

Literary Award-Winning Authors and Media Meta-Capital:

An Analysis of the Role of the Prize-Winning Authors of the Man Booker Prize, the Bord Gáis Irish Book Awards, the Orange Prize for Fiction and the Baileys Women's Prize in Generating Media Capital



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Introduction

When walking into a bookshop it is difficult not to have your eye drawn to the covers; often a short statement or a sticker is placed on the cover to highlight the fact that the book has won a literary prize. Indeed, in 2017 there is an abundance of literary awards to celebrate fiction in almost every category—with a focus varying from genre to language to nationality. Richard Todd states that literary awards have been around for the past century but the number has increased over the past few decades, especially since the 1990's (57). Literature is no longer confined to the literary world. Festive award ceremonies are organised and are widely covered in the media, allowing everyone to join in on the celebration of literature.

As the number of literary prizes has increased their presence and relevance in the literary field has also grown. Research has been done on the position of literary prizes, for example by James English and Todd. A matter which Todd has elaborated on is the importance of inclusiveness of literary awards; prizes are expected to present a diverse shortlist and diversity among prize-winners (83). Todd makes an example of the Man Booker Prize where it has become increasingly important to differentiate between shortlisted and award-winning authors based on their gender, nationality, ethnicity, age and other characteristics (83). The surge in the number of literary prizes also reflects a similar demand for inclusiveness: for example, the Orange Prize for Fiction was established to award fiction written by women and the Irish Book Awards only award writers with an Irish nationality. These prizes are established not only because they want to celebrate the writing of a specific category but also to draw attention to authors who are believed not to attract sufficient attention because, for instance, they are part of a minority in the literary field.

The flip-side of the need for inclusiveness are charges of tokenism and sexism. However, Todd remarks that these allegations “apply more to race than gender” (85). These charges are often picked up on in the media and cause of controversy. Literary awards thrive

on the attention paid to them in the media. Indeed, according to Driscoll it is important for a prize to have a media profile in order to “raise the visibility of their prize above that of other awards” (134). Driscoll suggests that a way to interpret the impact media have on literary prizes is through the concept of media capital. Therefore, the framework of this thesis is based on the concept of media meta-capital by media scholar Nick Couldry who argues that media capital is similar to symbolic capital, which sociologist Pierre Bourdieu defined as a form of value such as prestige, honour and recognition (“Social Space” 21). Couldry connects the concept of symbolic value to the media by arguing that media capital is a form of symbolic value which only media can disseminate. Media meta-capital is to be understood as a definitional power in the sense that it can attribute symbolic power without the agents in a certain social field. Naturally, this concept will be elaborated on in the theoretical framework section of this thesis but this short explanation was necessary to provide an understanding of the research question: *how do characteristics of the winners of the Man Booker Prize, the Orange Prize for Fiction and the Baileys Women’s Prize, and the Irish Book Awards generate media capital?*

This thesis is set out to research how the relationship between media and literary prizes can be interpreted by analysing whether the increasing interest in the diversity amongst writers can be discerned in the media, and how this relates to the literary field. This research will contribute to the current literature by (1) providing a better understanding of the relationship between the literary field and the media by considering the effect of media capital on the literary field, and (2) it will help make the abstract concept of media meta-capital more concrete. Literary prizes need media capital to establish symbolic capital in the literary field, thus literary prizes are partly dependent on media and the capital media generates. This means that literary prizes are partly constrained by the agendas or ideas set by the media. By tracking

what is important in the media it is possible to indicate what the effect of media meta-capital is on the literary field.

This thesis focuses on the representation of the authors in print media who have won either the Man Booker Prize, the Orange Prize for Fiction or the Baileys Women's Prize (the name changed in 2013), and the Bord Gáis Irish Book Awards from 2006 until 2016. These literary awards were selected for this analysis because they share the common denominator of being awards of fiction in English, based (partially in the case of the Irish Book Awards) in the United Kingdom. Furthermore, these awards were selected because two of these prizes award fiction are based on one characteristic of the author: the Irish Book Awards only award Irish authors but authors of any sex are eligible, whereas the Orange Prize for Fiction—which changed its name to the Baileys Women's Prize in 2013—is a women-only literary prize which is open to female authors of any nationality (“History”). These awards contribute to an awareness of diversity among authors of literature. The Man Booker Prize is a more general prize: authors of any nationality and any gender are eligible, as long as their novel is written in English and published in the United Kingdom in the year of the prize (“FAQs”). The Man Booker Prize was selected because it would be interesting to discern what characteristics of the author were identified to display an awareness of diversity of prize-winners.

A combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches was used in the data analysis: I have counted how many feature articles on literary prizes, interviews with award-winning authors and reviews of prizewinning novels mentioned the nationality, the cultural or social background, and the gender of the author. Furthermore, I have done a close reading of these articles to exemplify how a respective characteristic of the author attracts attention. Due to the length of this thesis, the background of the journalists and interviewers has not been taken into account. The table below shows how many feature articles, interviews, and reviews I have taken into account per prize.

Man Booker Prize

Year	Name winner	No. of reviews	No. of feature articles on MB	No. of interviews
2016	Paul Beatty	1	3	1
2015	Marlon James	1	3	1
2014	Richard Flanagan	1	3	1
2013	Eleanor Catton	1	3	1
2012	Hilary Mantel	1	5	1
2011	Julian Barnes	1	4	1
2010	Howard Jacobson	1	2	2
2009	Hilary Mantel	1	3	1
2008	Aravind Adiga	1	3	1
2007	Anne Enright	1	2	2
2006	Kiran Desai	1	3	2
	Total:	11	34	14

Orange Prize for Fiction/Baileys Women's Prize

Year	Name winner	No. of reviews	No. of feature articles on OPF/BWP	No. of interviews
2016	Lisa McInerney	1	3	1
2015	Ali Smith	1	3	1
2014	Eimear McBride	1	3	1
2013	A.M. Homes	1	3	1
2012	Madeline Miller	1	3	1
2011	Téa Obreht	1	4	1
2010	Barbara Kingsolver	1	4	1
2009	Marilynne Robinson	1	4	1
2008	Rose Tremain	1	3	1
2007	Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie	1	2	1
2006	Zadie Smith	1	4	0
	Total:	11	36	10

Irish Book Awards

Year	Name winner	No. of reviews	No. of feature articles on IBA	No. of interviews
2016	Mike McCormack	3	1	1
2015	Anne Enright	1	1	1
2014	Mary Costello	1	1	1
2013	Roddy Doyle	1	2	1
2012	John Banville	2	1	1
2011	Neil Jordan	1	2	1
2010	Emma Donoghue	2	1	1
2009	Sebastian Barry	2	0	1
2008	Anne Enright	1	0	1
2007	Patrick McCabe	3	0	0
2006	John Banville	2	0	0
	Total:	19	9	9

The research data in this thesis are drawn from a number of electronic sources of print media: *The Guardian*, *The Telegraph*, *The Irish Times*, *The Independent*, *The Times*, *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post* and *The New Yorker*. Driscoll has stated that literary prizes “are particularly rich in media capital” (136). Indeed, especially the number of feature articles on the Man Booker Prize and the Orange Prize for Fiction and the Baileys Women’s Prize shows that much attention is paid to the awards. These tables show that in some instances there were no feature articles or interviews with prize-winners available, unfortunately, but not enough to skew the research. There were more feature articles available on the Man Booker Prize, and the Orange Prize for Fiction and the Baileys Women’s Prize than on the Irish Book Awards, which can be explained by the fact that the Irish Book Awards are smaller. Therefore, in this thesis I will rely less on the feature articles on the Irish Book Awards, and more on interviews with award-winners and review of prize-winning novel of the award. The way in which the nationality, social and cultural identity, and the gender of the prize-winners are represented in media will be demonstrated by an analysis of a number of significant examples.

The first chapter will provide the theoretical framework for this thesis which consists of a definition of the literary field as proposed by Bourdieu and the concept of media meta-capital as described by Couldry. A section of the literary framework will be devoted to the three characteristics which this thesis will be concerned with, namely the nationality of the author, cultural and social background of the author, and the gender of the author. Finally, the concept of the author will be considered in the theoretical framework to demonstrate a tension in what it means to be an author. The consecutive chapters will focus on one characteristic of the author respectively in order to discern whether (1) this characteristic generates media capital and (2) what this means for the literary field and the broader field of power. The first chapter will take representation of the nationality of the author into consideration; the second chapter will focus on the social and cultural background of the author; and the third chapter will consider the gender of the author. Finally, the conclusion gives a brief summary and critique of the findings.

1. Theoretical Framework

In order to examine how the author generates media capital, it is necessary to establish a theoretical framework. A number of theoretical issues have to be addressed and therefore this chapter will be subdivided under three headings. Firstly, an account of the literary field as described by Bourdieu will be provided. Couldry has extended the range of Bourdieu's field theory to media studies and has proposed that media have meta-capital over the rules of play; Couldry's article "Media Meta-Capital: Extending the Range of Bourdieu's Field Theory" will be used to establish what will be understood as media capital. The second part of this chapter moves on to explore the concept of nationality by hand of Stuart Hall; the question of social and cultural identity will be elaborated on by hand of Graham Huggan and Hall; and for an exploration of the role of gender in authorship I will draw on Toril Moi. In the final paragraph the tension between author and text will be explored.

Literary Field and Media Meta-Capital

Bourdieu has introduced many useful concepts to the sociology of culture. In the context of this thesis, Bourdieu's field theory has proven to be a useful approach to help understand and examine the roles of the agents who operate in the literary field, such as publishers, authors, universities, and literary prizes. Bourdieu's works *The Field of Cultural Production* (1993) and *Rules of Art* (1996) provide a solid point of departure for research into the field of literature, but the relation between the media and the literary field which Driscoll has discerned "modifies Bourdieu's model of literary production" (Driscoll 135). Driscoll suggests that a way of analysing the relation between media and the literary field is "through the concept of media capital" (136), and this will be done in this research. Therefore, the point of departure for the theoretical framework of this thesis will consist of a description of Bourdieu's theory of the field of cultural production. Subsequently, Couldry's theorization of

media meta-capital—which derives from Bourdieu’s work—will be explained and Couldry’s approach of media meta-capital will be used as a conceptual theoretical framework for this research.

Bourdieu’s theory of the field of cultural production is focused on literature and art. According to Bourdieu *value* is constructed in a relational field which is a structured social space. The field is hierarchical and it contains a number of agents who compete for dominance over the field (“Field of Cultural” 41). Examples of agents in the literary field are authors, publishing houses and literary awards. The agents at the top of the hierarchy determine what counts as literature, and who is recognised as an author (“Field of Cultural” 41). Within the field of cultural production different forms of non-economic value—or what Bourdieu also terms *capital*—are created and contested. These non-economic forms of capital consist of forms of value such as social capital, for example, a person’s network or connections; cultural capital, for example, knowledge and skills; and symbolic capital, for example prestige, honour and recognition (“Social Space” 21). The latter form of capital is most relevant in the context of the literary field because ‘success’ in the arts relies more on how art is defined by the field than on economic success. According to Bourdieu, the field is relational and the position of every agent in the field is a result of its interaction with other players according to the rules of the field. Even though Bourdieu’s theory is helpful, it has its limitations in the analysis of contemporary cultural production because, as Hesmondhalgh states: “Bourdieu offers no account of how the most widely consumed cultural products – those disseminated by the media – are produced” (218).

Indeed, it appears to be difficult to reconcile Bourdieu’s field-based research with the role of the media in the social realm. Couldry acknowledges this difficulty and addresses the question of power by suggesting that the media field should not be considered as a regular field, but as a field which exceeds all social fields (653). Couldry addresses the problem of

integrating media power into field theory by pointing out that it is difficult to discuss media capital because it can be understood in multiple ways; the media can be taken as one field, or multiple fields (657). Additionally, “the media are *both* a production process with specific internal characteristics (possibly a field of such processes) *and* a source of taken-for-granted frameworks for understanding the reality they represent (an influence, potentially, on action in all fields)” (654). Couldry discerns there are many ways to analyse the media and notes that neither Bourdieu’s field theory nor his work on the media is of use; Bourdieu’s *On Television and Journalism* (1998) has been criticised for sweeping generalisations of the media and for the avoidance of “a general account of the impacts of media representations on social space and a detailed account of media audiences” (654). According to Couldry, Bourdieu also has remained unclear about how the media field and other fields interrelate, especially because fields are supposed to move homologously (659).

In search of a concept that can explain the power of the media over other fields, Couldry examines how the influence of media has been discussed. Sociologist Patrick Champagne has discussed the influence of media on the political field in *Faire L’Opinion* (1991), and questions how “representations made by actors in one field come to have influence on the actions and thoughts of others in another field” (Couldry 661). In this analysis, Champagne introduces the term *media capital*. This is a form of capital, a form of value, which is not elaborately explained by Champagne, yet it can be discerned that it is a concept which “field theory cannot encompass” (Couldry 662). It is implied in Champagne’s description that the concept of media capital would not be compatible with the notion that fields are interrelated. However, Couldry justly points out that “field-based accounts of media are irrevocably pushed towards a type of explanation that spills out beyond the field model, if they are to sustain the bold claims about the media’s broader ‘symbolic power’ that gives this analysis much of its critical edge” (663). Before Couldry offers a solution to this problem, it is

first necessary to define symbolic power.

Couldry gives two definitions of symbolic power; he differentiates these two by marking them as a strong and a weak definition. The weak definition is based on a definition by sociologist John Thompson: symbolic power is the “capacity to intervene in the course of events, to influence the actions of others and indeed to create events, by means of the production and transmission of symbolic forms” (qtd. in Couldry 664). This definition is helpful because it helps to imagine how symbolic power works in a number of social institutions, however, according to Couldry, another definition is needed to explain “certain types of concentration of symbolic power (for example in media institutions)” (664).

Therefore, Couldry introduces a strong concept of symbolic power, which, “by contrast, suggests that some concentrations of symbolic power are so great that they dominate the whole social landscape; as a result, they seem so natural that they are misrecognized, and their underlying arbitrariness becomes difficult to see” (664). Couldry adds that symbolic power therefore shifts from being a “local power,” which, for example, allows for a work of literature to be recognized, to a “general power, what Bourdieu once called a “power of constructing [social] reality”” (664). Thus, this concept of power is to be understood as a form of symbolic power which does not apply to one field, but to the whole of social space (664). This is how Couldry theorizes media capital, as a symbolic *system*: “an explanatory framework that cuts across field theory” (665).

This strong definition of symbolic power helps to theorize the impact of media on social space. It is suggested that this would help clarify “the media’s ability to sanctify certain things as having primary importance” and “a connection to Bourdieu’s concept of symbolic systems brings into view the impacts that media might have on all fields simultaneously by legitimating certain categories with not just cognitive but also social significance” (Couldry 665). The latter understanding can be reconciled with Bourdieu’s work on the power of the

state, where general social space is influenced. Couldry has connected this idea to media capital, and suggests that media capital is to be understood as a form of meta-capital: a form of capital which transcends specific fields of power and is able to “set the rules that govern” (Couldry 667) other fields. It has often been suggested the media function as a frame of social reality, and therefore it functions parallel to other social fields: “When the media intensively cover an area of life for the first time [...], they alter the internal workings of that sub-field and increase the ambit of the media’s meta-capital across the social terrain” (669). When this happens, media capital indeed functions as a form of meta-capital as it executes symbolic power over the “construction of social reality;” it is a definitional power in the sense that it can attribute symbolic power without the influence of agents in a certain field (669).

This elaborate explanation of media meta-capital functions as a foundation for answering the research question of this thesis; with this theory in mind it can be discerned what it means to generate media capital; it helps to analyse the implications of the discussion of the author in feature articles in the media of literary awards. Before presenting the observations of this analysis it is necessary to elaborate on the notion of identity, the concept of the author and their relation.

Nationality, Cultural and Social Identity, and Gender

Characterisations of the author in the media based on their nationality, social and cultural identity, and their gender are central to this thesis. These characterisations lead to certain assumptions which are connected to a conversation based on these identity traits, for example, what it means to be a woman writer or an Irish author. Therefore, it is necessary to address questions of identification and identity. Stuart Hall has explored the debate on identity in the co-edited *Questions of Cultural Identity*, and in the introduction of this work Hall demonstrates why identity is such a compelling concept which a variety of disciplinary areas continue to explore. It is agreed upon in these disciplines that identity is non-essentialist; the

idea that an identity is “integral, originary or unified” is critiqued (1). Hall notes that the question of identity is closely, and perhaps obviously, related to the process of identification: an identity is a process rather than a static given. Hall describes identification as follows:

In common sense language, identification is constructed on the back of a recognition of some common origin or shared characteristics with another person or group, or with an ideal, and with the natural closure of solidarity and allegiance established on this foundation. In contrast with the ‘naturalism’ of this definition, the discursive approach sees identification as a construction, a process never completed—always ‘in process’ (2).

Indeed, identification is the pursuit of completeness but a unified self will never be. This thesis will focus on national, cultural and social identity, and these traits will be considered in the light of an approach outlined by Hall; and for the concept of gender identity this thesis will draw on the description of the tension between gender and authorship by Moi.

In “The Question of Cultural Identity”, Hall elaborates specifically on the question of cultural identity. Hall’s interest is in national cultural identities and how these are formed, because people “participate in the idea of the nation as represented in its national culture” (612). Literature is a form of culture which represents a nation and its cultural markers. It could be argued that literature is part of the tradition, of the narrative of a nation which has historically formed the nation. Often literary prizes award authors based on their social or cultural background try to set forth this tradition by awarding authors who contribute to a national culture. However, for this thesis it is interesting to take into account whether the focus in the media is placed on the national or cultural background of the author instead of the literary work, and whether the author identifies according to the characterisation as well. Furthermore, Hall notes in “Cultural Identity and Diaspora” that everyone writes “from a particular place and time, from a history and a culture which is specific” (222). Indeed,

besides nationality there are other factors that create a sense of belonging to a cultural group. As mentioned in the previous paragraph, Hall has noted that “identification is constructed on the back of a recognition of some common origin or shared characteristics with another person or group, or with an ideal” (“Questions of Cultural” 2); for example, ethnicity, social class, or religion. The construction of identities happens through recognition and differentiation; identities also “emerge within the play of specific modalities of power, and thus are more the product of the marking of difference and exclusion” (Hall, “Questions of Cultural” 4). To understand how identification through differentiation works, it is helpful to take an example from Hall about the colonial experience: “black people, black experiences were positioned and subjected to the dominant regimes of representation” (“Cultural Identity” 225). In other words, the way colonized people perceived themselves is constructed by the way white people perceived them; every regime of representation is a regime of power, and the Western representation of black people and black experience made them experience themselves as ‘Other’ (“Cultural Identity” 225). National and cultural identities can clash and collide simultaneously: differences can be discerned in the perception of where one ‘belongs.’ Therefore some people choose to identify in both ways, for example African-Americans or as a Catholic in Ireland.

Literary prizes respond to the historical suppression of voices of the ‘Other’ in literature; Graham Huggan discusses tokenism in literary awards in the significantly titled and praised article “Prizing ‘Otherness’: A Short History of the Booker.” Huggan shows how the struggle in the literary field over authorship, authenticity and legitimacy is most clearly shown in postcolonial literatures (412). The Man Booker Prize—whose sponsor Booker has a colonial history but is now known as a “postcolonial literary patron” (Huggan 414)—is taken as an example as this site of struggle; it is suggested that the prize legitimizes literary works which are concerned with the postcolonial. However, Huggan suggests that the choice to

shortlist or award these works is often commercially motivated due to the growing interest in the postcolonial subject. One of the objectives of this thesis is to analyse whether the interest in the postcolonial subject, and other marginalized subjects or minorities, can also be discerned in the media and to what extent this appears to function.

Along with an analysis of the representation of the cultural or ethnic identity of the author, this thesis will also focus on the role of the gender of the author in the media. Whereas the establishment of the Orange Prize for Fiction in 1996—a literary award that only awards female authors—displays a demand for more attention for female authors, Moi has signalled a general decline in interest in “women and writing” (259) in literary theory. Even though literary prizes are not particularly concerned with literary theory, it is useful to take Moi’s article “‘I am not a Woman Writer:’ About Women, Literature and Feminist Theory Today” into account because Moi adequately describes the difficulty to discern what it means to be a ‘woman writer’, and she exemplifies the reluctance of female authors to call themselves a woman writer in statements made in the media; something this thesis will also take into consideration.

Moi historically traces the concept of the ‘woman writer’ in order to explain the decline of interest in women writers. Moi begins by describing the 1970s, a period when feminine writing, or *écriture féminine* was popular: a writing style “marked by femininity, which in general meant writing by women, although it was acknowledged that femininity could occasionally be found in men’s texts, too” (259). According to Moi, simultaneous to this period—when literature by women flourished—female authors also expressed annoyance with the emphasis on gender differences, and appeared to be reluctant to call themselves a woman writer (260). During the 1980s, this debate came to a stop due to the rise of poststructuralist theories of authors and writing (261); the question arose whether it mattered who the author was; a notion that will be addressed later in this chapter.

Moi argues that it is important to reconsider the question of the woman writer in literary theory, and explores the debate on what it means to be a woman writer. Firstly, she addresses the question of what it means to be a woman, and draws on gender theories by Judith Butler and Simone de Beauvoir (263). Both share the idea that gender is performative, and that “gender is created or comes into being” (263): one is not born a man or a woman, but one rather becomes one. Moi elaborates on De Beauvoir, who has stated that “man is [considered] the universal and [the] woman is the particular; he is the One, she is the Other” (264). As a consequence, when women respond to a provocation, they have a choose between “forced elimination of [their] gendered subjectivity,” and forced imprisonment in it” (264). Moi has exemplified this abstract idea with a recent statement in the media by Drew Faust, after she was elected the first female president of Harvard. The fact that she was the first female president was heavily emphasized in the media, and in response Faust made the following statement: “I’m not the woman president of Harvard, I’m the president of Harvard” (qtd. in Moi 264). Faust steers clear from having to eliminate her gendered subjectivity (i.e. she is a woman”), and establishes her perspective as a universal perspective (i.e. she is not the woman president of Harvard but the president of Harvard).

The reason why female authors are reluctant to call themselves a woman writer is similar. To exemplify this Moi refers to an interview which the French author Nathalie Sauraute who said: “When I write, I am neither man nor woman, nor dog nor cat, I am not me, I am no longer anything” (qtd. in Moi 260-61). There is a tension which cannot be avoided when addressing the dilemma of the woman writer: the woman writer is a historical person who represents both a particular (gendered) and universal perspective, and a writer who can adopt any perspective, which can be attributed to the imaginative power of literature. This tension does not only arise from the question of the woman writer: in a similar way one can also become imprisoned in their race (Moi 265). Indeed, any individual who comes from

a subjective position that deviates from the universal, i.e. male and white, is forced to defend their position. Moi closes the article as follows: Literature is the archive of a culture. We turn to literature to discover what makes other human beings suffer and laugh, hate and love, how people in other countries live, and how men and women experienced life in other historical periods. To turn women into second-class citizens in the realm of literature is to say that women's experiences of existence and of the world are less important than men's. (268) Even though this is a valid statement, and sentiments such as these have motivated the establishment of a women-only literary award, namely the Orange Prize for Fiction, it relies on the assumption that an author is personally invested in a novel and represented by the voices in the work. From this notion, a tension arises which has to be elaborated on by describing the relation between the author and the text.

The Author

In literary theory, the author has been declared dead since 1967—the year when Roland Barthes published the essay “Death of the Author.” Whereas poststructuralists argue that the text and the author no longer have any connection, it has also become increasingly problematic to separate the two. About ten years after Barthes, Edward Saïd published the widely acclaimed book *Orientalism*, which is a critique of the Western representation of the Orient, which was represented as ‘Other’. Postcolonial critique of Eurocentrism led to a growing demand for a more authentic representation of minorities and marginalized groups; a perspective which authors of literature from a minority could offer. Indeed, contrary to the poststructuralist notion of the death of the author and simultaneous to the rise of postcolonialism, the importance of the relationship between the author and the text has become increasingly emphasized.

Two years after “Death of the Author” was published, Michel Foucault wrote the article “What is an Author?”, which explores the role of the author in fiction. Foucault agrees

with Barthes on the idea that literary critics should not analyse the literary work in relationship to the author; it should not discuss the work as if it were a mode of personal expression. However, as the author disappeared, Foucault argues that “we must locate the space left empty by the author’s disappearance follow the distribution of gaps and breaches, and watch for the openings this disappearance uncovers” (“What Is” 209). By considering the historical author, Foucault points out an idea relevant to this thesis: the author’s name “performs a certain role with regard to narrative discourse, assuring a classificatory function” (“What Is” 210). A discourse, which is a concept by Foucault, has to be taken as a system of power from which the way in which knowledge is constituted can be derived from discursive practices; a discourse is conscious and subconscious knowledge of norms and values which members of a society have (“Power/Knowledge” 119). Therefore, Foucault derives that the text marks a subjective position of the author, because “the author function is [...] characteristic of the mode of existence, circulation, and functioning of certain discourses within a society” (“What Is” 211). In other words, a literary text is both the product from a historical author and a product of a much larger culture which ‘speaks’ through the text. Therefore, via a literary work an author can convey an authentic experience based on his or her cultural or social background, and gender; literary works can be read as a means of access to a different culture, to a different discourse and a different perspective.

As mentioned, the struggle for validation in the literary field seems to be most relevant to postcolonial literatures, and Huggan has distinguished a trend of literary awards to be more inclusive in their shortlist because of the increasing demand for diversity (412). The idea that literary works can be a means to access a different perspective has become an excuse to commodify such literature. This idea is supported by Huggan who points out that literatures from the margin of society are probably most marketable; “value-laden terms as ‘marginality,’ ‘authenticity,’ and ‘resistance’ circulate as commodities available for

commercial exploitation, and as signs within a larger semiotic system – the ‘postcolonial exotic’ (413). The emphasis on awarding postcolonial fiction is discerned by Todd, and, in addition, an emphasis on diversity of gender, age, and the cultural background of shortlisted authors can also be distinguished (83). Therefore, when journalists contribute importance to characteristics of the author this will produce an effect on literary prizes, and on a literary conversation: the focus shift from the novel as a space where readers encounter the ‘Other’, to the author being the ‘Other’ that we encounter. Because literary awards are partly constrained by the ideas set in the media it has an effect when journalists contribute value to certain characteristics of the author; when literary prizes will incorporate this in their consideration, which might lead to the quality of the literary work getting overruled by the author, the text becomes secondary.

2. Nationality of the Author and Media Capital

Due to the growing importance of diverse shortlist, literary awards are expected to be inclusive. Todd's documentation of the shortlists of the Man Booker from 1970 to 1995 shows an increase in diversity amongst shortlisted authors, which "reflects a new public awareness of Britain as a pluralist society" (83). Todd refers primarily to the inclusion of former Commonwealth countries, but the prize has generally become more inclusive—all countries have become eligible since 2014, including the United States. In the analysis of feature articles on the Man Booker Prize, the Orange Prize for Fiction and the Baileys Women's Prize, and the Irish Book Awards a strong emphasis on the nationality of award-winning and shortlisted authors can be discerned. Interviews with winners of these literary awards also stress the nationality of the author as do reviews of prize-winning novels, yet to a lesser extent than feature articles on the prizes. In this chapter, the focus on the nationality of literary award-winning authors in the media will be discussed in order to show that the nationality of an author generates media capital, and as an effect it becomes increasingly important which country wins instead of what the best novel is.

Nationality of the Award-Winning Authors in Feature articles

An analysis of the representation of the prize-winning authors according to his or her nationality in feature articles on the Man Booker Prize, the Orange Prize and the Baileys Women's Prize shows that journalists use the nationality of the author as a framing device. Couldry's strong definition of symbolic power is helpful here, as it can be discerned that the media have sanctified the nationality of the award-winning and shortlisted authors as having importance (665). This mention of nationality of the author is not incidental: out of 34 feature articles on the Man Booker Prize, 25 mentioned the nationality of the prize-winner of a respective year; out of 36 feature articles on the Orange Prize for Fiction and the Baileys

Women's Prize, 23 named the nationality of the award-winner. The nationality of award-winning authors in feature articles on the Irish Book Awards was not emphasized to the same extent as in feature articles on the other prizes, because the award is already nationality-based: only 1 out of 9 feature articles on the award explicitly mentioned that the award-winning author was Irish. Therefore, this paragraph will focus on the representation of the nationality of award-winning authors in feature articles on the Man Booker Prize and the Orange Prize and the Baileys Women's Prize for Fiction.

The nationality of award-winning authors is employed as a framing device in feature articles on the Man Booker Prize, the Orange Prize for Fiction and the Baileys Women's Prize. For example, when Anne Enright won the Man Booker Prize in 2007, Sarah Lyall wrote the following in a feature article in *The New York Times*: "The Irish author Anne Enright won the Man Booker prize on Tuesday night for *The Gathering* [...]" ("Anne Enright" n.p.). This is but one example, but every time the nationality of an award-winner of the Man Booker Prize, and the Orange Prize for Fiction and the Baileys Women's Prize is mentioned in a feature article, this is done in a similar way: the nationality of the author is connected to his or her name. Remarkably, the analysis of feature articles also shows that nationality of non-British authors is mentioned more often than that of British authors. In fact, the nationality of British authors is only mentioned when it can be linked to another characteristic of the author. This can be exemplified by comparing feature articles on the Man Booker Prize 2012 and 2009—both won by Hilary Mantel. Whereas Mantel's nationality is not mentioned in feature articles on the prize in 2009, it is highlighted numerous times in feature articles on the Man Booker in 2012 that Mantel is both "the first woman and the first British writer to win the literary award twice" (Jeffries, "Hilary Mantel" n.p.). It could be argued that the nationality of British authors is omitted because both prizes are based in the

United Kingdom. However, this observation also signals that British authors are taken as the norm for producing literature in English.

Another striking aspect in the analysis of feature articles on both the Man Booker Prize, and the Orange Prize for Fiction and the Baileys Women's Prize is the emphasis on American authors. Whereas American authors have always been eligible for the Orange Prize for Fiction, the Man Booker Prize has only allowed Americans to enter the competition since 2014. For five consecutive years American authors won the Orange Prize for Fiction and the Baileys Women's Prize; this winning streak started with Barbara Kingsolver in 2009 and ended when A.M. Homes won in 2013. This certainly did not pass by unnoticed, in fact it was heavily emphasized in feature articles on the prize; for example, when Madeleine Miller won the Orange Prize in 2012, Mark Brown highlighted the fact that Miller was the "fourth consecutive US novelist" no less than three times in the article "Orange Prize for Fiction 2012 Goes to Madeline Miller." The demand for diversity amongst prize-winners was heavily emphasized by journalists during these five years. The Orange Prize for Fiction and the Baileys Women's Prize presents itself as a literary award which "celebrates the very best full length fiction written by women throughout the world" ("History"), and journalists are critical of the latter notion. Since it was announced in 2013 that American authors would be eligible for the Man Booker from 2014 onwards, controversy over the nationality of the winning author seems to have increased. In comparison to feature articles from 2006 until 2011, the number of times the nationality of the author was mentioned in feature articles doubled in feature articles from 2012 until 2016. The controversy caused by award-winners with an American nationality shows that journalists have sanctified the nationality as having primary importance, as Couldry suggested that media could do (665). In fact, these observations show that an equal division between countries is considered important to such an extent that it seems that Man Booker Prize and the Baileys Women's Prize have become a competition

between countries instead of a celebration of literature. between the nationalities of the award-winners of the. Literary prizes are partly constrained by ideas set in media and this observation suggests that the nationality of the author becomes more important than the literary quality of the text.

Discussion of Nationality in Interviews with Award-Winning Authors

As shown, feature articles on the literary awards emphasize the nationality of award-winning authors by identifying their country of origin. However, these feature articles fail to take into account whether authors themselves identify with this nationality, and the set of traits which characterize the respective nationality and national literature. Hall has described how national cultural identities are formed in relation to a national culture (612). An author can therefore position him or herself in relation to a national literature but also to European literature or a certain genre, for example. Out of 14 interviews with award-winners of the Man Booker Prize, 12 discussed the nationality of the author; out of 10 interviews with winners of the Orange Prize for Fiction and the Baileys Women's Prize, 6 discussed the nationality of the author; and out of 9 interviews with winners of the Irish Book Awards, 6 discussed the nationality of the author; indeed, again a considerable number. Whereas feature articles do not allow for an author to comment on the link between authorship and their nationality, an interview can serve as an opportunity for an author to comment on a possible tension between their practice as a writer and as an author from a certain country.

Authors and their work are often placed in a national tradition in the media; this is done most frequently and explicitly with Irish authors. Journalists often avoid giving a description of 'typical' Irish literature, yet authors are placed in an Irish national literary tradition; they are compared to other Irish authors, for example. The tendency to place Irish authors in an Irish tradition is persistent but in interviews Irish authors are able to offer a more

nuanced perception of their role as a writer and as an author from Ireland. For example, in an interview with Stuart Jeffries, Anne Enright acknowledges that indeed, she is an author from Ireland, and her novel is about Ireland but she also remarks that *The Gathering*—which won the Man Booker Prize and the Irish Book Awards in 2007—hardly “is the stuff of Oirish [Irish] fictional cliché” (“I Wanted” n.p.). Even though Enright refuses to have her novel classified as a typically Irish, and therefore also refuses to be seen as a typical Irish author, Jeffries still persistently places Enright in an Irish literary tradition: “Critics have often compared her earlier books to those of the great Irish humorous writer Flann O’Brien, but not this one. Perhaps they should” (n.p.). Enright is only able to steer clear from classification by stating that she is an Irish author, and by refusing to be seen as a typical Irish author. Similar to Enright, John Banville—winner of the Man Booker Prize 2005, and the Irish Book Awards 2006 and 2012—does not only want to be seen as a typical Irish author.

Birchwood, led him [Banville] up a literary dead end. “It was my Irish novel and I didn't know what to do next. I thought of giving up. I hated my Irish charm. Irish charm, as we all know, is entirely fake.” Instead, he reinvented himself as a European novelist of ideas, writing novels involving Renaissance scientists. (Jeffries, “John Banville” n.p.)

These interviews show how Enright and Banville attempt to avoid categorization by positioning themselves both in and outside of the national literary tradition—other Irish authors such as Mike McCormack (winner Irish Book Awards 2016) and Sebastian Barry (winner Irish Book Awards 2009)¹ do this as well. Even though categorization of Irish authors in the media is persistent, interviews are an opportunity to speak out national literary

¹ For McCormack see interview with Justine Jordan in *The Guardian*; for Barry see interview with Stuart Jeffries in *The Guardian*.

stereotypes; and media capital is employed as a means to spread awareness of stereotypes, and to offer a more nuanced view of Irish literature.

Another author who speaks out against general and literary stereotypes is Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, who won the Orange Prize for Fiction in 2007. Adichie was born and raised in Nigeria, and when her novel *Half of a Yellow Sun* was awarded she had been living and studying in the United States for ten years. Yet she is still categorized as an African writer. Adichie is both responding to the power of the media to present ideas about African literature and using the opportunity speak through the media to counter this stereotype:

Americans think African writers will write about the exotic, about wildlife, poverty, maybe Aids. They come to Africa and African books with certain expectations. I was told by a professor at Johns Hopkins University that he didn't believe my first book [Purple Hibiscus, published in 2003] because it was too familiar to him. In other words, I was writing about middle-class Africans who had cars and who weren't starving to death, and therefore to him it wasn't authentically African. (Moss, "Madonna's Not" n.p.)

Adichie speaks through the media to alter the stereotype and simultaneously also calls attention to the impossibility of a singular author to account for an entire continent. Furthermore, as Driscoll suggested, Adichie "converts [her] existing symbolic capital as a literary figure into the media capital of a prize-winner, which becomes a valuable asset" (136) in other fields; what Adichie has to say is of relevance in the larger social realm too. The effect of the focus on Adichie's nationality, however, is that the interview is mostly about the political nature of Adichie's authorship instead of the literary quality of the award-winning novel: out of 14 paragraphs, 4 paragraphs discuss the content of *Half of a Yellow Sun* (and out of these 4 paragraphs the content of the novel is used by Moss to make another political

statement) and 6 paragraphs contain lengthy quotes by Adichie making political statements about Africa and the African stereotype. The direction of the literary conversation has changed: an author can contradict as national—in this case even continental—stereotype and change the perception of a country and even a continent, but instead of taking the text as the place where the ‘Other’ can be encountered, Adichie has become the ‘Other’ that is encountered. Thus, to an even greater extent than Banville and Enright, Adichie speaks through the media to adjust the image of the ‘stereotypical African;’ to employ media capital to add to a more realistic image of African life; the “construction of a social reality” (Couldry 669).

Nationality of Award-Winning Novels in Book Reviews

Interviews can offer the author an opportunity to speak out against the idea of a unified national literature, but reviews also can function as a means of emphasizing diversity in a national literature. In reviews, the author is mentioned to a lesser extent than in feature articles on literary prizes and interviews with award-winners. Out of 11 reviews of award-winning novels of the Man Booker Prize, 2 mentioned the nationality of the author; 3 out of 11 reviews on prize-winning novel included the nationality of the author; and 14 out of 19 reviews of novels of the Irish Book Awards connected the nationality of the author to the novel.

Enright takes the opportunity to counter Irish literary stereotypes in a review of *A Girl is a Half-Formed Thing*—the winning novel of the Baileys Women’s Prize 2014 by Irish author Eimear McBride. Enright places the novel both in an Irish and a European literary tradition multiple times. According to Enright, the novel has the characteristics of a stereotypical Irish novel, namely “a ranting, Catholic mother, a disabled brother and a pervy uncle” (“A Girl” n.p.), but Enright distinguishes the novel from the Irish literary tradition by

stating that the account of McBride's protagonist "feels more French than Irish" (n.p.). The review has had an effect on other representations of McBride and *A Girl is a Half-Formed Thing* in the media: in an interview by Susanne Rustin with McBride, Rustin explicitly refers to the review by Enright. Rustin continues Enright's train of thought and quotes McBride several times as she places herself both in an Irish and a European tradition ("Eimear McBride" n.p.). The impact of Enright's review can thus be measured: Enright has used her voice as a tool in the media to employ media capital to raise awareness and change standards of Irish literature.

In conclusion, the nationality of winners of the Man Booker Prize, the Orange Prize for Fiction and the Baileys Women's Prize, and the Irish Book Awards plays an important role in the generation of media capital. Feature articles on these prizes show how the media have sanctified the nationality of the author as having importance—especially articles on the Man Booker Prize, the Orange Prize for Fiction and the Baileys Women's Prize. Via media meta-capital the goal of the Man Booker Prize, and the Orange Prize for Fiction and the Baileys Women's Prize, that is to celebrate fiction written by authors throughout the world, is both enforced and undermined: feature articles are critical when the diversity among prize-winners is at stake due to the dominance of better represented countries, however, as an effect the nationality of the author of the award-winning novels attracts more attention than the novel and the competition becomes focused on nationality instead of the quality of the novel. The Irish Book Awards, are effected to a lesser extent because the prize is already nationality-focused, and therefore using the nationality of the author as a framing device is out of place. However, the stereotype of Irish literature is emphasized in the media, and therefore expectations of the national literature are amplified as well. In interviews, authors are given the opportunity to speak out against literary categorization according to their nationality even

though it proves to be difficult to truly disengage. Because of the importance which is attributed to diversity among prize winners, authors are forced to take a position on matters which are non-literary, such as Adichie who had to contradict a stereotypical image the entire continent instead. Instead of letting the award-winning novel become a means to conceive of a different image of Africa, Adichie personally counters the stereotype. As Driscoll suggested, Adichie “converts [her] existing symbolic capital as a literary figure into the media capital of a prize-winner, which becomes a valuable asset” (136) in other fields, or the larger social realm because Adichie addresses a problem which is not confined to the literary field, she counters a stereotype which exists outside the literary field as well. Authors are not only categorized based on their nationality, but cultural and social background is a means of generating media meta-capital as well. Even though these characteristics overlap in certain ways, the next chapter will be devoted to an analysis of the discussion of the cultural and social background of award-winning authors because these characteristics are discussed differently in the media.

3. Cultural and Social Identity of the Author and Media Capital

The previous chapter showed that the nationality of the author generates media capital by using the nationality of the author as a framing device. Therefore, it is interesting to analyse whether other identity traits also generate media capital, such as ethnicity, class and religion. Huggan has suggested that terms such as “marginality, authenticity and resistance” (413) have become commercially attractive. According to Huggan, the commodification of such terms is exemplified by the “postcolonial exotic” which and who has become an “exotic-culturally ‘othered’ good” (413). In other words, symbolic value is attributed to both novels and authors which portray an experience from the margin; an authentic story; an ‘Other’ point of view. Journalists emphasize the importance of authenticity, and are sensitive to the “active ‘making one’s own’ of another culture’s elements,” (476) as media scholar Richard A. Rogers broadly defined cultural appropriation. For that reason, journalists tend to focus on the experience of the author in connection to award-winning novels and often the author has to account for the choices made in the novel. Not only do the media focus on the cultural identity of the author—for example, by portraying them as the postcolonial exotic instead of focusing on the novel as a place where a culture speaks through the text— but an interest in the social background of authors can be discerned as well; in the class or religious background of the author. The social or cultural background of the author generates media meta-capital but only when the personal background of the author can be linked to the story in the award-winning novel; importance is contributed to authors who have lived a similar experience as main characters.

Social and Cultural Identity of Award-Winning Author in Feature articles

In feature articles on the Man Booker and the Orange Prize for Fiction and the Baileys Women’s Prize cultural or social characteristics of an award-winning author are only

explicitly mentioned when these aspects can be brought into context with the prize-winning novel, which does not happen very often. In 6 out of 34 feature articles on the Man Booker Prize this was mentioned, and 4 out of 36 feature articles identified the social or cultural background of the prize-winning author. Before looking further into examples of feature articles on the Man Booker, the Orange Prize for Fiction and the Baileys Women's Prize it is necessary to explain why the Irish Book Awards will not be taken into account: none of the feature articles on the Irish Book Awards mention the cultural or social background of the author. The prize only awards Irish authors, and therefore one would expect that the media would attempt to differentiate between award winners on account of social or cultural traits. The omission of these characteristics in the media indicates that no relevance is attributed to such traits and therefore it does not generate media-meta capital. Possible cultural and social differences between Irish authors are evened out and journalists do not account for any connection between the author and the novel based on these characteristics.

In feature articles on the Man Booker Prize, cultural characteristics of award-winning authors are specified when deemed important in the context of the story in the novel. For example, when African-American author Paul Beatty won the Man Booker Prize 2016, Beatty's ethnicity was identified and brought into connection to the theme of *The Sellout*, namely racism in the United States. Moreover, Beatty's ethnicity is also mentioned because journalists are aware of the ongoing debate on cultural appropriation: "In his acceptance speech, Mr. Beatty waded into the raging debate about cultural appropriation" (Alter, "Paul Beatty" n.p.). Beatty added to this debate by stating: "'Anybody can write what they want,' [...] 'Cultural appropriation goes every direction'" (Alter, "Paul Beatty" n.p.). Even though Beatty states that he does not particularly believe in cultural appropriation, journalists are sensitive to the ongoing discussion and therefore highlight Beatty's ethnicity. In addition, the emphasis on Beatty's ethnicity can also be explained by the ongoing protests against racial

profiling and police brutality in the United States in 2016. Indeed, Mark Brown points out that the novel is relevant “particularly in the context of the Black Lives Matter movement” (“Man Booker” n.p.). In the context of this movement it is important who speaks out or discusses racial identity, and therefore feature articles identify Beatty as an African-American author. The discussion on cultural appropriation and Black Lives Matter have already gained traction in the media, and have been sanctified as having importance at that moment. Moreover, media have “set the rules that govern” other fields (Couldry 667); because these matters can be brought into connection with Beatty’s ethnicity, much importance is contributed to Beatty’s cultural background. Media meta-capital has already transcended general social space and therefore also influences the reporting on the Man Booker Prize. Therefore, in this case, the author generates media capital due to his cultural background because the topic of racism and cultural appropriation have been “sanctified as having primary importance” (Couldry 665) at that moment.

The idea that the cultural background of an author is sanctified when it is discussed in the larger social realm, is enforced by comparing the relevance of the discussion on cultural appropriation to a different situation. In contrast to when Beatty won the Man Booker Prize in 2016, the media did not discuss cultural appropriation when British author Rose Tremain won the Orange Prize for Fiction in 2008—the debate was not covered as much as when Beatty won the Man Booker. Several feature articles on the prize discuss the social relevance of the award-winning novel *The Road Home*. The story is about an immigrant from Eastern Europe who “tries to make his way in Britain” (Higgins, “After Years” n.p.). Journalists mark the novel as “topical” (Alberge, “Rose Tremain” n.p.); the judges’ chair Kirsty Lang is quoted stating the novel contains a “very timely theme” (qtd. in Higgins, “After Years” n.p.), and in an interview with Elizabeth Grize, Tremain points out that she wrote the novel after becoming aware of the existing anxiety with regard to immigrants in Britain. (“Rose Tremain’s” n.p.).

As a British author, Tremain wrote the novel from the point of view of an immigrant, yet none of the feature articles comment on the appropriation of a different cultural perspective; on the contrary, Tremain is praised for “writing in a male voice” (Lang qtd. in Alberge, “Rose Tremain” n.p.) and capturing the zeitgeist. The omission of the background of the author in the media signals that the relation of the author to the novel is not deemed relevant; Tremain author is not held accountable for the story in the novel and attention is only paid to the topicality of the novel itself. Therefore, in this case, the cultural or social identity of the author does not generate media capital, instead it is the novel to which symbolic value is attributed because of its timely theme. In comparison to Beatty this is an interesting observation; the cultural or social identity of the author in relation to the novel is only considered important when this is already part of an ongoing discussion. This shows that media meta-capital is ephemeral: even though the discussion of cultural appropriation has been topical in the literary field since the emergence of postcolonial theory, media only attribute importance to the cultural background of the author when it is connected to a discussion in the public sphere.

Social and Cultural Identity of Award-Winning Authors in Interviews

Interviews offer a more in-depth conversation with award-winning authors, and function as an opportunity to explore an author’s relation to their cultural and social identity. The personal background of the award-winning author is brought into connection with the novel when possible, and the author is asked about a personal opinion on matters which are connected with the author’s cultural or social identity. Again, this is not done often: 8 out of 14 interviews with winners of the Man Booker Prize discuss the social and/or cultural background of the author; this happens in 3 out of 10 interviews with winners of the Orange Prize for Fiction and the Baileys Women’s Prize; and only in 1 out of 9 interviews with

winner of the Irish Book Awards. However, the following examples will demonstrate that when the social or cultural background of the author is discussed, the author is held accountable for the experiences in the novel; the imaginative power of literature is overshadowed by the connection between the author and the novel. Therefore, the possible implications of this observation are that the literary quality of the text is overruled by the authenticity of the story, and because literary prizes are dependent of what is found important in the media it is possible that literary awards are influenced and take authenticity into account as a criterion.

When Kiran Desai won the Man Booker Prize in 2006, interviews with the Indian author were mainly focused on her personal background. Desai emigrated from India when she was 14 and moved to the United Kingdom first and then to the United States. The award-winning novel *The Inheritance of Loss* is brought into connection with Desai's life, and journalists have glamorized the experience of the immigrant; of not belonging to any nationality or culture. This can already be signalled by the suggestive titles of interviews such as "Kiran Desai: Daughter of the Diaspora" (Tonkin) and "A Passage from India" (Barton). Desai is being portrayed as what Huggan named the "postcolonial exotic" (413): a producer of a literature who represents a marginal and authentic point of view and this asset is highlighted for the sake of marketability. The experiences in Desai's novel are considered to be more authentic than they would have been if Desai had not lived the experience; in the interviews with Tonkin and Barton, Desai's personal life as an immigrant from India to the United States is elaborately discussed. Not only is Desai's personal life considered but the colonial past of India is mentioned a number of times and brought into connection with the colonial history of the sponsor of the Man Booker Prize: "one wonders [...] whether she felt altogether comfortable accepting the Man Booker prize, considering the inherently colonial nature of the award" (Barton, "A Passage" n.p.). In the interview with Barton, Desai is asked

to reflect on the postcolonial state of India, and Desai's interview with Tonkin contains many references to the colonial India as well. For example, the interview with Tonkin starts with an anecdote of the first moments of their interview: "'English tea?' asks the waitress. When I answer 'yes', of course I mean Indian tea. Thereby hangs the endlessly rich and tangled tale that has sustained so many creative careers - including those of Kiran and Anita Desai [Kiran's mother]" ("Daughter of" n.p.). The latter sentence signals an awareness of the commodification of the postcolonial exotic yet Tonkin fails to offer a critical reflection on this observation, in fact, Desai is portrayed as a "culturally-exotic 'othered' good" (Huggan 413); people would want to read Desai's novel because of her experience is advertised as a marginal point of view. Desai, as a postcolonial exotic generates symbolic capital; these interviews affirm that journalists value authenticity in a novel and Desai's experience is commodified.

Media meta-capital transcends the field of power and is able to set the rules that govern other fields (Couldry 667). The example of Desai has shown that journalists confirm the value of authenticity but they can also reframe a literary conversation to a journalistic conversation by analysing the author's experiences rather than what is said in the novel. An interview with Aravind Adiga, winner of the Man Booker Prize 2008, conducted by Stuart Jeffries makes this idea more concrete. Similar to Desai, Adiga is from India and has lived, studied and worked in countries such as Australia and the United States. Contrary to Desai, the interview does focus on Adiga as a postcolonial author but Jeffries mainly discusses the social class Adiga came from; Adiga is from a higher social class than the characters portrayed in his award-winning novel *The White Tiger*. The beginning of the interview already sets the tone for the rest of the interview: "How do you get the nerve, I ask Aravind Adiga, to write a novel about the experiences of the Indian poor? After all, you're an enviably bright young thing, a middle-class, Madras-born, Oxford-educated ex-Time magazine

correspondent? How would you understand what your central character, the downtrodden, uneducated son of a rickshaw puller turned amoral entrepreneur and killer, is going through?” (“Roars of Anger” n.p.). Throughout the interview Jeffries continues a similar critical way of questioning and holds Adiga personally accountable for the story in *The White Tiger*. Jeffries attempts to invalidate the novel by putting Adiga through a journalistic enquiry about his relation to the story. Jeffries confirms authenticity as a valid criterion of value of a novel and is critical therefore of the symbolic value which is bestowed on Adiga because he has won the Man Booker Prize. However, Jeffries fails to acknowledge the imaginative power of literature; Adiga might have been a journalist but *The White Tiger* is fiction. The idea that an authentic experience can be conveyed through a literary text is picked up on but skewed: the author is held personally responsible and accountable for the representation of a social class in a fictional story.

Social and Cultural Identity of Award-Winning Authors in Book Reviews

As shown, journalists emphasize the award-winner’s cultural and social background primarily when this can be brought into connection with the prize-winning novel. This is done in reviews as well, even though to a lesser extent. Out of 11 reviews of award-winning novels of the Man Booker Prize, 1 discussed the cultural background of the author; reviews of the Orange Prize for Fiction and the Baileys Women’s Prize showed exactly the same ratio; and none of the reviews of award-winning novels of the Irish Book Awards discussed the cultural or social background of the author. Even though the cultural or social background of the author is not brought into connection to the novel often in reviews, this will be exemplified in order to show how it can be done. Similar to placing authors in a tradition according to their nationality, an author can be motivated to write in a certain style because of his or her cultural background. Téa Obreht’s novel *The Tiger’s Wife*—winner of the Orange Prize 2011—is

brought into connection with her Balkan heritage. Obreht was born in Serbia, moved to Cyprus and then to Egypt with her family during the Yugoslav war, and emigrated to the United States at the age of twelve (Brown, "Orange Prize 2011" n.p.). Obreht's personal history is stressed in relation to the novel in a review by Kapka Kassabova: "Obreht's – and Natalia's – real journey is back in time, and the real investigation here is of the difficult times, violent death and crippled afterlife of that mythical place once called Yugoslavia" ("The Tiger's Wife" n.p.). Again, authenticity is brought up as a criterion to validate the quality of the story: "this novel is a spirited attempt to cram her entire cultural and family heritage into a story" (Kassabova). Aside from the story which is brought into connection with Obreht's personal experience, the genre of the novel is also placed in a cultural tradition. Kassabova connects the genre of magic realism with other cultural expressions which emerged after the Yugoslav war: "Modern Yugoslav fiction and film have tended towards the absurd, the hyperbolic and the surreal for a good reason: putting Yugoslavia's history into a coherent narrative is hard even for historians" (n.p.). Not only book reviews but feature articles on the Orange Prize and interviews with Obreht highlight the connection to Obreht's cultural heritage as well. This example shows when the cultural identity of an award-winning author can be connected to the novel, this will be picked up on and importance will be attributed to this connection. Again, symbolic capital is generated in the media and importance is bestowed on the connection between the author and the novel.

The previous chapter showed that much attention was paid to the nationality of the author. The examples in this chapter emphasized the cultural and social background of the author and stressed their place in a group based on this characteristic. Data showed that the cultural and social background of the author was discussed considerably less than the nationality of the author. Many articles do not discuss cultural or social background of the authors because it is

not considered to be important. However, when journalist did discuss the social and cultural identity of the author, these characteristics were heavily emphasized: this was only done when these characteristics could be brought directly into connection with the award-winning novel, or when they could be connected to a larger conversation, as the example of Beatty showed. When the social or cultural background of the author is discussed; when it generates media capital, two observations can be deduced. Firstly, the example of Beatty showed how media meta-capital can transcend the literary field; the importance which is attributed to Beatty's ethnicity was partially initiated by an already ongoing discussion which gained much traction during the period Beatty was awarded. Secondly, when the author generates media capital on account of his or her social or cultural background media have the ability to re-frame a literary conversation: the example of Desai and Adiga showed how journalists involved their cultural and social background to validate the fictional story in their award-winning novels. When the demand for authenticity of a story would become a more important criterion in the media, and literary prizes would become constrained by this idea, the imaginative power of literature would be overruled. Again, this is an interesting notion but it has to be noted that less importance was attributed to the social and cultural identity of award-winning authors because it was mentioned less. This chapter and the previous chapter showed that national, cultural and social background play an important role in the credibility of conveying a native and/or cultural experience. Therefore, the final chapter will take into account the gender of the author to take into account whether all characteristics of an author can generate media capital.

4. Gender of the Author and Media Meta-Capital

In 1996, when the “annual prize for the best full-length novel written in English by a woman of any nationality published in the UK in the past year” (Zangen 281) was launched, attention was drawn to the gender of literary award-winning authors. According to Zangen, when the Orange Prize for Fiction was founded, it provoked quite some controversy in both the literary field and in the public sphere (281). The award was created after the shortlist of the Man Booker Prize in 1991 was announced, which did not include any women writers even though “60% of English novels are written by women” (282). This chapter will show that even though the prize has grown to be quite prestigious, yet the gender of award-winning authors does not attract as much attention in the media as the nationality of the author or his or her social and cultural background; therefore, the conversation which the Orange Prize wanted to spark has either not been picked up on in the literary field, or it can be said that it is no longer necessary to emphasize difference of gender. This chapter will show examples of articles where the gender of the author is discussed and consider what the absence of discussion with regard to the gender of the author might imply.

Gender of the Award-Winning Author in Feature articles

Even though the founders of the Orange prize tried to establish an equal balance of gender on shortlist of literary awards, the award was deemed sexist and its standards were questioned (Zangen 282). This is a conception which is still present; even though controversy over the prize has diminished, the award still needs to justify its existence. Feature articles in the media on the prize still often quote the chair of the judges and female authors on the relevance of a literary award solely for women. Notably, men are never quoted on this matter. However, out of 34 feature articles on the Man Booker Prize, 12 mention the gender of the winner; out of 36 feature articles on the Orange Prize for Fiction and the Baileys Women’s Prize, 5

emphasize the gender of the author; and out of 9 feature articles on the Irish Book Awards none mentioned the gender of the prize-winner.

The majority of the feature articles on the Man Booker Prize and the Orange Prize for Fiction and the Baileys Women's Prize identify the gender of the author by explicitly naming their gender. For example, in a feature in *The New York Times*, the winner of the Orange Prize for Fiction 2009, Marilynne Robinson is announced as following: "The British award, given annually for the best novel written by a woman in English, was presented to Ms. Robinson at a ceremony on Wednesday night at the Royal Festival Hall in London." Not only female authors are referred to as 'Ms.' or 'Mrs.' but male authors as well: male denominators are also placed in front of the last names of Paul Beatty, Howard Jacobson, Julian Barnes and Aravind Adiga. Feature articles that identify the gender of award-winning authors by a gender-denominator are exclusively published in *The New York Times* and *The Independent*. Therefore, the reason why the gender of the award-winning author is named is to be assigned to a writing style or etiquette rather than the awareness of the division of gender among award-winners, and in the literary field in general.

In the article "Being Female" (2011), poet and writer Eileen Myles heavily criticises the idea that we have reached a time when writing by male and female writers is equally celebrated (n.p.). Myles argues that male writing is still seen as the norm, and Baileys Women's Prize winner 2016 Lisa McInerney affirms this idea. McInerney states in her acceptance speech that her novel *The Glorious Heresies* was rejected several times because was considered too 'male'; "a few people thought it necessary to tell me how 'male' it was, and that it was no wonder its jacket sported quotes from male writers" (McInerney qtd. in Flood, "Baileys Prize" n.p.). McInerney commented on this by dismissing the idea that women cannot write like male writers, and ridicules the idea that women can only write about things that are considered 'feminine,' like embroidery: "Was it because it had a certain

boisterousness, when women are best suited to gentle pursuits, like embroidery?” (McInerney qtd. in Flood, “Baileys Prize” n.p.). McInerney explicitly acknowledged that she was a woman, and insisted on the importance of that fact, but she also stressed that there was no connection between her gender and her novel: “I am a woman writer and no one is going to waste their time examining my book in the context of my gender” (n.p.). None of the feature articles or interviews with male award-winners questioned the belonging of their work in a genre based on their gender. Similar to the example of Drew Faust, the first female president of Harvard, given by Moi, McInerney steers clear from being categorized according to her gender without eliminating her gendered subjectivity; she establishes her perspective as both particular and universal. However, this example signals that apparently there still is a differentiation between ‘universal’ writing and *écriture féminine*; the idea that women cannot write like men is persistent.

In feature articles on the Man Booker Prize there are two authors whose gender is explicitly named—so not by their gendered denominator—namely Hilary Mantel when she won the award for the second time in 2012, and Kiran Desai who won the prize in 2006. Their gender is only emphasized because Desai was the youngest woman to date to win the prize and Mantel was the first woman to win the Man Booker Prize twice. This is mentioned in 1 out of 3 the feature articles on the Man Booker Prize 2006, but attention is drawn to Mantel’s gender is in 4 out of 5 feature articles on the award by statements such as: “Not only does Hilary Mantel become the first British novelist and the first woman to win the prize twice, she is also the first writer to win double glory with a sequel” (Jordan, “Hilary Mantel” n.p.). Mantel’s victory is glamorized in feature articles because the uniqueness of this occasion is emphasized: only two male authors had won the prize twice before Mantel. The gender of Mantel but it is sanctified only because her second win was a unique case because when she won for the first time in 2009, none of the feature articles identified Mantel’s gender. In

comparison to the way writers get framed according to their nationality, the lack of consideration of the gender of award-winning authors in feature articles can indicate three things: (1) journalists do not attribute importance to the gender of the author because they find the issue of gender difference (and the existence of gender difference) not relevant to the discussion of literature; or (2) journalists do not want to take an active stance on gender difference between writers because the discussion of what it means to be a woman writer is too difficult; or (3) journalists have the idea that it is not necessary to stress the gender of the author anymore, because literary works by female authors have increasingly been awarded—indeed, in 2008 AL Kennedy won the Costa Prize, Anne Enright won the Man Booker Prize and Doris Lessing won the Nobel Prize for Literature.

Gender of the Award-Winning Author in Interviews

Interviews are a more convenient type of article to explore this discussion; the gender of the author is only mentioned in interviews when authors take an active stance on the connection between their gender and authorship. Out of 14 interviews with the award-winning authors of the Man Booker Prize, 5 discussed the gender of the author; 4 out of 10 interviews with winners of the Orange Prize for Fiction and the Baileys Women’s Prize were about the gender of the author; and 2 out of 9 interviews with winners of the Irish Book Awards discussed the gender of the author. Most of the authors who discuss their gendered role as a writer are women and the following examples will demonstrate that this is done in several ways.

There are a number of female authors who actively identify as women writers. In an interview conducted by Charlotte Higgins (“Baileys Prize”) it is emphasized that Ali Smith—winner of the Baileys Women’s Prize 2015—marks herself as a woman writer, and as a supporter of the literary award for women. Smith is quoted by Higgins: “Hence, perhaps, the importance of the Baileys as a corrective – it recognizes (and is judged by) women. We have

always been up against the canon, and the canon is traditionally male” (n.p.). By identifying as a woman writer, Smith emphasizes the necessity to celebrate women writing: to Smith it is a political act, to make people aware of the lack of female voices in literary history, and to have these voices heard now. Anne Enright—winner of the Man Booker Prize 2007 and Irish Book Awards 2008 and 2015—also takes responsibility to portray an authentic female experience in literature. Enright states in an interview from 2007: “In some way, when I deal with sexual material, I feel that I’m reclaiming or repossessing some territory that’s been taken away from women by male writers” (Tonkin, “Interview: The Fearless” n.p.). In addition, Enright enforces this standpoint in an interview in 2015: “for me to be accepted, for a female voice – with all the anxiety there is about the female voice in Ireland – for that somehow to dissolve, and this symbolic thing of the laureateship, is just lovely” (Clark, “Anne Enright” n.p.). Indeed, Smith and Enright are conscious of their role as women writers in a world where the “man is [considered] the universal and [the] woman is the particular” (De Beauvoir qtd. in Moi 264), and actively emphasize the need to reclaim female terrain in literature; especially Enright relies on her femaleness to portray authentic experiences in her novels.

The gender of the author in relation to the main character(s) in their award-winning work is a point of interest in interviews as well. Like Enright, the winner of the Man Booker Prize 2013, Eleanor Catton, has stated in an interview that she felt responsible for reclaiming territory which has been taken away from women by male writers. However, because she feels that she has not lived up to her own expectation—which was inspired by gender courses at university—leads her to apologise for the fact that female characters are a minority in her novel; *The Luminaries* features “two female characters, and 18 male characters” (Catton qtd. in Cochrane, “I’m Strongly” n.p.). Catton states that she felt uncomfortable when she realized that the gender division in the novel was not equal. She responds to this observation by stating the following: “I haven’t let my femaleness stand in the way of writing a structurally complex

book” (n.p.). Catton seems to take her gendered position as an obstacle and as something that can be overcome as well but she also states that she feels guilty for not having taken the opportunity to repossess terrain which has been taken from women by male writers; “Catton admits she’s had ‘moments where I’ve [Catton] felt like a bit of a traitor’” (n.p.), and she states that the division of gender in her next novel will be on her mind. Like Adichie, Catton is responding to the power of the media to present ideas about the role of women writers but acknowledges at the same time that she has not lived up to this idea. She tries to convey the importance of the role of the woman writer in this interview and tries to convert her symbolic capital as a literary prize-winner into the media-capital of a prize-winner to set this idea in the media, so it will influence the literary field; so that the importance of the role of women writers is acknowledged in the literary field. However, she fails to do so because she has not lived up to her own expectations and because she feels guilty over not having taken responsibility for the representation of the female voice in literature, Catton fails to acknowledge the power of imagination. Catton tries too hard to prove a point, which leads to the strange situation where she accounts for a fictional world, and as an effect the importance which she attributes to women writers does not come across.

Instead of trying to take away terrain from women, John Banville, who won the 2012 Irish Book Awards, states in an interview with Stuart Jeffries (“John Banville”) that it is impossible for him to take on the perspective from one of the female characters in his award-winning novel *Ancient Light*: “Could the affair in the new novel have been narrated from Mrs Gray's point of view? ‘I don't think so because I've never understood women. Never will, don't want to’” (n.p.). With this statement, Banville marks his subjective position and shows that he knows he is unable to adapt a female voice. However, it has to be noted that Banville romanticises women, because in the same interview he admits: “I’m in love with all of them [women], always have been fascinated by them. Not just for sex but because they always do

the unexpected – at least I don't expect what they do. They say: 'We're ordinary, we're just like you.' I say: 'You're not. You're magical creatures.' I'm a hopeless 19th-century romantic" (n.p.). Certainly, it is worth being critical of such statements, especially in the context of the male writer's representation of women; Banville states he can only romanticise women and therefore it is necessary that women writers present more realistic female characters. Therefore, it is important for women writers to speak through the media to emphasize their responsibility as a woman writer; in this way media capital could be generated when journalists also attribute importance to the matter as well.

Gender of Award-Winning Authors in Book Reviews

Notably, none of the reviews of award-winning novels of either the Man Booker Prize, the Orange Prize for Fiction and the Baileys Women's Prize, and the Irish Book Awards mention the gender of the author in relation to the novel. While little but some attention is given to the connection between the nationality, the cultural and social identity of the authors and the novel in book reviews, it is striking that there were no reviews which were concerned with the gender of the author and the voices represented in the novel. This observation could signal that there is no interest in *écriture féminine* or in an authentic representation of female characters—at least in these reviews. In connection to the observations that have been made in the previous section, where female authors establish themselves as women writers, it proves to be necessary to raise awareness on the matter of the female perspective and whether it is represented by a male or a female author, and book reviews are a favourable place to take this into account.

The lack of conversation about the gender of the author in the media in comparison to the traction which the nationality, cultural and social background is meaningful. Again, this could mean three things: (1) journalists do not attribute importance to the gender of the author

because they find the issue of gender difference (and the existence of gender difference) not relevant to the discussion of literature; or (2) journalists do not want to take an active stance on gender difference between writers because the discussion of what it means to be a woman writer is too difficult; or (3) journalists have the idea that it is not necessary to stress the gender of the author anymore, because literary works by female authors have increasingly been awarded. However, women who are actively in the literary field still feel the need to emphasize the need for a women-only prize: Myles argued that there still is no equal gender division in book reviews, and many feature articles on the Orange Prize for Fiction and the Baileys Women's Prize quote judges' chairs and authors who emphasize the relevance of the prize. The gender of the award-winning author can generate media capital; the case of Mantel exemplifies this—but her case is unique. The omission of gender in media highlights a difficulty in the conversation on gender: what is a male or female experience to begin with? The range of the female experience is vast and therefore it is difficult to discern what it means for literature to convey this gendered experience. Indeed, when the female experience is linked to the woman writer it is important to take into the social and cultural background into consideration; there is no universal female (or male for that matter) experience. Because of the difficulty of this discussion—which does not only take place in the literary field, but in the social realm as well—media do not attribute importance to the gender of the author to the same extent as to the nationality of the author or the social or cultural background of the author.

Conclusion

This thesis set out to research how the relationship between media and literary prizes can be interpreted by analysing whether an increasing interest in the diversity of literary prize-winners could be found in the media, and how this relates to the literary field. By discerning what characteristics of award-winning authors of the Man Booker Prize, the Orange Prize for Fiction and the Baileys Women's Prize, and the Irish Book Awards have attracted media capital a number of interesting observations could be made. In correspondence with the chapters of this thesis the findings will be briefly summarized in order to answer the research question: *how do characteristics of the winners of the Man Booker Prize, the Orange Prize for Fiction and the Baileys Women's Prize, and the Irish Book Awards generate media capital?*

Out of the three characteristics that were analysed, it was clear that the nationality of the award-winning author generated most attention: the nationality of the author was named considerably more than the social and cultural background of the author and the gender of the author. The nationality of the author has become a framing device, and because literary prizes are partly dependent of what is deemed important in the media the growing emphasis on the author might signal that literary prizes will become a site of competition over which country wins most often, instead of it being a competition over the best literary work. This observation reflects a demand for diversity amongst prize-winners yet the extent to which this happens is worth paying attention to; literary prizes have become increasingly influential in the literary field and when literary prizes do not function as gatekeepers of literary quality, this has a considerable impact on the literary field. In addition to this observation, media endorse categorization according to nationality which facilitates a national literary stereotype.

The social and cultural identity of an award-winning author generates media capital when it can be connected to the story in the award-winning novel; authenticity becomes a criterion. An emphasis on these characteristics in the media reflects an awareness of not only the importance of diversity among literary prize-winners but also an awareness of pluralism in society: importance is attributed to the voices heard through literature; there is a demand for an authentic experience. However, 'Other' experiences become glamorized in the media like the example of Kiran Desai showed. Also, the idea that the text is both a product of a historical author and a product of a much larger culture which 'speaks' through the text is skewed; journalists focus on the author as the 'Other' that we encounter, instead of the novel as a space where readers encounter the 'Other'. The analysis of the discussion of the social and cultural background of literary award-winning authors also has shown that media capital can be temporary and ephemeral: when the social or cultural background of the author is part of a larger discussion at the moment of the literary award, such as with Paul Beatty, this characteristic is sanctified in the media, and generate more attention than when the social or cultural identity of the author is not part of a larger discussion, such as the example of Rose Tremain has shown.

The discussion of the gender of literary prize-winners in the media was meaningful: in comparison to the other characteristics which were taken into consideration, the gender of the author was mentioned least. When the gender of the author was discussed this was predominantly done with female authors; they identified as women writers. Indeed, authors such as Anne Enright and Ali Smith emphasized their need to convey a female experience through literature to reclaim some of the terrain which was taken away from women by male writers. However, the dilemma of the women writer remains unresolved because one has to choose between eliminating their gendered subjectivity (and identify as a writer) or become imprisoned in their gender (identify as a woman writer). What's more, the range of the female

experience is so vast that the matter can only be addressed when other characteristics such as cultural and social identity are discussed as well; the subjective position of the author has to be defined further than simply stating their gender. Media have not consecrated the gender of the author because a larger conversation is hereby avoided.

In conclusion, the analysis of media articles which were presented in this thesis draws attention to three main observations. The literary prize-winning author generates media capital, primarily on behalf of his or her nationality as it has become a framing device for journalists. The focus on the social and cultural identity of the author showed that authors are often held accountable for the experiences in their novel and instead of looking for the ‘Other’ experience in the literary work the focus in the media has shifted to the author as the ‘Other’ that we perceive. Contrary to the other characteristics, the gender of the author does not generate much attention even though it has been argued that it is still necessary that women’s writing still needs to be celebrated in order to create an equal gender division in awarded literature, and in literature in general. Literary prizes need media capital to establish symbolic capital in the literary field, and thus literary prizes are partly dependent on the media and the capital media generate. Therefore, the characteristics which attract importance in the media will partially also influence literary prizes, and because literary prizes have become increasingly influential in the literary field, the internal workings of the literary field will also change.

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