

# 「レ・ミゼラブル」の「Who am I」に関する比較研究 A Comparative Study of “Who am I” of “*Les Miserables*”

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## 要旨

この論文ではミュージカルを代表する「レ・ミゼラブル」の中の曲である「Who am I」において『Who am I?』は、ミュージカル映画「レ・ミゼラブル」で主人公のジャン・ヴァルジャン（バルジャン）が自問自答するシーンで歌われる劇中歌である。原作のフランス語と翻訳された英語、日本語と中国語それぞれの歌詞の文化的意味の違いを考察する。今回の考察で各国の文化の相違から同じ歌詞「Who am I」でも言葉の使い方、並び方が異なるということを明らかにする

## Abstract

This thesis deals with “*Who am I*”, which is a song from the first act of *Les Miserables*, a solo sung by the main character *Jean Valjean*. It is rather slow-paced, and shares a melody with *Valjean*'s solo in “*One Day More*”, as well as the ten-year-later sequence after the Prologue. “Who am I” is a song that is sung in a scene where the main character *Jean Valjean* of the musical *Les Miserables* asks himself this question. The French, English, Japanese and Chinese lyrics are somewhat different from each other. A comparative examination is made, according to the language. The meaning being conveyed is considered and a discussion of how the words are used and lyrics are arranged is made.

## 1. Introduction

This paper focuses on the lyrics of the song “*Who am I*” in the musical *Les Miserables*. “*Who am I*” is a song appearing in the musical *Les Miserables* with music composed by the French composer, *Claude-Michel Schonberg* (Boublil & Schonberg's, p. 7). The English lyrics were written by *Herbert Kretzmer* (Boublil & Schonberg's, p. 13). The French lyrics were later written by *Alain Boublil* and *Jean-Marc Natel* (Boublil & Schonberg's, p. 12).

“*Who am I*” did not appear on the first recording, but was a part of the stage show as *Comment faire?* (What to Do?). It includes an additional stanza, in which *Valjean* shortly reveals his past, since the concept version did not contain the Prologue, this song is known as *Le procès : comment faire?* (The Trial – What to Do?). The Japanese title of “who am I” is called “*Sabaki*” (裁き) which means judgment. The Chinese title is called as “*wo fei wo*” (我非我) which means “I am not me”.

## 2. The lyrics of the French, English, Japanese and Chinese versions

### 2.1. The lyrics of French and English

It would seem to be of interest to examine how the lyrics of the “Who am I” change in the context of Asian languages and consider what the cultural implications might be. The lyrics in Chinese and Japanese will be examined and compared with the original French and English. Each language reflects different cultures. Language expression is different.

the French lyrics of the song are as follows:

### 2.1.1 "Who am I" French lyrics

Comment faire?

VALJEAN

Il prend cet homme pour moi,

C'est peut-être ma chance.

Je n'ai rien d'autre à faire

Que garder le silence.

Mais n'ai-je tant lutté,

Construit et inventé

Que pour céder la place

À un remords qui passe?

Si je me tais, je me damne;

Et si je parle, je me condamne.

Et tous ces gens qui travaillent à l'usine,

Et qui croient tous en moi,

Puis-je les abandonner?

C'est au néant

Que je les renvoie.

Si je me tais, je me damne;

Et si je parle, je me condamne.

Comment faire?

Trahir cet homme accablé par erreur?

Le laisser choir Dans le puits du malheur?

Cet innocent dont le péché

Est seulement de me ressembler.

Comment faire?

Refuser de retourner en enfer

Parce que j'ai fait mon paradis sur terre.

Tirer un trait sur mon passé

Et dans l'oubli, me prélasser?

Comment faire?

Comment pourrais-je Regarder dans la glace

Un homme qui n'ose pas Se regarder en face?

Si mon âme appartient à Dieu,

Il peut la reprendre quand il veut.

Si c'est une épreuve qu'il m'envoie,

C'est qu'il a décidé pour moi.

Comment faire? Rien à faire!  
Je suis Jean Valjean.

Voilà Javert, la vérité.  
C'est un innocent qui est jugé

Regarde bien!  
24-601!

### 2.1.2 The back translation of French lyrics

What to do?  
VALJEAN  
He takes this man for me,  
This may be my chance.  
I have nothing else to do  
Just to keep silent.  
But did I fight so much,  
Built and invented  
What to give way  
To a passing remorse?

If I shut up, I damn myself;  
And if I speak, I condemn myself.

And all those people who work at the factory,  
And who all believe in me,  
Can I abandon them?  
It's nothing  
That I send them back.  
If I shut up, I damn myself;  
And if I speak, I condemn myself.

What to do?  
Betray this man overwhelmed by a mistake?  
To let it fall in the well of misfortune?  
This innocent whose sin  
Is only to look like me.

What to do?  
Refuse to return to hell  
Because I made my paradise on earth.  
Draw a line on my past

And in oblivion, lounging?  
What to do?  
How could I look in the mirror  
A man who does not dare to Look at his face?  
If my soul belongs to God,  
He can take it back whenever he wants.  
If it's a test he sends me,  
He decided for me.

What to do? Nothing to do!  
I am Jean Valjean.

That's Javert, the truth.  
It is an innocent person who is judged

Look well!  
24-601!

### 2.1.3 "Who am I" English lyrics

Who am I  
VALJEAN  
He thinks that man is me  
He knew him at a glance!  
That stranger he has found  
This man could be my chance!  
Why should I save his hide?  
Why should I right this wrong  
When I have come so far  
And struggled for so long?

If I speak, I am condemned.  
If I stay silent, I am damned!

I am the master of hundreds of workers.  
They all look to me.  
Can I abandon them?  
How would they live  
If I am not free?  
If I speak, I am condemned.  
If I stay silent, I am damned!

Who am I?

Can I condemn this man to slavery  
Pretend I do not see his agony  
This innocent who bears my face  
Who goes to judgement in my place

Who am I?  
Can I conceal myself forevermore?  
Pretend I'm not the man I was before?  
And must my name until I die  
Be no more than an alibi?  
Must I lie?  
How can I ever face my fellow men?  
How can I ever face myself again?  
My soul belongs to God, I know  
I made that bargain long ago  
He gave me hope when hope was gone  
He gave me strength to journey on

Who am I? Who am I?  
I am Jean Valjean!

And so Javert, you see it's true  
That man bears no more guilt than you!

Who am I?  
24601!

Let's compare the French lyrics and English lyrics first. In the French lyrics, there are many religious words, for example, "Et si je parle, je me condamne." Here "condamne" means condemn in English. "Et qui croient tous en moi," here "Croient" means believe. "Cet innocent dont le péché", "péché" means sin. "Refuser de retourner en enfer, Parce que j'ai fait mon paradis sur terre." The words of "enfer" and "paradis" means "hell" and "paradise". "C'est un innocent qui est jugé" here the word of "jugé" means judged, the judgment of god in the case of religion.

It is believed that the history of Catholicism in France began when King Clovis I was baptized. The religion in England was formerly Roman-Catholicism, but now is primarily protestant. In Japan, Shinto or kami no michi is the traditional religion of Japan that focuses on ritual practices to be carried out diligently to establish a connection between present day Japan and its ancient past. Also, in Japan there is an estimated 84.7 million Buddhists listed in the statistics of 2013. According to Eiji Hisamatsu:

クロヴィス1世は王妃のクロティルドの説得によってアリウス派から（アタナシウス派の）カトリック教徒に改宗したことも有名です。フランスはこの時から現在に至るまでカトリック教徒が主流となっている国です。さらにこの改宗はのちのカール大帝の時代になって皇帝の世俗権力と法王の宗教の権威

が結びつく遠因を作ったと考えられます。四世紀以降カトリック教会総本山のローマは衰退してイタリア本土には東ゴート族、ランゴバルド族が交代に入ってきて支配する時代が続きました。フランク国王は全てのカトリック教徒の精神的拠り所であるローマ教皇公式に人民の首長であることを宣言されることになりました。(久松 英二 P129)

In China, Confucianism, was founded by Confucius (551-479 BC), and adopted by the Lu people during the Spring and Autumn Period.

Let's take a look at the Japanese lyrics and Chinese lyrics.

### 3.1. The lyrics of Japanese and Chinese "Who am I"

#### 3.1.1 The lyrics of Japanese

裁き

VALJEAN

あいつは全て信じている

身代わり

入れば

救いの神

長い年月

苦勞の果てに

勝ち得たものを

捨てられるか

名乗れば牢獄

黙っていても地獄

俺を待ってる多くの人が

工場では

飢えて

死ぬのだ

見殺しに出来るか

名乗れば牢獄

黙っていても地獄

誰だ？

その男を奴隷に

おとし入れてしまうのは

俺の罪と過去

人に負わせても

生きるか

葬り去るつもりか

罪深い我が過去を  
死ぬまで己を  
偽り続けて  
生きるか  
それが許されるのか  
恥ずかしくはないのか  
この魂  
すでに神に渡して  
替わりに得たのだ  
生きていく力を

誰だ！俺は？ジャン・バルジャン  
さあ皆よく見ろ

俺は誰なのか  
俺は24653

### 3.1.2. The Japanese back translation

The back translation of Japanese lyrics is:

Judgment  
VALJEAN  
He believes all  
Substitution  
If you enter  
The god of salvation  
Long years  
At the end of hardship  
Winning things  
Is it thrown away?

If you give in to your prison  
Even if you keep silent, hell

Many people waiting for me  
At the factory  
Starved  
To die  
Can you kill it?  
If you give in to your prison  
Even if you keep silent, hell

Who?  
Make that man a slave  
What I am going to do is  
My sin and past  
Even if I let people

Do you live?  
Are you going to burial away?  
My sinful past  
Until I die  
Keep lying  
Do you live?  
Is it allowed?  
Are not you ashamed?  
This soul  
Already given to God  
I got it instead  
The power to live

Who! I am? Jean Valjan  
Now, look at everyone

Who am I?  
I am 24653

### 3.1.3. The lyrics of the Chinese

Wǒ fēi wǒ  
VALJEAN  
tā rènwéi nàgè rén jiùshì wǒ  
tā yīyǎn jiù kàn chūláile  
zhège bèi tā fāxiàn de mòshēng rén  
zhège rén shì wǒ shēngmìng de zhuǎnji  
wǒ wèihé yào gǎiguò xiàng shàn  
dāng wǒ fúchūle zhème duō  
zhēngzhále zhème jiǔ

rúguǒ wǒ chéngrènle, wǒ jiāng zāo tiānqiǎn  
rúguǒ sānjiānqǐkǒu, wǒ yiyàng zāo tiānqiǎn

wǒ shì zhè shù bǎi gè gōngrén de zhǔrén  
tāmen quán yǎngzhàng wǒ  
wǒ néng qǐ tāmen yú bùgù ma?

Tāmen jiāng lài héwéishēng  
rúguǒ wǒ shìqù zìyóu  
rúguǒ wǒ chéngrènle, wǒ jiāng zāo tiānqiān  
rúguǒ sānjiānqíkǒu, wǒ yiyàng zāo tiānqiān

wǒ shì shéi?  
Wǒ néng jiāng zhège rén sòng jìn jiānláo  
jiǎzhuāng duì tā de tòngkǔ shìruòwúdǔ  
zhège yǒuzhe wǒ liǎn kǒng de wúgū zhī rén bèi dàngchéng shì wǒ lái shòushěn

wǒ shì shéi  
wǒ néng zài yìcì de yǒngyuǎn yīncáng wǒ zìjǐ ma?  
Jiǎzhuāng wǒ zài yě bùshì cóngqián nàgè wǒle ma?  
Ér wǒ zhè míngzì bixū péizhe wǒ  
máimò zhìsī lái tuō zuì ma?  
Wǒ gāi shuōhuāng ma?  
Wǒ jiāng rúhé miàn duì wǒ de rénmin?  
Wǒ jiāng rúguǒ zài miàn duì zìjǐ?  
Wǒ de línghún jiāo gěile shàngdi wǒ zhīdào  
wǒ hěnjiǔ yìqián jiù zuòle jiāoyì  
tā zài xīwàng miǎománg shí gěi wǒle xīwàng  
tā cǐ gěile wǒ huó xiàqù de lìliàng

wǒ shì shéi? Wǒ shì shéi?  
Wǒ jiùshì shàng wàn qiáng

suǒyǐ, jiǎ wéi, nǐ cái duìle  
zhè rén bìng bùbǐ nǐ bèifù gèng duō de zuì'è!

Wǒ shì shéi?  
Wǒ jiùshì 24601

#### 3.1.4. The back translation of the Chinese lyrics

I am not me  
VALJEAN  
He thinks that person is me.  
He saw it at a glance.  
This stranger he found  
This person is a turning point in my life.  
Why should I change my goodness?  
When I paid so much  
Struggling for so long

If I admit it, I will be condemned.  
If I swear, I am equally condemned.

I am the owner of these hundreds of workers.  
They all rely on me  
Can I disregard them?  
They will live  
If I lose my freedom  
If I admit it, I will be condemned.  
If I swear, I am as devastated.

Who am I?  
I can send this person to prison.  
Pretending to turn a blind eye to his pain  
This innocent person with my face is treated as if I am going to be tried

Who am I  
Can I hide myself forever?  
Pretend that I am no longer the same as me?  
And my name must accompany me.  
Buried to death to offend?  
Should I lie?  
How will I face my people?  
Will I face myself again?  
My soul is handed over to God, I know  
I made a deal a long time ago.  
He gave me hope when he hoped for it.  
He gave me the power to live

Who am I? who am I?  
I am Shang Wanqiang.

So, Jia Wei, you guessed it.  
This person is no more sinful than you!

Who am I?  
I am 24601

In the Japanese version, the lyrics “Are not you ashamed?” (恥ずかしくはないのか) represent a Japanese idea, The English lyrics “How can I ever face myself again?” has the same meaning as the Chinese “Will I face myself again?” (我将如果再面对自己?)

Europe and the United States have Christian civilizations, and religious precepts exist in accepted norms of behavior. If they keep God's commandments, their hearts are kept fresh and there is no cloudiness, but, on the contrary, they have a strong sense of sin. In their hearts there is always a

consciousness of the absolute norm that God exists and that one is seen by God. That is connected to guilt consciousness (breaking a promise to God is “sin”). Ruth Benedict calls this “a culture of sin”.

On the other hand, Japan is polytheistic, and the consciousness of God and Buddha is not so strong. Therefore, one does not want to be laughed at by other people, nor does one want to face shame. This regulates the behavior of the Japanese. Instead of deciding whether an action it is right or not, Benedict analyzes it as “a culture of shame” where one decides what to do according to what the world thinks.

Face culture has been in China for a long time. The most primitive “face” should be a person’s face. The ancients know how to wash their faces every day. They should do so in front of a bronze mirror and wash the lower ground of the upper and lower sides. The Chinese are more proud of the “Four Beautiful Women”, proud of their yellow skin. Perhaps it is the special importance of the face which forms the basis of an invisible face culture.

In China, individuals can’t be independent of the collective. Every Chinese has his or her own network of relationships. Because of the overlapping of different networks, a more complex network of interpersonal relationships is formed, and “humanity” and “face” are the key to maintaining this network. Face symbolizes interpersonal influence and human relationships. Therefore, the harmony between human relations and interpersonal relationships is very important in Chinese culture. The measure of individual interpersonal relationships and the degree of influence is the sentiment. In order to achieve harmonious interpersonal relationships, it is an important part of interpersonal communication to give each other a face. Therefore, China’s business culture pays attention to effective communication in the harmonious atmosphere of “face”. Before talking about business, Chinese people pay attention to establishing friendly relations through means of banquets and gifts, and they must avoid conflicts during business negotiations. It is most important for the Chinese to maintain harmony and build relationships. This is the reason why the so-called business may not be continued, but relationships should.

Western culture tends to regard self as an independent body separate from others and the whole world, emphasizing self and personal achievement. The acquisition of personal face is based on the success of an individual career. Therefore, the relationship between the individual and the collective and society is relatively high loose, Unlike the “emotional” interpersonal relationships that are widespread in Chinese society, Western societies are more biased towards task-type relationships. They are short-lived and unstable relationships established by people to achieve a certain goal. Reflected in interpersonal communications, it is particularly pragmatic, so it quickly cuts into the topic in the dialogue. According to Western communication standards, if the greeting time of the other party is too long, the listener will take the initiative to remind the other party to go directly to the topic or give some tips for “talking about business”.

“Face” in the eyes of Westerners is centered on “self” and is based on the principle of benefiting oneself. At the same time, they emphasize the differences between individuals, respect individual opinions, and, in order to protect personal interests, both sides can argue or even fight. The appropriate level of conflict is seen as a positive behavior of self-protection. Therefore, people often follow objective rules in their interactions. If things are not right, people pay attention to business affairs, and they rarely pay attention to human feelings or face on the principle issues. They are generally not affected by emotions. Therefore, people feel that they are “not sympathetic” and “coldly frosty.” In business negotiations, they can fight for their own interests and be arrogant. For small details that are unsatisfactory, they can negotiate without too much consideration of the faces and interests of others. In their eyes, people are people, things are things, and negotiating situations are arrogant. People can separate business and still be

friends. Because Westerners are task-oriented, business negotiations are aimed at safeguarding their own interests. This is quite an “unscrupulous” style in the eyes of the Chinese, and it is very different from the Chinese thinking that “sales and salesmen are not righteous.”

Considering the word “man”, in French, “Il prend et homme pour moi”, it was used to mean “homme” meaning “this man”. In English we see “he thinks that man is me”. In Japanese, “あいつは全て信じている” appears, “あいつは” was used to mean “that person”. In Chinese “他认为那个人就是我” is used to mean “那个人” which has the same meaning as Japanese “that person.”

In French, “C’est un innocent qui est jugé”, is used where the relative pronoun “qui” indicates a person. In the English version, it is “the man bears no more guilt than you”. In Japanese, “さあ皆よく見ろ” is used where “皆” which means everyone. In Chinese, it is “这人并不比你背负更多的罪恶!” which is used for “this people”. As Mori writes:

英語で「人」という意味で使われるmanは少なくなっている。またことわざなどにしばしば出る例であるが、man をheで受けることが多かったが、最近ではhe/sheとしたり、he or sheとしたりしている。日本語の「人」にはこのような複雑ではない、「人=男」ではないからである。この点では日本語は英語より民主的となろう、なお、日本語「人」には「人の目をはばかりる」など「他人」や「世間の人たち」という意味もある。英語でいうと、other peopleやpeopleに相当する。(森住 衛 P173)

#### 4. Conclusions

The word “man” in French and English and Japanese is different. Europe and the United States have Christian civilizations, and religious precepts exist in the norms of behavior. Ruth Benedict calls this “a culture of sin”. On the other hand, Japan is polytheistic, and the consciousness of God and Buddha is not so strong. Ruth Benedict analyzed it as “a culture of shame”. Face culture has been in China from ancient times.

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