, ethnic, cultural (and even gender) stereotyping; chauvinism and xenophobia; and the accompanying topics of acculturation and multi- and interculturalism. Many of the texts composed by Asian-Americans of different ethnic origins⁵ do indeed depict the astounding and heart-rending experiences of first- and second-generation Asian Americans and their individual destinies, as they attempt to make a living in the US despite state efforts to control the "yellow peril", and the institutional and social racial profiling of the Asian-American community⁶. The plays by these and other authors of the same background, however, do not discuss only these typical issues; they also address other, equally challenging and unsettling aspects of Asian, Asian-American and Amerasian life in the twentieth century US, or their existence before they moved to America, including the Second World War, the internment of Asian Americans, and the US occupation of Japan. It is the contention of this paper's author that this category of modern dramatic literature provides the most striking illustrations of the ways in which English-speaking theater dramatizes conflict-induced displacement and migration and the repercussions of the Second World War, while effectively dealing with one of the most disconcerting events in the US' recent history.

The next section of the paper first discusses the state-controlled relocations of Asian-American citizens and their consequent experiences in Wakako Yamauchi's play *I2-I-A*. It then examines the ideological and socio-economic repercussions of the Second World War for the Japanese community, as shown by Velina Hasu Houston in her drama *Asa Ga Kimashita (Morning Has Broken)*. The paper concludes by

⁴ The use of the term "ethnic" in reference to Asian-American theatre and drama is particularly problematic as it presupposes the existence of a single, unifying, common ethnic denominator in a social group that is the epitome of multiethnic, multicultural and diversified strata. For more information see (Ono 2005); Lee (2006); Hendry & Wong (2006); and Lei in Krasner (2005).

⁵ Including (but not limited to) second-generation Chinese Americans David Henry Hwang (*M. Butterfly*, *FOB*, *Chinglish*), Elizabeth Wong (*China Doll*, *Letters to a Student Revolutionary*) and Frank Chin (*Chickencoop Chinaman*); the second-generation Japanese Americans such as Bessie Toishigawa Inouye (*Nisei*), Momoko Iko (*Gold Watch*), Wakako Yamauchi (*And the Souls Shall Dance*, *The Music Lessons*) and Genny Lim (*Paper Angels*, *Bitter Cane*); and Amerasian Velina Hasu Houston (*Tea*, *Kokoro: True Heart*).

⁶ For in-depth discussions of Asian-American theatre and/or drama, see the previously mentioned theoreticians and critics, as well as Čirić-Fazlija (2017) and (2019b).

evinced the similarities and differences between these two pieces of Asian-American theater. Both plays are in part, if not fully, based on or inspired by the authentic personal experiences of the authors or their close family members. The paper, however, does not take the author-based approach, or fall into the trap of biographism, although at times it foregrounds information on the authors, and certain facts pertaining to the playtexts’ publications and performance.

“NOT THE TIME FOR FIGHTING”: KEEPING THE FAMILY TOGETHER IN *12-1-A*

Authored by Wakako Yamauchi, one of the pioneers of Asian-American theater, the play with the curious title *12-1-A* was composed in 1982. It was premiered the same year by the famous East West Players, the first Asian-American theater company in the US (established in 1965 in Los Angeles). Later that year, the play was produced by another highly influential theatre company in the field, the Asian American Theater Company, and then revived by Kumu Kahua Theatre – the US’ second Asian-American theater (established in 1970 in Hawai’i). It was further performed by the University of Southern California’s Massman Theatre in 1990, the University of California in Berkeley 1992, and Cal State University in Los Angeles in 2012. When it was first produced, the play was referred to as “a stirring account of those bitter years” (Rainer quoted in Hasu Houston 1993a: 26), but it does not seem to have lessened the ongoing racial hatred towards Japanese Americans or other non-Caucasian US citizens: a local Los Angeles television station received hate mail after it presented a piece on internment camps 50 years later (see Hasu Houston 1993a: 27), and more recent events confirm the prejudice.

In its two acts of seven scenes altogether (three in Act One and four in Act Two), Yamauchi’s play portrays camp life and the struggles of the twelve interned Asian Americans – male and female first- and second-generation US citizens (Issei and Nisei) – as they try to come to terms with reality. They have been forcefully relocated from their respective homes in different parts of the US, to a camp in Poston, Arizona. The state took their civil rights away – because “we all look the same to them” (Yamauchi 1993: 54) – several months after the country’s official declaration of war in December 1941, and Roosevelt’s signing of Executive Order 9066 in February 1942. The story of this sudden, nightmarish, and grim turn of events and the detainees’ attempts to make camp life bearable (although they do not know how long the misery will last, if it will ever end, or what their future might hold) unfolds over the course

of a year, from May 1942 to July 1943. It is seen through the eyes and interactions of the members of the Tanaka household – Mrs. Tanaka, an Issei widow in her forties, and her 20-year-old son Mitchio (Mitch) and 17-year-old daughter Koko, both born in the US (Nisei)—with other internees. These are Mrs. Ichioka, the forty-five-year-old wife of heartbroken Ichioka (an absent character); her son Ken (Kenji), a 19-year-old Nisei whom Koko remembers from school; Yoshiko Yoshida (Yo), a 25-year-old Nisei woman who is on her own since she was separated from her father and sent to a different detention center; Harry Yamane, a mentally disabled 25-year-old Nisei; and a handful of minor characters, whose functions are subsidiary: 19-year-old Nisei boys Sam and Bill; 45-year-old Issei Mr. Endo; 35-year-old Nisei man Yama(saki); and Fuji-san's 16-year-old daughter (who is not given a name or a clearly delineated identity). The action is set in front of and inside the Tanaka's meager temporary accommodation in barrack 12-1-A of the Poston camp, which Mrs. Tanaka tries to make as habitable and hospitable as possible. This and the way she nurtures her family are reminders of the play's actual, non-fictional background: the author's family had the same address during their internment (see Yamamoto 2012). The play's dialogue is fully in English, with only a few words and phrases in Japanese. The Issei figures talk in broken English, while the Nisei speak it fluently, which is an additional indicator of their respective, individual characterizations.

The play opens with the Tanaka family arriving at the camp on a windy May day in 1942, stupefied and exhausted, akin to "zombies in the desert" (Yamauchi 1993: 48). An impending dust storm (the first they have ever experienced) stops a fight between Mitch and Koko, and hurls Yo, Ken, and Harry into the action, thereby introducing the audience to the protagonists and the problem at work. From there the play's action progresses steadily in a linear fashion. The unity of time is not fully preserved, but the play is kept coherent and within the scope of realist theater by its plot construction, characterization and other structural and formal elements. These include use of the vernacular; the recounting of incidents that occurred elsewhere (such as Mitch's temporary release from the camp to work at a sugar beet farm, and the detainees' strike and protests); the symbolism of the soundscape, and the bowling trophy and playing card motifs, associated with Mitch and Koko respectively.

The play does not present explicit images of battles or wartime strife on stage, but the character's monologues and dialogues continually revolve around the war between the US and Japan, the lives lost on both sides, and the war's effects on Asian-American citizens, such as the ever-increasing xenophobia and anti-Japanese sentiments outside the center and the humiliating camp conditions inside which figure vividly

in the character’s consciousness and reality. While at the onset her family members and compatriots attempt to make camp life as close to normalcy as possible by adapting and decorating the barracks to make them feel more homely; or getting a job to instill a daily routine; or writing reports and recording the details of camp life, Koko refuses to join in the pretense. The world she has known has suddenly vanished, and, desperate and disillusioned, she “look[s] for answers with the utter, quiet belief that there simply are none for a Japanese-American woman in the United States” (Hasu Houston 1993b: 40). In contrast, cynical Yo is a survivor by nature. She keeps her optimism and spirits high, despite her early comparison of her and other single women’s treatment in the camp to those of “whores in a whorehouse ... inmates in prison. Orphans in an orphanage,” suggesting she has been “dealt a stacked deck” (Yamauchi 1993: 50). Mrs Ichioka criticizes the US government loudly, citing the appalling conditions in this and other detention centers, and stating that “Freedom [sic!] only for white people” (Yamauchi 1993: 75). Even Mitch, having returned from the outside in Act Two, has a change of heart, and claims that “They take away every right we have except the right to be shot at” (Yamauchi 1993: 92). Velina Hasu Houston’s brief analysis of the play properly suggests that:

“The characters feel distrust and anger toward America for, in effect, withholding the promise of the American dream from first-generation Japanese Americans on the basis of their race. Nisei, who are American by birth, are indignant that all the promises of democracy are no longer theirs because their face looks too much like the enemy. The young are torn by confusion as they sort out their emotions and politics amid a hostile America and families who are frustrated by grave losses, shame, and dishonor. The land of the free and the brave has been falsely advertised. Yamauchi takes us on this journey with gentle acuity that allows us, if we are open, to see through every character’s eyes and understand the human frailty of government and the injustice done to Japanese Americans.” (Hasu Houston 1993a: 26–27)

It is this distrust, anger, shame and dishonor that lead the Tanakas to respond negatively to two critical questions about their “unqualified” allegiance to the US at the end of the play. They choose to keep their family unit together, even if it means being sent to a maximum-security camp. This is another step away from retrieving their civil rights, as they will most probably be deported to Japan, even though neither sibling has ever been registered at the Japanese consulate. The wind and the guard tower that “welcomed” the Tanakas in Poston, Arizona now “escort” them to Tula Lake and Nippon, while the symbols of their American lives, the bowling trophy and the deck of cards, are left behind.

“THE TIME TO THINK ABOUT SURVIVAL”: LOSING FAMILY IN *ASA GA KIMASHITA (MORNING HAS BROKEN)*

With its bilingual title, the second play analyzed in this paper was composed in 1980 by Amerasian Velina Avisu Hasu Houston, an academic and second-wave female (and feminist) author of Asian-American (as well as multicultural, international) theater⁷. The piece premiered at the University of California at Los Angeles in 1981, and was subsequently performed by East West Players in 1984; Nova Theatre/Pacific Rim Productions in 1985; and the Kumu Kahua Theatre, Massman Theatre, and the State University of New York at Geneseo in 1991. The play is the first in the trilogy comprising *Asa Ga Kimashita (Morning Has Broken)*, *American Dreams* and *Tea*. It describes different stages in the lives of Shin-Issei women, “war brides” from Japan who married American soldiers during the post-war US occupation of Japan and immigrated to the US. Audiences’ reception of the play have refuted the reaction of its first reader-cum-critic, a European-American professor who suggested that “the play had no place in the American theater because American theater audiences had no desire to see a play set in postwar Japan that focused on the fall of a Japanese patriarch” (Hasu Houston 1993a: 2).

The text of *Asa Ga Kimashita (Morning Has Broken)* is subdivided into eight scenes, preceded by a prologue. It has no strictly defined acts or intermissions: the ending of one scene and the beginning of the next are bridged by a soundscape and/or lighting design. Apart from the Prologue, Scene Two and a brief episode inserted in Scene Five, the action takes place at the Shimada estate, located in the city of Imabari, on the Japanese island of Shikoku. The Prologue takes place in the city of Matsuyama in 1945; Scene Two in the city of Kobe; and the inserted episode in Scene Five on a pier, thus breaking the unity of place. Aside from the Prologue, the events portrayed unfold over the period of few weeks in 1946, which breaks the unity of time. Throughout the play (except in the Prologue, Scene Two and the episode in Scene Five), the stage is stylized to represent the interior of a home, a yard with a flower garden and beginning of a persimmon orchard (which leads offstage). The house comprises an anteroom, “living room”, bedchambers and hallway. Despite the stylization, departure from realism and other elements, the play maintains a coherent plot with a cause-

⁷ As explained in my earlier works (see Čirić-Fazlija 2017: 293–294; and Čirić-Fazlija 2019: 89–90), Velina Hasu Houston’s work defies neat classifications of any kind. The author embraces the term “Amerasian” as she is “multiracial, ... multicultural and binational ... much more Japanese than American” (Hasu Houston in Uno 1993: 156–157). For more information on the author and her prolific career, see her official website, and Uno (1993).

and-effect construction. Moreover, the dramatis personae are highly individualized and distinctive from each other.

There are ten characters in total (eight Japanese and two African-American), whose interactions the audience follows throughout the course of the play. The focus is on 60-year-old pater familias Kiheida Shimada, aged 60; his wife Fusae, 7 years his junior; and their two daughters, more traditional Haruko, aged 25, and a rather liberal Setsuko, who is 20. The household also includes Hajime Takemoto, a worker at the estate and would-be son-in-law of the Shimadas; and Yoko Sagami, an 18-year-old maid. Another character associated with the family is Fumiko Kitagawa, Kiheida's 30-year-old niece, who lives in Kobe and works as a translator for the US occupying forces. She dresses in Western clothes, is never without a hat and gloves, and enables the illicit relationship between Setsuko and Creed Banks, a 33-year-old African- and Native-American soldier. The supporting characters are 44-year-old physician Dr. Watanabe, and 38-year-old Mitchel Daniels, an African-American member of the occupying forces. Although the play seems to revolve around the actions of the Shimada patriarch (which eventually lead to the family's dissolution and his suicide), the central character is Setsuko. The play depicts her struggle to find a way to reconcile her traditional upbringing and social expectations with her unyielding spirit and her frowned-upon love relationship with Creed. More precisely: the central characters are Japanese women, and the play describes their lives in the days following Japan's surrender to the Allied Forces toward the end of the Second World War, and the consequent US occupation. Despite its setting, content and the background (or characterization) of its dramatis personae, the play's dialogue is in English, with only occasional phrases in Japanese.

It is easy to question why the play is classified as Asian-American theater, when it dramatizes Asians in Asia. According to the author, the playwright is

“... based on extensive discussions I had with my mother about our family history in Japan related to the World War II experience. This peculiarly Japanese play is also part of the African American experience, by virtue of its exploration of a Japanese woman's interracial romance with an African-Native American. In addition, the play speaks of a new era, not only for Japan and for America, but also for the world” (Hasu Houston 1993b: 210).

To bring in the new era the author mentions in the Preface to the play, one first has to reconcile with the change – a feat that Kiheido (and Haruko) cannot manage. First the war and then the defeat of the imperial forces effect new rules and new manners, and create uncharted territory that Kiheido refuses to acknowledge and tread.

For him, there is only the past, as "the future always is uncertain" (Hasu Houston 1993b: 227); the Americans are vermin, beasts with tails who "rape you if you so much as look at them" (Hasu Houston 1993b: 226); and "democracy seems a matter of mere convenience and privilege" (Hasu Houston 1993b: 228). Kiheido's older daughter Harukuo shares his views, and wishes everything could be "as it was before the war" (Hasu Houston 1993b: 239). She claims the Westerners are there to plunder the riches of the Far East, have no respect for women, and "think we are one of them, a thing to possess to wear on their fingers like golden rings" (Hasu Houston 1993b: 239)⁸, although it is Hajime and Kiheido who disrespect the women and treat them as chattel, rather than Creed or Daniels. Haruko's prejudice manifests in her statement that: "I am sure they do not take off their shoes. It is a guarantee they do not take a bath every night. They do not like our food. They do not know our language. Their ears and noses are so big!" (Hasu Houston 1993b: 246)

Asa Ga Kimashita openly discusses, references, and portrays the Second World War and its quite extensive and tangible consequences for the lives of Japanese people. Two of the play's protagonists are African-American members of the Occupational forces, and another dramatis persona, although Japanese, fully embraces the American lifestyle; this is easily detectable in her appearance, and in her willingness to uproot herself to be with an American citizen. The characters continually address the issue of war casualties; they discuss the people killed, cities destroyed and the presence of US army personnel in the country, who enforce land reforms and resettlement laws. What is more, the play opens in Matsuyama in 1945, with a soundscape of explosions (of bombs dropped from a B-29), and the cries of people running for their lives. Setsuko then enters the stage, with a smudged face, torn dress and a disheveled, frightened, look. She soliloquizes about an arrogant, white beast that comes at night to "abort our lives and devour our dreams", and about her schoolmate who died in the attack (Hasu Houston 1993b: 221). Setsuko is joined by a speechless Kiheida, who saves his daughter by carrying her on his back in a futon, and crawling to escape the bombs. The Prologue ends with the sound of an atomic bomb exploding, as "cries of death and pain echo" (Hasu Houston 1993b: 222). It is this image that haunts Kiheida, who tries to fight off the nightmares and the humiliation of being dispossessed by falling into a sake addiction, which eventually pushes him toward suicide.

⁸ Kiheido and Haruko's lines echo images of Westerners as projected by the Japanese war propaganda of the time. Particularly telling is the depiction of Westerners as "oni". For more information on Japanese (and American) war propaganda, see Break and Pavia (1994), Horton (2018), and Wantakan Arcado (2019).

Regardless of the aforementioned, the play does not end on a gloomy note, but with a more positive, hopeful tone and the possibility of reconciliation: Fusae tells Setsuko that "No one is to blame for the casualties of war" (Hasu Houston 1993b: 273). Her husband (and many like him) has been defeated, in no small part because of the "loss of his land. It is the passing away of all that he ruled. When the kingdom is gone, what job is there for the king?" (Hasu Houston 1993b: 273)

CONCLUSION

The two plays in the focus of the paper, Wakako Yamauchi's *I2-I-A*, and Velina Hasu Houston's *Asa Ga Kimashita (Morning Has Broken)* are two extraordinary pieces of Asian-American dramatic literature that present the effects of a world war on an immigrant population. Both plays dramatize the immediate consequences of the Second World War on Japanese migrants: Yamauchi's portrays the internment of innocent Japanese-American families when the US enters the war; and Hasu Houston's thematizes the life-altering experiences of the local population at the beginning of the US occupation of Japan. Although the plays set the locations of their respective actions in different parts of the world, and use different timelines, they both show the ramifications of war for the aforementioned ethnic communities through the central image of family. Yamauchi's playtext stays mostly within the conventions of realism, whereas Hasu Houston's combines a stylized setting with a fragmented, episodic structure, although it builds to its finale causally. The two plays stage images of war differently. Yamauchi avoids presenting direct war imagery on stage, but the play's dialogues and characters' consciousness revolve around the war and its implications for the community, shown through the Tanakas. On the other hand, Hasu Houston not only opens her play with the overt theatrical image of the bombing of Matsuyama, but she continues in this manner, with the presence of army personnel on stage, and the depiction of immediate postwar affairs such as the resettlement law, and their effects on the lives of the Shimadas. In conclusion, both plays poignantly disclose the suffering and agony of human beings caught in the circumstances of a global conflict, and through this disclosure deafeningly express anti-war sentiments.

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„NIJE VRIJEME ZA BORBU NEGO JE VRIJEME ZA UZAJAMNU BRIGU“: DRAMSKI PRIKAZI DRUGOG SVJETSKOG RATA U DVA KOMADA AZIJSKOAMERIČKIH AUTORICA⁹

Sažetak

Veći dio ljudske historije je trajno obilježen oružanim sukobima vođenim u različitim dijelovima svijeta, ali su opseg i posljedice dva svjetska rata u prvoj polovini dvadesetog stoljeća ipak bez presedana. Oba svjetska rata su prekrjili geografije, politike, ekonomije i predratna poimanja stvarnosti te gromoglasno odjeknuli u modernoj književnosti. Anglofone književnosti, poput jetkog "rovovskog pjesništva", antiratnih romana spisatelja „Izgubljene generacije“, drama o Holokaustu ili teatra genocida, direktno prikazuju ratne strahote i ljudsku patnju te istovremeno podižu svijest i agitiraju protiv okrutnosti rata. Iako relativno recentna potkategorija anglofone drame, azijskoamerička drama također tematizira oružane konflikte i njihove posljedice, premda se njena kritika (uglavnom) zabavila politikama identiteta, etničkim i manjinskim studijama i nizom ideja i slika koje jesu osobine azijskoameričkog teatra. Međutim, upravo se u ovoj kategoriji savremene drame na engleskom jeziku mogu pronaći izvrsni primjeri prikazivanja ratnih progona i migracija nastalih kao posljedica ratnih dešavanja te mnogih drugih reperkusija Drugog svjetskog rata. Odabrani tekstovi azijskoameričke drame se bave i jednim od najkontroverznijih događaja u savremenoj historiji SAD, tzv. Izvršnom naredbom 9066. Ovaj rad analizira dramsko prikazivanje preseljenja pod nadzorom države i s tim povezanih iskustava azijskoameričke populacije u djelu 12-1-A autorice Wakako Yamauchi te slike ideoloških i društveno-ekonomskih posljedica koje je Drugi svjetski rat imao po zajednicu u Japanu u komadu *Asa Ga Kimashita* (Morning Has Broken) autorice Veline Hasu Houston.

Gljučne riječi: azijskoamerička drama; multikulturalni teatar; Wakako Yamauchi; Velina Hasu Houston; 12-1-1; *Asa Ga Kimashita*

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