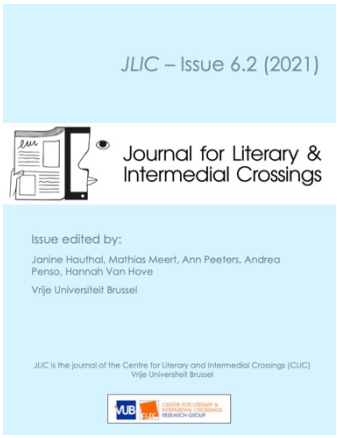

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Elisabeth Bekers & VUB Students; Transcribed by Emre Ok – Vrije Universiteit Brussel

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On Chiselling, Pruning and Trimming:

Chika Unigwe in Conversation about *Better Never Than Late*

Elisabeth BEKERS and VUB students. Transcribed by Emre OK.

Vrije Universiteit Brussel

Introduction

Chika Unigwe is a writer of fiction, poetry and educational books and regularly contributes to newspapers in different continents. Born in Enugu, Nigeria, in 1974, she studied English at the University of Nigeria, before moving to Turnhout, Belgium, with her Belgian husband in 1995. She went on to obtain an MA from Katholieke Universiteit Leuven and a PhD on Igbo women's writing from Universiteit Leiden. In 2012 she was the second diaspora writer to win the Nigeria Prize for Literature for her novel *On Black Sisters' Street* (2009). She has received several creative writing fellowships and served as a judge for literary prizes, including the Man Booker International Prize in 2016. In 2013 she moved to the USA, where she is currently a lecturer at Georgia College and State University in Milledgeville, Georgia. Her most recent work is a collection of short stories entitled *Better Never Than Late* (2019), published by Cassava Republic Press in Abuja & London. Most of the volume's loosely connected stories address the experiences of a group of Nigerian migrants in Turnhout for whom Belgium was an "accidental destination" rather than an aspiration, a motif that also recurs in other works by Unigwe (see Bastida-Rodríguez and Bekers).

This interview took place during a webinar with the author on 30 November 2020 in the context of the "Postcolonial Literature in English" Master course taught by Prof. dr. Elisabeth Bekers, which in 2020-21 included *Better Never Than Late*. Students in the "Master Taal- en Letterkunde" and the international "Multilingual Master in Linguistics and Literary Studies" introduced the author to the guests in the audience (which included colleagues and students from VUB and beyond) and prepared and asked the questions.[1] Participants were invited to ask questions or share their observations regarding passages in the text that spoke to them in particular. Emre Ok subsequently transcribed the interview, which was later edited by Elisabeth Bekers.

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Question: One of the things that Prof. Bekers emphasized last year was that most of the time literature is not just art for art's sake. It's political. It's social. It's economic. It's a lot of things. And recently I was reading Maximilian Feldner's book on the new African diaspora and one of the things that he was talking about was how some of these writers have to be deliberate in what they write, because for their work to be classified as African literature, it has to meet certain criteria like pan-Africanism or authenticity (Feldner). So, I wanted to ask you as a creative person, to what extent do these external factors influence what you write or how you adapt your stories? In your creative process do you think of where your book can be positioned or how to receive the kind of attention that you would want it to get?

[1] Questions were asked by, in alphabetical order, Parham Aledavood, Tara Brusselaers, Cassia Hayward-Fitch, Alieu Jarju, Emmanuella Kyereme, Hira Naz, Christiana Udoh, and Prof. Patricia Bastida-Rodríguez (University of the Balearic Islands).

Chika Unigwe: Thank you for that question. I haven't read Maximilian's book yet, but the very short answer to your question is: not at all. I don't think that when I'm writing that I'm thinking of the labelling, because the labelling happens after the book is written. The labelling is not done by the writer, but by others. One of the things that I found interesting when you were introducing my work was that even though my stories are fiction, in some bookstores they are shelved under true stories. So that is a labelling that I can't influence.

One of the earliest lessons I've learnt was from my first editor, a wonderful woman called Ellah Wakama. One of the things Ellah told me was "Always assume knowledge" and I've never forgotten that. Assume that people will understand what you're writing about. What they don't understand, they will look up, if they're interested enough to do so. If I imagine that I am writing for an audience, that audience isn't doing the labelling, that audience is somebody very much like me. Because that is the only way that I can assume knowledge and that is also the only way that I can write truthfully. I've been interested in reading Maximilian's work, because when you were talking about it, there were some things that jumped out at me, one of them being authenticity. Who determines to what extent a writer is authentic? Who determines what is authentic? Who determines to what extent a writer is pan-Africanist, which is a broad and vague term anyway? One of the things you are right about, of course, is that all writing is political. While all writing is political, not all politics is intentional. Some of the political things that come out in the writing might not be things that the writer is even thinking about at the time that they are writing it. We all come to books, or we come to reading, with our own experiences.

So, the very short answer to your question is that I'm not thinking about how a book is going to be labelled when I'm writing. What I tell my students is to just concentrate on telling the story. If you tell a human story, nothing else matters. It's in telling the human story that the politics

comes out. The socio-economic problems come out. When I was writing about Prosperous and Agu [in *Better Never Than Late*] for example, I didn't have a checkbox of things I wanted to tick. I was just thinking, how is Prosperous going to survive in a country where she goes from being middle class to being marginalized, without her husband being in her corner, her husband who has always been her ally but is now focused on fighting for his own survival. For me, that story was more interesting than, for example, the racism or even the domestic violence. Everything else that happens to Prosperous, happens because she is in this space. Her relationship changes because she is in this space. Her way of looking at life changes because she is in this space. Her way of interacting with others changes because she is in this space. That for me was the more interesting question than what are all the check boxes that I have to tick. But I'm not surprised that Maximilian, not having read the book but going by your summary of it, would frame things the way he does, because there is also a faction of African writers and African critics who believe that some Africans, especially Africans being published in the West, are writing for a particular audience and that they are highlighting particular issues because they are writing for this particular audience. I don't think that is a fair assumption. I also don't think that it is a very easy thing to do, to adapt your writing for a particular audience. If I knew how to do that, I would. [Laughs]

Question: So which audience then would you be adapting your writing for, if you knew which one?

Chika Unigwe: Oh my god! I'd love to do Afro-futurism for young adults. Because it's in vogue and it sells. I'd make millions of dollars and I can buy myself a mansion. I'll do a book that could be called *Harry Potter: Set in Nigeria* whatever. Books that are easily classifiable, like *Game of*

Thrones: Set in Nigeria in the Year 2052. It would be so easy to sell that my agent would be really happy, because we'd both be millionaires.

Question: I would like to share an observation about the characters Ada and Ijeoma in the title story "Better Never Than Late." As an African, I think evil spirits are very common, especially in West Africa, including the country where I am from. I was reading this book and I can see myself in it. When I was reading it, I felt so much guilt, that I felt like you were talking to me. That was the reason why I had to reach out to you, that was why I had to call back home, to clarify what we did. We once had a cousin staying with us. At some point in time, my mom told me that she was possessed. I was laughing, but she said, "This is serious. This girl does not sleep at night; she touches everyone in their beds." I went to an Imam and he told me that my cousin was possessed, so he came to remove the possession from her. All the old women came to my house and the girl was called. She was stripped of her clothes and she was naked. They poured salt water on her and then she was yelling that she was innocent. But reading from the book, I think because of the pressure that they put on her, she accepted and said, "I am what you say I am." I was shocked and said "No, this isn't possible." I asked them to let me talk to her, but they refused. Let me read from the last paragraph of "Better Never Than Late":

> Then a song of thanksgiving began. Deep in her heart, where relief should have been a river flowing, Kambi discovered instead that a heartburn had lodged itself, holding her around her neck, so that when she opened her mouth to sing, she could only whisper, "I'm sorry. I'm so sorry!".

This was exactly the kind of guilt I was feeling. I felt so emotional. What if we are wrong and she is not possessed as the Imam said? After reading this, I had to call home. I asked my cousin "Do you remember what happened to you five years ago?" and she said, "Yes." "Is it really true?" She

kept laughing and she told me, “I don't even know what they did to me.” So your book revealed so many things to me; it was like a reflection of what really happened to me. I feel so much guilt; I am sorry for my cousin. So that's the comment I wanted to make.

Chika Unigwe: Thank you for sharing that really sad and touching story and I'm really sad that this happened to your cousin. You're right, very often in our cultures when things happen to people and they can't explain those things, they look to other places for answers. Sometimes the people who are providing those answers are really just manipulative and exploiting them. I think that we all probably know these stories. I've always been very suspicious of certain evangelical practices. This was my way of exploring them. One of the things that I always tell people when they ask “Why do you write?” I say that I write to answer my own questions. I always write out of a sense of curiosity. All of the stories in the collection, all the works I have done really, are born out of curiosity. These are questions that I am trying to answer and the only way I can answer them is by writing about them extensively, by thinking about them a lot, and then the ultimate articulation of that thinking is my writing. Thank you for sharing your story and you shouldn't feel guilty. I think we've all done things that we are guilty of. And if you are guilty by omission rather than commission, you are fine.

Elisabeth Bekers: Thank you both. I think what you were saying about your motivation of writing: I can't write. I'm not a fiction writer but this is exactly my reason for reading. Trying to explore issues, trying to figure things out, trying to understand other perspectives, trying to learn more about the world at large, trying to see how limited my knowledge and experiences are, how much more there is out there. So, I find it very important to have fiction writers taking us into all these

worlds and making us think about issues that maybe we're not confronted with in our daily lives or that we are very much confronted with and the fiction can help us think about this and revisit things that we had brushed under the carpet for so long. So, I really believe in the power of fiction, also for readers.

Question: “Better Never Than Late” is indeed a very sad, beautiful, and touching story, but I was wondering why you put it in this collection. We had some discussions around this in class, but it didn't really convince me as to why you put this story in the collection. My second question relates to the cover of the book. The cover of the English edition published by Cassava Republic has as subtitle “Stories about the tragedy of arrival and the yearning for home in Belgium.” I wanted to ask you whether or not it was you who chose this subtitle, because I saw in other books by this publisher that they put these kind of subtitles. Was it you who wrote it?

Chika Unigwe: No, I didn't choose it. I think it is their way of putting their own blurb on the cover of the book, so that it is easy for people who pick it up to know what the book is about in a nutshell. No, I didn't choose it, but I endorsed it. As to your other question, I'm curious to know what the explanation you got in class was.

Question: It was suggested that the little girl Ijeoma could be seen as a migrant too because she has come from her homeland village to the city to work, so it could be seen as some sort of a replica of immigration. We know that Kambi is related to Agu and Prosperous, so in a way we could see how their lives could've been if they had stayed home. This explanation didn't really convince me.

Chika Unigwe: I like that explanation. I'm going to steal that. [Laughs] Ijeoma is also somewhat a migrant because she leaves her home and comes to the city. That's one explanation. I haven't read the story in a while, but if I remember correctly, I think that at some point when Kambi's cousin is trying to encourage her to take Ijeoma to the pastor for an exorcism, she mentions that Ijeoma is probably responsible for Agu and Prosperous not having any children. The third explanation is that Kambi is related to Agu. Because one of the common denominators in the entire collection is Agu's family. Everybody in the book is somehow related to Agu and Prosperous, either as a blood relative or a friend. I wanted them really to be the people holding the collection together. I wanted every single life in the book to be linked back to them. Even though this is a short story collection, I wanted it to read like a novel. I wanted there to be in every story something that could deepen or add some sharpness to Agu's or Prosperous's story. So, when you read *Better Never Than Late* and you read about Ijeoma being accused of being responsible for Prosperous not having a child and then you're reading in another story that Prosperous does not want a child and that she is very consciously preventing herself from getting pregnant. It adds another layer of understanding to both stories. In that way, the stories talk to each other. So that story is there for those three reasons: one, because it's talking to the narratives of Agu and Prosperous; two, because Ijeoma is a migrant too; three, because Kambi is related to Agu.

Elisabeth Bekers: One of the related questions that we were discussing. How important was the sequence to you because we were discussing this? What if we read them in a different sequence? Because one of the questions that we were tackling was: Is this a short story sequence and to what extent is the order of the stories important? I think we all agreed that the final story had to be at

the end, and that some of them had to be positioned towards the beginning, but about the rest we weren't really sure. We were wondering how definite this order was for you.

Chika Unigwe: I love reading short stories. It is one of my favourite genres to read, and I never read short stories chronologically. So, the order wasn't at all important for me. I'm not even sure that I chose the order. I don't remember, because it's been a while. It might have been my editor who chose the order. I feel like people should be able to pick up a short story and read it in one go. Every short story should be a complete world on its own, but a collection like this where the stories are all linked should be able to provide a fuller picture, regardless of the way in which you read it. Maybe it gives a different experience if you read it chronologically. I think the stories are arranged chronologically in order of when they happened, because I know I had to map out a timeline for my editor. I think she thought that, because the stories were linked, it would be a better experience to read them chronologically. Or at least for the stories to be filed chronologically, but it's not that important to me honestly. Because that's not how I read short stories.

Elisabeth Bekers: It's a nice humbling lesson for us literary critics who start to read all kinds of meanings into this and then the author tells us “Well, actually....”

Question: Kind of relating to the short story aspect of the collection, you mentioned that you wanted all the stories to tie back to Prosperous. Was the decision to make a short story collection and not a novel about Prosperous just because of your love of short stories or was there anything more to that decision?

Chika Unigwe: I think that because the stories started life as short stories… I think that the structure of the work only comes to me after I start writing. For example, the second story "Finding Faith," which sort of started life as a novel, *The Phoenix,* and I was sort of never satisfied with it as a novel, and I didn't know why I wasn't satisfied with it as a novel until I wrote it as a short story and it worked a whole lot better. Everything completely changed and I felt a lot more satisfaction with it. The same thing with the other stories. Prosperous's life came to me as a short story. I decided to follow that path. I'm not sure the stories would've worked well as a novel because short stories gave me the chance to explore different things. I could talk about Añuli's encounter with the young men on the train; I could talk about Prosperous's encounter with the woman that she cleans for; I could talk about Tine and Godwin and all of these people. In a way that never felt overwhelming, but if I had put all of that in a novel, it would've been overwhelming. Having all these different plot points, maybe ten different plot points, would be too much for a novel. I wanted the freedom to tackle as many plot points as I wanted, without it feeling overdone.

Question: I noticed you write different types of literature, poetry, short stories, novels, and I was wondering if you have different ways of approaching these different modes of writing. My second question is if you've ever surprised or even scared yourself with your writing.

Chika Unigwe: When I write a short story, I find that I tend to write a short story in one go and then it's the revising that takes sometimes months to do. But the easiest way for me to write a short story is to write it in one go. I found that any short story that I start and don't finish in one sitting I rarely ever go back to. Because it means it hasn't fully formed. For me, the short story starts here [points at her head] and all I have to do is pour it out. And if I stop pouring it out and it gets stuck,

then I know that it isn't fully formed. I can't think of any short story that I started, not finished, and then come back to. The short story I have to pour out in one go. And then I give it a few days to marinate. And then I go back, and then I go back, and then I go back. I chisel, and I prune, and I trim, and I do all the things that need to be done to it. A novel takes a lot longer for me. With novels I do word counts. I tell myself "I'm going to write maybe five hundred words a day." If I manage to do it or I do more, I reward myself with a new pair of shoes, because I love shoes. Or I tell myself if I hit this number of words in a week then I can take myself shopping, which I also absolutely love. [laughs]

I just started writing some poetry again. I used to do poetry when I was in Nigeria. That was actually how I got into writing, by poetry. I did poetry a lot. And then I moved to Belgium in 1995 with my Belgian husband and suddenly I was in this space where nothing I knew mattered at all. The fact that I knew English didn't matter. The fact that I had a university degree didn't matter. I was in this space where people looked at me and thought that they knew me. I was in this space where I couldn't talk to anyone where my husband's life just continued because he got his job maybe a few months after we moved back to Belgium. He went off to work and I was at home – I never wanted to get married and sit at home. That wasn't the life I envisaged for myself. Going to college in Nigeria, I had a totally different vision for my life. Before moving to Belgium, my only experience with the West was England. I had been to London as a kid and my uncles lived in London and they all had good jobs. My father's brother was an attorney, my mother's brother was an engineer, so I assumed if you moved abroad, you got a job. Suddenly, here I was. My siblings lived in the States, and their lives sort of continued, but there I was in this place where I couldn't do anything. The culture was completely alien; the language was completely alien. I couldn't even go to the bakery and buy bread. I suffered panic attacks and because of these panic attacks I

couldn't do any kind of writing at all, not even poetry. When I eventually got back to writing, I realized that I couldn't write poetry anymore. So now, once in a while I write something and post it on Instagram but I still don't call it poetry. I actually call the posts "not a poem" because I'm not at that stage where I am prepared to say that what I'm doing now is poetry. I didn't think that moving to a new place would do that to me but what it did basically was steal my muse. The poetry muse just sort of went away. It was scary.

The second part of your question: Has anything ever surprised me? Yes. Ngugi wa Thiong'o, the Kenyan writer, whom I absolutely love, once said that – and I'm paraphrasing him here – "Writers are like Cassandra, doomed to prophesy but never to be believed." So, there are things that I have written about that eventually happen and that scares the shit out of me. So yes, there are things that I've written that surprised me, things that I've written that scared me. Just for how prophetic they turned out to be. And listening to one of you talk about his cousin's experience, when I wrote that story "Better Never Than Late," it was purely a work of imagination. Then to hear that it had happened to someone almost word for word. That is surprising, that is scary.

Question: Based on your own life history, could we say that Prosperous in *Better Never Than Late* is based on your own life story? Maybe not entirely but maybe somehow.

Chika Unigwe: I think that maybe we only think what Prosperous and I share is that we both moved from Nigeria to Belgium. We both know what it is like to move from a place of familiarity and a place of comfort to a place where you have to begin from scratch. We are both Igbo women, but Prosperous is a much better cook than I am and her migration is completely different from mine. I moved with a Belgian husband, so in a way I had a community; I had his family. For want

of a better word, my assimilation was somewhat different than Prosperous's, but the obstacles were all the same. For example, I took a break between my post-grad and my PhD and I went to look for a job. So, I walked into an interim bureau [job agency] and told the woman at the counter that I was looking for a job. She said, "Oh yes, we need cleaners and you can start today." Coming to a place where suddenly people felt like they could label you or that they could put you in a box because of your skin colour, I know what that feels like and so does Prosperous. These are the things that we have in common, but I also think that if writers only wrote about people like them, then we'd not be able to write a lot.

I think that the work a writer does is to imagine the life that people who are not like them live. I think that one of the reasons why I find it very difficult to write poetry these days is because poetry is very intimate, and I find it very difficult to write about myself and I would find it even more difficult to write about my personal experiences in fiction. The experiences I share with Prosperous are also experiences that anybody in our situation would share with us. Living in Turnhout, I had a friend who did engineering in Nigeria and moved to Belgium and who up until today works in a factory as an *arbeidster*, a labourer. I also know somebody who did architecture who is an *arbeider*, a factory worker. These stories are not atypical of the Africans I knew in Belgium, especially Africans from anglophone countries who come to Belgium and have to struggle with a new language. Belgium is very insular that way. If you don't have Dutch, if you don't have French, and maybe English and German, then you're completely locked out of the labour market. It doesn't matter how many degrees you have, unless of course you're an expatriate and you come from somewhere else; then you're working in an environment where English is the language used.

Question: When will we find your novel *The Black Messiah* published in English? I think it was originally written in English. I would like to be able to read it, but I can't read it in Dutch. I'm also very curious to hear your opinion on the term "Afropolitanism," which became very fashionable years ago for diasporic Africans. I wrote an article about it in which I question the concept and what people mean when they use it.

Chika Unigwe: I have absolutely no idea when *The Black Messiah* is coming out in English. My agent is trying to sell another novel, so we'll see. It will come out whenever we manage to sell it. As to your second question, I know that Taiye Selasi made Afropolitanism when she published her essay "Bye Bye, Babar." What do I think of Afropolitanism? I think that, well, it sounds like a drink, like a cocktail. [laughs] I can understand why that concept is interesting to somebody like Taiye who has no roots. There are people who say that you bury your umbilical cord where you come from. Taiye's umbilical is not buried in Africa and it's very easy for Taiye to claim and enjoy Afropolitanism because Taiye does not feel rooted to anywhere. I don't know if you remember her, she gave a TED Talk some years ago where she talks about "Don't ask my nationality. Ask me where I'm local to." There's a group of diasporic Africans who don't feel at home in Africa, in any country, because they haven't lived there, because they don't go back often enough, because they don't feel rooted to it. Therefore, they feel like Taiye. She feels she has more in common with an African from Liberia who lives in the U.S. and calls New York home. Afropolitanism is not something that I would claim because I feel very rooted to a particular African country. I'm not an Afropolitan. I'm Nigerian, and in that Nigeria, I'm Igbo. Because I can find where my umbilical cord is buried, figuratively, Afropolitanism seems too vague and too borderless for it to be interesting to me, but I understand Taiye's position. I understand her not wanting to be coded in

national of anywhere because she feels like she belongs everywhere; her identity is fluid. She belongs to places rather than to a nation, but that doesn't work for me. What do you think of Afropolitanism?

Question: I agree with you. This is what I argued in my article, in fact, that it's more a question of your position, the roots that you have to the place where you are born. At the end of my article, I wondered whether, for example, your children, because they were born in Europe, whether their position could be different. I am aware that the term has been questioned and criticized because of its elitism.

Chika Unigwe: Of course, it is very elitist. By its own definition, it is very exclusive. Which is also one of the reasons why I don't find it interesting. My children's father, who is my husband, is Belgian and my kids were raised in Belgium; all but one of them were born there. They feel Belgian. That is the identity that they claim. What I found very frustrating, raising them in Belgium, is that people would always ask them, “Where are you really from?”. Because they're biracial, they do not fit into some people's natural understanding of what a Belgian is supposed to be. One of the ironies is that it's only in the States that they can claim their European identity without anybody ever asking, “Where are you *really* from?”. They have *never* got that question once. In fact, when my eldest was in high school and some black kid walked up to him and he couldn’t do the handshake, the guy was like “Oh, I forgot you’re European.” There is no question of their Europeanness here in the same way that it is in a place that they consider home. That is one of my most enduring frustrations.

I remember being back in Belgium on holiday three years ago and one of my kids went to church with their grandfather. Some woman walks up to my father-in-law and is like "Who is this?" "My grandson." "*Ah spreekt hij Nederlands?* Does he speak Dutch?" and my son is like "Yes!" and my father-in-law explains he grew up in Belgium. But this woman would not hear; every time my son spoke Dutch to her, she would respond to my father-in-law in Dutch. Because she could not understand that the words coming out of my son's mouth were Dutch. Because as far as she was concerned, if you are this colour, you can't speak Dutch. One of the most emotionally violent things to ever happen to me was somebody walking up to my husband in Belgium, where he was with our two boys, and asking "Where did you adopt yours from?", "Where did you get yours from?". Or my son coming back when he was in elementary school and asking me, "Am I an *allochtoon* [an allochtonous person], because my teacher says I am?". And this kid was born in Turnhout and is going to school in Turnhout and his teacher is telling him he's foreign because he looks foreign. It doesn't matter if he has a very Flemish sounding first name and a very Flemish sounding last name. So, I said "No." "But why does she keep saying that?" I said, "Because she's foolish. She's dumb." There was another student in class, who was a first-generation immigrant, Vlad, from Poland. My son could understand why the teacher would call Vlad foreign because Vlad's Dutch was very hesitant and Vlad had a very Polish-sounding first name and a very Polish-sounding last name. I guess every time she talks about foreigners in class it would be Stefaan and Vlad, which can be very confusing for a kid. Years later, I met Vlad in Turnhout and I go "Hi, Vlad!". And Vlad goes to me "Sorry *mevrouw [ma'm]*, but I'm not Vlad anymore. My name is Toon." So, Vlad is able to cross that border into *autochtoon* [an autochtonous person] that my children can never cross. Because of their skin colour, there is that barrier. But Vlad who is a first-generation immigrant, all he has to do is to learn Dutch, change his first name, adopt his stepfather's

last name, and nobody asks Vlad “Where are you from?”. I've sort of gone off on a tangent. [*Laughs*]

Elisabeth Bekers: I just want to add to that. I think that would be a warm plea to apply what Andrea Levy said in a British context “If Englishness does not define me, then please redefine Englishness.” This is also something that we need to do. We need to step away from our mental images of certain identities and look more for the diversity within that.

Chika Unigwe: Absolutely! Which is why I find the irony fascinating that my children had to leave Belgium, come to the States, to become accepted as Europeans. Now that one of my kids is in school in Belgium, he is at the University of Ghent, and there he tells me that they call him African American. Having to constantly define your identity in the place that you call home is kind of frustrating.

Question: I am wondering about the selection of first- and third-person narrators. Is that a conscious decision? We've discussed it at some length, as some of the stories are in first person and others not.

Chika Unigwe: I think that all these choices sort of happen at a point when I'm writing. If the voice doesn't sound right, then I change it. I don't want to sound cheesy or anything, but the characters sort of choose in what voice they are written. Sometimes I start in the first person and then I feel it isn't working. This character really wants me to tell this story in a different voice. So, I let the characters choose what voice they want to be written in.

Elisabeth Bekers: I want to thank you so much for having taken the time to answer our questions and visit our class long distance. And thank you so much for your writing! We look forward to that next novel that you mentioned! Fingers crossed that it will appear very soon.

Chika Unigwe: Thank you very much. It was lovely. Thanks for all your really thoughtful, kind comments and questions. I appreciated this. Thank you for teaching and reading my work, and for engaging with my work and for giving me new insights into the work.

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