スタインベックの作品における関係詞 That, Which および "zero"の用法に関しての一考察

堀 内 俊 和

John Steinbeck's Use of the Relatives That, Which and Zero

Toshikazu HORIUCHI

This is a limited investigation on John Steinbeck's literary works with a special attention to the relatives with non-human antecedents: *that, which* and zero. In the last analysis it seems that Steinbeck made a skillful use of the three relatives, whether consciously or unconsciously. That is, in the more successful works he always employed zero in objective case (except the case of the relative governed by a preceding preposition), and in subjective case he usually used *that* while he occasionally employed *which*, it seems, with a certain kind of significant distinction between the two which I believe there must be.

INTRODUCTION

1. Though he may not be ranked as a first-rate novelist, John Steinbeck might be said to be one of those American writers who tried to write well and beautifully.¹ In this connection I suspected during my former investigation² that this craftsmanship of his had something to do with his use in *The Pearl* of the three relatives with non-human antecedents: *that*, *which* and zero.³ Such being the case, I decided to look into a few more of his works to find out anything concerning his use of the relatives in question, and, if possible, any fundamental difference between *that* and *which*.

TEXT AND MATERIAL

2. The stories and novels by John Steinbeck used for this investigation are as follows:

The Red Pony (Bantam edition)

The first six chapters of *The Grapes of Wrath* (Penguin edition)

The Moon Is Down (Bantam edition)

The Pearl (Bantam edition).

Table 1 below is the statistic results of his use of the relatives in question in each text, where every quotation and direct speech is excluded from counting because the point is to know the frequency of the author's use of them in narrative and description alone. The symbols used in the table (and henceforth as well) are defined as follows:

(a) *Pony*, *Wrath*, *Moon* and *Pearl* represent the texts listed above in that order.

(b) *that*(S), zero(O), etc. shows that the *that*, the zero, etc. is in subjective case(S) or in objective case(O).

(c) +which(O) and that(O)+ or zero(O)+show that the *which* is governed by a preposition put immediately before it, and the *that* or zero, by a preposition put at the end of the clause.

(d) *which* shows that the *which* is unmistakably in nonrestrictive use with a comma put immediately before it.

	Pony	Wrath	Moon	Pearl	Total
that(S)	25	20	7	43	95
that(O)	1		1		2
that(O) +			1	-	1
which(S)	8	2	7	9	26
which(O)	-		1		1
+which(O)	3	4	3	5	15
,which	3	1	5	2	11
,+which(O)			1	1	2
zero(S)	2			2	4
zero(O)	22	6	10	21	59
zero(0) +	1		—	1	2
Total	65	33	36	84	218

Table 1

GENERAL TENDENCY

3. As for John Steinbeck's characteristics in the "apparently"⁴ restrictive use of the relatives in question (thus excluding *,which* and *,+which* here and hereafter as well), we shall be able, by observing Table 1, to make the following general statements:

(a) When the relative is governed by a preposition, +which(O) (which preceded by a preposition) is the most common. (83.3%)

(b) As the relative in objective case(except the case of (a), of course), zero is almost always the case. (95.2%)

(c) As the relative in subjective case, that is more usual than which. (76%: 20.8%, the rest being zero.)

DEVIATION

4. The furthest deviation from the general tendency above is *Moon*, where we find, together with the same frequency of that(S) and which(S), a complexity of relatives in objective case: that (O), that(O)+, which(O) and zero(O). And this deviation, however far-fetched it may sound,

seems (at least to me) to have something significant to do with the failure of the writer's craftsmanship. That is, Steinbeck's style seems to be at its best when he deals with nature, and men and animals in it; for example, Pony is no doubt one of his masterpieces and Pearl is beautifully written with several techniques of colored motion pictures.⁵ Moon, however, is more concerned with human activities than with nature and men in it, and this seems to contribute to the effect that the work is not so artistically written. In other general words, where he deals with his favorite material Steinbeck seems to be competent for making full use of his artistic craftsmanship, simultaneously showing that characteristic tendency, in the use of the relatives in question.

4.1. Now we shall examine all the three exceptions to the usual zero in *Moon*:

- He opened a little leather book that he carried in his pocket. (Moon, p. 6) (The italics of the relative here and hereafter are mine.)
- (2) The patrol talked as they walked, and they talked of things *that* they longed for — of meat and of hot soup and of the rich-

ness of butter ... (Moon, p. 71)

(3) Only once or twice in her life had she ever understood all of him, but the part of him *which* she knew, she knew intricately and well. (*Moon*, p. 7)

Though the presence of that or which above might signify something in terms of rhythm and/ or emphasis, the absence of the relative word does not seem to contribute to a drastic change in each situation. To examine from a different point of view, the use of the relatives in objective case seems to differ from one writer to another.6 If we take, for example, Hemingway's The Old Man and the Sea, we are to get this result: $24 \ that(O)$'s, 1 which(O) and 29 zeros. This shows that Steinbeck must have been extremely inclined to employ zero as the relative in objective case. Consequently, it seems plausible to assume that the complexity in the objective relatives in Moon might be due to an unconscious slip of the author's pen. Otherwise we should have equally come across this kind of complexity in his other works too.

4.2. In Pony again we find one sample of that(O), the only exception to the predominant 23 zero(O)'s (including one zero(O)+.) Here we should like to take the construction of the story into consideration. Pony consists of four parts: I. "The Gift," II. "The Great Mountains," III. "The Promise" and IV. "The Leader of the People." The first two stories were published on magazines in 1933, and in 1937 The Red Pony appeared with "The Promise" as the later story of "The Gift;" and afterwards the independent story "The Leader of the People" was added as the last chapter to produce the present Pony.⁷

With this constructional background of *Pony* in mind, if we re-distribute the relatives in

	Ι	П	Ш	IV	Total
that(S)	9	3	9	4	25
that(O)	-			1	1
which(S)	7			1	8
+which(O)	3			-	3
,which	3				3
zero(S)	-		1	1	2
zero(O)	6	3	8	5	22
zero(O) +	1		-		1
Total	29	6	18	13	66

Table 2

question in Table 1 to each chapter, we are to get the results in Table 2. As is seen in the table, the exceptional that(O) belongs to "The Leader of the People," and we happen to feel that the narrative and description of this last chapter is the least attractive of all from an aesthetic point of view. Here again, since we cannot find anything particularly significant in, or any serious raison d'etre for, the use of this relative word in (4), we cannot but assume that the that(O) here must have been another slip of the author's pen which I mentioned above.

(4) He heard the dull rushing sound that space and silence make. (*Pony*, p. 87)

THAT VS. WHICH

5.1. In Table 2, another deviation from the general tendency is revealed to our attention, namely the frequent use of which(S) (43.8% as against 56.2% of that(S)) in "The Gift." Because Steinbeck must have been rather deliberate about the use of the relative in objective case as we have seen in the preceding sections, we might as well expect him to have been as deliberate about the choice of the relative in subjective case. Consequently, we should like to examine all the seven cases of which(S) in "The Gift" here.

First we shall take the following into consideration.

- (5) His eyes were a contemplative, watery grey and the hair which protruded from under his Stetson hat was spiky and weathered. (Pony, p. 3)
- (6) After Billy had tilted his saucer and drained the coffee which had slopped into it, and had wiped his hands on his jeans, the two men stood up from the table and went out (Pony, p. 9)

Though these two *which*-clauses may appear restrictive, we will notice on careful examination that they differ from strictly restrictive clauses in that they do not restrict the antecedents in denotation but give additional information about them to the effect that the relative clause sentences deliver two pieces of information instead of one. In other words, these *which*-clauses are not essential to define the idea expressed or the referent, which in strictly restrictive clause sentences, however, is not clarified until both the antecedent and the relative clause are combined in meaning. Accordingly, these two samples might as well be classified, strictly speaking, as parenthetical or nonrestrictive, though the paired commas are not used as the usual signal for it. Accidentally, this kind of what we might call a neglect of the common device seems to make sense in the author's craftsmanship if we remember that he has also used the device explicitly as in the following:

- (7) The cut ends of the stuble turned black with mildew; the haystacks greyed from exposure to the damp, and on the roofs the moss, which had been all summer as grey as lizards, turned a brilliant yellowgreen. (Pony, p.21)
 - Next we shall take the following two.
- Jody sat at the long table which was covered with white oil cloth washed through to the fabric in some places. (*Pony*,p. 4)
- (9) But now he noticed the moving ears which gave expression and even inflection of expression to the face. (Pony, p. 16)

These which-clauses, only within the context of the single sentence containing them, may be interpreted as restrictive, but it might be more justifiable to assume that they give additional information about the antecedents. This is partly because it is clear from the larger context that there cannot be another "long table" or other "moving ears," and partly because the two senteces might be rewritten as:

- (8') Jody sat at the long table. It was covered with white oil cloth washed through to the fabric in some places.
- (9') But now he noticed the moving ears. They gave expression and even inflection of expression to the face.

In (10) too, the interpretation in terms of additional information seems better than interpretation in terms of strict restrictiveness since much the same thing could be expressed as (10'):

- (10) And in his sleep he heard a crashing noise which went on and on until it awakened him. (Pony, p. 30)
- (10') And in his sleep he heard a crashing noise. It went on and on until it awakened him.

Finally we shall take these two into consideration.

(11) Nearly all of his father's presents were given with reservations *which* hampered

their value somewhat. (Pony, p. 8)

(12) The room was dark but there was a greyness in the window like that which precedes the dawn. (Pony, p. 24)

In (11), the which-clause may be restrictive because it might be rewritten with the "reservations" preceded by "those":

(11') Nearly all of his father's presents were given with those reservations which hampered their value somewhat.

But this rewritten sentence sounds different from the original, where the which-clause seems to contribute to the effect of additional new information. This might also be the case if the which in the original were replaced by that. Furthermore, if this original which were replaced by ,which, the situation would be different: the referential entity (antecedent) of .which might be felt as (part of) the preceding expression, and not merely as the "reservations." Accordingly, the which in (11) might safely and justifiably be said to function uniquely and effectively. In (12), on the other hand, the which-clause is strictly restrictive since the antecedent "that" could not be clarified without it, and euphony seems to cause the preference of which instead of that. In this connection, if we examine all the nine cases of that(S) in "The Gift," we can say that they are all strictly restrictive in the sense of our discussion above.

In the long run, therefore, which(S)'s in question, from the point of view of strict restrictiveness, might diminish in number, which in turn seems to imply Steinbeck's skillful choice between the two relatives: that(S) and which(S).

5.2. As for that(S) and which(S) in Moon, where the two occur in the same frequency as is mentioned above (4,), things seem somewhat different from in the case of "The Gift." Here again we shall examine all the seven examples of which(S)with some reference to that(S).

In (13) and (14) below, the which-clauses seem to be used rather effectively in that they may give additional new information as we have pointed out in 5.1.

- (13) In cabarets he sometimes made pencil sketches of his companions which were so good that he had often been told he should have been an artist. (Moon, p. 21)
- (14) They were muffled figures deep in thick coats; under their helmets were knitted caps which came down over their ears

and covered their chins and mouths.

(Moon, p. 71)

Next we shall take the following pair of sentences into consideration.

- (15) The wind was dry and singing over the snow, a quiet wind that blew steadily, evenly from the cold point of the Pole. (Moon, p. 89)
- (16) By ten-forty-five old Mayor Orden had received the formal request that he grant an audience to Colonel Lanser of the invaders, an audience which was set for eleven sharp at the Mayor's five-room palace, (Moon, p. 2)

At first sight, the interchange of the relatives may not seem to make much difference because the two clauses occur at similar syntactic positions and are obviously restrictive. But on a closer examination we might feel that Steinbeck's choice between that and which does work. That is, whereas in (15) the appositive clause merely serves for a precise description of the inherent nature of the wind that blows in that time of the year (of which one probably has some knowledge, hence that-clause)⁸, in (16) the appositive clause is to give a new piece of additional information which requires our attention (hence which clause)⁹. Similar things could be observed in the next two sentences too.

- (17) ... he ... subscribed to those country magazines which extol gardening and conitnually argue about the relative merits of English and Gordon setters. (Moon, p. 19)
- They could look down over the little (18)town that twisted past the square to the waterfront, and they could see the fishingboats lying at anchor in the bay (Moon, p. 23)

In (17), since the content of the relative clause seems to require much attention, which, as it is used, will be the proper word. In (18), though the relative clause may not be restrictive in the strict sense of the word, that, as it is used, seems to be proper since which would cause the relative clause more or less separated from the antecedent. giving additional information.

Finally we shall consider the following sentences.

(19) On the mantel, flanked by fat vases, stood a large, curly porcelain clock which swarmed with tumbling cherubs. (Moon, p. 2)

- (20) He imagined his death very often. lighted by a fair setting sun which glinted on broken military equipment, his men standing silently around him, with heads sunk low.... (Moon, p. 21)
- (21) On the table were two gasoline lanterns which threw a hard, brilliant light and they made great shadow on the walls, and their hissing was an undercurrent in the room. (Moon, p. 60)

In these three, the effectivenenss of *which* seems somewhat dubious. Or rather, the use of *that* might have been better. Because the *which*-clauses, drawing too much attention of ours, seem to sound so weighty that they may give the impression of additional new information.

Such being the case, we might safely say that Steinbeck's choice between that(S) and which (S) in Moon, though effective in a considerable measure, is not as effective as in the case of "The Gift," and this happens to coincide with the poor impression we get from Moon.

6. As is mentioned above, Steinbeck usually employs *that*(S) more frequently than *which*(S), and this choice between the two seems to make sense, especially in the more successful works of his. Since we have discussed in the preceding sections their psychological or impressionistic distinctions or characteristics, here we should like to examine physical or structurally distributional differences, if any, between the two relative words.

What features or criteria should be taken for comparison may be very difficult to decide on, but in this statistical investigation we have partially followed Randolph Quirk.¹⁰ The symbols used here are defined as follows:

- d, nd: the determiner of the antecedent is definite, or non-definite;
- m, nm: the antecedent word is preceded, or not preceded, by one or more modifiers;
- i, ni: the relative clause follows, or does not follow, the antecedent word immediately;
- a, b: the relative clause occurs after, or before, the main verb of the clause in which it is included.

And the statistical results are shown in Tables 3 and 4

that(S)	nd	d	m	nm	а	b	i	ni
ndmai	10		10		10		10	
ndmani	1		1		1			1
ndmbi	1		1			1	1	
ndmbni	-					-		
ndnmai	28			28	28		28	
ndnmani	2			2	2			2
ndnmpi	2			2		2	2	
ndnmbni	-			-				
Total	44		12	32	41	3	41	3
dmai		11	11		11		11	
dmani		1	1		1			1
dmbi		5	5			5	5	
dmbni		1	1			1		1
dnmai		18		18	18		18	
dnmani		3		3	3			3
dnmbi		12		12		12	12	
dnmbni		-						
Total		51	18	33	33	18	46	5
Sum total	98	5	30	65	74	21	87	8
		-						

Table 3

which(S)	nd	d	m	nm	а	Ъ	i	ni
ndmai	5		5		5		5	
ndmani	1		1		1			1
ndmbi	-							
ndmbni								
ndnmai	6			6	6		6	
ndnmani	1			1	1			1
ndnmbi							—	
ndnmbni								
Total	13		6	7	13		11	2
dmai		6	6		6		6	
dmani		1	1		1			1
dmbi						-	-	
dmbni						-		
dnmai		3		3	3		3	
dnmani								1
dnmbi		3		3		3	3	
dnmbni				-				
Total	-	13	7	6	10	3	12	1
Sum total	26		13	13	23	3	23	3
	Г	ab	le 4	1				

6.1. Out of Tables 3 and 4 we can make Table 5 which shows more conspicuously the distributional frequency of *that*(S) and *which*(S). As is clearly seen in the table, that(S) occurs frequently in cases of ndnmai, dnmai, dnmbi, dmai and ndmai in that order, and in these same cases which(S) could also be said to be relatively frequent so far as it alone is concerned. Thus it seems that we might safely say that the relative word, whether that(S) or which(S), usually occurs in the cases mentioned above. What we should not overlook here, however, is the ratio between that(S) and which(S). That is, while in ndmai and dmai the ratio is rather small (2:1 and 1.8 :1 respectively), in dnmbi, ndnmai and dnmai it is much larger (4:1, 4.6:1 and 6:1). And this seems to reveal something significant about the difference between the two relatives.

	that(S)	which(S)
ndmai	10	5
ndmani	1	1
ndmbi	1	_
ndmbni	_	_
ndnmai	28	6
ndnmani	2	1
ndnmbi	2	
ndnmbni		
dmai	11	6
dmani	1	1
dmbi	5	
dmbni	1	
dnmai	18	3
dnmani	3	
dnmbi	12	3
dnmbni	-	
Total	95	26

Table	5

	that (S)	which(S)
d	51 (53.7%)	13 (50.0%)
nd	44 (46.3)	13 (″)
m	18 (31.6)	13 (50.0)
nm	33 (68.4)	13 (″)
а	74 (77.9)	23 (88.5)
b	21 (22.1)	3 (11.5)
i	87 (90.1)	23 (88.5)
n i	8 (9.9)	3 (11.5)

Table 6 is another special version that results from Tables 3 and 4, and from this table we seem to make the following statements (a) Whether the antecedent is definite or non-definite does not seem to have any particular correlation with the choice of that(S) or which(S)(though that(S) seems to have a slightly greater tendency to co-occur with the definite antecedent), since both relatives are in much the same frequency in either case.¹¹

(b) Whether or not the antecedent word is preceded by one or more modifiers dues seem to have some effect on the choice, since that(S) occurs more frequently with the non-pre-modified antecedent than with the pre-modified, which is not the case with *which*(S).

(c) Whether the relative clause comes before the main verb of the clause containing it or after the verb seems to have something to do with the choice, since the probability of a *that*clause occurring before the verb seems greater than that of a *which*-clause, though either generally occurs after the verb.¹²

(d) Whether or not the relative word follows the antecedent immediately does not seem to have any particular influence on the choice since both relatives almost always occur immediately after the antecedent.¹²

Now we shall focus on (b) and (c) above. Why is it that that(S) is more usual when the antecedent word is not preceded by modifiers? Generally speaking, if the antecedent word is premodified, the idea or image expressed may naturally become the more specified than otherwise. Suffice it to compare the following pairs:

- (21a) It was a truth *that* might be shattered by division. (*Pony*, p. 50)
- (21b) He ignored the whole speech of the preacher, as though it were some private thing *that* should not be inspected. (*Wrath*, p. 53)
- (22a) Mayor Orden switched on a lamp that made only a little circle of light. (Moon, p. 44)
- (22b) Juana sang softly an ancient song that had only three notes and yet endless variety of interval. (*Pearl*, p. 4)
- (23a) They cleared the brush *that* edged the beach and picked their way down the shore toward the water. (*Pearl*, p. 117)
- (23b) At last he turned about and faced the dusty side road *that* cut off at right-angles through the fields. (*Wrath*, p 17)
- (24a) The old dark eyes grew fixed, and their light turned inward on the years *that*

were living in Gitano's head. (Pony, p. 44)
(24b) The sun shone on the sharp white quartz
that stuck through the ground here and
there. (Pony, p. 34)

And as is pointed out above (5.) which-clauses tend to give an impression of adding new information, while that-clauses do not. Consequently, it seems that which-clauses may well have a somewhat greater inherent possibility of following the pre-modified antecedent word than thatclauses which simply tend to define the simple antecedent that is not pre-modified. In the last analysis this seems to come out of that essential difference between that and which I have pointed out in my former study:13 that is, while thatclauses closely adhere to the antecedent with that playing a mere role of adhesive, which because of its weightiness is more pronominal and tends to draw much greater attention to the clause it introduces

By this fundamental difference between the two relatives, (c) also seems to be explained. When the relative clause occurs before the main verb of the clause in which it is included, it usually modifies the subject of the larger clause. In this case the subject modified by the relative clause is normally expected to express one single piece of information and not two, the impression of which might be given by using a *which*-clause. Here again, suffice it to compare the following pairs:

- (25a) And the birds *which* spent the day in the brushland came at night to the little pools that were like the steps in the mountain cleft. (*Pearl*, p. 104)
- (25b) The animals *that* used the pool came near and smelled men there and drifted away again into the darkness. (*Pearl*, p. 108)
- (26a) Now the tension which had been growing in Juana boiled up to the surface, and her lips were thin. (*Pearl*, p. 50)
- (26b) In the houses of the neighbors the subject *that* would lead all conversations for a long time to come was aired for the first time to see how it would go. (*Pearl*, p. 42)

Consequently, *that* would be the proper relative in the case we have discussed. In addition, we should notice that in the majority of this case, where *that* is used, the antecedent word is not preceded by modifiers, as is seen in Table 5. Such being the case, it seems that we might safely say that John Steinbeck has made the most of the fundamental difference between that(S) and which(S), though the description of the difference may need further refinement.

CONCLUSION

7. At least in the limited materials used for this investigation, John Steinbeck seems to make more or less effective use of the three relatives with non-human antecedents. The author almost always employs zero in objective case to the effect of purified simplification, and the exceptional *that* or *which* could be labeled as an unconscious slip of his pen.

As for that and which in subjective case, it seems that he generally makes an effective choice between the two, making the most of their fundamental difference in nature. He usually uses that, while he occasionally employs which. From a distributional point of view, which is in relatively high frequency when the antecedent word is preceded by one or more modifiers, and that with the non-pre-modified antecedent. When the relative clause comes before the main verb of the clause in which it is included, that is normally preferred, of course with non-premodified antecedents. And these trends in Steinbeck's use of *that* and *which* seem to conform to their basic difference which I have pointed out in my former study.13

NOTES:

1 Cf. Shigenobu Sadotani, Amerika Sakka no Sakuhin to Sutairu (Tokyo: Kenkyusha, 1959), p. 160.

2 Toshikazu Horiuchi, "An Inquiry into the Difference between the Relatives that & which," Bulletin of Aichi Institute of Technology No. 6 (1971), pp. 51-58.

3 Cf. Tetsuo Ando, "A Glimpse of S. Maugham's Colloquialism through his Choice of *THAT* vs. *WHICH*," *Bulletin of Hachinohe Technical College* No. 6(1971), pp. 79-87. Here he tries to consider Maugham's use of the two relatives from a stylistic point of view.

4 As is often pointed out, there are some vexed borderline cases of the restrictive and the nonrestrictive, and the strict distinction between the two seems to need a critical re-examination and consideration with all the (more or less brief) comments by a great number of grammarians and linguists. But as this is beyond the present study, here every relative clause that is not preceded by a comma is taken as restrictive, together with the few unmistakably restrictive clauses despite the preceding commas, as in:

> ... as though the Bank or the Company were a monster, with thought and feeling, *which* had ensnared them. (*Wrath*, p. 30)

6 Cf. Toshikazu Horiguchi, "On the Characteristics of Relative Pronouns *That* and *Which*," *Bulletin of Tokyo Gakugei University* No. 22 (1971), pp. 99—110. On p. 109 he also mentions the arbitrariness of the writer's choice of relatives in general.

7 This description is based upon: Sadotani, op. cit., p. 156; Ishi, op. cit., p. 6 and p. 75.

8 Cf. Horiguchi, *op. cit.*, p. 110. Here he ⁻ says, "Adjective clauses which specify some inherent, integral, or pre-existent characteristics tend to use *that*." 9 Cf. Horiuchi, op. cit., pp. 52-54.

10 Quirk, "Relative Clauses in Educated Spoken English," *Essays on the English Language* (London, 1968), pp. 94-108.

11 Cf. Sayo Yotsukura, The Articles in English (The Hague: Mouton, 1970), pp. 85-86. Here she says that out of 379 noun phrases which have adjective clauses modifying the noun as postnominal modifiers, 208 are in the definite category and the rest in the indefinite. The 45.1%. This is much the same ratio is 54.9%: as the result we get from the much narrower corpus of the relative clauses of that(S) and which(S); Sandra Annear Thompson, "The Deep Structure of Relative Clauses," Studies in Linguistic Semantics (New York, 1971), p. 80. Here she assumes that "the choice of the definite determiner will in general correlate with certain presuppositions which the speaker makes about the extent of his listener's knowledge and not with the content morphemes and the relations among them."

12 This coincides with the results of Quirk's survey. (Cf. Quirk, *op. cit.*, p. 103).

13 Horiuchi, op. cit.