

A STUDY OF NOSTALGIA IN WILLA CATHER'S MY ANTONIA

A MASTER'S PROJECT

BY

MISS PATHATHAI SUKSANGDOW

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the

Master of Arts Degree in English

at Srinakharinwirot University

October 2006

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การศึกษาอารมณ์ของตัวละครในนวนิยาย

เรื่อง My Antonia ของวิลลา แคเธอร์

บทคัดย่อ

ของ

นางสาวพัทธ์หทัย สุขแสงดาว

เสนอต่อบัณฑิตวิทยาลัยมหาวิทยาลัยศรีนครินทรวิโรฒ เพื่อเป็นส่วนหนึ่งของการศึกษา

ตามหลักสูตรปริญญาศิลปศาสตรมหาบัณฑิต สาขาวิชาภาษาอังกฤษ

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พัทธ์หทัย สุขแสงดาว. (2549). *การศึกษาอารมณ์ถวิลหาอดีตในนวนิยายเรื่อง My Antonia ของ วิลลา แคเธอร์*. สารนิพนธ์ ศศ.ม. (ภาษาอังกฤษ). กรุงเทพฯ: บัณฑิตวิทยาลัย มหาวิทยาลัยศรีนครินทรวิโรฒ. คณะกรรมการควบคุม: อาจารย์ ดร.สุภาภรณ์ ยิ้มวิสัย, ผู้ช่วยศาสตราจารย์ เพ็ญณี ดิสกะประกาย, Mr. Stephen Wayne Palmer.

งานวิจัยนี้มุ่งศึกษาอารมณ์ถวิลหาอดีตของตัวละครในนวนิยายเรื่อง My Antonia ของ วิลลา แคเธอร์ ในการศึกษาครั้งนี้ผู้วิจัยได้นำแนวความคิดและภูมิหลังของปรากฏการณ์ถวิลหาอดีตมาประยุกต์ใช้ในการวิเคราะห์เพื่อสำรวจว่าตัวละครใดบ้างที่มีอาการถวิลหาอดีต และ อารมณ์ถวิลหาอดีตของตัวละครเหล่านี้ถูกนำเสนอในนวนิยายเรื่องนี้อย่างไร และเพื่อสำรวจสาเหตุของอารมณ์ถวิลหาอดีตของตัวละครเหล่านั้น ผลการศึกษาพบว่า ตัวละครผู้มีอารมณ์ถวิลหาอดีตอย่างชัดเจน ได้แก่ Mr. Shimerda, Peter, Pavel, Jim, Antonia รวมไปถึงตัวละครอื่นๆ ที่ถวิลหาสถานที่ที่มาจากมา และบุคคลอันเป็นที่รัก และการโหยหาอดีตของตัวละครเหล่านี้สามารถสังเกตได้จากอาการคิดถึงบ้าน ความเสื่อมห่างร่างกาย การแยกตัวจากสังคม ความเหงา ความเศร้า รวมไปถึงการตาย นอกจากนี้ผู้วิจัยยังพบว่าตัวละครเหล่านี้รู้สึกโหยหาอดีตเนื่องมาจาก ประสบกับความเปลี่ยนแปลงและวิกฤติในชีวิต ประสบการณ์ในอดีตที่ฝังลึก ความโดดเดี่ยว การสูญเสีย และสาเหตุเด่นชัดที่ทำให้ตัวละครส่วนใหญ่ในเรื่องเกิดความรู้สึกถวิลหาอดีต ได้แก่ การอพยพย้ายถิ่น

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AN ABSTRACT

BY

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This research was to study nostalgic feeling presented in Willa Cather's novel My Antonia. The concept of nostalgia was applied to the analysis in order to examine who were the characters having nostalgia and how each character's nostalgia was presented in the story. Moreover, this study also examined what were the causes of these characters' nostalgia. It was found that both main characters and minor characters had nostalgia for their old places and attached persons. The study revealed that the characters who obviously felt nostalgic were Mr. Shimerda, Peter, Pavel, Jim Burden, Antonia Shimerda, including some Norwegian immigrants. Their nostalgia was presented through their homesickness, physical decline, isolation, loneliness, depression, and even death. In My Antonia, there were many reasons that caused the characters' nostalgia; for example, the crises and great changes in life, the important memorable experiences in the past, the mental condition such as loneliness and feeling of loss. Particularly, it was found that immigration was the obvious cause of most characters' nostalgia.

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Pathathai Suksangdow

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Chapter 1

Introduction

“Yet the past is not dead; it is not even sleeping. A mass of memories and records, of relics and replicas, of monuments and memorabilia, lives at the core of our being.

----- J.H. Plumb. “The Historian’s dilemma”

In the period of globalization, science and technology drive the world forward to the more hi-tech future. In developing society, everything is fast and possible.

Technology spreads out to almost every field. Even art, the opposition of science, has been applied and combined with technological tools such as photo editing programs, science-fiction films, and music. While most people are enjoying these things, there is a reversal tide of thoughts that emphasizes on people’s past experiences. Its essence is based on pastness, antiqueness, and good old days that people yearn for. This phenomenon is known as “nostalgia”.

In the beginning, nostalgia has been reflected in the postmodern society, as Pam Cook mentions that nostalgia, as a longing for past, remarkably characterizes postmodernism in historical approach (xii). Additionally, Nelson Graburn states, "Modernity, the belief in progress and rational solutions to problems, automatically highlights both present imperfections and lost of the past" (qtd. in Jafari 415). That is, technology and modernity change people’s lives; then, people realize its problematic effects such as competition, stress, separation, and loneliness, and seem to return to their past time by imagination and memory. For example, they may visit their hometown once

after they face stress from work, or someone may be reminded by his or her childhood from seeing an old photograph.

This nostalgic tone has been presented in almost every corner of society, as seen in art, music, fashion, films, architecture, decoration, advertisement, TV programs, magazines, tourism, food, product, service, and so on. For instance, nostalgia is a main motivation of tourism because people feel the loss of time and want to experience that time again. Nostalgic tourism provides them a time travel bringing back the scenery of past and nature (Jafari 415). Moreover, the retro-fashion becomes a popular industry until now as people in 1993 once returned to 1970's flared trousers, platform shoes, and disco music (Meewan 27). In addition, music and films also portray the features of earlier period through their forms, instruments, melody, costume, and settings in order to evoke the nostalgic feeling of audiences. To exemplify, films present the pastness in costumes and settings. Moreover, nostalgia can also be found in the mental state of a person that is the emotion for the past. For example, the character thinks of his or her first love in youth time. In conclusion, nostalgia is applied to and portrayed in various dimensions.

Nostalgia can also be seen in literature. In fact, nostalgia may not be the main theme of literary works; however, there are some writers employing the essence of nostalgia in their works such as Edith Wharton, Sarah Orne Jewett, and F. Scott Fitzgerald. In 1920, Wharton's The Age of Innocence was published picturing her long-gone time and experience in New York. Also, Sarah Orne Jewett applied "Imperialist nostalgia" to The Country of the Pointed Firs which is about the collective longing for what they have changed. Fitzgerald's The Great Gatsby also reflects nostalgia;

Fitzgerald wanted to present Jazz Age and his protagonist who strongly yearns for past love.

Willa Cather is one of well-known American writers in the first half of twentieth century. Her works contain the essence of nostalgia, and mostly portray the gender issue and pioneers in frontier life, especially the land in Midwest America. Doubtlessly, Cather was born in West Virginia and, with her family, moved to middle west town, Red Cloud, Nebraska where she learned much about frontier life and inspired her identity as an artist.. Many of her works reflect pictures of the land where the protagonist feels attached to because they have childhood experiences there such as O Pioneers!, The Song of the Lark, and A Lost Lady (Kanchanachart 204). These novels present the tone of nostalgia to the land by picturing the western prairies and the memories of the characters bound with the past, places, persons, and things.

My Antonia is one of many outstanding novels by Willa Cather. This novel not only conveys the nostalgia that is awakened by the frontier land but also clearly expresses the nostalgic feeling of the characters such as Jim Burden, Antonia, and Mr. Shimerda. James Woodress states that "This story is told retrospectively by a male narrator whose experience growing up on a farm and in the town of Black Hawk (Red Cloud) paralleling Cather's own life. Again the same sense of place is evoked memorably, and the land and its pioneer settlers are presented with a haunting nostalgia" (Kirkpatrick 133). Also, Nongyao Kanchanachart claims, "This (Antonia's success) is clearly emphasized by Jim's obvious admiration for Antonia and by the fact that all the significant action takes place in Nebraska: the early years are heavily stressed. Thus from this stress, the reader sees clearly Miss Cather's acute nostalgia" (211).

Obviously, My Antonia is a good example portraying nostalgia; however, the researcher has not found the study on nostalgia in this novel in depth. Therefore, this study attempts to explore the characters' feeling of nostalgia presented in Willa Cather's novel My Antonia. The study is expected to provide readers the concept of nostalgia for the better appreciation and understanding on Willa Cather's ideas. In addition, this study can be applied to the analyses of other fields related to nostalgia.

Purposes of the Study

In this study, the researcher aims to answer these following questions:

1. Who are the characters having nostalgia?
2. How is each character's nostalgia presented in the story?
3. What are the causes of these characters' nostalgia?

Scope of the Study

This study covers the analysis on the feeling of nostalgia found in the characters in Willa Cather's novel My Antonia.

Procedures of the Study

1. The study of the related literature
 - 1.1 The background of nostalgia
 - 1.2 The related studies on nostalgia
2. The analysis of My Antonia
 - 2.1 The survey of characters who had nostalgic tendencies

2.2 The analysis on how nostalgia was presented in the characters

2.3 The examination as to why nostalgia happened among the characters

3. Conclusion and discussion

4. Suggestions for further studies

Significance of the Study

1. The study helps readers appreciate Willa Caher's My Antonia more.
2. The study helps readers understand the concept of nostalgia more.
3. The study can be a guideline for analyzing other writings portraying nostalgia.
4. The study can be applied to study the concept of nostalgia in other fields.
5. The study can help the readers to better understand the behavior of people in

society.

Definition of Term

“Nostalgia” is a memory of pleasure and sorrow to the attached past moment, places, persons, or things. It also means a way or a thing that awakens this kind of feeling and leads people back to their earlier time.

Chapter 2

Review of Related Literature

In this chapter, the background of nostalgia was discussed. Then, the related literature was presented.

Background of Nostalgia

The word “nostalgia” is originated from "nostos" and "algos" in Greek. The first means “return” and the second means "pain" (Lowenthal 10). According to The American Heritage College Dictionary, "nostalgia" refers to "a bitter sweet longing for things, persons, or situation of the past" and "homesickness" (950). Similarly, Oxford English Reference Dictionary defines the term "nostalgia" as sensitively yearning for a moment in the past, "a regretful or wistful memory of earlier time" and also something that awakens the past memories (993). Additionally, nostalgia also refers to "the evocation of this emotion (nostalgia), as in a book, film, etc" (Collins Concise Dictionary of the English Language 774). That is to say, “nostalgia” is a memory of pleasure and sorrow to the attached past moment, places, persons, or things. It also means a way or a thing that awakens this kind of feeling and leads people back to their earlier time.

Generally, nostalgia is a way of looking at the world focusing on imagination and emotion toward the past of people in that present time (Kitiarsa 3). The real experiences once happening in the past are now just a memory, and the past does not come back; thus, imagination is obviously related to the nostalgic process, and experience or memory are also materials for nostalgia. By imagining, people can reproduce a vanished past and touch it again in a form of an authentic past (Ivy 58). Therefore, it seems that nostalgia is

a part of human personality structure because 'pastness' considerably has influences on imagination and feeling. That is, people usually use imagination and culture to react the limitation of the present; then, nostalgia commonly becomes a part of people's lives (Kitiarisa 6). Moreover, it seems that nostalgia is the past which entirely exists in the identity of the present (Zerubavel 38). Nostalgia, considered by time and attitude, is the attached emotion to the glorious past. Nostalgia is opposite to the direction of decline and descent of the present. That is, the present descent goes downward whereas nostalgia goes upward to the "good old days" in the past (Zerubavel 16), as illustrated in Figure 1.

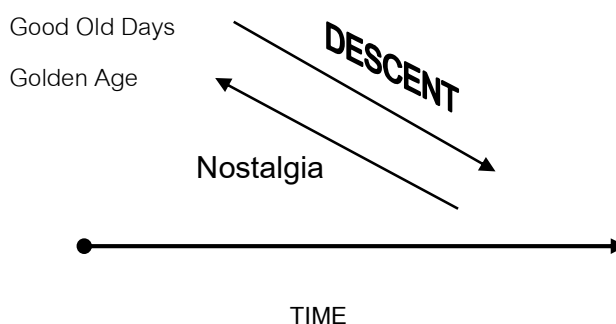


Figure 1 The Direction of Nostalgia and Descent (Zerubavel 17)

Normally, nostalgia is discussed in two levels: individual level and social level. Individually, nostalgia is a psychological mechanism establishing the 'selfness'; this is, human beings create their private world and their own characteristic. Actually, nostalgia of each person is different because of various backgrounds such as family, status, environment, experience, and so on. Also, people implicitly use nostalgia to create personal memory and self-identity representation of their own. The past that we yearn for may return to haunt us and confine our thoughts (Kitiarsa 8). In this sense, nostalgic

people are preoccupied by those good old days, obsessed persons, objects, or places by ignoring the present and future, and the past may be used in the present or the future decisions.

Socially, nostalgia is collective imagination of individuals; that is, it is social members' common feeling that inspires the culture activities such as art, literature, music, or fashion. In other words, nostalgia seems to be the representative of the past from collective imagination of social members. Besides, it is basically related to experience, politics of memory, imagined community, and identity crisis (Kitiarsa 11).

First, experience is a material for nostalgia. Although it is an experience of the impossible past, a person still longs for it since it cannot return. Second, memory is about mind and ideology, and nostalgia makes a story from past memory within the present situation. Third, imagined community is a destination of nostalgia which happens among the same group in society. Last, identity crisis is culturally about a feeling of loss, suspiciousness of the past, lack of confidence for the future, and confusion in historical shift (Kitiarsa 22). Obviously, nostalgia always happens in the society that severely suffers in economy and in a new society. Particularly, it complicatedly affects homeless people, emigrants, and people who lose faith of better future (Kitiarsa 43).

In the early period, nostalgia was studied in a physical term. According to Hofer, this illness was like a "continuous vibration of animal spirit through those fibers of the middle brain in which the impressed traces of ideas of Fatherland still cling" (qtd. in Lowenthal 384). In other words, it was a sickness happening to a person who departed from home or native land. Hofer studied Swiss students who left home to study and work in a foreign country. They really suffered and thought they could not return home before

they died of fever. This "real disease" was related to symptoms such as "loss of appetite, irritability, anguish, fever and progressive physical decline" (qtd. in Bolaffi and Bracalenti 209). In the same way, Pinel, a neurologist, indicated that persons who were nostalgic might have a gloomy appearance, absent-mind, inattention, or were bedridden. They might also suffer from contumacious silence, food rejection, loss of strength, and death (qtd. in Lowenthal 10). Also, Lowenthal briefly stated, "To leave home for long was to risk death" (10).

Although nostalgia was studied in a medical term in the earlier time, it has later been considered rather in a psychological perspective focusing on a state of mind and socio-cultural relationship. In this sense, nostalgia refers to a person who longs to go back to the pleasant time or place that he or she is sentimentally attached to and that is opposite to the present condition (Longman Dictionary of Psychology and Psychiatry 500). Psychologists and sociologists believe there are many reasons for being nostalgic. For instance, Melotti points out that the mental causes of nostalgia are "breaking of ties with loved ones, uprooting, loneliness, and the difficulties encountered in a foreign, sometimes hostile, environment" (209).

Immigration is one cause of nostalgia. In the late nineteenth to the early twentieth century, large groups of Europeans and Asians immigrated to due to the industrial revolution. Generally, the immigrants try to seek the economic and educational opportunities, and sometimes escape from the limitation of politic and religion (Healey 119). The departure from the native place to the new one leads to intense suffering on physical and particularly mental conditions. Jaworski mentioned that,

“One of the difficulties experienced by a portion of the new population was the inability to adjust emotionally to their new environment. No matter how hard some immigrants tried to become real Americans, they never learned to feel at home here. And yet they no longer belonged to their native land” (58).

When migrants are distant from their families, they suffer a lot from trying to adapt themselves to a new environment. Moreover, they have no social skills to culturally interact with others and become isolated. It seems that they lose confidence and the ability to deal with the present world and as a result start to avoid other people (Jafari 416). Khan and Talal state that “In becoming displaced, independent men and women lose their status, their livelihood and their identity” (15). This is related to the terms "depression" and also "regression" (Encyclopedia of Psychology 334). These people tend to regress to the former time that can never come back because they fear of the future and encounter alternatives of the past and the present. As David Lowenthal mentions in The Past is a Foreign Country, “ ‘landscape that we never know, but wish we had’ suggests refusal to face up to the dilemmas of the present”(13). In other words, the immigrants have to suffer from a new landscape where they expect a better life whereas they feel unfamiliar with that place. Also, Zerubavel claims that the interesting point is the process and capacity of identities that encounter and deal with the changes. The cause of nostalgia are the great changes of science and society such as technology, culture, politics, and economy that lead people to return to the traditional and "conservative" way of life (38).

Similarly, Tannock, who believes that nostalgia is socially constructed, points out three steps of nostalgia: prelapsarian world, lapse, and postlapsarian world or the present, as illustrated in Figure 2.

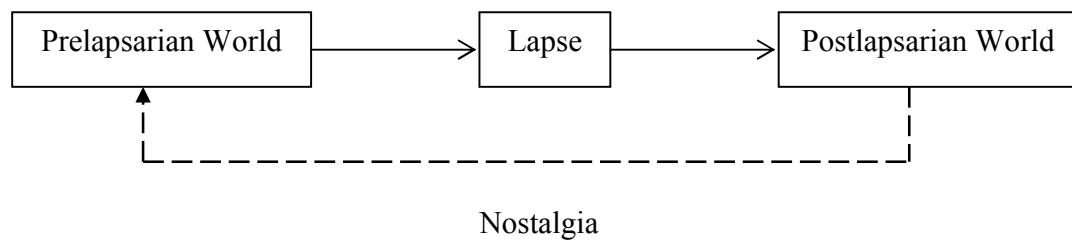


Figure 2 Steps of Nostalgia

First, prelapsarian world is the world of sweet past, or the golden period of the past such as a life in childhood. Furthermore, the powerful and valuable traditional culture remain in this stage. Second, lapse is the descent that happens in the past world. In this stage, tradition declines and spiritual alienation takes a longer time. Third, it is the present or postlapsarian world of people who feel lost and unstable; then, they return and yearn for the pleasant past in the first stage (qtd. in Meewan 18-19).

In the essence of nostalgia, it is not only discussed in physical, psychological and social views but also applied to various fields including art such as literature. Nostalgia, for Kathleen Parthe, is presented as a complicated feeling, spiritual property, a sense of loss, and 'radiant past'. These senses are reflected in written works that focus on the pattern of everyday life and a fear of losing rural past. Sometimes, authors express their personal memories of childhood in their works. Characters usually search for root,

beauty, value and tradition, especially old characters who approach the past through nature (Graham 111-112).

From the evidence mentioned above, nostalgia is related to human being's imagination and complicated feelings toward the past. This kind of feeling is also a part of personality and identity, and it also socially affects members and activities of society. Meanwhile, an individual's nostalgia happens when a person longs for the past when he or she faces a great change such as loss of things or a person, and departure from his or her family or country, and suffers from his or her new environment. This causes the physical and mental symptoms such as food rejection, tiredness and weariness, loneliness, isolation, depression, and even death.

Related to the purpose of the study, the concept of nostalgia discussed above was applied to the analysis of nostalgia reflected in Willa Cather's My Antonia. The researcher analyzed the feelings of the characters who have nostalgia in the novel.

Related Studies on Nostalgia

Many researchers studied nostalgia in various fields.

Regarding psychological perspective, Joan Cooper, in "The Concept of Nostalgia and Its Relationship to Narcissism", examined the relationship between nostalgia and narcissism. The results revealed that the high-scoring narcissism person tended to be strongly nostalgic, especially men when they reached success. Cooper also found that most men have intensive nostalgia to experience in childhood and late adolescence while women are nostalgic on their early adulthood experience as a time of freedom.

In "When It Hurts to Leave Home: Meaning, Manifestations, and Management of Homesickness", Van Tilburg and Maria Adriana Louisa studied homesickness. They found three kinds of it: "recurrent homesickness" from anxiety, "holiday homesickness" from inflexible personality, and "recovered homesickness" from adaptation. They found that homesick symptoms did not change because of age, sex, and situations of homesickness. Also homesickness could happen when a change was expected, not only when being far from home. Furthermore, Tilburg and Louisa found that homesick adults mentally escaped instead of finding helps, thinking in a positive aspect, or approaching religion.

For commercial field, Susan L. Holak and William J. Havlena, in "Feeling, Fantasies, and Memories: An Examination of the Emotional Components of Nostalgia", investigated the sensitive elements of individuals' nostalgic description in order to see the differences between nostalgia and other sentimental emotions of consumers. Holak found that nostalgia was complicated and contained positive feelings such as happiness and joy. Also, it involved negative feelings such as sorrow and desire.

In "An Exploratory Investigation of the Nostalgic Experience Among Mature Adults", Joyce McGriff explored the emotional qualities of nostalgia in mature adults' experiences. The study showed that there were four memories among mature adults: stimulation of sight and sound, memory of personal profile as cognitive reaction, emotional reaction, and reminiscence. Positive reaction, both in quality and quantity terms, was influenced by satisfaction of life, and it was not different between low and high satisfaction. Besides, the result was discussed that the nostalgia strategy was not suitable for sixteen to twenty-five ages.

There are also some studies on nostalgia in literature. For example, Aeron Santesso, in “The Poetics of Nostalgia from Dryden to Crabbe (John Dryden, George Crabbe)”, investigated nostalgic poems written in the late eighteenth century from the poets such as Dryden, Pope, Gray, Goldsmith, Cowper, Percy, and Crabbe. Santesso stated that nostalgia poems were traditional poems focusing on sensitive and old day tones such as peaceful rural life and school day experiences. Moreover, he maintained that this genre of poems was a kind of classical poems, not an autobiography or confession.

Another interesting research about nostalgia in literature is "Writing the Long Desire: The Function of Sehnsucht in The Great Gatsby and Look Homeward, Angel", D.G. Kehl studied the function of nostalgia, or Sehnsucht in German, in F. Scott Fitzgerald's The Great Gatsby and looking homeward in Thomas Wolf's Angel. Kehl showed that the writers yearned for earlier experience. In addition, he found four features of nostalgia that differentiated from other emotions: remarkable intensity, bittersweetness, mystery of object, and the irony of longingness unfulfilled. Kehl concluded that the functions of nostalgia in these two novels are: to extend the nostalgic motif to be an archetype, to focus on meaning of experience and memory, and to re-scope Sehnsucht as an aesthetic elusion from intricacy. According to Kehl, the Sehnsucht was not an allowing for insatiability, but an indication of creativity.

Additionally, there was the study of nostalgia and depression in Willa Cather's novels between 1915 and 1923.

Dix McComas, in "The Unrecalled Past: Nostalgia and Depression in the Middle Novels of Willa Cather", examined the mental effects on children who faced an absence

of parent Cather's four works: The Song of the Lark, My Antonia, One of Ours, and A Lost Lady. McComas pointed out that parent's absence caused a psychic loss and depression on children; the children replaced the painful past with fancied past, nostalgia.

Obviously, there are many studies about nostalgia discussed in different areas, especially the study of nostalgia in Cather's novels. Nevertheless, McComas focuses on the nostalgia and depression caused from the non-existence of parents in all four novels considering only children characters. Moreover, McComas analyzed only young characters Jim Burden and Antonia Shimerda. There has not been specific analysis on nostalgic feeling in other characters yet. As a result, this study explores the feeling of nostalgia found in all characters in Willa Cather's My Antonia.

Chapter 3

An Analysis of the Characters' Nostalgia Presented in My Antonia

This chapter applies the concept of nostalgia to the analysis. After being analyzed, it is obvious that nostalgia can be seen from both major and minor characters. However, this chapter presents the character's nostalgia arranged by the severeness of nostalgia reflected in each character from the most to the less ones: Mr. Shimerda, The Russians Peter and Pavel, Jim Burden, Antonia Shimerda, and other immigrant characters.

Mr. Shimerda

The first character, Mr. Shimerda, is the obvious character who presents a high level of nostalgia. In My Antonia, Mr. Shimerda is a genteel Bohemian old man who is the father of Ambrosch, Antonia, Yulka, and Marek, and Antonia is his dearest daughter. In his old country, Bohemia, Mr. Shimerda used to be an educated musician, and his family was respected by others. He and his family emigrated from their native land, Bohemia, to the Midwest America, Black Hawk, Nebraska in order to have a prosperous life. However, he feels out of place in America and lacks farming skills. The troubles overwhelm his life and he cannot endure this shame. Mr. Shimerda becomes depressed before he ends his life by shooting himself.

In fact, Mr. Shimerda never wants to come to America at all. To exemplify, since he and his family move from Bohemia to America, he cannot find happiness in this new land. In contrast to his wife, Mrs. Shimerda has high expectations of a better life coming to America. It can be seen that Antonia says about her parents, "He not

want to come, nev-er! My mamenka make him come”(53). Mr.Shimerda’s unintentional coming to Nebraska makes him sad. Also, he misses his hometown, his old friends, and his favorite music and is constantly thinking of his happier past in Bohemia. These seem to be valuable memories for him.

It is obvious that immigration is an important change that causes him to feel nostalgic. It also leads to problems involving the language barrier, the poverty, and the loneliness.

Actually, language is one of the problems he faces in America. Mr.Shimerda has no friends in this new country because he cannot speak English at all. Therefore, it is hard for him and his family (except Antonia) to interact with neighbors. For example, “Krajiek was their only interpreter, and could tell them anything he chose. They could not speak enough English to ask for advice”(18). As you can see, he has to depend on the translator to communicate with others. Moreover, Peter Krajiek, who is the Shimerdas’s interpreter, is not trustworthy because of his unfairness. For example, he persuades the Shimerdas to pay for things for unreasonable price. Krajiek does this because he thinks the Shimerdas has to depend on him anyway. This brings Mr.Shimerda loneliness and thinking about his Bohemian language, and people who speak the same language. He only has Russians friends who speak the same dialect as him; however, they have been in Nebraska for a short period of time since Pavel dies and Peter moves away.

In addition, another related problem is the hardship about poverty. That is, Mr. Shimerda really lacks knowledge of farming. He used to be an artist playing music with his friends for Bohemian traditional celebrations. When he and his family move to Black Hawk, he has to change occupation and begins farming that he has never done before, for example, “...but the father was old and frail and knew nothing

about farming”(18). Sometimes, he has to go hunting for his family’s survival. Therefore, Mr.Shimerda possibly feels that he cannot make his family prosper as head of the family. Although he feels guilty for his lack of skills, he does not want any help from the Burdens and tells that his family is a respectable family in the old country. For example, “He wanted us to know that they were not beggars in the old country; he made good wages, and his family were respected there...He wished grandmother to know, however, that he still had some money”(48).

Additionally, it is also the loneliness that hurts the old Shimerda. Since he immigrated to America and lost his old friends, he does not play music and does not go for hunting with them anymore. Of course, the past cannot become present world and the present remains are full of many obstacles and the loneliness. Antonia says to Jim, “My papa, he cry for leave his old friends what make music with him” (53). Although he meets Peter and Pavel, the new Russian friends whom he hopes to get along with in America, Pavel later dies and Peter moves out. Mr.Shimerda’s nostalgia becomes severer after Pavel dies. It seems that he suddenly loses the important person in his life because Russians are the only beloved friends he has in Nebraska. A few days before Pavel’s death, Mr.Shimerda is there, at the Russians’ house, sitting beside Pavel’s bed and listening to his haunting story about the wolves. As a friend, Mr.Shimerda witnesses Pavel’s severe illness, and after Pavel dies, Mr.Shimerda becomes more depressed and isolates himself from society. “The loss of his two friends had a depressing effect upon old Mr.Shimerda. When he was out hunting, he used to go into the empty log house and sit there, brooding”(39). Certainly, Mr.Shimerda is much attached to his Russian friends because they are not only nice men but also speak in a quite similar language as him, and do activities together.

According to Tannock, nostalgia begins with the golden past; then, this sweet past declines because of some changes. Finally, a person feels lost and comes back to the good old days again (qtd. in Meewan 18-19). This idea can be well applied to Mr. Shimerda who has nostalgia because of the great changes in his life. He used to have a pleasant life: living in familiar land, doing his favorite activities, and enjoying the company of his old friends. Mr. Shimerda tends to be regressed to his past since he faces many problems such as poverty and loneliness in this new country. Consequently, there is no doubt that he prefers Bohemia to Nebraska and yearns for the earlier experiences in Bohemia.

Actually, when Mr. Shimerda feels nostalgic in his earlier time of life due to the sufferings he faces, there are many symptoms showing that Mr. Shimerda is still attached to the memories of the past. As discussed in The Past is a Foreign Country, nostalgia is earlier considered a physical disease or homesickness that is caused from the departure of a native land. According to Doug Tynan, a homesick person is always alone, bored, separated, and lacks attention and direction (2). Moreover, Pinel states that a nostalgic person usually has gloom, an absent mind, silence, physical decline and even death (qtd. in Lowenthal 10).

In My Antonia, Mr. Shimerda has the homesickness or nostalgia because of being far from homeland, Bohemia. Jim and Antonia witness Mr. Shimerda's nostalgic feeling that can be seen through his gloomy appearances, isolation and brooding, depression and loneliness, and death.

Firstly, Jim, Antonia, and the neighbors notice that Mr. Shimerda has a gloomy appearance after he and his family immigrates to Nebraska. At first sight, Jim describes Mr. Shimerda's characteristics, "His face was ruggedly formed, but it looked like ashes—like something from which all the warmth and light had died out" (20).

Moreover, Jim and Antonia, one day, see Mr. Shimerda in the lonely and hopeless manner, as Jim describes, “He is walking slowly, dragging his feet along as if he had no purpose” (28). Also, Mr. Shimerda is an inactive man as mentioned in the sentence “She (Antonia) was the only one of his family who could rouse the old man from the torpor in which he seemed to live”(28). That is, the old Shimerda is quite inertial as if he did not live in the present, but in the past. Besides, he also has a physical decline after he moved to America as Antonia tells Jim, “My papa sick all the time” and “He not look good, Jim”(28). When the Shimerdas visited the Burdens’ house, Jim observed Mr. Shimerda’s gloomful behaviors finding that he had some kind of bored feeling towards the present life:

“He sat still and passive. His head resting against the back of the wooden rocking-chair, his hands relaxed upon the arms. His face had a look of weariness and pleasure, like that of sick people when they feel relief from pain. He said almost nothing, and smile rarely; but as he rested there we all had a sense of his utter content” (51).

In this sense, Mr. Shimerda’s appearances seen by Jim, Antonia, and the neighbors are the signs of nostalgia after emigrating from Bohemia to America. These indicate his unpleasant feeling toward the new environment and a new way of life that are different from the old things in Bohemia.

Secondly, Mr. Shimerda lacks attention from the society; he not only broods on the past but also isolates from others. After Russian Pavel dies and Peter moves away, Mr. Shimerda is still thinking of his two Russian friends who used to go out for hunting with him in the past. After losing these Russian friends, Mr. Shimerda shows signs of depression since he has to go out hunting alone. Sometimes, he goes into the Russians’ empty log house and sits there, brooding. In addition, Mr. Shimerda

usually isolates from his society. When the Burdens comes to visit the Shimerdas, Jim sees that Mr. Shimerda is sitting behind the stove and tries to hide himself from the Burdens. This shows that Mr. Shimerda seems to separate himself from the neighbors even the familiar Burdens. His symptom of isolation from others is related to the term “alienation” which Reader’s Digest Universal Dictionary defines it as a state of isolation (50). Similarly, Frank J. Bruno states that alienation is the feeling that a person does not belong to a group, and he or she is isolated from the family, from some other groups, or from traditional society (7). Similarly, Mr. Shimerda feels alienated from his family, from his neighbors, and from new environment of America. He is not interested in his surroundings trying to keep himself from others. Another example is when Mr. Shimerda visits the Burdens on Christmas morning, and Jim makes the observation that Mr. Shimerda is in his personal world of past memories as follows.

“The atmosphere of comfort and security in my grandfather’s house. This feeling seemed completely to take possession of Mr. Shimerda. I suppose, in the crowded clutter of their cave, the old man had come to believe that peace and order had vanished from the earth, or existed only in the old world he had left so far behind” (51).

From the examples, although Mr. Shimerda opens himself to other world (Burdens’ house), there remains the strong longing for his old homeland. In other words, he refuses to participate in the present and prefers thinking about the radiant past in Bohemia and making his own private world of memories. Jim, the boy who continuously observes him, realizes this until Mr. Shimerda commits suicide, as Jim mentions that “I did not, of course, say that I believed he had been in that very kitchen all afternoon, on his way back to his own country” (60). This shows that before

Mr. Shimerda kills himself, he is isolated and stays in his own world longing for the bygone past.

Pattana Kitiarsa, in Humanities and Nostalgia Phenomenon in Contemporary Thai Society, writes that human beings create their private world and their own characteristic (8). This is, the readers can see that when a person feels nostalgic, as shown in Mr. Shimerda, he or she usually broods and isolates creating their own world about the vanished past in order to replace the unfulfilled present.

Thirdly, depression and loneliness are also the signs of nostalgia. Many times, Jim describes Mr. Shimerda's sad manners to show the depressed feeling he has. For instance, Jim first hears the distinct sad sound when Mr. Shimerda calls his daughter, "While we were disputing about the ring, I heard a mournful voice (of Mr. Shimerda) calling, 'An-tonia, An-tonia' "(21). Furthermore, when Mr. Shimerda gives Jim his hunting gun because he thinks Jim is mature enough to try it, Mr. Shimerda looks sad, as in "The old man's smile, as he listened, was so well of sadness, of pity for things, that I never afterward forget it"(29). At that moment, he seems to have something in his mind; he is thinking about the way he got this gun from the great Bohemian man.

Another example is in the week following Christmas. Antonia says to Jim,

" My papa sad for the old country. He not look good. He never make music anymore. At home he play violin all the time; for wedding and for dance. Here never. When I beg him for play, he shake his head no. Someday he take his violin out of his box and make with his fingers on the strings, like this, but never he make the music. He don't like this kawn-tree" (53).

This shows that Mr. Shimerda thinks of the past experience about playing music in Bohemia; he has never played music like that in America. To exemplify, Antonia

says, “My papa, he cry for leave his old friend what make music with him. He love very much the man what play the long horn like this” (53). That is to say, he is stuck in a depression which is the result of loneliness when he thinks of the past such as the time that he and his old friends played music together.

Finally, his death from committing suicide is the tragic result of nostalgia. Philippe Pinel, in The Past is a Foreign Country, mentions the symptoms of nostalgia are silence, absent-mind, loss of strength, and death that relate to both physical and mental sickness. Similarly, Lowenthal states that “To leave home for long was to risk death” (10). In My Antonia, the cause of Mr. Shimerda’s suicide is homesickness due to the physical and mental symptoms emerged. As seen in Mr. Shimerda case, he is often sick, always spends his time alone longing for his homeland, and feels depressed with his unsuccessful and hopeless life. Jim who can feel Mr. Shimerda’s spirit and who always observes Mr. Shimerda’s behavior knows that Mr. Shimerda has lived in America with pain of his vanished past. Jim thinks, “I knew it was homesickness that had killed Mr. Shimerda” (59). To discuss this in psychological terms, Mr. Shimerda encounters conflict in his mind or the dilemma between the old land and the new. Living in Bohemia is good, but moving to America is the Shimerdas’ hope for a better life. Therefore, this confuses him, and he cannot manage the present life and decides to end his life at last.

However, it is likely to be that Mr. Shimerda decides and plans to commit suicide. According to Lettieri, “Suicide was the result of planned and organized action” (15). In the same way, Mr. Shimerda washes and shaves beforehand, arranges his clothes neatly, and then shoots himself in the mouth with his shotgun while lying down. Others assume that he kills himself because he is unable to make his family prosper. The result of troubles in foreign land, the loss of friends, loneliness, and

depression develop into mental sickness and the feeling of nostalgia that distinctly lead to Mr. Shimerda's committing suicide. One researcher concludes that "Although there has been much variability in sample selection and psychiatric diagnostic procedures, one can tentatively conclude that suicide is seldom an act of insanity, rather it is rational, albeit not necessarily logical or morally sanctioned" (Lettieri 15).

Obviously, Mr. Shimerda has never asked for help from others and has developed symptoms of homesickness to the committing suicide. Like the idea of Tilberg and Louisa, the homesick adults mentally escapes instead of finding help, thinking about positive aspects, or approaching religion.

The Russian Peter and Pavel

Peter and Pavel are two characters who suffer from nostalgia. Peter and Pavel are Russian immigrants who move to Nebraska and become neighbors of the Shimerdas and the Burdens. They tell that they have to leave Russia because of 'great trouble', causing a groom and a bride dead. A long time ago in the dark night in Russia, Peter and Pavel had to drive his friend, the groom, with his bride home after the wedding party. During the journey, the cruel wolves chased their sled trying to attack them, and the sled was out of control. To survive, Pavel decided to lighten the sled by knocking the groom and the bride out of the sled to feed the wolves. Pavel and Peter were the only two survivors, and they could not live in Russia anymore. After that, they had to run away to many places until they settle in America. However, they do not live in Nebraska long since Pavel dies and Peter moves out of Nebraska.

Pavel is a tall thin feeble man who is often sick, and Peter is a short jolly man who is fond of Jim and Antonia. In the story, they are good at doing farming and

housework. Because of speaking similar dialects, Peter and Pavel become Mr. Shimerda's close friends and have a lot of influences on him. Mr. Shimerda, Peter, and Pavel all face the same difficulties since they immigrate to America such as homesickness and cultural and economic problems. Like Mr. Shimerda, Peter and Pavel feel nostalgic because they have to be far from their old familiar country. In this way, immigration is the cause of their nostalgia. As immigrants, they face many great obstacles: they have language problems, feel lonely, and are taken advantage of by unscrupulous people.

When Peter and Pavel move to Nebraska, they have no friends because nobody understands or speaks the same language as them, "They went about making signs to people, and until the Shimerdas came they had no friends" (24). Therefore, they cannot communicate with others. The neighbors think that the Russians, Peter and Pavel, are the strangest people of immigrants settling in Black Hawk. As a result, Mr. Shimerda becomes only their friend. Even though they can get along well with Mr. Shimerda who later becomes their close friend, it is not really the same as in the past in their home country. In the past, they could talk in Russian everywhere and every time when they were in their own country; however, they cannot do this in America. Thus, they miss their Russian language and long for it.

In addition, Peter and Pavel face the economic crisis due to some cheaters. When they first come to Nebraska, Peter Krajiek, a man who is fluent in many accents, can communicate with them. However, Krajiek cheats them, and they cannot rely on and believe him anymore. Another person who cheats them is Wick Cutter, a wicked moneylender. In autumn, when bad luck strikes the Russians, Peter has to mortgage all things they have to Cutter who makes the Russians accumulate heavy debts.

“Peter could give no very clear account of his transactions with Cutter. . . ., and the debt grew faster than any crop he planted. Now everything was plastered with mortgage”(33).

As Eviatar Zerubavel states in Time Maps: Collective Memory and the Social Shape of the Past, nostalgia is the great changes of science and society such as technology, culture, politic, and economy that lead people to return to the traditional and conservative way of life (38). Peter is stuck by the economic troubles and Pavel’s sickness becomes worse. During this time, they face a great crisis that disheartens them so much. Because Peter and Pavel are hurt from these troubles, they think of their past old days in Russia, their homeland.

Another reason is the loneliness and the isolation in the new land. According to Melotti, loneliness is one of the mental causes of nostalgia (209). In America, they neither have friends nor women to marry. They live with their animals and work without other living things. Peter likes Jim and Antonia and would like to have a child; he thinks that he could have a child if he were in Russia. However, the past does not return, and they cannot reenter to Russia where they can find a loved woman and have many children of their own just as other families. Only loneliness remains in their lives in America, and this makes them want to go back to Russia. Furthermore, they seem to be isolated from the society. They have only Mr. Shimerda, Jim, and Antonia giving attention to them, “The Russians had such bad luck that people were afraid of them and liked to put them out of mind”(34). Indeed, the neighbors have a different culture from the two Russians; therefore, the neighbors don’t understand them and laugh at their behavior. For example, “I had heard our neighbors laughing when told how Peter always had to go home at night to milk his cow” (25). As can be seen, most of people do not understand them, and the two

Russians also have no wives and children in their houses. Therefore, the loneliness evokes their minds to go back and yearn for their familiar old land.

In this way, the causes that lead to the Russians' nostalgia for their native country are immigration including the sufferings from language, economics, and loneliness.

In My Antonia, the Russians, Peter and Pavel, both have nostalgia for their homeland which is a place of bittersweetness providing of both happiness and sadness. As a narrator, Jim observes that Peter emotionally yearn for their old place, and Pavel has a severe physical decline because of the sinful experience.

For Peter, his nostalgia is presented through his lonesome manners. When Jim and Antonia come to visit the Russians' house one afternoon, Peter always tells Antonia about the Russian's way of life, and Antonia has to translate it for Jim. To depict, Peter loves to take care of his cow well. He goes on by saying that only the rich have cows in his country; however, he adds that he can have a cow of his own in America. The cow makes him proud of himself and connects him to the past. In his sense, the cow evokes nostalgia about the experience and the way of life in the old country where there are a lot of cows, and people working on farms. Moreover, Peter feels lonely because he and Pavel have no wives and children. Peter prefers Antonia and Jim visiting him, especially Antonia. Seeing the innocent and lovely makes Peter want to have a daughter like Antonia. For instance, "Once, while he was looking at Antonia, he sighed and told us that if he had stayed at home in Russia perhaps by this time, he would have had a pretty daughter of his own to cook and keep house for him" (26). In this case, Antonia is like an evocation that awakes his loneliness and causes the nostalgic feeling of the happy life in his native land.

Additionally, Jim can feel the bittersweet emotion of Peter when he shows his harmonica, his loved musical instrument from Russia and plays it:

“He ran into the storeroom and brought out a gaudily painted harmonica, sat down on a bench, and spreading his fat legs apart and began to play like a whole band. The tunes were either very lively or very doleful, and he sang words to some of them” (26).

This is an evidence to show that he misses his homeland while playing the harmonica. Of course, the harmonica evokes nostalgia for Russia. Nevertheless, it is only the bygone past that has never comes back and makes him ache and yearn for it. As Jim observes, the tune of the music reflects the sorrow of Peter.

Also, Pavel has nostalgia like his companion. In the novel, Pavel dies because of the sickness and the haunting of his sinful past after he and Peter kill the groom and bride a long time ago in Russia. The tragedy affects Pavel so much because it is deep in his mind. Unfortunately, Pavel becomes worse when he has an accident while working and has to stay in the bed. He is haunted by past memories because of this. He becomes more frightened by his sinful experience of killing his friends to save himself. Sick Pavel becomes neurotic and haunted by the coyotes’ sound. This makes him think of the past event. While lying on his bed, sick, he hears the wolves’ whining which makes him feel frightened.

“Presently, in one of those sobbing intervals between the blasts, the coyotes tuned up with their whining howl; one, two, three, then all together – to tell us that winter was coming. This sound brought an answer from the bed – a long complaining cry – as if Pavel were having bad dreams or were walking to some old misery”(35).

According to Marilyn Ivy, people can reproduce a vanished past and touch it again in a form of an authentic past (58). This is, the past influences a person's thoughts and mind. Similarly, Kitiarsa says that the past that we yearn for may return to haunt us and confine our thoughts (8). In My Antonia, Pavel feels bitterly nostalgic for the unforgettable event and seems to go back to the past when he is very sick lying in bed. Pavel's fright of past memories is especially more apparent when he tells that story to Mr. Shimerda himself. "He grew more and more excited, and kept pointing all around his bed, as if there were things there and he wanted Mr. Shimerda to see them"(35). While listening, Mr. Shimerda, Antonia, and Jim witness Pavel's frightening symptoms. The sound of the wolves reminds Pavel of the wolves that ate men and women in his previous sinful experience in Russia, and it seems that Pavel can recall the event. Obviously, It is a very realistic hallucination because it stays deep in his memory and is ready to come out any time. This makes him frightened and it traps him into the illusion of the sin. Until he dies, Pavel is in both physical and mental pain. He cannot live anymore; hence, he surrenders to the sinful haunting memory that makes his sickness more severe and finally leads him to his death.

That is to say, this tragic event has been imprinted in their minds in term of memories following them as a shadow and is ready to revive all the time. Peter and Pavel keep this story in secret. Before Pavel dies, he reveals their secret to Mr. Shimerda whom he relies on. He tells Mr. Shimerda what happened on that tragic night; the secret story is now transferred to others.

According to Marriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, folktale refers to a characteristically anonymous, timeless, and placeless tale circulated orally among people. In My Antonia, the story told by Pavel is like a folktale; it is about the past experience and is handed down to the next generation. In this case, Mr. Shimerda and

Antonia as well as Jim are the listeners of this tale. Stith Thompson mentions about the form of folktale that “It may give what has been handed down as a memory – often fantastic or even absurd – of some historical character” (9). Also, Yos Santasombat states about the relation of a tale and the past that,

“Every telling is thus a creation of units of experience and an arbitrary imposition of meaning on our memory. We interpret the meaning, picking and choosing certain points while disregarding others”(68).

Like the idea of Thompson and Santasombat, this individual folk tale of Peter and Pavel is the story of past memories that seems to be an evocation of nostalgia for Peter and Pavel whenever they think of it or tell someone. Moreover, it can be considered as the nostalgia that is expressed to others, like the folktale passing down to the next generation.

To sum up, we can see Peter’s and Pavel’s nostalgia from their lonesome manners, the sickness, and the hallucination about the past. Similar to Mr. Shimerda, they feel nostalgia for their native country and their past secrets since they immigrate to America and encounter problems of language, culture, and economy. Even though they have friends in America, Shimerdas and the Burdens, this friendship cannot bring back the old country where they left behind.

Jim Burden

Jim Burden, the narrator of the story, is an orphan who takes a journey from Virginia with his grandparents to Black Hawk. He is a smart thoughtful and romantic man who has a strong sense of the past and has been a friend with the Bohemian girl, Antonia. Jim is educated in New York and becomes a lawyer who is married without love and no children.

As a narrator, Jim tells the story about the relationship between Nebraska, Jim, and Antonia in the past. Therefore, the story he tells is like the past memory awakened and transferred to readers. In fact, the entire novel is Jim's nostalgia for Antonia. It is obvious that Jim feels nostalgic for places and persons throughout the novel.

There are two places where Jim feels nostalgic for: Virginia and Nebraska. In the beginning of the story, Jim is nostalgic for his homeland, Virginia, because he moves to Nebraska when he is a boy. In the very first time he gets on the train to Nebraska; Jim fears of a new country, America, which is not like his hometown. To explain further, Jim writes in the very first part that "We went all the way in day-coaches, becoming more sticky and grimy with each stage of the journey" (9). This shows that Jim begins to feel strange of the new place and fears about what will happen to his life. A boy like Jim feels strange to a prairie with no trees and buildings, unlike those in the Virginia town he left behind.

"There seemed to be nothing to see; no fences, no creeks or trees, no hills or fields. If there was a road, I could not make it out in the faint starlight. There was nothing but land: not a country at all, but the material out of which countries are made" (11).

That is to say, Jim feels nostalgic for his native land because he moves alone to Nebraska without parents, and Nebraska is an unfamiliar new world for him.

Obviously, the main causes for Jim's nostalgia for Virginia are the immigration and especially the loneliness that influences his mind. According to Dix Comas's study, parents' absence causes a psychic loss and depression on children; the children replace the painful past with fancied past, nostalgia. In My Antonia, Jim has lost his father and mother before he immigrates to Nebraska and also has no brothers

or sisters. When he moves to Nebraska where the landscape is different and he knows nobody, he longs for the past and the landscape of Virginia. That is, he thinks back of the former time in his homeland in order to fulfill the feeling of emptiness.

Living in Nebraska, Jim, however, tries to adjust himself to the new place and the society. Many years pass, and he feels more familiar with Nebraska and has a lot of neighbors and new friends, including Antonia and the Shimerdas. He spends his time in a field with friends, especially Antonia. However, Jim has to go to study in New York when he grows up many years later. In this sense, he has the same feeling and has to face a lot of new things again, like when he emigrated from Virginia.

Therefore, another place that Jim also yearns for is Nebraska. Jim feels nostalgia when he leaves Nebraska for New York to study Law at Lincoln University. His departure from home causes him to long for it. At the university, Mr. Gaston Cleric, his advisor, is his close person; however, Jim still thinks of the past and Nebraska. Jim mentions that though his body is in New York, his mind usually goes back to the naked land and thinks of places and people in his past. That is, the “naked land” refers to the prairie land in Black Hawk, Nebraska where he lives before coming to New York. This shows that Jim has homesickness and nostalgia for Black Hawk even though he lives in a good society of scholars in Lincoln University.

In addition, his nostalgia becomes severer when he returns to Nebraska one day in summer. Jim explains that the landscape of Black Hawk is different from the old days. For instance, some wooden houses appear instead of the old sod dwelling; wheat fields and cornfields replace the pastureland. While describing the landscape, he mentions that these changes are like the growth of a great man, and he can remember all trees and things used to be there including the land reformation. Besides, he adds that the landscape can make him recognize these things as the

remembrance of someone's face. In this way, Jim has been far away from Black Hawk for a long time. When he comes back and sees many changes there, the changes remind him of the memory of Black Hawk in the past time. This is because he feels impressed by the beautiful landscape of Black Hawk full of good childhood memories. Of course, all the good things are kept in his mind and are ready to be awakened any time. Moreover, it is because Jim studies hard alone in New York where he has no relatives or friends, unlike Nebraska, so he feels lonely and thinks of them. Undoubtedly, this causes Jim to keep coming back home in Black Hawk many times.

Not only does the memory of landscape follow Jim but also his old friends are still fresh in his mind. Jim feels nostalgic for Jake, Otto, and particularly Antonia.

When Jim first comes to Nebraska, he has no friends except for Jake and Otto, the hired men of the Burdens. They usually do activities together. Therefore, Jim feels nostalgic for them after Jake and Otto leave the Burdens in order to work as miners. It is observed that Jim describes how good they are and friendship they have together. When he is in New York and feels lonely, he recalls the memory of his old friends, Jake and Otto. Although he does not really miss them, the memories of them are distinct as if they are going along with him all the time like a shadow. This shows that Jake and Otto still exist in Jim's unconsciousness, ready to come up in his mind anytime. In fact, Jim keeps his old friends in his mind all the time but he does not know.

Moreover, Jim can remember the way he, Jake, and Otto have fun together. Leo, one of Antonia's sons, makes fun of Ambrosch by poking out his tongue at Ambrosch, and Jim witnesses it. This reminds Jim of the event when he, Jake, and

Otto did the same thing in the past. Jim utters in his mind that this is the same thing they used to do together when they were boys, and he would like to see Jake's smile and Otto's fierce mustache again. Leo's action evokes Jim's nostalgia about his old friends and childhood memories. In this sense, Jim is nostalgic because Jake and Otto are his closet people in his early life. They have good old days together before Jake and Otto leave Black Hawk. Although Jim is older, he always keeps them in his mind and think of them. Also, Jim's loneliness causes him to think of Jake and Otto.

Another important person whom Jim always feels nostalgic for is Antonia. In fact, this novel is like Jim's own memory because it talks about Antonia throughout the novel. The story begins when he first comes to Nebraska becoming a close friend with Antonia and is ended when she has a successful family life. Throughout the novel, Jim always thinks of Antonia and longs for the happy moment they spent together when they were children. Especially, when he once returns to Black Hawk and meets Antonia with her baby. On the way walking back home across the field, Jim thinks of the past and describes the good warm memories about him and Antonia as if he returned to the past at that moment.

In this scene, Jim describes the fields where he and Antonia used to run in childhood and explains his sentimental feeling about Antonia. As seen in the sentence "As I went back alone over the familiar road, I could almost believe that a boy and a girl ran along beside me, as our shadow used to do, laughing and whispering to each other in the grass"(172). This is, Jim's memory of Antonia is so real to him, following him as a realistic picture in his mind and thought. Although they, indeed, are not married, their relationship seems to be more than a couple's love. For Jim, this is the infinite friendship he has ever had.

In this way, he never forgets his friends because of Jim's fondness to his sweet memories of childhood with them. These good memories are easily evoked, especially when a person feels lonely or faces some changes in life. Even though Jim seems to be successful working as a lawyer and earning a lot of money, he is never happy because they are not real happiness as in the past. He always feels lonely and yearns for the past more and more. According to Joan Cooper, a man tends to be strongly nostalgic especially when he reaches success; in addition, most men have intensive nostalgia for the experience in childhood and late adolescence. Since Jim has no real happiness in life, undoubtedly, Jim always keeps coming back to Nebraska and longs for the good childhood memories and the familiar landscapes that bring him the true happiness.

At the end of the novel, Jim reviews his nostalgic feeling when he and Antonia come back to their road again. Although he is now mature, memories of the good old days remain and this makes him keep coming back to Black Hawk.

“This was the road over which Antonia and I came on that night when we got off the train at Black Hawk and were bedded down in the straw, wondering children, being taken we knew not whither.... The feelings of that night were so near that I could reach out and touch them with my hand. I had the sense of coming home to myself.... Now I understood that the same road was to bring us together again.

Whatever we had missed, we possessed together the precious, the incommunicable past” (196).

It is obvious that Jim Burden usually feels nostalgic for places he is far away from and that he also longs for his childhood friends who spent memorable moments with in those old days.

Other characters

In My Antonia, there are other characters in the story who feel nostalgic. One of them is the female main character, Antonia.

Antonia Shimerda is a Bohemian immigrant who moves to America with her family to find a better life. Antonia is an innocent girl and the beloved daughter of her father. She has brothers and a sister and also becomes a friend of Jim, her neighbor. In fact, she is a strong-spirited woman as she encounters many troubles in her life. Moreover, she can endure them until she has a happy family in the end of her life.

Throughout her life, Antonia yearns for her old place, Bohemia, and her dead father. In the story, Antonia has longed for her native country since she first comes to Black Hawk. Like her father, she feels nostalgic for Bohemia. Many times, she recalls her life in Bohemia and tells Jim about it including Bohemian language, music, and traditions. That is to say, Antonia once sees a small insect, and she cries. She tells Jim that it makes her think of the old woman beggar in Bohemia whom many Bohemian children love. Moreover, she usually speaks or sings Bohemian songs; this shows that she is attached to her native culture. Also, she tells the stories about the Bohemian Christmas and weddings to her neighbors. Jim comments that “We all liked Tony’s stories. Her voice had a peculiarly engaging quality; it was deep, a little husky, and one always heard the breath vibrating behind it. Everything she said seemed to come right out of her heart” (98). She tells the stories of her native country as if they existed in her soul.

The obvious example showing that Antonia feels nostalgia is in the middle of the novel when Antonia works as a hired girl. Jim sees her crying on the bank, and she tells him that the smell of flowers reminds her about her old country. In Bohemia,

her father planted these flowers in the yard where he played music and talked with his friends. Obviously, this scene shows that the smell of the flowers evokes her nostalgia for Bohemia and father and makes her look back to the past. That is to say, America never makes her happy like Bohemia; therefore, Antonia never forgets her homeland and everything there. Furthermore, Jim once declares that he will go to Bohemia one day to see Antonia's homeland and asks her whether she can remember Bohemia. She replies that she can remember the way home, including every step she walks; she really never forgets. It is like the intuition that is embedded in a person.

Another thing that she always longs for is her father who killed himself when Antonia was young. Antonia always talks about her father, especially when she feels lonely. Once, she says that

“Look at my papa here; he's been dead all these years, and yet he is more real to me than almost anybody else. He never goes out of my life. I talk to him and consult him all the time. The older I grow, the better I know him and the more I understand him” (170-171).

That is, her father remains alive in her mind as if she can see him and talk to him anywhere and anytime. For Antonia, her father still stands by her side and keeps watching at all the time though he passed away long time ago. Moreover, Antonia always keeps Mr. Shimerda's violin which he passed on to her, and which she passes on to her son, Leo. The violin is the nostalgia and evokes her to think of her father's music. Another event that makes her think of her father is when Jim makes a speech at school. Antonia states that “Oh, I just sat there and wished my papa could hear you! Jim...there was something in your speech that made me think so about my papa!” (125-126). That is to say, her nostalgia for her father appears whenever she sees, knows, or hears something that link to him. This is because Antonia is the most

beloved daughter of Mr. Shimerda, and they both get on well. After Mr. Shimerda died, she still misses him and thinks he is always in her heart every time as if he was really alive.

From the evidence mentioned above, we know that Antonia is nostalgic for her homeland and her father because she has to live far from her homeland. Although the Shimerdas leave Bohemia and move to America in order to be wealthy, they do not enjoy a peaceful life as in Bohemia. Moreover, it is because she faces many hardships and great changes in her life; for example, when Mr. Shimerda dies; the Shimerdas face an economic crisis; Antonia has to work as a hired girl for the Harlings and Mr. Cutter; Antonia becomes pregnant with Larry Donovan. He later abandons her with a baby. All the troubles make her think of Bohemia and her father just as most people who return to their old pleasant days when they face a crisis.

My Antonia obviously shows nostalgia of many characters since this novel is related to pioneers and frontier life. Apart from Mr. Shimerda, the Russians, Jim, and Antonia, there are also other minor characters having nostalgic feeling such as Lena, Jim's grandmother, or even Mr. Cutter. Even though they are not the main characters in this story, they occasionally feel nostalgic.

Lena Lingard, the immigrant girl from Norway, expresses that she longs for her country, as Jim describes after they go to visit Lena's brother: "As we walk together up the windy street, Lena wiped her eyes with the back of her wooden glove. 'I get an awful homesick for them, all the same,' she murmured, as if she was answering some remembered reproach" (96). This shows that immigration causes her to feel nostalgic for the native place. Similar to other Norwegians, one of the immigrant girls tells that her grandmother suffers from homesickness. There is only Norway in her mind, not America. She always asks her daughter to take her to a river

and a market in order to buy fish; this was her routine, when she was in Norway. This shows that the Norwegian feels unfamiliar to the new land and tries to come back to her old way of life by often doing as she did in Norway.

It is obvious that the characters who are nostalgic in this novel show various signs of nostalgia: their gloomy appearances, loneliness, isolation, depression, sickness, and even death. Moreover, readers can see that nostalgia happens not only to male characters but also to female characters, particularly among immigrants. When these characters are far from their homeland and encounter hardship in the new environment, they recall their memories of the pleasant past old days. This is, nostalgia is clearly shown in My Antonia.

Chapter 4

Conclusion and Suggestions for Further Studies

In My Antonia, it is obvious that the main characters such as Mr. Shimerda, Jim, Peter, Pavel, Antonia, including the minor characters are nostalgic.

Mr. Shimerda who moves from Bohemia to America yearns for his native land, his old ways of life there, and his old friends. In his case, immigration mainly causes his nostalgia after he facing poverty, language barriers, and loneliness.

The Russians Peter and Pavel are also nostalgic for their homeland and their past experiences. As immigrants, they also face language, cultural, and economic problems that cause them to have nostalgia. Peter has the lonesome manners while Pavel is haunted by a sinful past.

Besides, Jim Burden continuously feels nostalgic throughout the novel. Although he has been succeeded in education and work, he still feels lonely and longs for the places he left behind including his childhood time and his old friends wherever he goes. At the same time, the female main character, Antonia immigrates to America when she was a girl and faces many great changes in her life. Therefore, she usually talks about Bohemia and her dead father when she feels lonely, showing her nostalgia for them.

Additionally, since this novel is about frontier life and immigrants, other characters such as Lena Lingard and the Norwegian immigrants are also nostalgic for their native land and the golden earlier moment of life in the past.

Obviously, nostalgia appears in these characters through both their physical and mental signs that can be observed by other characters in the story and by readers.

Readers can see these characters' nostalgia from words, behaviors, and thoughts. That is to say, the gloomy appearances, homesickness, health deterioration, isolation, loneliness, and depression all can reflect these characters' nostalgia. As seen in the characters' symptoms, Mr. Shimerda's severe homesickness, Pavel's hallucination, and even Jim's loneliness show the different images of nostalgia. However, they all are the same in one theory; that is, when they encounter some conflicts in the present, they tend to go back to their sweet memories in the past. Like Tannock's idea, the third stage of nostalgia happens in the present world of people who feel lost and unstable; then, these characters return and yearn for the pleasant past in the first stage (qtd. in Meewan 18-19).

In My Antonia, there are many reasons that cause the characters to have nostalgia. Immigration is the most obvious and influential cause of nostalgia as seen in this story since this novel is about pioneers' life in the frontier. In addition, the crises and great changes in life entail nostalgic feelings to the characters. The sufferings and problems they face in the present leads to their return to the past that is full of sweetness and never hurts them. Moreover, the important memorable experiences in the past such as happiness and sadness cause them to remember and recall the past in the present easily. As a result, the things, persons, and places that are similar to the past can evoke the character to long for the past. The last one is the mental condition of characters such as loneliness, feeling of loss, and etc. These conditions can also bring them to this nostalgic phenomenon.

Consequently, Cather's My Antonia is a very good example presenting the nostalgia of the pioneers and the immigrants in America. Both major and minor characters reflect nostalgia, the feeling of longing for the attached persons, places, things,

and the moment they left behind. Although in the minor characters' nostalgia is not as obvious as that of the main characters, it shows that nostalgia can happen to anybody in a society as well.

Nostalgia nowadays happens to not only the characters in this novel but also people in the society. In almost every corner, nostalgia may not be seen clearly and sometimes overlooked by most people; however, this sentimental meaning always exists underneath in individuals and their emotion. To exemplify, nostalgia appears in retro-fashion worn among both teenagers and adults and also the campaign of Thai-Silk dresses that spreads even among late teenagers. The old coffee or Ka-Fae Bo-Ran is one of the distinct examples reflecting nostalgic Thai society where people prefer going back to the old way of life. Besides, the antique decoration is a popular style among designers employing the antique furniture or local scenes of rural place in the past. Particularly, nostalgia has been frequently applied to marketing strategy; for instance, ecotourism uses home-stay to attract tourists because it provides the essence of local Thai way of life.

Since modernity and technology has become highly influential, nostalgia tends to happen more in the future. That is to say, when people face crises and changes in the present world, they return to the good old days that never hurt them. As a result, nostalgia is one of the interesting issues which should be observed and studied further in order to understand people in the society better and respond to them appropriately.

Suggestions for Further Studies

In My Antonia, there are many interesting points which should be studied. The following suggestions are:

1. Apart from the characters' nostalgic feeling in My Antonia, the tone of nostalgia reflected in the narrative style and settings of this novel should be studied. Probably, the analysis may be done in order to examine how the nostalgic narration and settings are related to the characters' feeling of nostalgia.

2. My Antonia should be studied in terms of relationships among the nostalgic characters to examine how each character's nostalgia is related to other characters' nostalgia in the story.

3. It would be interesting to study other novels by Willa Cather that also contain the nostalgic tone in order to see the similarities or the differences of nostalgia in those novels.

4. It would be interesting to study and compare nostalgia of Willa Cather's novels to other writers' novels such as Edith Wharton who also shows nostalgia in her works.

5. Nostalgia should be explored in other kinds of literature such as short stories, poems, songs, and films in order to understand people in society better and the causes of nostalgia in each period of time.

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ภาษาไทย

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Appendix

Willa Sibert Cather

- 1873 Willa Cather was born on December 7 in Back Creek, Virginia
- 1883 Move to Webster County, Nebraska
- 1884 Move to Red Cloud, Nebraska
- Meet Annie Sadilek (a model of Antonia)
- 1890 Graduate from Red Cloud High School
- Move to Lincoln
- Entrance at the University of Nebraska
- 1892 Publish her short story "Peter" in Boston magazine
- 1895 Graduate and return home
- 1896 Move to Pittsburgh to work as an editor
- 1900 Move to Washington D.C. to work as translator
- 1901 Return to Pittsburgh
- Teach English and Latin in Pittsburgh high school
- 1902 Visit to Europe
- 1903 Publish *April Twilights* (collection of poetry)
- Visit to Nebraska
- 1905 Short story collection "The Troll Garden"
- 1906 Move to New York to work as managing editor of McClure's Magazine
- 1908 Meet Sarah Orne Jewett
- 1911 Write Alexander's Bridge
- 1912 Publish Alexander's Bridge (first novel)
- Visit the Southwest and get an inspiration

- 1913 Work on free-lance writing
Publish O Pioneers!
- 1915 Publish The Song of the Lark
Visit the Southwest and see Annie Sadilek again
- 1917 Write My Antonia in New Hampshire
Award first honorary degree (Doctor of Letters) from University of
Nebraska
- 1918 Publish My Antonia
- 1920 Short story collection “Youth and the Bright Medusa”
- 1922 Publish One of Ours
- 1923 Award the Pulitzer prize for One of Ours
Publish A Lost Lady
- 1924 Award honorary degree from University of Michigan
- 1925 Publish The Professor’s House
Travel to the Southwest with Edith Lewis
- 1926 New Edition of My Antonia
Publish My Mortal Enemy
- 1927 Publish Death comes for the Archbishop
- 1928 Receive honorary degree from Columbia University
- 1929 Receive honorary degree from Yale University
- 1930 Award the Howells medal of the American Academy of Arts and
Letters for Death Comes for the Archbishop
- 1931 Publish Shadows on the Rock
- 1932 Short story collection “Obscure Destinies”
- 1935 Publish Lucy Gayheart

- 1935 Essay collection *Not Under Forty*
- 1939 Publish Sapphira and the Slave Girl
- 1944 Receive Gold Medal of the National Institute of Arts and Letters
- 1945 Short story “The Best Years”
- 1947 Willa Cather died on April 24.

Plot Summary of My Antonia

Jim Burden, an orphan boy from Virginia and Antonia Shimerda, a girl from Bohemia immigrate to Black Hawk, Nebraska with their families as the children pioneers. Jim lives on his grandparents' futile farm while Antonia faces economic troubles of her family since her father lacks farming skills. Jim and Antonia become close friends spending childhood moments together. Until Mr. Shimerda kills himself due to his disappointment and homesickness, the Shimerdas suffer; Antonia and her brother have to work in the fields. After the Burdens move to town, Antonia becomes a hired girl in the Harlings and the Cutters' houses whereas Jim studies Laws in the University of Lincoln. Many years later, Jim learns that Antonia is left by Larry Donovan with her child and returns to work hard on her brother's farm. Twenty years later, Jim visits Nebraska again and finds that Antonia is married to Anton Cuzak, a nice man, and has many children living happily together at last.

Vitae

Vitae

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