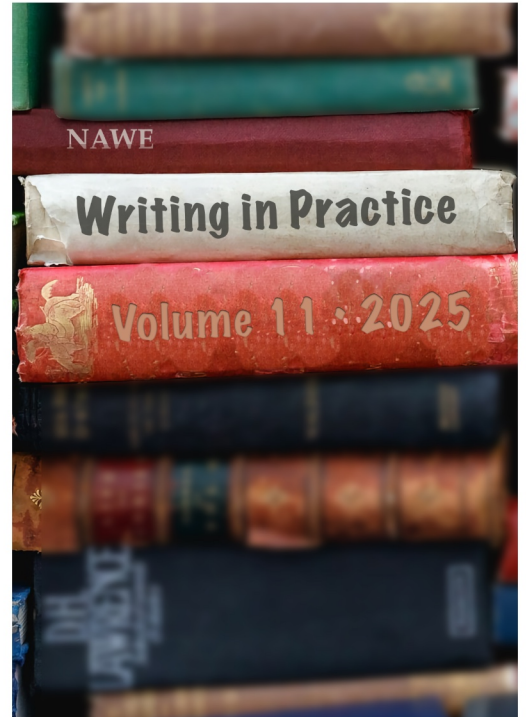




The short story cycle: A stronger medium for depicting the lives of minorities?

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ABSTRACT

This study considers the short story form in depicting minority cultures. It first looks into the relationship that the short story typically has with place and investigates the reader's role in unpicking the significance of geographical locations in short fiction. The concept of the short story cycle is then introduced and through examples of my own work, as well as Jhumpa Lahiri's *Interpreter of Maladies*, I consider ways by which this form can foreground the nuances of minority cultures, with specific consideration given to the depiction of Maltese lives.

KEYWORDS

Short story cycle, Minority, Literature, Culture, Maltese, English, Fiction, Representations, Diasporic, community.

When I started writing fiction in English about my country, Malta, the short story form seemed to come more naturally to me than the novel did. However, soon enough the thought of attempting to depict a minority culture like the Maltese one in short stories began to feel daunting. How could I show a foreign audience what Malta looked like, what it felt like to grow up there or to speak its language, in individual short stories of around 5000 words or less each? How could short fiction allow me the space to truly illustrate the complexities of my homeland, the tenth smallest country in the world, according to *World Atlas* (2024)?

These concerns were not invalid. Frank O'Connor defined the short story as "remote from the community – romantic, individualistic, and intransigent", for him "the little man", the "submerged population group", the "outlawed figures" were the best suited characters for the genre (O'Connor 1963: 18-19).

Charles E May interpreted that definition to mean that short stories mainly centre around "the universals of human experience rather than the particular circumstances of time and place" (May

2002: 186-7 cited in Lambert 2010: 125) This interpretation reduces the importance of the short story's political and social nature and suggests that it should address broader, more global themes instead, which does not bode well for writers like myself, attempting to depict the nuances of the minority Maltese culture through short fiction.

However, according to Zoe Lambert, O'Connor is actually pointing to the opposite. It is the emphasis on the "outside that makes short stories political". She concludes that the short story's political nature is realized "in the echo that answers back to the dominant culture by the outsider, the strange, the weird, the odd, the disaffected, those from different minority groups: those without voice" (Lambert 2010: 126).

This paper looks into how I attempted to do exactly this, to answer back to the dominant culture by writing about the Maltese outsider and bringing their social context to the forefront. To do this, I used the short story cycle, which is defined by Lynch as a collection of stories that "stand on their own and gather accretively to form more meaningful communities of fictions that, in turn, enlarge the meanings of each individual story" (2016: 513). It explores how the cycle offers a strong platform for the depiction of minority cultures like the Maltese one by specifically looking at Jhumpa Lahiri's *Interpreter of Maladies*, as well as my own creative work.

When I started writing short fiction, I became increasingly aware of the fact that I couldn't afford to dedicate long paragraphs to descriptions of what specific villages or cities in Malta looked like, simply because of the brevity of the short story form. This is acknowledged by Pasco who maintains that the authors of short stories are not at liberty to pause and "instruct in detail" and have "to assume considerable background on the part of their reader" (1993: 446). For this reason, he holds that a lot of description that is necessary for evoking a sense of place and ambience has to be left out.

Marc Brosseau also reinforces this as "due to its brevity, the short story can only afford to mention a very limited number of places and spaces and those that do appear are often stereotyped, generic and easily recognizable to the reader" (2008: 382). Despite this, he still places a lot of importance on place in the short story since the fact that the short story has few "place references", gives the places that are mentioned in the text significant meaning.

Ultimately, every part of the narrative "potentially imbues place with meaning because all that happens is confined to a particular place" (Grojnowski 2000, cited in Brosseau 2008: 382). To exemplify this statement, he uses Bukowski's short fiction,

where although the places aren't described in particular detail, the action in each story plays "a semantic role in attributing meaning to place" (382).

Typically, the places, either home, the workplace or the street emphasize the hopelessness and isolation that dominate the characters' lives. These individuals are caught in a double trap – the urgency to earn money and work under terrible conditions, followed by a miserable home environment where "an unhappy, disenfranchised wife is waiting for them" (388). Some, like Duke in 'A. 45 to pay the rent', even end up on the street, "the last step at the end of a long process of rejection", in order to make ends meet (390). In this way, place depicts the dismal cycle his characters find themselves in, a cycle they are unable to overcome or quit.

Brosseau also points to the fact that since short stories are designed to be read in one sitting, the detail of the atmosphere evoked in the narrative remains in the reader's mind, and is understood in relation to the story's plot and characters, whereas when it comes to the novel, "the sheer volume of places found in the narrative can dilute their significance vis-à-vis the narrative action" (382). In this way, Brosseau highlights the "geographical significance" of the short story by transforming its seeming shortfall into a triumph, in allowing settings that aren't given much description to "function thematically" and leave an impact on the reader (Hones 2010: 473).

Hones supports Brosseau's intimations on the geographical importance of the short story, however she emphasizes the reader's role in filling in the gaps that the story's narrative sometimes cannot, due to its brevity, which allows for fewer opportunities to describe a setting in the same detail a novel would (Hones 2010: 474).

One such story, which heavily relies on the reader is Alice Walker's 'Petunias' which presents the reader with a highly fragmented narrative and three very specific locations, "Vietnam", "Tranquil Mississippi" and "The Tearslee Plantation". Although these locations are central to the narrative here, it is up to the reader to piece together the fact that there are three voices, the author figure, the frame narrator and diarist. The reader must also surmise that the diarist's attempts to preserve order in her house have failed as a result of her participation in the "civil rights movement" and by her son's determination "to make a big noise in Mississippi" after returning from Vietnam (Walker 1981: 40).

Without a reader's engagement, the story remains fragmented. It has to be said that the three references the reader is given are relatively easy to decipher; the Vietnam conflict is well known and it is rather obvious that the diarist's

son was a soldier there. Apart from this, the reader can deduce the context and era, simply from the fact that the diarist's "daddy's grandmama" was a "slave on Tearslee Plantation" (40).

In this case, the author does not need to describe the setting in detail and as Pasco claimed, the author certainly assumes "considerable background on the part of their reader". Nonetheless, in 'Petunias', place remains crucial in indicating the emotional and cultural connection "for people to an existing space". As Buell postulates, it "demonstrates a collective history of space or the quotidian idiosyncratic intimacies that go with place" (Buell 2005: 63).

Claire Keegan also uses place to reflect a sense of emotional attachment in her short fiction, particularly in 'Night of the Quicken Trees' where the bog on County Clare, the protagonist, Margaret's home, is depicted as a symbol of "refuge and opportunity", it is a place in which she chooses the man who will father her child and is completely self-sufficient (Gladwin 2019: 148).

Although the landscape's portrayal; the grass, "long and sour", "the shivering bogland and all the gulls wheeling around, screeching under restless clouds", is redolent of traditional, Irish pastoral imagery, the story subverts the common narrative of the land as allegorical for the nation, as it is rendered in Yeats' Cathleen Ni Houlihan (Keegan 2007: 127). Margaret does not use her sexuality for the growth of the nation, but rather for women's "reproductive justice" which ultimately liberates her and results in her leaving the bog and starting a life, alone with her child, in the Aran Islands (Gladwin 2014: 147).

Much like Walker's 'Petunias', a story such as this one requires an educated reader to understand that Keegan is subverting the traditional notion of motherhood in Ireland while retaining the typical imagery associated with the boglands. This reliance on the reader where short fiction is concerned, does not only relate to joining the dots in individual stories. Santi believes that the reader's role is also crucial in constructing the meaning of the short story collection as a whole. Each collection has its own identity, and the reader is tasked with recognising it, as they are naturally "compelled to find wholeness or coherence in fragmentary discourse", even if the writer themselves might not have intended for the collection to have any particular identity (2014: 154).

Nevertheless, what all the short story writers mentioned above have in common is that they all write about places whose population is considerably large, and that are to an extent well-known and well-studied. Therefore, this makes it easier for readers of short stories to make connections in these cases, to fill in the

gaps and recognize the geographical significance offered in each narrative, and finally to recognize the short story collection's identity as a whole.

However, what of communities that are not as well-known, that are minor and have a small readership? How can such economical stories be written about them, how can readers assign the collections in which they appear an identity, when the majority of the mainstream readership will not be familiar with these places, their culture and people?

Looking at ways by which I could use the short story form to write economical, but nuanced stories about Malta, led me to discover the concept of "the short story cycle". Driss defines it as the "nomadic genre", since it is neither a novel nor a short story, it "inhabits the intermezzo" and "moves in smooth spaces" (2018: 62).

Much like the nomad goes to a pool of water for a short break and then moves on to traverse other boundaries, the short story cycle, goes from story to story in the same way, pausing on each one for a while and swiftly moving on to the next one. According to Ingram and Mann, the individual pieces can be unified through having "recurring characters" across stories, or through having a similar location or motifs that bind them together (1971, cited in March-Russell 2009: 104).

Therefore, since it can depict many perspectives and not just one in the same location, the "short story cycle" is a strong medium for stories about minority communities which an Anglophone readership might not be familiar with.

Brada-Williams suggests that the short story cycle might be better at depicting the lives of minorities than the novel, as the latter runs the risk of giving the "rational reader" an impression that a "part of a community" of an under-represented group actually "represents the whole" (2004: 452).

Of course, there is also the polyphonic novel, which does offer multiple, distinct voices in one narrative structure. In fact, this type of novel is defined by David Lodge as a work in "which a variety of conflicting ideological positions are given a voice and set in play both between and within individual speaking subjects, without being placed and judged by an authoritative authorial voice" (Lodge 1990: 86).

This form can offer a platform for multiple diverse voices, as evidenced through novels like *White Teeth*, *The Bluest Eye*, *Girl*, *Woman*, *Other* and *In Our Mad & Furious City*. The key difference between the polyphonic novel and the short story cycle is that in the former, "the text appears as an interaction of distinct perspectives and ideologies, borne by different

characters”, while in the case of the latter, the individual voices do not need to interact, their stories can also work as standalone short pieces, each with their own story world (Williams 2015). In the short story cycle, each story has its “own unity of effect” and can be treated as separate from the other narratives (Poe: 1846)¹.

Despite this, it is only when the stories in a cycle are displayed together that the meanings of the broader context truly emerge. If the stories are published in isolation, these meanings might be lost. In her thesis, ‘The Short Story Cycle and the Representation of a Named Place’, Rebekah Clarkson uses her story, ‘Something Special, Something Rare’, to show how within the backdrop of the cycle, the protagonist, Graham’s epiphany about his family is “intended to be ironic, poignant and ultimately tragic”, because the reader detects his daughter’s fate in “the gaps between the stories” (2015: 27).

Nevertheless, when the story was published independently in *Best Australian Stories* (2014), the meaning changed drastically. People thought the ending to Graham’s story was a hopeful one, the fact that he was “on the precipice of the greatest darkness” was completely lost (27). After reading Clarkson’s thesis, I became intrigued by the idea of including recurring characters in different stories. This new idea interrupted my writing process, and I decided to evaluate some of the stories I had written and revise them. My main goal of having individual stories that retained the nuances of Maltese life was now slowly changing to the idea of using interconnecting narratives with the intention that the association between some of them would work towards giving the collection a local flavour.

I started working on linking two of my stories, ‘Sunshine’ and ‘The Necklace’. Although I wanted them to be read as individual stories that work on their own, I wanted their effect to be realized in the cycle’s context. For this reason, I made sure to exclude some details in one story and include them in the other.

For example, in ‘Sunshine’, the reader might be inclined to understand Kady’s indifference towards her husband and her desperation to escape her marriage and be with her sick sister as a completely selfish act. However, in ‘The Necklace’, a story narrated from Kady’s daughter’s perspective, the reader is told how Kady had tried to help her husband after his brother’s suicide, how she “had tried to fix the situation, preparing his favourite meals, asking about his workday, persisting even when he just grunted at her”, how she “had called therapists, asking if any of them could go to see him at home” (Duivenvoorden, 2022: 175).

We also learn how mental illness seems to torment the men in their family, almost making them incapable of functioning. Not only does

this context help alleviate feelings of antipathy towards Kady, it also establishes a much stronger link between Kady and her daughter Ramona.

Essentially, their experiences come to mirror each other’s – much like her mother seeks to escape her husband’s despondency, Ramona too breaks away from her friend Graham’s mental deterioration, and at the end of her narrative plans to join her mother in Australia. Thus, the “short story cycle extends the benefits and demands of the single short story” (Clarkson 2015: 29). Although it gives more context and elaborates on theme and symbolism, it also expects more from the reader, in demanding that they read between the lines from one story to the next and connect the gaps.

In Jumpha Lahiri’s case, this nomadic genre is reflective of her “own hyphenated identity”, since she was born in England to Bengali Parents and became a naturalized American citizen at 18 years old. Her need to “belong to a place, either the one her parents came from or to America”, leads to her negotiating her identity through the short story cycle where she could be “many and one at the same time”, and where the “two worlds she occupied mingled on the page” (Driss 2018: 67). Much like Lahiri’s, my identity is also to a degree “hyphenated”, since I am of Dutch and Maltese descent and have been living in England for over six years now. I too started out my collection wanting to establish a sense of belonging through writing about a community tied to a specific locality, one I know well but never really felt accepted by, one which is somewhat suffocating and isolating to the individual.

I came to realize that the short story cycle was the perfect form for my stories, mainly because as Driss points out, the short story cycle, in not belonging to any genre, as it is neither a short story collection, nor a novel, “raises the question of belonging” (67). The fact that it is built on fragmented narratives informs the short story cycle with a sense of displacement which perfectly captures “a diasporic community’s” sentiment (67). Like Lahiri, who in navigating between two diverse identities becomes “a cultural mediator”, I too found myself having to translate from one culture to the other (69). In my case, I am writing about a Southern European minority group in the English language.

According to Brada-Williams, what makes Lahiri’s *Interpreter of Maladies* a short story cycle is the fact that “all nine of her stories are woven together with representations of extreme care and neglect” (2004: 456). Carelessness typifies a stressful period in the characters’ lives. Lilia’s parents in ‘When Mr Pirzada comes to dine’, start cooking boiled eggs and rice when the crisis in East Pakistan unfolds, rather than the good meals that Lilia is used to, while the loss of

a child in ‘Temporary Matter’ results in the parents’ failure to take proper care of themselves (Lahiri 1999).

However, this is balanced with stories where attentiveness and concern prevail, like ‘Mrs Sen’s’, where great emphasis is placed on the title character’s ritualistic acts of preparing food for Eliot, or ‘The treatment of Bibi Haldar’ where the communal love shown towards Bibi results in the community shunning her cousin for abandoning her (1999). I quickly came to realize that similarly to Lahiri, the stories in my collection were also subconsciously woven together, in a sequence in which “the themes and motifs progressively develop”.

Death presents itself in practically every story, all the characters are mourning a loss —of a relationship, a parent, a sibling, a friend. Shame too is prevalent in the narratives, for some of the characters it is closely tied to their Maltese identity, one which they feel rejected by, that pushes them to escape. However, there are also those who seek acceptance by returning to the island after having lived abroad for years. Thus, my stories are tied together through Malta’s representation as a place capable of both isolating the characters and integrating them in its community, as a place that people return to and escape from (March-Russell 2009: 104).

Interestingly, it is particularly alien to those who have never left the island, and I chose to home in on this alienation through the characters’ suffocating perception of the environment they inhabit. I decided to illustrate their entrapment in the construction boom that is literally closing in on them, leaving them helpless.

At the end of ‘Sunshine’, Kady decides to leave her husband and go to Australia with her sister, because now that a petrol station will be built in front of her flat, there is no reason to stay, all that will be left are cranes, “parked up against the rubble walls”, and the “grey mass of concrete and building blocks” that “would take over the fields” (Duivenvoorden 2022: 109). The obstructive image of the petrol station is a metaphor for her unfulfilling relationship with a man who no longer communicates with her.

I also used industrialization as a barrier for communication in ‘Little Assisi’, where Dun Pawl cannot conjure the image of his dead mother, or hear her voice, as it is lost in the whirl of “mechanized sounds of fast life” that move “over the corrugated blocks of apartments” that are “rising slowly over the city” (59). The way Maltese housing is constructed also adds to the characters’ sense of entrapment since the apartments they live in fit so close together that they have little privacy, and are easily disturbed by others, even in their own homes.

Once again, instead of making people feel less alone, this heightens their sense of seclusion.

Marthese who lives in a council flat in the south of Malta is always woken up to the sound of her neighbour’s religious radio station and she cannot bring herself to stop the woman from playing it, because the “persuasive conviction in the woman’s reiteration” of the prayers she listens to makes Marthese “feel inadequate, like she is interrupting an important lesson she isn’t part of” (145). Additionally, on having a client’s wife expose her as a sex worker, in front of all the people who live in her apartment block, Marthese’s humiliation prevents her from “going out to the courtyard to talk” to her neighbours as she is used to doing. She further alienates herself from the community by keeping “her head down”, “whenever the men walk past her on the staircase” (155).

It also occurred to me that having characters who were institutionalized would help strengthen this running theme of entrapment. For this reason, I chose to depict the stories of two characters for whom there is no means of escape. Hani in ‘B12’ and Eman in ‘Freeport Lights’, are literally trapped, the former being locked in a detention centre and the latter in prison. In both stories I made sure to include a similarity in description. Eman describes “the long prison fence, topped off with loops of barbed wiring and the mesh of housing structures in the distance”, and Hani watches “the outhouses and cranes, hazy in the dust that swells over the barbed wire and yard” (139, 86).

This repetition across stories is necessary in the short story cycle as it “functions in a cumulative way to provide the cycle with a textual harmony” and supplies the stories with “a postponed unity” (Driss 2018: 67). In this way, the similarity in setting reinforces the paralysis and hopelessness that ensnare the characters, even if they have had extremely different experiences.

On the other hand, for the characters who have left Malta for good, the island offers them a familiarity and sense of belonging that England, the colonizer’s country they now live in, lacks. When I was initially writing these more transnational stories, I realized that a nostalgic streak was seeping through them, one which resonated with my own feelings about Malta. When I later revisited these pieces, I focused on that nostalgic streak and sought to amplify it through drawing attention to the way the characters describe Malta.

When Anita from ‘Howard Gardens’ returns to Rabat where she has grown up, the descriptions she provides of her hometown are not deprecating, even if she points out the less appealing elements of the streets where she grew up, like the “limestone walls streaked with soot”, or the “electric cables dangling over the windows and balconies” (Duivenvoorden 2022: 36). There is a sentimentality in her words, a strong longing that “mostly it is as she

remembers” with “niches carved in the street corners holding statues of the Virgin Mary or St Paul with his hand reaching out” and “the Crystal Palace Bar”, “still at the corner, its green, louvered doors flat against the wall” (35).

Her depictions are accompanied by memories, of her friends playing “skipping games while they waited” for the bus, of a neighbour, “an old man who stammered and spent hours on the doorstep, sometimes giving them liquorice wheels, the black ones that looked like CDs and stuck to your teeth” (37). In making these depictions effective, I decided to contrast them against duller images of her life in London. These are very bare in comparison, illustrated solely in the wealthy symbols she carries with her, “a diamond-encrusted Piaget” and vague images of her and her husband ‘on their yacht in the Hebrides’ and “wrapped in coats on Portobello Road” (39).

The emptiness of her colonial experience is further delineated in the last image of the Mdina moat, which has recently been cleared of all its trees, and is now replaced “by stone paving, green turf and lines of gravel with saplings in pots”, reminding her of how she has abandoned both her country and family (55). However, the reconciliation with her father is suggestive of an integration back into the Maltese community, one she is ready to accept.

Similarly, in ‘Beach Houses’, I drew a stark contrast between Ghadira Bay in the North of Malta and Morecambe Bay in England. I described the former in a series of images that Mariam has of her husband, of how “blue grey” its sea was, “early in the morning, how shallow the water”, the “way you had to keep wading through it to get to a decent depth” (120). These work as a tool in elevating the bay’s beauty, while the English beach is depicted in a negative light. Its colour is “metallic”, like “fish skin”, and its “boulders” that are “heaped on the side of the shore” look “out of place, like they’d been forgotten there” (114). The dullness and desertion that Morecambe exudes is reflected in Mariam’s life, she too has been abandoned by her husband and now inhabits an “anonymous” existence in a house that feels “too big for her”, whose “walls are empty”, as she has “taken down all the photos of her husband, everything they’d bought together”, where there is nothing to “indicate the kind of person she is” (115).

The bareness of the house is symbolic of a loss of roots and culture. In cutting all contact with Maltese associations, her husband and brother-in-law included, she has completely isolated herself. This is apparent when she reflects on how “for so long she has felt detached from the people she meets at the café in Morecambe and the local shops she frequents” (127). Often, during conversations with her, when they “stop midway, just to ask something about Mariam”,

she feels like it’s a “forced interruption, like they know they have to include her, out of politeness, because of course she has no one, nothing to really talk about” (127). In the end she can only start to make sense of her identity through reconnecting to her Maltese past, by re-establishing broken relationships and finally returning to Malta, where “perhaps now she has a chance to finally be with her people again” (127). Hence, in this way, the image of Malta becomes a unifying one, representative of home and connectedness, rather than isolating in its hostility.

Lahiri too uses symbols across her short fiction in evoking cultural disintegration in characters who have emigrated from India, their home country. In *Interpreter of Maladies* the guidebook and camera that the Das family carry on their trip to India symbolize their unfamiliarity with their own country, as do the clothes they they wear – to Mr Kapasi, “they look Indian” but are “dressed as foreigners” (1999: 26). The disconnection the family shows towards the Konarak Sandstone temple is representative of their estrangement from their roots and culture.

Much like the bareness of the moat in ‘Howard Gardens’ signifies Anita’s abandonment of her culture and identity, the temple, which is now mainly “rubble” and impossible to enter, marks the Das’ family’s loss of touch with their country (26). In Lahiri, the isolation of characters who have emigrated from India is also at times reflected in the places they end up living in.

In ‘Mrs Sen’s’, the title character yearns for the community she was once part of in Calcutta, as she is now made to live in a University apartment on “the fringes of the campus” (61). Like Mariam’s house in England, it lacks warmth and character, the “white drum-shaped lampshades flanking the sofa” are “still wrapped in the manufacturer’s plastic”, indicative of the lack of belonging Mrs Sen experiences in this new environment (61). The objects she has kept with her on returning from India, like the “blade that curved like the prow of a Viking ship”, or the “crushed vermilion” that “shaded her braided hair” are the only indicators of a heritage she is unwilling to let go of (63).

However, despite the similarities, Lahiri, like Walker or Bukowski, still has an upper hand here. She benefits from engaging with a diaspora that, while a minority, is extensive and culturally resonant on a global scale. This allows her short story cycle to be appreciated and understood by a large number of readers because it intersects with well-known histories and cultural symbols. In fact, Lahiri’s collection was an instant bestseller. It won the Pulitzer Prize for fiction and the Hemingway Foundation/ PEN award.

On the other hand, when it comes to Malta, as Immanuel Mifsud noted, at the 2018 London Book Fair, “our language is not very widely known, but our country is not very widely known either” (2018). This ultimately, does put Maltese literature at a disadvantage as readers unfamiliar with our culture, which is much less globally visible than Lahiri’s, are more likely to struggle with identifying the connections between the stories, and the significance of the portrayals of the setting.

It is still harder for them to recognize the short story cycle’s identity as a whole. This disadvantage is reflected in the lack of Maltese publications in the Anglophone world. The truth is that “a lot of the time Maltese work is translated into English as a bridge language and then isn’t published”, which means that although many English versions are available, there is a lack of demand for them which further limits wider audiences from accessing Maltese literature and subsequently learning about its culture (Vassallo 2018). This emphasizes how hard it is for Maltese literature to make its mark internationally and for people to engage with its particularities.

Yet, the short story cycle remains a powerful vehicle for minority and marginalized cultures to articulate complex identities and histories, especially when aimed at broader Anglophone audiences.

By weaving together interconnected yet distinct narratives, the cycle allows for the exploration of diverse voices, perspectives, and moments within a community, capturing its complexity without forcing it into a singular, unified storyline. Those diverse voices are the echo that answers back to the dominant culture, inviting readers to engage with a minority community piece by piece, fostering a gradual and deeper understanding that is crucial for those whose stories are often underrepresented or overlooked.

In this way, the short story cycle not only gives voice to the particularities of minority experiences but also creates space for broader recognition within a global literary landscape.

NOTE

¹This term was coined by Edgar Allan Poe and refers to the idea that all the different elements in a short story should work together in producing one main emotional effect in the reader (Poe, 1846).

BIOGRAPHY

Amber Duivenvoorden is currently a Teach First lecturer, working at Bath Spa University. In July 2022 she graduated with a PhD in Creative Writing from Bath Spa University. Her research centres around how the nuances of a minority

culture, in this case the Maltese culture, can be retained when writing fiction in the English language. She is also doing research about long distance supervision and remote learning initial teacher training courses. Her creative work has appeared and has been shortlisted in a number of anthologies and journals, including *The Bristol Short Story Prize Award 2017*, *The Transnational Journal*, *Scintillas New Maltese Writing 2*, *The Bridport Prize*, *Antae*, *The Tickle* and *NAWE Writing in Practice* journal.

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