

The Fallen Idol and Southern Women Writers (Ⅲ)

—McCullers's "Boy-Girl Adolescents"—

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And the blots of Nature's hand

Shall not in their issue stand ;

—*A Midsummer Night's Dream*—

At the end of Shakespeare's comedy Oberon the fairy king retires with a blessing on all the newly made couples and their issue : "And the blots of Nature's hand/Shall not in their issue stand". The poet admits that nature sometimes makes mistakes, thereby creating "freaks". Carson McCullers was ever curious with "the blots of Nature's hand"; as a young girl she was taken to freak shows which provided children a major entertainment in a small town in the deep South. And in her fiction McCullers has created a whole gallery of freakish characters—the Amazonian Amelia Evans and her beloved Cousin Lymon the hunchback (*The Ballad of the Sad Café*, 1951), or the obese bestial Greek and John Singer the deaf-mute who cannot sing (*The Heart Is a Lonely Hunter*, 1940). She would, however, argue with Shakespeare that "[n]ature is not abnormal", and that there are no such thing as "the blots of Nature's hand".

Just the same McCullers has often been criticized for the apparent freakishness of her characters. To such accusation of morbidity, she once responded in her article, "The Flowering Dream : Notes on Writing": "A

writer can only say he writes from the seed which flowers later in the subconscious. *Nature is not abnormal*, only lifelessness is abnormal. Anything that pulses and moves and walks around the room, no matter what thing it is doing, is natural and human to the writer" (*Esquire*, December 1959, p. 163. My emphasis). To McCullers the physical anomaly—freakishness—was of the least importance. The novelist herself was an invalid for more than half of her life time; much of that time she suffered from paralysis of one kind and another. Hence, to McCullers, as long as one is about one's business of life, one is fulfilling one's *raison d'être* in life, which makes one just as natural and human as the rest of humanity. The hunchback is just as qualified a lover as the handsome rake. Indeed, the "freaks" constitute a legitimate constituency of McCullers's fictional world, and their so-called grotesquery has nothing to do with morbidity; it is simply a fact of life. To McCullers "[n]othing human is alien". Miss Amelia Evans in her manish outfit is a successful business-woman. Labelling this autonomous woman a freak has no relevance to her self-sufficient life. Her grotesquery is not, as is often argued in any discussion of the novella, merely a symbol of "spiritual loneliness" nor is it a mere trope for human condition in modern society.

What seems at issue here is the novelist's tacit endorsement of androgyny¹⁾ and her indictment of the socio-cultural milieu based on sexual polarization. This exploration of women in McCullers's fiction attempts to examine the relationship between the idea of androgyny and the alleged freakishness of her characters, and to clarify the nature of the problem raised yet not fully explored in previous discussions on McCullers. Leslie Fiedler in *Love and Death in the American Novel* (1960) and Patricia Spacks in *The Female Imagination* (1972) put their finger on the question of female adolescence in McCullers's works, but they dismiss the problem of "growing up female"²⁾ as sentimental and unworthy of

critical exploration. My contention is that in Mick Kelly (*The Heart Is a Lonely Hunter*) and Frankie Addams (*The Member of the Wedding*, 1946) McCullers celebrates female adolescence, claiming it to be a worthy subject for serious literature.

I

Discussions of fictional women in Katherine Anne Porter and in Flannery O'Connor³⁾ have demonstrated that the code of chivalry, which depends on the polarization of gender roles—the idea of virile gentleman and dainty lady—is no longer applicable. In the chivalric South in exchange for admiration, care, and economic security, woman was deprived of her personal freedom; in contemporary South “lady worship” has become a lost cause. An intelligent young girl such as Miranda Gay struggles to strike balance between the societal ideal of “a Southern belle” and the integrity of her self. The struggle is won hard, because the myth of the Southern lady is not only deep-rooted in society but inculcated in the consciousness of the woman herself. The manners with which these Southern writers treat their fictional women show, however, their protests against that myth.

Likewise, McCullers exposes the myth of “a southern belle” in a novella, *Reflections in a Golden Eye* (1941). The lustful Leonora Penderton is called “The Lady”, who turns out to be a veritable Guenever, and makes her husband a murderer. The crucial scene in the novella, where Private Williams keeps his vigil at the bedside of his Lady, is a parody on the adoration of the Lady done in black humor. Mick Kelly in *The Heart Is a Lonely Hunter* seriously worries about her inordinate height at about twelve. So does Frankie Addams in *The Member of the Wedding*. They do not want to grow beyond puberty, a world of yet undifferentiated gender, for McCullers’s boy-girl adolescents are afraid of becoming adults

because of their extraordinary height, which disqualifies them as desirable women.

Yet unlike her fellow Southerners—Katherine Anne Porter and Flannery O'Connor—Carson McCullers is less obsessed with female stereotypes, either a Southern belle or its deviate. Rather McCullers's so called grotesque characters become her tactics to show the "society's condemnation of androgyny". Biff Brannon, the owner of the New York Café in *The Heart Is a Lonely Hunter*, is McCullers's first exponent of the idea of androgyny; he wonders, watching Mick in khaki shorts, a blue shirt, and tennis shoes who looks like a very young boy :

And on that subject why was it that the smartest people mostly missed that point? *By nature all people are of both sexes.* So that marriage and the bed is not all by any means. The proof? Real youth and old age. Because often old men's voices grow high and reedy and they take on a mincing walk. And old women sometimes grow fat and their voices get rough and deep and they grow dark little moustaches. And he even proved it himself—the part of him that sometimes wished he was a mother and that Mick and Baby were his kids (119. My emphasis.).

Biff's observation above quoted rings a bell in our unconscious self, because as Carolyn Heilbrun suggests in *Toward a Recognition of Androgyny* (1973) the androgynous ideal persists in all the dreams of mysticism. In support of androgyny Heilbrun refers to "the androgynous nature of God and of human perfection before the Fall" (xvii), using Genesis 1 : 27 as proof of evidence : "God created man in his own image. . . male and female created he them". In the same "Introduction" she also makes a confession that she is not alone in ignoring the homosexual wholes of Plato's parable⁴), thereby condemning the slightest androgynous taint both in man and woman. Only in such cultural context the tragedy

of Captain Penderton and Private Williams is properly undertood, and the apparent freakishness of Miss Amelia Evans assumes another meaning.

Reflections in a Golden Eye, a novella set in an army post in the South in peacetime, is a tragedy which involves "two officers, a soldier, two women, a Filipino, and a horse" (7). The dramatic situation itself is ironically set in an army post in peacetime, which as the narrator says is "a dull place", where men are deprived of their rightful occupation. On the other hand, there is no other time when the polarization of the sexes is justified than wartime. Captain Penderton is a tell-tale rendition of the androgyne and his creator touches on the very nature of androgyny :

. . . Sexually the Captain obtained within himself a delicate balance between the male and female elements, with the susceptibilities of both the sexes and the active powers of neither. For a person content to withdraw a bit from life and able to collect his scattered passions and throw himself wholeheartedly into some impersonal work, some art or even some crack-brained fixed idea such as an attempt to square the circle—for such a person this state of being is bearable enough. (14-15)

A personality with "a delicate balance between the male and the female elements" roughly corresponds to what Virginia Woolf meant by the androgynous nature of a great poet⁵. The Captain has a brilliant career before him as he does not spare himself working in his study far into night, while his wife carries on an extramarital affair with Major Langdon. For the Captain "marriage and the bed is not all" ; and but for his wife he would not have felt his "basic lack, or superfluity".

Nonetheless, he is blind to the fact that their marriage is a crime against his wife as well as against himself. His "sad penchant for becoming enamoured of his wife's lovers" (15) precipitates him to murder the love-sick soldier. The object of his passion—his quest for the lost half—

is like himself a male rather than a female, Leonora. And in his misplaced passion he murders Private Williams in his wife's bedchamber, where he is silently and quietly paying his homage to his Lady. The Captain cannot tolerate the insolence of the soldier who shows no interest in his superior despite the latter's desperate efforts to attract his attention to himself. As has been suggested, the real cause of the tragedy in *Reflections in a Golden Eye* is our blindness to the significance of the androgyne in ourselves, or the society's condemnation of androgyny as deviant and evil.

In response to the Major preaching about how the army can make a man of Anacleto, the effeminate Filipino, the Captain retorts as follows:

"'You mean', . . . 'that any fulfilment obtained at the expense of normalcy is wrong, and should not be allowed to bring happiness.

In short, it is better, because it is morally honourable, for the square peg to keep scraping about the round hole rather than to discover and use the unorthodox square that would fit it?" (112)

The parable of fitting the square peg in the round hole here becomes an analogy for mechanically categorizing the manly and the womanly and condemning the slightest sign of the androgynous as evil or freakish. "In short, it is better, because it is morally honourable, for the square peg to keep scraping about the round hole rather than to discover and use the unorthodox square that would fit it?" To be sure, the question mark the Captain tentatively puts to his statement does not belong there. This cultural mistake that the Western civilization has committed, deliberately or otherwise, seems to have created fierce battles of the sexes.

McCullers challenges such socio-cultural injustice done to both sexes over centuries again in the portrayal of Amelia Evans in *The Ballad of the Sad Café*. In her overalls and gum-boots she looks more like a man than a woman. She is a tall woman with "bones and muscles like a man"; her hair is "cut short and brushed back from the forehead" (8). She is a

competent businesswoman, the proprietor of a store and of a still where she produces "the best liquor in the country". She resembles Captain Penderton in two respects. She excels in doing work: "With all things which could be made by the hands Miss Amelia prospered" (9); and she is not comfortable with people. Only as a healer (in her professional status) she is able to establish any kind of human contact; she cannot socialize even with her patients and customers. Furthermore, she somewhat anticipates a radical feminist in that she turns her bridegroom off from her premises soon after marriage, which has become the talk of the town.

In the meantime, Miss Amelia takes up with a stranger who comes to her door, claiming kinship to her. Together with this dwarfish cousin of hers, Miss Amelia opens a café, and turns it into a prosperous meeting place where people in the community gather and socialize. All seems to go well with Miss Amelia: the café flourishes; her liquor tastes even better than ever; she comes to know a certain warmth of human love and friendship, until the thwarted husband comes back to get it even with the woman who has humiliated and unmanned him in their too brief a married life.

The terrifying fight between Amelia Evans and Marvin Macy takes place on the Ground Hog Day exactly at seven; the deadly struggle between the two equally competent contestants continues for about half an hour, when the real fight begins.

... And now that Miss Amelia and Marvin were locked in a hold together the crowd came out of its daze and pressed in closer.

For a while the fighters grappled muscle to muscle, their hipbones braced against each other. Backward and forward, from side to side, they swayed in this way. (79-80)

Too obvious it becomes that the battle *is* sex; it is "the primal scene of sexual consummation" which should have taken place on their wedding

night⁶⁹. And just as the fight was almost won by Miss Amelia, "the hunchback sprang forward and sailed through the air. . . landed on the broad back of Miss Amelia and clutched at her neck with his clawed little fingers" (80). Cousin Lymon's intervention with the fight brings victory to Marvin Macy, and the pair leave the town together after they have done everything ruinous to Amelia's property.

In *No Man's Land* Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar contend that *The Ballad of the Sad Café* is quite an original dramatization of the sexual battle fought between Amelia Evans on the one side and Marvin Macy and Cousin Lymon on the other. They explain the mythic nature of the terrible fight as the revenge "that the law of the phallus inflicts on those (women) who defy its imperatives". She is meted out the punishment, they continue, because of her arrogance for the disposal of men in her self-sufficient life (105). Amelia Evans who wanted to rule rather than to be ruled finally succumbs to the convention of femininity, which is symbolized by the red dress she wears occasionally after the appearance of Cousin Lymon and the birth of the café. Yet the square peg does not fit the round hole, after all. Thus, Amelia becomes another victim of the polarization of gender roles that condemns the independent woman as a freak who eventually is to lose. Now McCullers's idea of androgyny finds its best expression in her boy-girl adolescents: Mick Kelly in *The Heart Is a Lonely Hunter* and Frankie Addams in *The Member of the Wedding*.

II

The Heart Is a Lonely Hunter is the first novel McCullers wrote at the age of twenty-three, and is considered as her best work. The action of the story takes place in a small town in the deep South on the eve of the World War II, covering a little more than a year from the middle of May 1938 to August 21, 1939. The book consists of three parts: the first part

introduces a pair of friends who are always together: John Singer and Antonapoulos, and four other characters who come to John Singer to tell stories of their frustrated dream and love—Biff Brannon who runs the New York Café, Jake Blount, “a stranger in a strange land” (24), Mick Kelly, and Doctor Copeland, an idealistic doctor. The second and largest part of the novel begins after each of the four people starts coming to see John Singer alone in his room and closes when Singer commits suicide after *his* friend’s death. The last part constitutes an epilogue summing up the way each of the four characters reorganizes his or her life after the death of Singer their confessor.

Of the five lonely hunters in search of love and sympathy, Mick Kelly is the most fully developed of McCullers’s characters. It is to this boy–girl adolescent that we now turn our attention, since Mick’s struggle for self-realization, as she grows into adulthood, makes the central episode of the second and largest part of the novel. And to examine the meaning of Mick’s adolescence is to explore further the novelist’s endorsement of androgyny dramatized in her fiction. Mick Kelly is McCullers’s successful rendition of the androgynous personality of which failed attempts are, as has been observed in the first section of this discussion, Captain Penderton and Amelia Evans.

Mick is a troubled adolescent; she comes to Biff’s café to buy a pack of cheapest kind of cigarettes, which she believes, “would help stunt the rest of her growth” (101). Mick fears of growing up into a freak because at thirteen she already measures five feet and six inches. She is “[a]gangling, towheaded youngster, a girl of about twelve, . . . dressed in khaki shorts, a blue shirt, and tennis shoes—so that at first glance she was like a very young boy” (20).

Mick is dressed the way she is as she does not want to look like her sisters, Hazel and Etta, who only care for movie stars and primp all day

long. They are no role model for Mick who dreams of becoming an inventor or a composer ; she tells her sisters : "I wear shorts because I don't want to wear your old hand-me-downs. I don't want to be like either of you and I don't want to look like either of you. *And I won't . . .*" (41. My emphasis). She'd rather be a boy any day, because she intuitively knows there's more freedom for boys than for girls ; she is to face a bitter realization later on that "A boy has a better advantage [like that] than a girl" (216). Therefore, she makes most of the prerogative of being in puberty, and tramps around all day in "silly boy's clothes".

Mick's favorite pastime amidst the humdrum life of worrying about money and taking care of her younger brothers is to climb to the very top of the house under construction :

Five minutes later Mick stood up and held herself very straight. She spread out her arms like wings. This was the place where everybody wanted to stand. The very top. But not many kids could to it. Most of them [including boys] were scared, for if you lost grip and rolled off the edge it would kill you. (33-4)

At the roof top Mick retreats into "the inside room" where she dreams of becoming a great composer like Mozart, or a great inventor : "She would invent little tiny radios the size of a green pea that people could carry around and stick in their ears. . ." (34). At Vocational Mick takes "mechanical shop *like a boy*" with special permission (94. My emphasis). She will have nothing to do with the stenographic course her sisters take. In this Mick is a legitimate first cousin of Porter's Miranda who dreamed of becoming a jockey or an airplane pilot⁷. These adolescent girls dare to break through the culturally determined gender role. And they are spared the terrible fate of Amelia Evans thanks to their blessed "boy-girl" adolescence, an ideal mode of being and life McCullers has envisioned.

Besides, Mick is confident of her physical strength ; she can take care

of herself. She enjoys walking the street at night, disdainful of girls who are scared of the dark :“. . . Most girls were nuts. If a person the size of Jo Louis. . . would jump out at her and want to fight she would run. But if it was somebody within twenty pounds her weight she would give him a good sock and go on” (93). Mick sounds like a kind of swagger Miss Amelia is without, to be sure, the latter’s eccentricity. The fact that this boy-girl adolescent has control over her own body is clearly shown in an episode of her sexual initiation with Harry Minowitz, which symbolically closes Mick’s bitter-sweet troubled adolescence.

One hot summer-like day in March 1939, Mick and Harry go on a bicycle trip to a deep, wide creek in the woods. Out in the country they play around like real good friends they are, swimming and diving in the cold water, and Mick dares Harry to take off his bathing-suits. She does the same, and very casually like innocent Adam and Eve they make love for the first time : “It was like her head was broke off from her body and thrown away. And her eyes looked up straight into the blinding sun while she counted something in her mind. And then this was the way” (241). McCullers handles this crucial episode of her boy-girl adolescent’s initiation into adulthood in the most natural and beautiful manner imaginable.

On their way home Harry tells Mick that he would leave town and find a job as a mechanic some other place. He also assures her of his readiness to take whatever responsibility he has in the matter. On her part Mick agrees but she soon forgets him after his departure : “She felt very old, and it was like something was heavy inside her. She was a grown *person* now, whether she wanted to be or not” (243. My emphasis). Thus, sexual initiation for McCullers’s adolescent girl is part of her growth process, and nothing to make fuss about. Sexually, Mick is more convention free and therefore more resilient than Esther Greenwood in Plath’s

The Bell Jar (1963), who is obsessed with the idea of chastity for both boy and girl.

Mick's sexual initiation is counterbalanced by her emotional maturity earned through her experience in "the outside room"—the full realization of her family's financial plight, of her Dad's unmitigated sense of loneliness, and of the general cheapness of life which turns Dr. Copeland's dream and hers into disillusionments. Mick gives up her music lessons and finishing her training at Vocational and takes a job at Woolworth's, because "[w]hen a girl wants a job she has to quit school and work full time," whereas "a boy can usually get some part-time job that don't take him out of school and leaves him time for other things" (216). Her muted rage and sense of disappointment, however, is not to be understood as a sign of her failed adolescent dreams and doomed adulthood.

In his discussion of the novel, Richard Cook observes that Mick gives an impression of what A. C. Bradley defined as "tragic waste" and one feels that Mick will grow up to be a bitter, neurotic woman (31). As Cook aptly points out, there is a tragic sense of loss in this adolescent female. However, Mick is no Amelia Evans and McCullers provides a parting glance at this grown up boy-girl adolescent which promises a different future for her adolescent "hero". On her way home from work, she drops in at Biff's café, and places an unusual (freakish?) order, an odd combination of "a chocolate sundae and a nickel glass of draw beer" (305), indicating that her old self—androgynous personality—is still intact.

Mick frowned and rubbed her fist hard across her forehead. That was the way things were. It was like she was mad all the time. Not how a kid gets mad quick so that soon it is all over—but in another way. Only there was nothing to be mad at. . . . It was like she was cheated. Only nobody had cheated her. So there was nobody to take it out on. However, just the same she

had that feeling. Cheated.

But maybe it would be true about the piano and turn out O. K. Maybe she would get a chance soon. Else what the hell good had it all been—the way she felt about music and the plans she had made in the inside room? It had to be some good if anything made sense. And it was too and it was too it was too and it was too. It was some good (308).

The above quoted passage which sounds like an incantation is a good testimony of the emotional and physical resilience of McCullers's boy-girl adolescent whom Harold Bloom calls in his introduction to *Modern Critical Views* "a visionary of 'the way things were' " (4).

Frankie Addams in *The Member of the Wedding* is another such adolescent heroine of McCullers's. To conclude the discussion on "the boy-girl adolescents" in McCullers's fiction, a few remarks on Frankie are necessary here. Like *The Heart Is a Lonely Hunter*, the novel records the growth process of Frankie during her "green and crazy summer when [she] was twelve years old" (7). But unlike the first novel which involves five isolated people each in search of his or her self-fulfillment, among whom Mick becomes their model, the later novel concentrates on one character and her reconciliation with the way things are.

Frankie shows familiar symptoms of troubled adolescence and uncertainties of identity: "She belonged to no club and was a member of nothing in the world. Frankie had become an unjoined person who hung around in doorways, and she was afraid" (7). Afraid to go through the doorway and engage herself in the world, she hesitates on the threshold. "She read the war news and thought about the world and packed her suitcase to go away; but she did not know where she should go" (30).

In her essay, "Loss of Self in *The Member of the Wedding*", Barbara White argues that the book "is less a novel of initiation into 'acceptance of

human limits' than a novel of initiation into acceptance of *female* limits" (141). This is true enough. Frankie's desire to be a soldier like her brother who is in the Marine Corps is only attainable for a boy. (Mick also wants to become a soldier and fight the Fascists.) And like her avatar Mick Kelly, Frankie has to face the problem of sex awareness as well as sex determination.

During that "green and crazy summer" she is suddenly made self-conscious of her extraordinary height. She is harassed by the idea of "a Southern belle": "This August she was twelve and five-sixth years old. She was five feet five and three-quarter inches tall, and she wore a number seven shoe. . . . [if she grows up at the present rate] she would grow to be over nine feet tall. And what would be a *lady* who is over nine feet high? She would be a Freak" (25. My emphasis). Frankie is serious in asking Berenice, the black servant, who mothers her: "Do you think I will grow into a Freak?" or "Well, do you think I will be pretty?" (28). Being accepted in society as a lady means satisfying a certain requirements; then she would rather remain in that androgynous state of oscillating between the two sexes, and dresses like a boy: "She wore a pair of blue track shorts, a B. V. D. undervest, and she was barefooted" (8).

Frankie spends all day with Berenice and her cousin John Henry in the gray ugly kitchen, where much of the action in the novel takes place. As in the case of Flannery O'Connor's stories, the kitchen functions as an effective trope for a place where women are trapped, deprived of activities in the outside world: "The three of them sat at the kitchen table, saying the same things over and over, so that by August the words began to rhyme with each other and sound strange. The world seemed to die each afternoon and nothing moved any longer. At last the summer was like a green sick dream, or like a silent crazy jungle under glass" (7).

The sudden visit of her brother Jarvis with his bride to be wakes up

Frankie out of such boredom and stagnation—"a green sick dream"—and lures her out into a larger world of experience. Frankie is excited with the prospect of their wedding: "She loved her brother and the bride and she was a member of the wedding. The three of them would go into the world and they would always be together" (57). Frankie's absurd plan to become "the member of the wedding" ends, however, in a fiasco and she has to learn a hard lesson of "the way things were", that growing up necessitates shedding a childish name "Frankie", her shorts, undervest, and cowboy hat, and her rough ways. Frankie's reconciliation with who she is and what she would be in the world is symbolically expressed in the change of her names from "Frankie" to "F. Jasmine", and finally to "Frances J. Addams". The acknowledgment of the last name registers the completion of her transformation from boy-girl adolescence into adulthood.

The Member of the Wedding closes as Berenice leaves the Addams household; John Henry is conveniently removed by death; and Frances and her father move to another house. Frances now has found a new friend, Mary Littlejohn, who is of her own sex and of her generation. "They read poets like Tennyson together; and Mary was going to be a great painter [like Michelangelo] and Frances a great poet—or else the foremost authority on radar" (186). The book leaves Frances waiting for her friend to come and spend the night together: "... with an instant shock of happiness, she heard the ringing of the bell" (190).

Frances Addams who has turned thirteen is not the Frankie of that "green and crazy summer"; she relinquishes her child plan to be a Marine, which, however, should not be understood as "acceptance of *female* limits", because "the foremost authority on radar" is just as much a man's profession as an officer in the Marine Corps. Frances's ambition to be a great

poet is even a happier choice ; a great poet must needs be androgynous as Virginia Woolf qualifies the term, citing as an example the androgynous nature of Shakespeare's poetry. It is also such harmony of "both sides of [one's] mind"⁸⁾ that is meant by androgyny in McCullers's boy-girl adolescents. It may well be that such ideal state of being—" [Frankie] planned it so that people could instantly change back and forth from boys to girls, whichever way they felt like and wanted" (116)—is possible only in an adolescent's daydream, or in a fantasy like Virginia Woolf's in her *Orlando*. Like Virginia Woolf, McCullers believed that our happiness lies in a movement away from the prison of gender toward a world where each individual can freely choose his or her role and mode of behavior.

As has been stated at the outset of this discussion, the idea of androgyny—a move toward the liberation of conventional gender roles—is one of the major themes in McCullers's fiction ; Mick Kelly and Frankie Addams are only two among many androgynous characters who populate McCullers's fictional world, not excepting so-called freaks—Amelia Evans and Captain Penderton. McCullers's choice of "boy-girl adolescents" as subject in her fiction has enabled the novelist to find a happy solution to the problem of "society's condemnation of androgyny" and to create a viable and endearing adolescent heroines. As portraits of adolescence, McCullers's Frankie Addams and Mick Kelly are an achievement that can compete with Mark Twain's Huck Finn or Salinger's Holden Caulfield⁹⁾ ; and McCullers's contribution to literature is, as Barbara White contends, that she has reserved "center stage for girls" (142).

Notes

- 1) Among the critics who refer to the subject in McCullers's novels, most outspoken are Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar in *No Man's Land* (New Haven : Yale University Press, 1988), Vol. 1, pp. 104–12. Also see Virginia Spencer

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- Carr, *The Lonely Hunter: A Biography of Carson McCullers* (New York : Doubleday, 1975), pp. 159, 167 ; Carr, "Carson McCullers", *Fifty Southern Writers After 1900* (New York : Greenwood, 1987), p. 305; Barbara A. White, "Loss of Self in *The Member of the Wedding*", *Modern Critical Views : Carson McCullers* (New York : Chelsea House, 1986) ed. Harold Bloom, pp. 125-142.
- 2) Patricia Meyer Spacks, *The Female Imagination* (New York : Avon Books, 1972), p. 200. The phrase "Growing Up Female" is also the title of Barbara A. White's book, *Growing Up Female : Adolescent Girlhood in American Fiction* (New York : Greenwood Press, 1985).
- 3) Keiko Beppu, "The Fallen Idol and Southern Women Writers (I)", *Women's Studies Forum* (Kobe College Research Institute for Women's Studies), Vol. 2 (March 1988), pp. 49-64, and "The Fallen Idol and Southern Women Writers (II)", *Women's Studies Forum*, Vol. 3 (March 1989), pp. 13-28.
- 4) Carolyn G. Heilbrun, *Toward a Recognition of Androgyny* (New York : Harper & Row, 1973), p. xiii.
- 5) Virginia Woolf, *A Room of One's Own* (1929 ; New York ; HBJ Book, 1957), p. 107.
- 6) Gilbert and Gubar, *No Man's Land*, Vol. 1, p. 109.
- 7) Keiko Beppu, "The Fallen Idol and Southern Women Writers (I)", p. 57.
- 8) See Note 5.
- 9) Richard M. Cook, *Carson McCullers* (New York : Ungar, 1975), p. 61.

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要 約

＜落ちた偶像＞と南部女性作家（Ⅲ）

——カースン・マッカラズとアンドロジニ——

別 府 恵 子

Carolyn Heilbrun はその著書 *Toward a Recognition of Androgyny* (1973) において、「社会における様々な問題は性の二極分化に起因する。将来わたしたちは、それぞれ個人がその性的役割や行動様式を自由に選択出来るような社会をつくる必要がある」と提言した。それからほぼ20年後の90年代になって、やっと Heilbrun が夢みた社会が到来したかに見える。「オジサン OL」とか「ギャル男」が増殖中で、周りの社会も彼らをことさら奇異なる現象とはみなさない。男らしさ、女らしさという既成概念から自由な彼らの生き方は新しいライフ・スタイルとして容認されているかのようなのである。

The Heart Is a Lonely Hunter (1940), *The Ballad of the Sad Café* (1951) などで知られる Carson McCullers は、生の不条理への問いかけを追求した作家である。彼女のグロテスクな作品世界は人間の孤独感、疎外意識を見事に描き出しており、McCullers は実存主義の作家、あるいは南部ゴシックの作家との評価が定着している。本論は、McCullers のいわゆるグロテスクな人間像を、生の不条理、人間の孤独感の顕在化として捉えるのではなく、西洋文明における性の二極分化による文化的奇形と読み解く。そして McCullers の創造した "Boy-girl Adolescents"—Mick Kelly, Frankie Addams—に性別、性役割に関する既成概念からの解放を提唱する McCullers のアンドロジニ的世界、Heilbrun の夢みた未来社会のヴィジョンを見ようとするものである。