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The Predicament of Hybridity in *The Body*

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Ⅰ. Introduction

In his interview with a British writer Hanif Kureishi, Bradley Buchanan refers to the postcolonial term of hybridity: "to be seen as creating something new that may push the boundaries of the human by crossing ethnic or racial lines" (119). Yet, Kureishi argues that if the notion of hybridity means "the pulling together of disparate things," "there is hybridity everywhere, there always has been" (qtd. in Buchanan 119). However, many commentators, as Susie Thomas asserts, hail Kureishi as the "herald of hybridity" (4), so that Kureishi's elaboration of the notion of hybridity is associated with a blend of any different ethnic people and cultures. In *The Buddha of Suburbia* (1990) and *The Black Album* (1995), Kureishi uses hybridity to challenge the rigid conception of racial and ethnic identities, exploring the possibility of transformative identities, whilst in *The Body* (2003) he addresses how technology is able to produce new hybrid bodies, raising the question of the possibility of a new conception of identity beyond humanism and of how such hybrid identities affect our life in the ethical and political contexts.

The Body displays metamorphoses in which characters become hybrids with the aid of bio-technology. Whereas Gregor Samsa in Franz Kafka's *The Metamorphosis* wakes up to find himself changed into a monstrous insect, something repulsive to him, the characters in this novel are actively willing to metamorphose by their consciousness being transferred into young and beautiful bodies. For this, they secretly trade corpses and implant their brains into them and become a hybrid of self and other, living and death. With the advance of technology, narratives of metamorphoses have greatly proliferated: from the modification of human bodies and genes in the real world to the transformation of humans, machines, aliens and vampires in

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the virtual world. Compared with science fiction and film, the modes of characters' metamorphoses in this novel do not seem to be either unique or remarkable. However, given Kureishi's focus upon socio-political issues in his previous works, this novel provides an exceptionally insightful exploration of technological hybridity and its concomitant effects. *The Body* is far removed from his previous realism and moves into more imaginative territory by drawing on science fiction. Although, as Susie Thomas notes, "this novel doesn't read like science fiction but rather allegory or fable since there is little interest in the medical or mechanical aspects of brains being implanted into deceased bodies" (134), it does nonetheless explore various aspects of hybridity related to technology and how it can alter the conception of our identity and life beyond humanism.

Hybridity proliferated by technology can be also rethought in an ethical and political sense by considering Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's conceptions of "assemblage" and "the body." Deleuze and Guattari's notion of assemblage has at least certain affinity with hybridity as a mode of subjectivity in the way they both involve a flexible subject. Given the fact that much of the critical debates about Kureishi's works have focused on Homi Bhabha's conception of hybridity,[1] it might be helpful to approach Kureishi's description of hybridity by connecting it to Bhabha's notion of "a third space" (19) ("in-between" or a "difference within") in a hybrid and a hybridization. Specifically, as David Huddart asserts, Bhabha's conception of hybridity refers to a cultural identity, that invokes an "original mixedness within every form of identity": "In the case of cultural identities, hybridity refers to the fact that cultures are not discrete phenomena; instead, they are always in contact with one another, and this contact leads to cultural mixed-ness" (6–7). Huddart's argument about hybridity means that it is fundamentally available for cultural identities to connect and mix with others, which is close to Deleuze's conception of assemblage. Huddart also radically interprets Bhabha's conception of hybridity on the grounds that the concept of hybridity is not merely related to the mixed form of identity or culture, but also marks "the constant process of creating new identities (their open-endedness or their 'becoming')" by

1. According to Susie Thomas, "[m]any critics have fruitfully explored Kureishi's novel as an embodiment and complication of Bhabha and Rushdie's celebration of cultural hybridity" (63). Indeed, many commentators such as Bart Moore-Gilbert, Ruvani Ranasinha and Bradley Buchanan approach Kureishi's novels in terms of hybridity.

drawing the borderline between "unsettled cultural forms or identities" (7). However, as Peter Hallward claims, Bhabha's notion of hybridity is not associated with collectivity or collective relations, but is rather accounted for by the "fundamentally non-relational terms of pure 'incommensurability' or 'untranslatability'" (24). Specifically, Hallward further argues that Bhabha's idea of individuals are "always derivative" as a result of differentiation of language. Thus, the individuals can be understood as singularity of difference by hybridizing subjects. By contrast, Deleuze and Guattari's conception of assemblage is to be understood as the body composed of collective relations between heterogeneous elements. Simone Bignall clearly explains Deleuze and Guattari's notion of the body as follows:

> A body is not a discrete entity defined by stable boundaries and a set of fixed characteristics; rather, it is an assemblage of components bound into a coherent form, but this bodily consistency is only ever temporary and is always shifting. This is so, because the component parts of a body constantly change as they enter into new relations with other parts encountered by the assemblage in its interaction with parts encountered by the assemblage in its interactions with its existential milieu. A body is, then, a 'composition of relations between parts.' (83)

In this passage, the body as assemblage is changeable in relation to other bodies. The body is also social because the body is, as Bignall asserts, an "extensive entity" which is related to other bodies and also forms an "element part in a multitude of more complex assemblages formed with other bodies in its social milieu" (83–84). For this reason, the body as assemblage is not predetermined, but inherently transformative by relating to other bodies in the milieu. This milieu is, as J. Macgregor Wise explains, understood as "the surroundings, the context, the mediums in which the assemblages work" (78). Deleuze and Guattari's conception of the body as assemblage is associated with the "becoming-other" beyond individualism and is also related to the "double-becoming" between bodies. Moreover, assemblage as a "constellation of singularities" (*A Thousand Plateaus* 406) or a collection of singular parts, is focused on the veritable affects of affecting and being affected by other bodies as well as interactive with the milieu. This complex of affects is inextricably associated with the becoming-other. Thus, we can approach Kureishi's description of hybridity in *The Body* in terms of Deleuze and Guattari's

conceptions of assemblage and the body to examine how a new body can bring interactive transformations between self and other or the living and the dead in the ethical and political spaces.

Relying on Deleuze and Guattari's perspective, this paper will discuss whether a hybrid can bring a new conception of identity beyond humanism and the mutual interactions between self and other in *The Body*, by focusing on complex repercussions for both these individuals and their society. For this, firstly, I will examine the pleasures and anxieties of hybridity invoked by Kureishi's depiction of a new body by comparing the characters' desire with Deleuze's concept of desire. Secondly, I will explore how a new body can experience Deleuze and Guattari's conception of "becoming-other" by affective relations with the dead body. This becoming-other will be discussed alongside "aging" or "auto-affection" concerned with a process which is denied by the appropriation of new bodies.

Ⅱ. The Pleasure and Anxiety of Hybridity

As a result of bio-technology, a hybrid in *The Body* becomes a "new body" physically and philosophically. The protagonist Adam, in his mid-sixties, thinks of his body as a "half-dead old carcass" (2) and suffers a lot of illness. Once he is offered the possibility of becoming a new body, he thinks of it as an irresistible invitation. After he has asked his wife Margot for a "six month sabbatical," he decides to transform his body into a hybrid one by implanting his brain into a young dead body. In terms of Adam's metamorphosis, he is situated at the boundary between self and other, the living and the dead. This drives Adam to experience a new body and new life. The prospect of transformation is seemingly pleasurable at the beginning. Technology and humans seem to have a symbiotic relationship with each other so that advanced medicine and skilful doctors help Adam change his body and enjoy the abandonment of an apparent liberation. On the basis of this optimistic vision, Adam can metamorphose into a hybrid physically as if he were incarnating the flesh of a Greek god. However, concerned with what Adam expects through his possession of a new body, we can question whether Adam becomes a new body as part of a new concept of identity.

As Bruce Clarke and Caroline Walker Bynum point out, narratives of metamorphoses in which humans transmogrify into machines, animals, trees

and light have continuously been represented in numerous ways in legend, art, fiction and film (Bynum 28–33; Clarke 170–71). According to Clarke, "archaic and classical metamorphosis — fictive entities once merely human that become some hybrid of human and nonhuman traces — were typically reinscribed back into the natural orders: Daphne into a laurel tree, Narcissus into a flower" (170). Bynum also explores tales of metamorphosis of werewolves and examines poetic images of transformation as depicted in the works of Marie de France and Dante in the middle ages (28). From Bynum's perspective, these medieval stories and images struggled to retain the identity of things, "both their entity-ness, or *unitas*, and their spatiotemporal continuity, despite physical or spiritual transformation" (28).[2] In these pre-modern metamorphoses, the narratives of transformations maintained the identities of humans and things, whereas the narratives of modern metamorphoses, according to Clarke, overlap with those in the pre-modern age, but also anticipate "posthuman transformation" (171). Metamorphosis has in recent times become a fascination in the popular imagination, finding instantiation in the ever-increasing virtual spaces of film, television and computer media. Indeed, the bestiary of hybrids and mutations such as "Batman" or "Spider-Man" has led to the production of powerful cultural icons.[3] However, we need to think why these narratives of hybridity are enticing. Some of these mutants glorify hybridity, in that they

2. Bynum distinguishes a hybrid from metamorphosis represented in narratives and images: "The hybrid expresses a world of natures, essences, or substances (often diverse or contradictory to each other), encountered through paradox; it resists change. Metamorphosis expresses a labile world of flux and transformation, encountered through story. In an obvious sense, the contrast is that metamorphosis is process and hybrid is not … A hybrid is a double being, an entity of parts, two or more. It is an inherently visual form. We see what a hybrid is; it is a way of making two-ness, and the simultaneity of two-ness, visible. Metamorphosis goes from an entity that is one thing to an entity that is another" (29–30).
3. See Will Brooker's *Batman Unmasked: Analyzing a Cultural Icon*. C.f. Meehan, Eileeen. "Holy commodity Fetish Batman!: The Political Economy of a Commercial Intertext." *The Many Lives of the Batman: Critical Approaches to a Superhero and his Media*. Ed. Roberta, E. Pearson and William Uricchio. New York: Routledge, 1991. 58–59. Print; Thurtle, Phillip, and Robert Mitchell. "The Acne Novelty Library: Comic Books, Repetition and the Return of the New." *Configuration* 15.3 (Fall 2007): 267–97. Print. Particularly, Thurtle and Mitchell emphasize that superheroes such as Spider-Man become cultural Icons in an industrial society through the humanized alter-ego of superheroes (for example, Peter Parker in *Spider-Man*) and the "sensory and affective capability" of our bodies.

both possess enhanced power and keep their human identity. These narratives of mutants are in fact related to superhumans, which could exhibit the positive expectations of hybridity promised by technology.

Transformations both in the virtual and actual world force us to reconfigure ourselves and our circumstances. Donna Haraway and Rosi Braidotti use the term "post-humans" to designate the current condition of mankind, which they view as already having metamorphosed both physically and philosophically into a new species.[4] Specifically, Haraway accounts of a cyborg as a posthuman: "A cyborg is a cybernetic organism, a hybrid of machine and organism, a creature of social reality as well as a creature of fiction" (291). She also claims that "by the late 20th century, our time, a mythic time, we are all chimeras, theorized and fabricated hybrids of machine and organism; in short, we are cyborgs. The cyborg is our ontology; it gives us our politics" (292). However, as Cary Wolfe argues, the concept of "posthumanism" should be distinguished from "transhumanism," a term Joel Garreal suggests to describethe extension of humanism (xv). Garreal insists that humanism has shifted into transhumanism based on "the enhancement of human intellectual, physical, and emotional capabilities" (231–32). In this respect, "transhumanism" is the opposite of "posthumanism" (xv), because "the posthuman" does not simply imply "culture and age that comes 'after' the human," but it "truly involves a fundamental change or mutation in the concept of the human" (Rutsky 107). In this context, we can question whether Adam's new body could be considered "posthuman" or "transhuman." Adam's expectations of his new body point to transhumanism, as he is able to enhance his physical capability and to expand his life span. However, it is also ethical to consider whether a new body is related to what Braidotti says about a "post-humanistic vision of the subject" by providing an "alternative foundation for ethical and political subjectivity" (11).

Concerned with Adam's transformation, there could be the negative expectations of a hybrid proliferated by technology. If technology has catalysed humans to become a new hybrid, yet they cannot foretell accurately how such transformations will impact on themselves and their life in a society. As Chris Hables Cray demonstrates, the proliferation of transformations could

4. See Haraway's "A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century"and Braidotti's *Metamorphoses: Towards a Materialist Theory of Becoming*.

be the premise of monsters, as depicted in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (195). These expectations toward radical changes might be, from Michel Foucault's perspective, described as utopian and heterotopian. According to Foucault in *The Orders of Things*, when people face unfamiliar and monstrous things or language—for example, Borges's unusual enumeration of animals in his essay "The Analytical language of John Wilkins"—they show opposite responses to the strange categories of animals (xv). Such uncanny objects might remind people of utopia because the utopian locus affords consolation: "although they have no real locality there is nevertheless a fantastic, untroubled region in which they are able to unfold" (xviii). On the other hand, unfamiliar things might make people imagine heterotopias. These are related to "the loss of what is 'common' to place and name" (xix). Moreover, "heterotopias are disturbing, probably because they secretly undermine language, because they make it impossible to name this and that" (xviii). In this respect, metamorphoses can be either pleasurable or fearful. Adam's transformation into the other body appears to lead to the loss of his identity or to a being in-between self and other, as he recognizes himself as a "nobody": "I was neither an Oldbody nor a Newbody. I was a Nobody" (74).

Adam's transformation is presented both in terms of pleasurable and anxious expectations. At first, we can see the positive expectations of Adam's transformation. As we have seen, the pleasurable expectation is related to the enhancement of Adam's body and power by mixing with the heterogeneous elements. This transformation starts to engage with what Deleuze and Guattari call "connections." For Deleuze and Guattari, our life is filled with connections to people, objects, nature, feelings etc. Indeed, as Claire Colebrook explains, for Deleuze and Guattari, "there is no present life outside of its connection: the eye connects with light, the brain connects with a concept, the mouth connects with a language" (56), even though we do not fully perceive the process of this connection. Yet, if we metamorphose into an "other," or into other forms of life, it is inevitable that we establish connections with "heterogeneous" objects. Adam at his friend's party encounters a beautiful young actor Ralph and is told that he became a new body before his death by his living brain being transformed into a new body. Adam's encounter with this young Ralph is a chance to transform himself into another form or body. Despite his successful career as a screenwriter, Adam's circumstance as an old body, as we have seen, is not a good one—he feels the loss of his physical vitality. Ralph's situation is very different—he has replaced his old body with a new one, and has become

revivified and re-invigorated. By connecting with a new body Ralph, Adam's life becomes an adventure and he falls down the rabbit hole.

The motifs of Ralph's and Adam's transformations are persuasively suggested by the character of their new circumstances. Ralph, for example, undergoes this metamorphosis because of his desperation about being old and weak. Moreover, even though he dedicated his life to making money, he feels lonely because his wife is dead. With nothing else filling his life, he found that the only thing he was preparing for was his own death. Reviewing his life, Ralph is consumed with regret at not fulfilling his earlier desire to be an actor. Emboldened by the hope of metamorphosis, he undergoes surgery to become a beautiful young actor. The process of getting a new body is simple, like changing clothes. How could people resist this kind of seduction to gain new bodies, to acquire immortality, particularly when they are themselves close to death? As the novel suggests, they would gladly sacrifice their old bodies for the opportunity to attain everlasting life.

However, Adam's expectation of the transformation is based on his misrecognition of self as represented in the process of his metamorphosis. The process by which Adam and Ralph enter new bodies is less than scientific. It is, instead, simply a transitional fantasy, although there is a description of the medical breakthrough. Accordingly, the processes of Adam and Ralph's metamorphoses are not described, but Adam simply enters the hospital and then finds himself transformed into a new body. After that, Adam identifies his mind with a new body by looking at his transformed body in the mirror:

> According to my friend, if a creature can't see himself, he can't mature. He can't see where he ends and others begin. This process can be aided by hanging a mirror in an animal's cage.
> Still only semi-conscious, I began to move. I found I could stand. I stood in front of the full-length mirror in my room, looking at myself—or whoever I was now—for a long time. I noticed that other mirrors had been provided. I adjusted them until I obtained an all-around view. In these mirrors, I seemed to have been cloned as well as transformed. Everywhere I turned there were more me's, many, many more new me's until I felt dizzy. (32)

Given that Jacques Lacan's account of the "mirror stage" is related to the infant's emerging perception of self, Adam's looking at the "specular image" in the

mirror can be regarded as a process of his "identifying" with the image of a new body. Adam's recognition of the image can be thus seen as the "transformation that takes place in the subject when he assumes an image" (*Écrtis* 2). Adam's narcissistic identification with the image represents his transformation, but it is, in fact, based on what Lacan calls the "*méconnaissances*" of constituting of ego based on "illusion of autonomy" (7). In turn, Adam's identification with the image of a new body relies on the reflection of its image and his fantasy of autonomy rather than his transformation. Adam's identity has to be newly constructed by identifying himself with the image of his new body. However, Adam's identity is not changed and formed by perceiving his new image, because Adam's transformation is relied on the Cartesian concept of "mind-body dualism" (Thomas 154). As a result, the body and the mind (or the brain) can be separated and the body is wholly controlled by the mind (or the brain). In this respect, as we have seen, the bodies that Adam and Ralph take are only "skins" to be worn like clothes, and they can retain their identity. They believe their identities will remain unchanged even though their bodies are new. In this sense, only their brains represent their identity and their old and new bodies are simply masks or clothes that temporarily house their self.

For Deleuze and Guattari, the body interacts with the mind. There is neither a separable concept of mind or body, nor a priority between them. Moreover, as we have seen, from the lens of Deleuze and Guattari, the body is not a fixed form: "A body is not defined by the form that determines it as a substance or subject, nor by the organs it possesses or the functions it fulfils" (*A Thousand Plateaus* 260). A body is instead an assemblage of ceaseless connections or complex relations between other bodies. For this reason, Deleuze and Guattari emphasize the potentiality of *the body* rather than the mind or the consciousness. Its potentiality is related to the body's capacities of affecting and being affected by other bodies (Deleuze, *Spinoza* 124). Thus, Deleuze and Guattari's conceptions of the body and its metamorphosis do not mean that people can change just the form of their body, but rather that they would only be able to transform the body as an assemblage of complex relations of numerous particles and affects. As Keith Ansell Pearson emphasizes, "affects do not bring about the transformation of one body into another, but rather something passes from one to the other" (179). Adam's and Ralph's transformations are not an assemblage of increasing affective and mutual relations among other bodies from the perspective of Deleuze and Guattari. On the contrary, their transformations are based on their exploitation and appropriation of another

body, which could be compared to the process of the colonizer implanting their power and ideology into the body of the colonized. The dead bodies are not able to resist Adam's and Ralph's appropriation of them. In this sense, Adam and Ralph are represented as socially and economically superior individuals, while the dead bodies are comparable to a lower hierarchical level in social terms.

The conceptual differences between these two accounts of metamorphoses also reflect a fundamental disagreement about the nature of desire. What Adam and Ralph change are their exterior selves, appropriating bodies as desirable objects that purvey the external attractiveness that they wished to attain but found impossible in their previous ageing physical incarnations. After the transformation, there is a surge in the characters' desires and a proliferation of desirable things with which they engage. A recuperated state of the body itself becomes an object of desire. Those who desire this transformation need youth and beauty as well as vitality. All of the characters admire youthful and beautiful bodies; ironically these are only young and beautiful corpses when Adam looks at the rows of them in the hospital. It seems natural that Adam chooses a corpse as perfect as a beautiful Greek sculpture. Adam compares it to "a stocky and classically handsome sculpture in the British Museum" (27). In contrast, old bodies like Adam's are "facilities" to be nullified. Old bodies represent lack, while new bodies represent the signifier of desire. There is no potentiality for bodies to increase their interaction with other bodies; what there is instead is the desire for new bodies, in terms of Deleuze and Guattari's notion of the body as an assemblage.

Deleuze and Guattari reject defining desire as lack. They argue that the traditional logic of desire has been wrong-headed from the very outset: from the Platonic to the psycho-analytic logic of desire (*Anti-Oedipus* 25). These logics, whether found in philosophy, literature or psychology, all account for desire in terms of lack. As a result, people look upon it as primarily lack: a lack of an object. In other words, as Ronald Bogue asserts, for Deleuze and Guattari, the logics of lack treat desire as the "acquisition" of an unfillable lack, which proliferates in language through endless substitutions in the chain of signifiers (89). However, Deleuze and Guattari reject the concept of desire as negation or lack and replace it with production or desiring production. Fundamentally, for Deleuze and Guattari, as Colebrook asserts, desire is a sort of force, or Nietzschean "power," which multiplies with the proliferation of connections: "When bodies connect with other bodies to enhance their

power they eventually form communities or societies. Power is, therefore, not the representation of desire but the expansion of desire" (91). Desire, as the productive expansion of power, is the fundamental way in which Deleuze and Guattari reconceive the idea of metamorphoses.

Looking at the transformation of Adam, we can observe that he re-names himself as Leo Raphael Adams as if the new body is his "double," making the new self something almost uncanny, certainly acquiring a surprising objective externality. Sigmund Freud in "The Uncanny" explains that "double" is a source of a strong feeling of "uncanny"[5] which is related to both familiar and unfamiliar sensations (219–33). A proliferation of desire occurs, in which its character as "force" becomes evident, and in which Adam becomes a hybrid or an assemblage: Adam's mind now co-exists with Mark's body (the former owner or possessor of the body). This means Leo R. Adams can experience an unfamiliar life. Mark had been a professional model and was also homosexual. Accordingly, Leo Adams spends most of his time enjoying various physical activities, but in reality these unfamiliar experiences are rooted in the desires that Adam had always felt but never acted upon. He travels several European cities and enjoys talking to strangers in cafes, museums and clubs and having sex with many women. However, Leo Adams' desire for physical pleasure is insatiable, continuously experienced as Adam's lack. During his journeys, Leo Adams often recalls how Adam was filled with "spirituality" and was indifferent to his body. He becomes aware that Adam was "without his body" and was "slightly phobic about other bodies" (35). In this respect, ironically, Adam's metamorphosis seems to lead him to search for his lost self. Spirit and self are still powerful enough to govern the body, even though Adam becomes Leo Adams. This is why his transformation repeats the desire as a lack.

Adam's desire as lack is reflected by the structure of a capital society based on the exchange of desire. As Colebrook points out, desire and labour in a capital society can be traded and exchanged with any other such as money, but

5. Freud says that "uncanny" (*unheimlich*) is "related to what is frightening—to what arouse dread and horror; equally certainly, too, the word is not always used in a clearly definable sense, so that it tends to coincide with what excites fear in general" (219). Yet, Freud's account of "uncanny" does not belong to only frightening of evoking dread and horror, but is also linked to the meaning of "familiar" or "homely" (*heimlich*). Thus, Freud asserts that "*heimlich* is a word the meaning of which develops in the direction of ambivalence, until it finally coincides with its opposite, *unheimlich*. *Unheimlich* is in some way or other a sub-species of *heimlich*" (226).

"an individual becomes an empty point where the flows of money, goods and images intersect for a privation to emerge" (143). For example, money is the typical object of "desire as lack" in such a society, because money is exchanged as the privileged virtual object but the desire for money cannot be fulfilled. Accordingly, as a sense of lack, the desire does not change the existing structure in a capital society but only repeats and intensifies it. In the case of Adam, to have his operation, he must spend a "considerable amount of money" (22). Without a great deal of money, nobody can transform into a new body. This reflects the scene in which Adam chooses "his guy" among the dead bodies. It is nothing more than "shopping for bodies" (26). During his trip across Europe, he gets an "odd job" cleaning rooms and working in the kitchen at a women's spiritual center. This center is sort of spa or sanatorium where mostly middle-aged, middle-class and divorced women receive "spiritual" nourishment or therapy. Matte, who Leo Adams meets at the festival held for the women's spiritual centre on the island, also is a new body that embodies this system of desire as lack and shows the horrible prospect of the transformations. He is described as a mysterious figure but he is known as a man of large substance who owns the island where the festival is held. For him, bodies are objects he possesses and changes as substitutes to fulfil his desire. Thus, he refers to bodies as "facilities" or "equipment" or "slack old body suits." The system of desiring useful bodies causes him to abuse other bodies: he is involved in murdering beautiful young bodies to possess and trade them like commercial goods. Moreover, he insists that "people might even start to share bodies to go out in, the way girls share clothes now" (117). As a result, the novel displays the terrifying vision in which an elite is free to shop for new bodies and change their old ones whilst innumerable amounts of other people are exploited, abused and murdered. Leo Adams is no exception to this violent system. His beautiful new body suddenly becomes the object of Matte's desire. After he rejects Matte's offer to buy his new body, Matte continuously pursues him. Thus, a hybrid produced by the economy of desire actually intensifies the brutal power-system that underlies a capitalist society.

Consequently, the characters' metamorphoses bring both pleasurable and fearful prospects. While technology here promotes and promises to people in the prospect of a better and more joyful life, the novel shows how this expectation is marred by the paradoxical effects of metamorphosis. Because the characters in the novel, as in capitalist societies, act according to a logic of "desire as lack," we find that Adam's pleasure concerning his new body

is disrupted and that his new body is threatened by Matte. The mobility and potentiality that technology could provide is destroyed by people who desire to fulfil their sense of lack. In this context, mutates as new bodies are not presented as a "post-human" or a new species beyond humanism or the concept of identity. What is more, from the lens of Deleuze and Guattari, these new bodies reject the potential power of bodies that affect and are affected by other bodies. In fact, as we have seen, Deleuze and Guattari believe that the body's capability of affects truly triggers our transformation or becoming-other. However, *The Body* shows that the body becomes an object of desire based on a sense of lack.

Ⅲ. Becoming-Other

As I have suggested, *The Body* subverts the system of "desire as lack" and opens characters to what Deleuze and Guattari call "becoming." Regardless of his intentions, Leo Adams is repeatedly driven into heterotopian situations, which cause him ceaseless bafflement by confusing the fundamental categories of self and other, the living and the dead. These perplexing experiences happen in a myriad of unexpected and unfamiliar situations, and compel him to face them as challenges to his identity. Encountering this problematization of his very identity forces Leo Adams to shake and uproot his idea of self. This ungrounding, uprooting, dissolution of the character is the extension and intensification of their metamorphosis, whereby they are "becoming-other" from the perspective of Deleuze and Guattari. Becoming-other is associated with assemblage or multiplicity, on the ground that "becoming" is "always 'between' or 'among': a woman between women, or an animal among others" (Deleuze, *Cyborg Citizen* 2). Consequently, to appreciate the nature of Leo Adams' metamorphoses, it is necessary to examine the problems he encounters as he enters into these newly arisen heterotopias. Through these problems, we can investigate how new bodies become the other, although they are dominated by their concept of identity. In this sense, we can also explore the capabilities of bodies in terms of Deleuze and Guattari.

The first problem of Leo Adams is that he becomes a "hybrid" and his connections to the world become disjunctive. He believes he is temporarily borrowing another's body and that his self-identity as Adam will not change. This faith in the stability of his identity is encouraged by Ralph's statement

that: "Your mind and the body's nervous system are in perfect coordination. You have your old mind in a new body. New life has been made" (41). However, Adam acknowledges that he has in fact become a "new combination" (44), not just a simple dual entity comprised of Adam's brain and Mark's body. In other words, he is an assemblage of a living brain and a dead body, as well as being a disjunctive connection between himself and other. This monstrous combination disrupts the traditional distinctions between self and other, the living and the dead. Leo Adams recognizes that his self cohabits with the other whom he cannot grasp. Consequently, his transformation becomes monstrous, a combination of parts like a "Frankenstein" (40), who finds himself "beyond good and evil" (44). It is for this reason that new bodies also call themselves "mutants, freaks, and human unhumans" (120). Regardless of Adam's mind, his experience as a hybrid "human unhuman" forces him into numerous new connections that undermine the very category of self.

The other peculiar problem Leo Adams faces is heteroglossia. Heteroglossia causes him to lose common ground from which to name and call. Even though Adam names his new body Leo Adams, his new body is still referred to as "Mark" by Mark's friends. For example, when Leo Adams is accosted by two gay friends, they call him "Mark" and talk to him as if he were their friend. This scene reveals that Adam's new body still in a sense belongs to Mark, or is marked out by his physical externality. And yet, paradoxically, as a mutant, Leo Adams' body cannot be named or defined as Mark. Thus, the new body is split into two names, which leads Leo Adams into a labyrinth of the signifiers. Furthermore, we realize that this new body cannot truly be called either Leo Adams or Mark. This hybrid body dismantles the common ground for linguistic reference, abrogating the conventionally fixed categories of self. In this sense, from Bhabha's perspective, Leo Adams as a hybrid can be related to the "in-between" self and the other or "difference within." Accordingly, as Peter Hallward explains, Leo Adams as a hybrid becomes what Bhabha calls an "'interstitial' agency that refuses the binary representation of social antagonism" (xvii).

However, Leo Adams sees himself as a "fake," as a "difference" rather than as an "interstitial" subject, while other people are thought to be "real."

Patricia, the woman in charge of the women's spiritual center, is in her late fifties, and is depicted as a militant feminist. She forces Leo Adams to make love with her. Despite his anger at this situation, Leo Adams finds he cannot simply reject Patricia's persistent demands. He thinks that "there was

something in her I didn't want to let go of. Her body and soul were one, she was 'real'" (122). In contrast to Patricia, mutants like Leo Adams seem to be phonies, because their bodies do not identify with their minds. Indeed, they are multiplicities incapable of realizing their former unity. To further complicate his troubles, Leo Adams encounters another problem blurring the boundaries between "fake" and "real." In the hedonistic festival that the women of the Women's Center take part in, Leo Adams is unable to recognize a famous film star, who had been metamorphosed into a new body at the same time as him. The world becomes the realm of the "simulacrum" where mutants are not distinguished from "real" people. Despite Leo Adams's anxiety about his identity, he finds himself falling further and further into the realm of the simulacrum in which real people are confused with fakes. Despite Leo Adams' consciousness of the difference between real body and fake bodies, the bodies of a real and a fake are not distinguished from each other.

However, it is also the body which propels Leo Adams into ever new lines of flight, into ever new heterotopias. We can see this firstly in the fact that it is the body which produces Leo Adams' self—even though he is unaware of this process. Adam's desires, thoughts and memories seemingly survive and are transplanted into the new body so that Leo Adams seems to recall Adam's memories and desires. However, he is also aware of a "ghost or shadow soul" inside him: "I can feel things, perhaps memories, of the man who was here first. Perhaps the physical body has a soul. There's a phrase of Freud's that might apply here: the bodily ego" (51). This obscure ghost-like thing, this phantom or trace, turns out to be the distinctive marks or scars left on the body, which record its experience and memories. All bodies including new bodies and "real" bodies have scars, which keep their memories. Leo Adams doesn't know Mark's history exactly but the memories inscribed into scars on the body cannot be removed. For example, Alicia at the Women's Center, with whom he falls in love, asks him about the scar under his elbow. He cannot answer her, because he does not know about it. Similarly, when Patricia at the festival sees Leo Adams' ears pierced and tells him they have matching earrings, he is perplexed to find his ears have several holes. These holes are traces on the new body which Leo Adams' mind cannot govern. In terms of Deleuze and Guattari's conceptions of becoming and assemblage, Leo Adams' scar can be accounted with Adam's becoming-Mark as well as Leo Adams' becoming-Mark. Moreover, as Leonard Lawlor asserts, Deleuze and Guattari's notion of "becoming" is connected with "aging," which "indicates the necessary condition for becoming; the

condition in which one's molar form is destroyed—the condition, in other words, of "desubjectification" (173). Specifically, according to Lawlor, Deleuze and Guattari explain life as cracking: "in a life, there is a type of cracking, that is micrological, like the small, almost imperceptible cracks in a dish" (172). This crack can be understood as aging. The bodies of Mark and Leo Adams have been aged and cracked over time.

Scars left on the body in this novel play a key role by providing a signature that both discloses and proves a person's identity. Just as Odysseus' scar on his thigh proves his identity to his nurse, Euryclea, scars in *The Body* serve to indicate identity in diverse ways. One interesting case is that of Alicia, who deliberately inscribes scars onto her body. One day, Leo Adams discovers three little childhood scars on her knees and is also surprised at the "random and deep scratchmarks" on her left arm. These marks are letters she "doodles on herself." Eventually, he even finds the word "poet" inscribed on her chest. Although Alicia has many scars and has suffered from painful experiences in her childhood, the marks she deliberately makes serve to symbolize that she controls her life herself. In contrast with Alicia's scars, new bodies have marks produced by doctors. Mutants believe they are transformed to be "all seamless," but they also receive scars as part of the process by which their new bodies are "born." Matte who desires Leo Adams' body, suddenly attacks him to examine the mark on his head. Matte says the "mark" on his head shows that he has "been achieved" (116) rather than born naturally and scarred normally. Thus, in this novel, bodies have scars or marks that record both "real" people's and new bodies' lives. Leo Adams' body continuously reveals that it belonged to Mark because its diverse scars, holes and marks are uncontrovertible testament to its provenance and history.

Nevertheless, new bodies, including Leo Adams, belong to neither the former owners of the bodies nor the present owners, because new bodies generate their own new scars, holes, and marks as they live out new connections with other "real" people and mutants. That is to say, they as mutants make new histories or lives, although their histories are also endlessly mixed and affected by the histories of the dead bodies. Ralph, for example, falls in love with Florence who plays the part of Ophelia at the theatre. Ralph and Florence eventually even have a child who is, therefore, the offspring of a mutant and a human. Ralph is making his own traces on his body as he lives out new possibilities. Similarly, Leo Adams becomes obsessed with his own sensory experience and the ways in which different emotions penetrate his new body.

His sensations and pleasures as well as his sufferings are produced by his new body which has continuous connections with other bodies. These sensations and affections cannot be accounted for merely by seeing them as the union of Adam's mind and Mark's body. This is because these feelings also have to be seen as produced through the complex web of relations and forces that the body connects to and which condition the body. From the perspective of Deleuze and Guattari, it is only as the emergent property of this network of dynamic relations that Leo Adams and Ralph are truly metamorphosed.

Finally, Leo Adams actively experiences "becoming nothing" as a means by which to escape from the system of "desire as lack." When Leo Adams is running away from Matte, he returns back to the hospital with the hope of regaining his old body. But Matte waits for him there in order to take possession of his body. What is worse, Adam's old body is no longer available because the hospital cremates all useless corpses, as his has been designated. Leo Adams recognizes that he cannot return to his old body nor get away from Matte. His final act is to burn his body, degrading it in the process, so as to forever evade Matte. His body can no longer be the object of pursuit nor can it ever be possessed by other people. Leo Adams' "self-immolation" is the final transformation that he undergoes. This metamorphosis is one where he becomes a nobody, a nullity: "I was a stranger on the earth, a nobody with nothing, belonging nowhere, a body alone, condemned to begin again, in the nightmare of eternal life" (149). This is his affirmation of metamorphosis, one which opens him up to the true freedom of nomadic existence, but only at the cost of ever actualizing it. The liberation from the logic of lack is finally only possible for Leo Adams with the termination of all desire.

Ⅳ. Conclusion

Kureishi in *The Body* explores many possibilities of the hybrid or more specifically, of a mode of being produced with the aid of bio-technology. The protagonist Adam transplants his brain into a young and beautiful corpse and becomes a "new body." Adam re-names himself as "Leo Raphael Adams" after his metamorphosis. This fantastic transition from his old body into a new one leads to both pleasurable and horrific visions. The optimistic potential of this transformation is found in the expansion of power: Adam is able to change his body and to enjoy a desirable life. Yet, this prospect is also reversed

by the logic of desire premised upon lack. The opportunity for humans to increase their power is finally found to be limited by their rigid adherence to conventional categories such as self and the other and to their pathological experience of "desire as lack." Even though Adam is able to transform himself into Leo Adams, his mind (or spirit) is still anchored in his old self, and all the pleasures that he seeks are simply neurotic repetitions of previously suppressed or thwarted desires. From the perspective of Deleuze and Guattari, Leo Adams as a hybrid does not experience his transformation into a new body: he merely plays out the patterns and structures of desire that had been socially inscribed into him. In other words, the characters' transformations repeat and even intensify the fixed system of desire inherent in their society. Given this situation, Kureishi's presentation of a hybrid of self and other does not invent a new mode of being, but rather repeats and intensifies the fixed conception of identity.

Despite this critical attitude toward hybridity, Kureishi nonetheless shows how Deleuze and Guattari's conception of "assemblage" and "becoming" opens the possibility for hybrids as new bodies to push themselves into the "in-between" of self and other, the living and the dead. From the perspective of Bhabha, these hybrids would be located in-between self and other, which implies that they are neither self nor other. Although Deleuze and Guattari's conception of becoming is similar to Bhabha's notion of hybridity based on the "in-between," Deleuze and Guattari's assemblage and becoming focus on affective and reciprocal relations between and among bodies. Accordingly, Leo Adams as a new body affects and is affected by the dead body, which leads the characters to "becoming-other" and "aging" with an assemblage of self and other, or the living body and the dead body. Finally, Leo Adams as a new body becomes nobody, which flows between the boundaries that had previously supported his identity. This demonstrates the possibility of evading the categories that define us, and as such it indicates the radical potential for transformation to self and other, which our encounter with hybrids, mutants and monsters can trigger.

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Abstract

This paper explores the both generative and mechanistic aspects of biotechnological advances in relation to the human body in Hanif Kureishi's novel, *The Body*, with particular reference to Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's conceptions of the body and assemblage. The protagonist Adam, in his mid-sixties, metamorphoses into a new body by transplanting his brain into a young and beautiful corpse. Adam's transformation appears to enhance Adam's power, by means of an assemblage of self and the Other. However, this hybrid instead repeats and intensifies a system of desire as a lack inherent in the principles of capitalism and colonialism in which those in positions of power consume the bodies of the Other. In spite of the negative vision of a hybrid pushed by advances in technology, Adam, as a new body, experiences the process of "becoming-other" and "aging" from the perspective of Deleuze and Guattari. This should be distinguished from Homi Bhabha's notion of "in-betweenness" which implies a space between self and the Other premised on "incommunitibility." It is my central contention here that Deleuze's assertions of "becoming-other" and "aging" provide us with interactive transformations between self and the Other, the body and the mind, the living and the dead over time, thus offering a site of the potential of the body which Bhabha's approach does not allow.

Keywords: Hanif Kureishi, Gilles Deleuze, Homi Bhabha, hybridity, assemblage, becoming-other

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