

# **BUILDING INTERDISCIPLINARY KNOWLEDGE.**

## **APPROACHES TO ENGLISH AND AMERICAN STUDIES IN SPAIN**

Esther Álvarez López (coord. and ed.), Emilia María Durán  
Almarza and Alicia Menéndez Tarrazo, eds.

Asociación Española de Estudios Anglo-Norteamericanos



**UNIVERSIDAD DE OVIEDO**



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Plan de Ciencia, Tecnología e Innovación de Asturias



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Approaches to English and American Studies in Spain



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## Introduction

*Building Interdisciplinary Knowledge. Approaches to English and American Studies in Spain* brings together a selection of the most stimulating scholarly papers and round tables presented at the Annual Conference of the Spanish Association for English and American Studies, held at the University of Oviedo on November 13-15, 2013.

Organizing the 37<sup>th</sup> edition of the AEDEAN Conference was a challenging endeavour not only because the increase in participation involved making arrangements for accommodating nearly 200 presentations in the form of round tables, oral communications, workshops and keynote lectures but also because, after 32 years, the Department of English, German and French Studies at the University of Oviedo hosted for the second time an AEDEAN conference. In spite of the demanding work, we greatly enjoyed sharing efforts with all the people who, at one stage or another, were involved in making this conference a great success. We would like to extend our gratitude again for their continuous support to AEDEAN's Executive Board, to the extended Organising Committee members and to the student volunteers who assisted in technical matters.

As the title suggests, this E-Book is the result of several collective efforts. In the first place, it features the work of AEDEAN members, who at least once a year get together to present and discuss their contributions in the fields of English and American Studies. Aiming at capturing a sense of the shared knowledges that build through these annual gatherings, this volume covers a wide range of inter-disciplinary interests and approaches from both young and established academics, reflecting the rich and diverse scholarship on Anglophone literature, cultural studies, language and linguistics produced in Spain.

The papers included in this volume have been subjected to a process of double, blind peer review. The final versions published here are therefore the result of the sustained cooperation among authors, anonymous colleagues, panel coordinators, style reviewers and editors. We take this chance to thank the coordinators of the panels and the blind reviewers for their work both before and after the conference; special thanks go to Ronnie Lendrum, the style editor, for her critical, constructive reading and invaluable comments; and, above all, our appreciation goes to the

contributors, whose faith in what they do and in their research is what inspires us all to move beyond limitations and continue in our pursuit of new perspectives to light our knowledge in the fields of English and American Studies.

I.

LITERATURE AND CULTURAL STUDIES



“Bein Alive & Bein a Woman & Bein Colored Is a Metaphysical Dilemma”:  
Surviving Gender Violence in Ntozake Shange’s *for colored girls*

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This paper explores the situation of African-American women in the American society of the 1970s as depicted in Shange’s play *for colored girls who have considered suicide when the rainbow is enuf*, focusing on the constant presence and threat of gender violence, and the chance of recovery through the process known as female bonding.

Keywords: African American; gender violence; theatre; female bonding

\* \* \*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The connection between the African American community and violence is not a new issue. Since the time of slavery, the lives of African American people have been a continual fight for survival. Although black men and black women fought together to achieve their rights as human beings in society, the situation was in fact different for men and women. bell hooks affirms that African American women were so immersed in the fight against racism that they were incapable of acknowledging sexism as a threat:

Although black women and men had struggled equally for liberation during slavery and much of the Reconstruction era, black male political leaders upheld patriarchal values. . . . While black women participated equally with black men in the struggle for survival by entering the work force whenever possible, they did not advocate an end to sexism. Twentieth century black women had learned to accept sexism as natural, a given, a fact of life. (1981, 4)

hooks also explains that during the 1950s and 60s the tendency in black American communities was for males to establish patriarchy as the social system through which to rule, without women questioning whether this was right or wrong. Therefore, the quest for civil rights became truly the triumph of patriarchy.

The 1970s marked the change in the sense that the so-called second wave of feminism, together with the Women's Liberation Movement, challenged the predominant patriarchal rule. Specifically, one of the major achievements of these two pro-women's rights' groups at the time was the social/public recognition of the abuse (especially sexual and physical) many white women were enduring within the home. The two movements, however, showed different attitudes towards the situation of African American women. Whereas the Women's Liberation Movement fought to condemn their situation of double discrimination, focusing on proving the existence of sexist oppression, "white feminists tended to romanticize the black female experience rather than discuss the negative impact of that oppression" (hooks 1981, 6). Thus, during the 70s, the term *black feminism* was coined by black women scholars, artists and, especially, writers to refer to the specific situation black women were living, acknowledging sexism as an obstacle to fight against.

It was during the 1970s when, as a result of the work of these movements, the term *gender violence* was introduced into the popular vocabulary. At the time, the old patriarchal precept that a wife was her husband's property still prevailed, meaning that if a husband considered that his wife deserved to be beaten up, he had the right to do it, for the privacy of the home prevented authorities from intervening. It was precisely due to this inherent sense of privacy that the abuses committed were not denounced or, in the few rare cases that were, their reporting was belittled, as marriage was seen as a place where authorities should not interfere. However, in the field of the Arts, especially in literature, the denunciation of this unfair treatment for women was explicit.

Gender violence encompasses a wide range of abuses usually committed against women and perpetrated by their (ex)boyfriends, (ex)husbands, and even fathers and brothers. Although it does not respect social, economic, class or race boundaries, it is important to note that, as it began to be made visible, it seemed that this type of violence only occurred within working-class or marginalized groups of people, such as the African Americans.

In this essay, we will be dealing with a play that appeared in 1974 that tackles with the everyday situation of African American women within the African American community: Ntozake Shange's opera prima *for colored girls who have considered suicide when the rainbow is enuf*.<sup>1</sup> By using this play as an example, I will try to demonstrate how, at that time, African American women started to become conscious of their unfair situation, even within an environment which, supposedly, was safe for them. Not in vain, through literature, especially through drama, they started to denounce and make public the abuses they suffered every day, putting special emphasis on cases of sexual abuse, since it appeared that any African American woman was an easy target for rape.

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<sup>1</sup> The title of the play appears in lowercase letters following Shange's own guidelines.

## 2. FOR COLORED GIRLS: GENDER VIOLENCE UNDER STUDY

*for colored girls who have considered suicide when the rainbow is enuf* (hereafter *for colored girls*) is a very particular type of dramatic piece. First of all, it is not truly a play. It has been defined by its writer herself as a *choreopoem*: it is a collection of twenty poems written to be performed and danced and is in fact a mixture of poetry, music, dance and drama written in the African American dialect. Mar Gallego summarizes the essence of this text saying, “*for colored girls* is basically the best reflection of her [Shange’s] intention to debunk old-fashioned male images about women and to create fresh and alternative ways of redefining African-American women” (2002, 208). Nonetheless, Shange does not attribute *for colored girls* to an individual writer. For her, this play is the individual work resulting from a collective effort made by certain feminist writers who put the African American question to the stake (cf. Anderlini 1991).

The play portrays the lives of seven African American women who share their individual experiences of violence, racism and sexism with the audience. There are many similitudes among them, like their race, the fact that all of them live “outside” a different city (Chicago, Detroit, Houston, Baltimore, San Francisco, Manhattan and St. Louis), and that they are each exposed to various types of violence, especially sexual and physical abuse. They also share their anonymous existence: the characters have no names; the audience only knows them as lady in red, lady in yellow, lady in blue, lady in green, lady in orange, and lady in purple—completing the colors of the rainbow—plus lady in brown, who signifies the earth. The fact that they have no names, as Mar Gallego affirms, provides the text with universality: “Their namelessness and the color spectrum contained in the rainbow image allow for their representing a wide picture of African American womanhood which defies and subverts any previous notions, and offers an alternative model for female identity based on a collective sense of self” (2002, 214).

One of the most important things about this play is that it focuses exclusively on what happens within the African American community. Therefore, the perpetrator is not the outsider white man but the insider, the local African American man. This is indeed one of the first conventions this play breaks. Together with this topical transgression we find the breaking up of the silence imposed culturally on these African American women. They are no longer quiet. They dare to defy the system by speaking up and telling their true stories of suffering and pain. Timidly at first, speaking individually, they raise their voices imitating the ancient African American songs that have perpetuated the oral tradition within the community, and they dance together. By doing this, Shange uses the stereotypes traditionally employed to define African American women but in such a way that they act as a celebration of the uniqueness of African American women:

In white culture the black woman’s sensuality and sexuality have been viewed negatively. Black women have been viewed as sexually loose, as having animal like passions, as

willing whores. These images of the white man's imagination have been used to justify sexual abuse and rape of Black women by white men. Despite these stereotypes Shange has chosen to begin her choreopoem with a celebration of Black women's sexuality and love for music and dance. In doing so, she affirms the body and its rhythms of sensuality and sexuality and rejects those white male images of humanity that denigrate the body and sexuality. (Christ 1986, 105)

It seems that all the seven women share the threat of being raped. Although we will concentrate on sexual abuse, we should point out that gender violence is present in this work in each one of its different subtypes: wife-beating, represented by the story of Crystal and Beau Willy (a "returned" soldier incapable of adapting to society) which ends dramatically when Beau drops their children out of a fourth floor window; psychological abuse, for example, three of the women share the experience of being repeatedly cheated by a man, and the teenager who is being constantly pressured to lose her virginity in order to fit into the group.

The topic of sexual abuse is introduced very early in the choreopoem, showing its importance. Significantly, it is lady in red who introduces this touchy problem, red being the color of blood; she explains, "A rapist is always to be a stranger / to be legitimate / someone you never saw / a man with obvious problems" (Shange 1992, 17). As rape is in itself a traumatic experience, it is not difficult to deduce that this trauma will increase if the rapist happens to be someone you know and someone you trust. In this choreopoem, the stereotype of the mental illness a rapist supposedly suffers from is highlighted, although in this case lady in red is being ironic; reality can be hidden behind this supposed illness, the perpetrator's act being considered less serious if he is ill, but, here the friend who rapes her is not ill. On the contrary, he uses all his charms to achieve what he wants:

Lady in red

These men friends of ours / who smile nice / stay employed / and take us to dinner

Lady in purple

Lock the door behind you

Lady in blue

Wit fist in face / to fuck

Lady in red

Who make elaborate Mediterranean dinners / & let the art ensemble carry all ethical burdens / while they invite a coupla friends over to have you/ are sufferin from latent rapist bravado / & we are left wit the scars

Lady in blue

Bein betrayed by men who know us

Lady in purple

& expect / like the stranger / we always that waz comin. (18-19)

Shange is here playing with the presupposed exaggerated sexuality black women possess. On the one hand, we could say that this myth about black female sexuality is still being propagated by the males of this black community itself. On the other, in this quotation, the stereotype of the rapist as an uneducated, unemployed stranger is broken and the rapist is depicted as an upper-class man who performs the role of the gentle southern cavalier, who “makes elaborate Mediterranean dinners,” a man who would never be suspected of being a sexual aggressor, although he is.

Furthermore, in the quotation above, we observe how these women are talking about a multiple sexual aggression (“while they invite a coupla friends to have you”). The humiliation they experience is consequently greater, since they are treated as nothing more than objects whose only function seems to be to supply sexual satisfaction to all the men who want it, thereby suggesting, it seems, that all these women should expect to be raped, as can also be deduced from the following quotation:

Lady in red

Women relinquish all personal rights / in the presence of a man/ who apparently cd  
be considered a rapist

Lady in purple

Especially if he has been considered a friend

Lady in blue

& is no less worthy of bein beat witin an inch of his life/ bein publicly ridiculed /  
havin two fists shoved up his ass

Lady in red

Than the stranger / we always thot it wd be

Lady in blue

Who never showed up

Lady in red

Cuz it turns out the nature of rape has changed. (20)

Another thorny issue about rape that is explored in this choreopoem is that of “women are looking for it.” It was (and perhaps in certain circumstances still is) a social preconception that if a woman is raped, to a certain extent she has caused this to occur. She may have dressed in a certain provocative way or she may have given some indication that she wanted to have sex:

Lady in red

If you know him / you must have wanted it

Lady in purple

A misunderstanding

Lady in red

You know / these things happen

Lady in blue

Are you sure/ you didn't suggest. (17)

The idea conveyed here being that society still denies these women the right to be considered as victims, particularly if raped by a friend, as it is most likely thought that they may have provoked their rapists. Therefore, the difficulties for these women increase when they have to confront society. They experience a lack of support that increases further if they consider the option of going to the authorities, since “a friend is hard to press charge against.” There is a dilemma between the right thing to do and the wrong thing to do, which usually ends up being resolved by the women not reporting the crime. The fear of being judged and internal shame are some of the factors that force women to keep silent. Moreover, as Judith Herman explains, “the rapist often enjoys higher status than his victim within their shared community. The people closest to the victim will not necessarily rally to her aid; in fact, her community may be more supportive to the offender than to her” (1997, 62). Indeed, as indicated by Herman and alluded to in what we can read in the previous quotation from the choreopoem itself, this is precisely what happens in *for colored girls*. We see how the community surrounding these women supports the offender rather than the victims, blaming them for having caused this act to happen.

Nonetheless, it can be observed that this group of women manages to raise their voices to denounce the hypocrisy of the society in which they are living, succeeding through their union in creating their own community to support their own recovery. They have been suffering a series of repeated abuses and, instead of keeping silent, as would be expected of them, they join together and speak out their truth. In this case, we can consider that this act of speaking together, this joining or bonding between them is their way of recovering from the trauma they suffer after the rape. As Pineda-Hernández explains, “it is not enough to survive a terrible violent experience, the survivor needs to regain control over her life and become empowered by the reconnection with her family, friends and community” (2012, 16).

### 3. CONCLUSION

Some experts on gender violence, among them Judith Herman, have reached the conclusion that female bonding mitigates the harsh impact of the trauma. It seems that this sense of union and community is particularly important for the African American women since, as stated by Pineda-Hernández “African American women, despite living through the worst experiences, can overcome anything if they stay together” (2012, 119). Therefore, through a process of bonding, of weaving different stories of violence and suffering in which the primary material is personal history and language, these women achieve both: they denounce their unfair situation, in this case within the 1970s society, and they manage to find

their own identity within the community, which will help them to recover from the traumatic episode of rape.

In this sense, we could say that the composition of different dialogues mixing different stories together alludes metaphorically to the famous precious quilts created by African American women in previous decades. In doing so, we are supporting Lucy Lippard's opinion that "since the new wave of feminist art began around 1970, the quilt has become the prime visual metaphor for women's lives and for women's culture" (1983, 32). Therefore, in order to reinforce the opinion that female bonding helps to recover from trauma, we might say that these seven colored girls emulate and pay homage to their ancestors' quilting bees, weaving their own personal traumas in their meetings.

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“No Guy’s Sister”: A Youngster’s Experience of the West in Lorrie Moore’s *A Gate at the Stairs* (2009)

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This paper explores the experience of Tassie Keltjin, a college girl in her twenties growing up in the Midwest during the Afghanistan war that followed the 9/11 attacks in Lorrie Moore’s coming-of-age narrative, *A Gate at the Stairs* (2009). The American West has traditionally been associated with the idea of youth and its relationship with war and patriotism. Twenty-first century American women writers such as Lorrie Moore challenge dominant official discourses of war going beyond idealized portrayals of youth and frontier metanarratives of innocence.

Keywords: Lorrie Moore; *A Gate at the Stairs*; youth, coming-of-age narrative; Western American Literature; 9/11 attacks; Afghanistan War

\* \* \*

Lorrie Moore in *A Gate at the Stairs* (2009) explores the significance of the experience of a young female, Tassie Keltjin. The coming-of-age process in the tradition of the American coming-of-age narrative is used to examine the state and identity of the nation as it challenges dominant official discourses of war going beyond idealized portrayals of youth and frontier metanarratives of innocence. The new anxieties of coming of age in the aftermath of 9/11 in the American West is paralleled by this college girl in her twenties growing up in the Midwest. Indeed, it falls within the *Bildungsroman* tradition as the development and the rites of passage of the main character form the organising centre of the text. It is precisely by using the coming-of-age structure and the literary figure of youth that the discourse of dissent and counter-discourse of war is made explicit. Narratologically, this stream-of-consciousness first-person narrative combined with dialogue reveals Tassie’s inner life and social awakening.

On the one hand, the American West has historically been associated with the very idea of youth, which is related to the notions of possibility, movement and freedom long associated with this place. On the other, Western American history and literature have traditionally focused on the nationalistic metanarratives of heroic white male experiences of the West and the myth of the frontier that derived from

them, which in turn originated the figure of the American Adam (Lewis 1955). However, rather than a grand narrative with a distinctive formative nationalistic flavor, *A Gate at the Stairs* deals with the growing up of a female whose road journey functions as a metaphor for her development and her experience of the American West. In this sense, place and identity arise as important inter-connected narrative components. Indeed, in Tassie Keltjin there are echoes of Holden Caulfield, the protagonist of the quintessential twentieth-century novel of youth, *The Catcher in the Rye*, who also wants to go west, as Vanderbilt highlighted (1963). In a challenge to the traditional western movement represented by white males, this narrative gives visibility to neglected voices of the American West through its use of different themes and genre of the novel, which become significant structures that enable the author to remap, explore and rewrite the American West in order to accommodate other narratives. Consequently, this paper explores some little examined facets of Western literature, such as the Western coming of age narrative or *Bildungsroman*, the female road novel and the female experience of the New West. This paper is based on the premise that the genre that best accommodates the subject matter of this study, youth, is the coming of age narrative or *Bildungsroman*. This is because it has the capacity to depict the complex process of becoming of a protagonist, in contrast to other genres that rely on an “image of the *ready-made* hero” (Bakhtin 1986, 20). It can be argued that since the late twentieth century there has been a trend for characters in such novels to be older and to come of age later than in previous decades, where the milestone was most often reached in late childhood. Similarly more recent examples do not actually portray the whole childhood of the characters, *The Catcher in the Rye* being a good example. Instead, as occurs in *A Gate at the Stairs*, they depict the protagonist’s process of transition into adulthood, while recalling the childhood events that have made significant contributions to this process and that affect the present development of the character.

In addition, a central question that concerns the *Bildungsroman* is identity, which is, according to Bakhtin, “the image of *man in the process of becoming*” (1986, 19; emphasis in the original). This implies that identity results from a process rather than being a stable entity as it was conceived of in previous centuries. In contrast to the nineteenth-century European *Bildungsroman*, which has been regarded as conservative (Moretti 1987), twentieth-century American coming-of-age narratives usually avoid normative endings and portray non-normative subjects. As a contested genre, the *Bildungsroman* has grown to accommodate alternative processes of the self, which are sometimes opposed to the original ideals of the genre. Indeed, American hegemonic narratives do not encompass the female youth experiences that inhabit this literary landscape of the New West, as Rosowski extensively argues in *Birthing a Nation* (1999). Genre, gender, youth and the West all signify, at the same time and through discursive routes, a multiplicity. It is this very multiplicity of signifying which enables a complex and contested reformulation of traditional literary

representations, thus allowing the reconstruction of these contested cultural sites. However, I would argue that it is precisely the original effect produced by the genre on the reader, as registered by Karl Morgenstern in 1819, that makes this genre and its young protagonists a powerful means of social change, "this depiction promotes the development of the reader to a greater extent than any other kind of novel . . . toward the development of its audience" (Boes 2012, 27). Due to the paramount importance of myth in the American West, and in order to explore the process of becoming of the protagonist of *A Gate at the Stairs*, a comparison of this process with the traditional male hero's monomyth is drawn in the analysis that follows. By doing so, the female heroine of the novel will show both similarities and divergences from the classical male model. The analysis encompasses the three phases of the initiation rite: separation, transition and incorporation, which also correspond to the monomyth of the hero: departure, initiation and return.

To start with, the first stage of the process is the separation or departure, which in *A Gate at the Stairs* is announced by the image of the flying birds, common in female *Bildungsroman* and female novels, "The cold came late that fall and the songbirds were caught off guard. By the time the snow and wind began in earnest, too many had been suckered into staying, and instead of flying south, instead of already having flown south, they were huddled in people's yards . . . I was looking for a job" (2009, 3). The metaphor of the flying birds stands for Tassie's desire to leave the small family farm in the Midwest because she, like the birds, should have already left. The image used to open the novel, the flight, works similarly to represent the state of suspension in which the character is at that moment: suspended between two worlds, the world of childhood and the world of adulthood. This image highlights the protagonist's feelings of fear, uncertainty and instability as well as her desire to seek out new knowledge and experience. As Curnutt points out, "the drama of much alienated-youth fiction arises from the tensions between two specific motifs: flight and fall" (2001, 106). This young woman is willing to be part of "being-in-the-world," consciously pursuing ways of assuming her subjectivity. In contrast to previous young male protagonists, Huck Finn being the prototype, "flight dramatizes the desire to prolong initiation and stave off entry into adulthood" (Curnutt 2001, 106). Furthermore, the literary figure of youth as a witness and non-participant in social discomfort evolves into a participant character that regards becoming as necessary, the importance of which is highlighted through the expression of the protagonist's fears and desires. Some autobiographical information frames the beginning of Tassie's narrative as she recalls childhood events, such as how she came to realise that her Jewish mother was blind; this is relevant, as Tassie's mother is the antithesis of the stereotypical overprotective Jewish mother, rarely calling her by her given name, and instead using "Doll, Dolly, Dollylah, or Tassalah" (8). As a site of contested identity politics, this range of names reveals a denial of agency, which parallels the one undergone by Mary-Emma (Emmie), the African-American girl child Tassie is babysitting.

As is common in the *Bildungsroman* genre, the protagonist comes from a rural community and poor family. However, although orphanhood is a traditional feature of the genre, the variation that we encounter in this text provides the character with a mother, in Campbell's terms "the supernatural aid," and with a father and a brother. Before Tassie departs her mother hands her a pearl necklace, reminiscent of Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird* (1960), that will mark the beginning of her journey, of which Tassie says, "with no man in my life, even though I was only twenty, she [her mum] would be the one to bestow this artefact of womanhood, this rite of passage, this gyno-noose . . . a kind of ticket off the farm and out into the world, wherever *that* was" (55). The mother-daughter relationship is important, as the protagonist has, despite their differences, the support of her mother, although she is not the overprotective mother of the Jewish myth: "I wasn't going to worry and interfere with you," her mother tells her (9). Unlike previous examples of female *Bildungsroman*, she does not face the opposition of her family when she decides to undertake her journey.

In addition, another new twentieth-century paradigm is the sister-brother one. It is especially relevant in this text, as the "apotheosis" (using Campbell's terminology) is related to this paradigm, which is used together with the coming-of-age structure to highlight the discourse of dissent or counter-discourse of war that infuses the novel.

In Tassie's narrative, the point of departure is the Midwest, in particular, Dellacrosse Central High, a location which, although similar to LaCrosse (Indiana), cannot be found on an actual map. This may be understood as a reimagined geography of the New West, through analogy with the creation of the new self. Tassie's narrative starts "in medias res" as she has been in college for a year; the beginning of the novel focuses on the exact moment of her awakening and is devoted to her recalling the feelings and the environment she found upon arrival to the university town. At home, the oppression of her growing up in a small farm in the country and the violence with which she is forced to endure it, as she realises her situation is underscored in this paragraph: "the birds had disappeared. . . . I wondered about them all the time: imagining them dead, in stunning heaps in some killing cornfield outside of town, or dropped from the sky in twos and threes for miles down along the Illinois state line" (3). Tassie suffers the constraints of growing up in a Midwestern farm and rural environment which do not enable her to be part of "being-in-the-world." In consequence, she resolves to depart. The experience of leaving the small family farm and arriving at the vaguely so-called "this university town of Troy, 'the Athens of the Midwest'" (4) is described in figurative language (reminiscent of Plato's *Allegory of the Cave*):

being kept in the dark for the bulk of his childhood and allowed only stories—no experience—of the outside world. Once brought out into light . . . wonder; no story would ever have been equal to the thing itself. . . . The flat green world of my parents' hogless, horseless farm . . . left me with a brilliant city life of books and films and witty

friends. Someone has turned on the lights. Someone had led me out of the cave—of Perryville Road. (4)

The author chooses the historical time of the 9/11 attacks and places Tassie's narrative in the Midwest so as to address the specific feelings and anxieties that they caused in this part of the country and in young people in particular. By the time Tassie starts college, the attacks have already taken place and she recounts how she and her roommate, Murph, lived through them in their private sphere. The motif of the journey marks the beginning of Tassie's separation rite of passage and she moves towards what Campbell calls "the crossing of the first threshold," leaving a rural area in order to "enter the city with bewilderment and naiveté" (Buckley 1974, 49). Consequently, as Arnold van Gennep argues, "the passage from one social position to another is identified with a *territorial passage*, such as the entrance into a village or a house . . . so often ritually expressed by passage under a portal, or by an 'opening of the doors'" (1977, 192). Tassie's crossing can be more specifically located at the door of the house where she takes her new job as a babysitter. This final separation of the known world by the road of trials is finally undertaken as she enters the "belly of the whale," willing to undergo a transformation. Once inside Tassie will experience a transformation, made possible by her newly acquired knowledge.

During the second phase of the rite, the transition or initiation, Tassie encounters what Campbell calls "the meeting of the goddess," as she falls in love with Reynaldo. Similar to most of the characters in the novel, as David Brauner points out, Reynaldo's ethnicity remains indeterminate. First, Tassie refers to him simply as "the Brazilian," later he is given a name and described by his cream teeth and brown skin, a description which does not disclose his ethnicity but rather increases the ambiguity. Like Mary-Emma, his ambiguous ethnicity is related to the colour of his skin. In Mary-Emma's case, Tassie recalls, "Everyone, I only noticed now for some reason, called Mary-Emma by a slightly different name, like she was no one at all" (256). One way Moore's novel explores feelings in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks is by making Tassie have a relationship with a Muslim boy and raising the issue of the stereotypes that could arise from Tassie being Jewish and he Muslim, notably when he explains that "I'm part of an Islamic charity for Afghan children" (204). Nonetheless, the mixed and ambiguous ethnicities of the protagonists prevent stereotypes from emerging and Tassie in fact identifies with Reynaldo and Mary-Emma as they all seem to inhabit the same liminal territory. By the end of the novel, she compares her "half-Jewishness" to the feeling of being "*part* extraterrestrial, a mixed breed, sci-fi mulatto" (285). As introduced, Campbell's "apotheosis," arrives for Tassie when her brother, Robert, who went as a soldier to the Afghanistan war, is sent home dead. After the funeral, Tassie lies inside the coffin with her brother until it arrives at the cemetery. According to Campbell, "the hero can be seen as dead to the outside world, but in reality he is on an inner journey to find a new self and come back to the world as reborn" (1949,

97). In the end, Tassie's "ultimate boon" is accomplished as she achieves the goal of her quest; her quest for knowledge is fulfilled.

In the last phase of the initiation rite, the incorporation or return, Tassie's regeneration is accomplished due to the fact that she integrates herself into the community she meets at her destination. Tassie is integrated into Sarah's family (Mary-Emma's adoptive mother) and friends. However, the family models and the community displayed in this novel differ broadly from the nuclear family and the normative community and redefine them. The sisterhood among the women constituting this community entitles each of them to mutual affirmation, thus allowing individual validation as well as a sharing of the outer and inner world. Tassie's mourning for Robert leads her, with Murph, into a creative process as they compose lyrical poetry. Thus the last phase of the hero's journey, Campbell's "return," which is made dangerous and adventurous, is undertaken when Tassie returns home with the pearl necklace, which represents the boon in Campbell's terminology, in what he terms "the magic flight." It can be argued that the reintegration of the protagonist in this coming-of-age narrative is made by virtue of the "individual *in* community" (Rosowski 1997, 222). It is worth mentioning that, on the one hand, the female monomyth of this narrative highlights the importance of the community in completing the process of becoming, while, on the other, it gives visibility to non-normative members of this community. Tassie functions as a catalyst, mediating among the members of her new community.

The places that are described and where contact interactions occur are mainly indoors. Overall, they acquire an important function within the novel as they challenge the private/public spaces that have long caught the attention of feminists. Sarah's house, especially the nursery and the kitchen, are strikingly important for the interactions of its inhabitants. The fragmented conversations that Tassie hears from the adults who are downstairs are usually related to racial issues, the unclear and polyphonic voices she hears from the support group consist of "transracial, biracial, multiracial families" who refer to their children as children "of color" (154). It can be argued that Sarah's house becomes a microcosm for the contested discourse of race and racial difference in America. By staying in the nursery with the children, Tassie's anti-passing identity, as David Brauner notices, becomes a metaphor for her alienation.

Earlier in the narrative, Tassie draws attention toward performativity like in "[Edward and Sarah] were performing their marriage at me" (98) and the theme of marriage in her grandmother's advice to the young. In this sense, the end of *A Gate at the Stairs* differs from the normative *Bildungsroman* closure, although the final function of the *Bildungsroman*, that is, to reflect on the reader, is definitely made evident with the final direct appellation that cautions the reader, "Reader, I did not even have coffee with him. That much I learned in college" (321). Additionally, it is significant that the novel finishes with a darkening scene, "Outside, in the early night,

it was already beginning to snow" (320), which implies, as van Gennepe argues, that the life of an individual in any society is a series of passages from one age to another. Transitions from group to group and from one social situation to the next are looked upon as implicit in the very fact of existence, so that a man's life comes to be made up of a succession of stages with similar ends and beginnings (1977, 3). In conclusion, by using the tradition of the coming-of-age narrative and the significance of the experience of a young female in the aftermath of the 9/11, Lorrie Moore in *A Gate at the Stairs* (2009) re-examines the dominant discourses of war and the traditional relationship between war and youth going beyond idealized portrayals of youth and frontier grand narratives.

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# America Dreams with Music: Reflecting the American Dream in Hollywood Musicals

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Also known as “the factory of dreams,” the Hollywood industry has provided international audiences with its own visions of the American Dream. In the case of musicals, this is the notion that gives form to the thematic myth of the whole genre. By comparing different subgenres like the Backstage, the Cinderella or the Folk musicals, we can approach some of the versions that Hollywood has made of the Dream during different periods of time.

Keywords: film musicals; American Dream; Cultural Studies; Genre Studies

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The term “American Dream” has been highly contested. Scholars have been studying its many variations for years, as well as the different interpretations provided by the media. Understanding the notion of “the Dream” as a cultural construct, we can approach its study by looking into the values promoted by a series of cultural productions during different periods of time. Our intention, however, is to explore some of the ways in which the American Dream was portrayed in the Studio Era in one specific film genre: the Hollywood musical.

We have chosen to analyse three different subgenres, the Cinderella, the Backstage and the Folk musicals, as representative of the musical tendencies of the 1920s, 30s and 40s. A comparative study has shown that, although they all seem to nourish the promise of the Dream, they differ in their methods according to the needs of the socio-historical context in which they are embedded. Their diachronic evolution leads to the musicals heyday in the 1950s, a time in which spreading the *American way of life* became an international goal.

## 2. THE AMERICAN DREAM: CINEMA AND IDEOLOGY

The reference to the pursuit of happiness made in the Declaration of Independence is considered by many as the seed of the whole myth of the American Dream: “We hold

these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and *the pursuit of Happiness*” (“Declaration of Independence;” emphasis added). As Delbanco explains, “Here was the ground of hope—the idea that Americans were not fixed in their circumstances of birth, but were free to become whatever they could imagine” (1999, 61). In theoretical terms, anyone had the opportunity to succeed in life; thus, anyone could become the hero of his/her own “story.” Hard work and sometimes a stroke of luck were also part of this apparently simple idea. The United States has always praised the “winners,” those who fight their way to the top. This has been true since the times of the first colonies, where men had to work the land and start a new life with hardly any resources. As Adams (1931, 2012) argues,

that dream of a land in which life should be better and richer and fuller for everyone, with opportunity for each according to ability or achievement . . . It is not a dream of motor cars and high wages merely, but a dream of social order in which each man and each woman shall be able to attain to the fullest stature of which they are innately capable, and be recognized by others for what they are, regardless of the fortuitous circumstances of birth or position. (214-15)

We can argue that the American Dram, in any of its variations, is a story of success through hard work and a little bit of luck, a story in which anyone can be the protagonist if they are only willing to try.

The study of cinema as a conveyer of ideological messages was resisted for years by those who argued that films were pure “entertainment.” But with the rise of Cultural Studies in the 1990s the study of films eventually reached the university sphere. Because all text is created within a socio-political context, it is impossible to avoid the reflection of ideological values in any type of cultural artefact.

Focusing on the particular situation of the musical film, we must acknowledge its condition as “the window to American culture” (*Broadway: the American Musical*, 2004). As happens with all genres, there is a close connection between these films and their audience. The popularity of a genre during certain periods of time can only be justified by the necessity of the audience to keep watching those particular productions. They must connect with society at a certain level, addressing current social concerns. As Benshoff and Griffin explain, genres “look and sound” a particular way (i.e., they share structural characteristics) but they also address similar ideological concerns, their thematic myth: “Genres can also be defined by their deeper ideological concerns, sometimes referred to as their **thematic myth**. Genres are popular with audiences when these thematic myths in some way relate to current social concerns, and as such genres function as a sort of feedback loop between filmgoers and filmmakers” (2009, 28; emphasis in original). My argument is that the thematic myth of the musical genre has always been the promise of the

American Dream, in many of its variations. The film industry itself has been often referred to as a “Factory of Dreams,” and the musical genre has always been able to adapt itself to social needs and visions of the Dream. Although they have achieved this by developing different subgenres, cycles, and using different stars and even different kinds of music, the main purpose has remained the same since the origins of sound: they want to make the audience dream of another world that somehow maintains some similarities with their own. According to the musical historian John Lahr, “Musicals have always reflected the changing times. Whether offering escape from a world wearied by depression and war, or celebrating life with a brash, up-beat optimism, the Broadway musical has sung the promise of America” (*Broadway: the American Musical*, 2004).

### 3. “LOOK FOR THE SILVER LINING”: THE CINDERELLA MUSICAL

Although they have followed different lines of evolution, the roots of the Hollywood musical can be easily found in the Broadway stage. As usually happens with the arrival of new technology, the musical film relied on previous forms of success in order to create its own products. The first musicals were mainly revues that imitated the vaudeville shows as well as shows imported directly from the Broadway stage. *Sally*, directed by John Francis Dillon in 1929, was one very good example of the first Broadway adaptations that reached the big screen.

When thinking about the Cinderella subgenre, *Sally* is perhaps one of the first examples to come to mind. This subgenre was, in fact, a type of what Rick Altman (1987) has denominated the Fairy Tale musical. Although most of the films within this genre have their roots in European operetta, the Cinderella musical departs from this tradition and presents a story set in the present and in the United States. The heroine is usually a young woman that starts from a disadvantaged position and through perseverance, hard work, optimism and faith in life is rewarded at the end with the life she has always dreamt about.

The most well-known musical number of the film, created by composer Jerome Kern, was the duet “Look for the Silver Lining,” a song intended to transmit a message of joy and optimism to the audience:

BOY: Please don't be offended if I preach to you a while  
 Tears are out of place in eyes that were meant to smile.  
 There's a way to make your very biggest troubles small,  
 Here's the happy secret of it all.  
 Look for the silver lining  
 When e'er a cloud appears in the blue.  
 Remember somewhere, the sun is shining  
 And so the right thing to do is make it shine for you.

A heart, full of joy and gladness  
 Will always banish sadness and strife  
 So always look for the silver lining  
 And try to find the sunny side of life.  
 SALLY: As I wash my dishes, I'll be following your plan,  
 Till I see the brightness in ev'ry pot and pan.  
 I am sure your point of view will ease the daily grind,  
 So I'll keep repeating in my mind. . . (*Sally*, 1929)

But it has since taken on another meaning, more connected with the individual achievement of personal happiness through success in the world of show business. In the film *Till the Cloud Rolls By* (1946), a biopic dedicated to the composer Jerome Kern, Judy Garland performs this song while literally “washing [her] dishes.” In a sense, this song acquired a new meaning by making reference to the departure from an *ordinary* life to the life of a successful figure in the world of Broadway.

#### 4. “YOU’RE GOING OUT A YOUNGSTER BUT YOU’VE GOT TO COME BACK A STAR!”: THE BACKSTAGE MUSICAL

Following on from this idea, Hollywood created a subgenre that was not an adaptation of a previous Broadway play, but rather consisted of a fictionalization of life in Broadway and the experiences of all of those who went to New York City in search of becoming a *Star*. The American Dream as presented in musicals became more specific since it was adapted to the world of show business.

All Backstage Musicals present the “putting-on-a-show” trope. The plot always revolves around the production of a show and the way in which the company overcomes a series of obstacles during rehearsals. The success of the premiere becomes the final resolution of the film, and it can only be achieved through hard work and the cooperation of all members in the company.

Since *The Broadway Melody* (1929), the Backstage Musical has become one of the most successful subtypes within the musical genre. But it was the film *42<sup>nd</sup> Street* (1933) that made the first attempt to connect the world of show business with the outside world. During the Great Depression, *42<sup>nd</sup> Street* bluntly addressed topics related to financial problems or unemployment. Despite the grandeur of the final musical numbers, the film presented a hard story that was directly connected with the audience’s real experiences. According to Aylesworth (1984),

Even without its extravagant ending, the picture would have had an attraction for audiences of the 1930s. It told a harsh story of struggle and hard work. . . . In all, the film dealt with tough realities that Depression-era audiences understood and that aroused a definite emotional response in them, and director Lloyd Bacon should be

given much of the credit for this. When these realities were blended with Berkeley's escapist production numbers, *Forty-Second Street* became a perfectly but eerily balanced Depression product. (27)

The protagonist of the film is a naïve countryside girl who, at the end, is selected to lead the show to success. The final message seems to convey the idea that one single individual is capable of marking the difference, and that even the most unexpected person can achieve not only his/her dream, but can also help others to realise theirs.

The world of show business is presented as a *microcosm* and the figure of the Star stands out as a representative of the dreams of the audience, as a role model that has achieved fame, wealth, and social recognition. In other words, the Star represents the Dream come true. Nevertheless, Hollywood seemed to become wary of this figure, especially when appealing to young women who dreamt about becoming successful divas. In films like *Ziegfeld Girl* (1941) and *A Star is Born* (1954), Hollywood showed the dark side of fame and punished those who used stardom as a synonym for dishonesty or misbehaviour.

##### 5. "WE KNOW WE BELONG TO THE LAND": THE FOLK MUSICAL

Hard work continued to be praised in subsequent subgenres. But with the announcement of war, the theatrical and the cinematographic worlds tried to appeal to their audiences by broadening their settings and calling to a national past that would awake the collective memory of their public. The Folk Musical presented a story set in a mythologized version of the American past. As Rick Altman (1987) states,

Folk musical sets are characterized by a conventionalized realism in which conventions are borrowed from the vocabulary of American regional art. Instead of recalling the visions of the spectator's personal past, the folk musical brings back instead those works of popular art through which previous generations have taught us how to see the American past: postcards, engravings, calendars, magazines, photographs, paintings, and films. (278)

We can argue that this subtype was born in Broadway with a play that has later become a landmark in the musical tradition. *Oklahoma!* (1943), by Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein II, broke many of the rules that governed the genre at that time. The reason for its success had much to do with the sociological context in which it was presented. This musical was produced during World War II, and it symbolized *home*. It made the audience remember, as choreographer Agnes De Mille said, "what they were gonna die for" (*Broadway: The American Musical*, 2004). At the same time, it was connected with one powerful myth, that of the pioneer, and with one of the

first versions of the American Dream: the conquest of new territory, controlling the wilderness of a new land and building a home out of nothing. According to Strook, “in the self-making, ambitious tradition of America and its folk heroes—the search for a better life, the trope of creating something out of nothing, of taming the wilderness and bending it to the will—is the ‘American dream.’ On a broad scale, it is the folk narrative with which Americans want to be identified” (2003, 4).

#### 6. THE 1950S AND THE “GOLDEN AGE” OF THE HOLLYWOOD MUSICAL

During the Cold War years, cinema became an important tool in spreading American values and the American way of life. Films like *Oklahoma!* (1955) connected audiences with their own history, but they also sent a message to the rest of the world as they inundated international cinemas with their particular way of viewing life. Nevertheless, these were conservative years, a period in which society tried to recover the traditional values that had been lost during the war. The American way of life that was portrayed in films during the fifties involved the presentation of stereotypes like *the breadwinner* or *the housewife*, the foundation of a happy family life, the purchase of a house in suburbia and the defence of a capitalist economic system.

Although all musicals created during the Studio Era revolve around a love story, it is not until the fifties when marriage and family life are brought into the spotlight and made the central topics of films. The Dream that is presented is a shared Dream, in which an individual can only find happiness in a successful, happy marriage. Thus, despite the fact that musicals during this decade defied for the first time the institution of marriage by presenting problematic relationships and divorced couples (e.g., *Kiss Me Kate*—a couple of divorced actors; *High Society*—two divorced socialites; *Carousel*—a man who beats his wife, etc.), the final message continued to protect white, capitalist, patriarchal values.

#### 7. CONCLUSIONS

Cinema has always been an excellent example of what is denominated as cultural imperialism, defined by Benshoff and Griffin as “the promotion and imposition of ideals and ideologies throughout the world via cultural means” (2009, 29-30). By using one of the most appealing notions of the American culture, the promotion of the American Dream, the US have managed to defend their ideological institutions not only within their own country, but also at an international level.

Often described as “escapist,” musicals during the Studio Era were able to connect with audiences at an emotional level through their music, through the topics or the thematic myth they presented. The different subgenres discussed here are good examples of how the genre has evolved in accordance with the changing mentality of the society in which the films were produced.

During the 1920s and 30s, the Cinderella and the Backstage musicals presented modern fairy tales adapted to the everyday American life. They promoted a message of hope and made the audience believe that the American Dream was within their grasp, it only took hard work and determination.

The Folk musical connected with people at a different level, since it had more to do with their collective identity as a nation than with their personal ambitions. The exaltation of the land brought to the surface patriotic connotations, and the audience could find pride in their past and a reason to fight in the present.

Although it has often been argued that the American Dream has been tied to a consumerist vision that has more to do with socioeconomic status, its basic notions are still the seed of many different stories that people are willing to see. The musical genre has benefited from this idea and has given audiences what they needed during different periods of time. According to John Lahr (2002), “The whole point about the musical is selling America, showing America its dream come true. Stories about where someone starts at a disadvantage and through a combination of goodness, forbearance and luck, triumphs. It’s the triumph of self. It’s the dream. That’s what America is and Broadway is always telling that story” (*Broadway: The American Musical*, 2004).

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Can We Find Kafka's Seed in Coetzee's  
*Life & Times of Michael K*?

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One of the reasons why J.M. Coetzee is one of the greatest living authors in English is probably the use of intertextuality in his novels. This essay will focus on how *Coetzee's Life & Times of Michael K* interacts with some of Kafka's main works such as *The Burrow*, *The Castle*, *A Hunger Artist* or *The Process* and departs from them as well. The parallels are numerous and very interesting to analyse.

Keywords: J.M. Coetzee; Franz Kafka; *Life & Times of Michael K*; intertextuality; Comparative Literature

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J.M. Coetzee is a widely praised novelist born in South Africa. Being probably one of the most cultured living writers and prominent literary critics, he belongs to a generation of South African writers, including the Nobel laureate Nadine Gordimer, Athol Fugard and Alan Paton, who have criticised apartheid, but unlike probably no other South African writer, he has absorbed post-structural and post-modern strategies. Obviously, there exist numerous reasons that could account for his reputation as one of the greatest living authors in English. One of them, which numerous critics have noticed and praised, especially Derek Attridge, is the use of intertextuality in his novels. The most obvious example is probably his novel *Foe*, a postcolonial rewriting of Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* from the perspective of a woman named Susan, which is also the perfect example of Coetzee's explicit questioning of authorial power.

When one reads Coetzee's novels, there is always a classical character hidden in the plot. Just to mention one very interesting example, Gayatri Spivak has analysed the existing intertextuality between the female protagonists in Coetzee's *Disgrace* and Shakespeare's *King Lear* in relation to silence. She also puts the main character in *Disgrace*, David Lurie, in an intertextual relationship with Kafka's K in *The Trial* for its symbolic end of civilization. Coetzee has been largely influenced by some of the classics, especially by North American and European modernist writers. As some critics have noticed, like for example Derek Attridge in *J.M. Coetzee and the Ethics of Reading*, Beckett and Kafka are probably two of Coetzee's most important literary

precursors.<sup>1</sup> This paper will address *Life & Times of Michael K*'s intertextuality, which has been widely studied and discussed. *Life & Times of Michael K* was published in 1983, when his reputation as a great writer had already been established. The book itself won the Booker prize and Coetzee then became, with *Disgrace*, the first author to win this award twice.

*Life & Times of Michael K* tells the story of a young man who is born with a hare lip, and after having been rejected by his own mother, he spends his childhood in a boarding school for unfortunate children where he receives no attention. He becomes a gardener and in the middle of what seems to be a civil war, he then decides to take his ill mother to the place where she had spent her childhood. On their way there, she dies, but he decides to continue the trip on his own. When he finally arrives at a deserted farm in Prince Albert, he starts to grow vegetables to feed himself and becomes somehow happy for the first time in his life.

We have already mentioned that Beckett and Kafka are two of his most obvious influences. Gilbert Yeoh, who emphasizes Coetzee's modernist ties with Beckett, asserts that both Beckett in *Molloy* and Coetzee in *Life & Times of Michael K* question the representation of reality and that there exist similarities between both main characters. He explains, "Like *Molloy*, *Michael K* recounts the episodic encounters of an itinerant tramp-like protagonist who ekes out a vagrant and minimal existence. The boggy Irish landscape reappears as the South African Karoo; Molloy and Moran's bicycles substitute K's self-constructed barrow" (2000, 121). However, it is the intertextual Kafkaesque resonances we are going to focus on. One of Coetzee's most reputable literary critics, David Attwell, finds a parallelism between Coetzee's and Kafka's novels, not only in their allegorical design, but also in their questioning of authority:

There are obvious links between the state of civil anomie through which South Africa is passing in *Michael K* and the nightmarish world of *The Trial* and *The Castle*. Doubtless, "K" is a nod to these works; *The Castle* seems particularly relevant with its concern with the authority of the document, in the form of a letter, and the way texts and stories circulate. However, the pertinence of Kafka is more specific: we find it focused in his stories, particularly "The Burrow." (1993, 101)

When reading Coetzee and Kafka, one realizes that their protagonists are in disagreement with the society they live in and tend to become isolated from it. They embody values different to those prevailing in their oppressive environments and have to suffer the consequences. The society depicted in *Life & Times of Michael K* is ineffective and corrupt and this is very typical in Kafka's novels as well. When Michael's

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<sup>1</sup> Coetzee is now working on a collection of novels which have influenced him, their authors being: Daniel Defoe, Gustave Flaubert, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Franz Kafka, Heinrich von Kleist, Ford Madox Ford, Robert Musil, Lev Tolstói, Robert Walser and Patrick White.

mother leaves hospital, they have to wait for hours to get a bus home, although she is sick and can hardly stand up. To leave their city, they need a permit that never arrives, just as K in *The Castle* needs a permit to stay at the hostel when he arrives the first night, but he is not allowed to ask for it because the count is sleeping.

Another similarity between both authors is that their novels show numerous instruments of control and that these are ineffective and corrupt. Dominic Head in *The Cambridge Introduction to J.M. Coetzee* recognizes a profound Foucauldian preoccupation with the negative role of institutions and administrations in *Life & Times of Michael K*. This, of course, is one of Kafka's main criticisms in most of his works. Even Michael's doctor, whose authority and wisdom will be questioned in the novel, compares Michael to a stone that is passed from one hand to another and this obviously has very negative connotations. He is interpreted as an object—without a will—which society wants to control: "He is like a stone, a pebble that, having lain around quietly minding its own business since the dawn of time, is now suddenly picked up and tossed randomly from hand to hand. . . . He passes through these institutions and camps and hospitals and God knows what else like a stone" (Coetzee [1983] 1998, 135).

On the other hand, it may or may not be a coincidence that the letter K of the protagonist coincides with the letter K of both main characters in Kafka's *The Castle* and *The Trial*. Even though Coetzee mentioned in an interview with Tony Morphet in 1987, "I don't believe Kafka has an exclusive right to the letter K," he has admitted Kafka's influence on his novels and good readers may have noticed that to understand Coetzee's texts, we do need to read between the lines. Apart from this, he published a critical article on Kafka's "The Burrow" with the title "Time, Tense and Aspect in Kafka's 'The Burrow'" in 1981, just two years before he published *Life & Times of Michael K*. He has also addressed Kafka through a revision of different translations of *The Castle* and *The Trial*, which was published in *Stranger Shores: Essays 1986-1999* in 2001.

A critic who is against this interpretation of the letter K is Nadine Gordimer, who mentioned in her article "The Idea of Gardening": "Michael K (the initial probably stands for Kotze or Koekemoer and has no reference, nor need it have, to Kafka) is not Everyman" ([1984] 1998, 1). Of course she is right, above all because Michael does not behave like everyman, although the title reminds us of a novelistic tradition where the protagonist represents a society and may suggest a Bildungsroman. This is obvious from the very beginning of the novel, when the description of him makes it clear he stands out from society. Michael, like most of Coetzee's protagonists, represents a castaway, a person who does not accept most of society's standards, or at least questions them, and fights to live up to his own premises. This, of course, reminds us of Kafka's characters, people who stand out from society and its arbitrary system of bureaucracy, and whose uniqueness "disappears" in a civilisation that does not allow people to live according to their own beliefs. However, he is the only character of

all Coetzee's protagonists up to now who also stands for the dispossessed, and more particularly, the colonised.

According to Dominic Head, his resistance to becoming assimilated in his social and political milieu depicts Michael as an anti-hero "whose *raison d'être* is to resist all forms of social connection and political affiliation" (2009, 55). Although most readers would understand he is black, there is only one reference to his skin colour and this does not appear in all editions of the novel.<sup>2</sup> Head explains that this absence of explicit reference to his racial identity, which colonialism understood as a binary concept (black or white), follows the Derridean criticism of classification (2009, 44). Laura Wright goes even further in her article "Minor literature and The Skeleton of Sense: Anorexia, Franz Kafka's *A Hunger Artist* and J.M. Coetzee's *Life & Times of Michael K*" and explains that Michael challenges not only race but also gender classifications since there is no explicit reference to his masculinity or femininity.

Apart from the letter K or the parable form, other more obvious Kafkaesque motifs appear interwoven in the text: his parable form or his uniqueness in a society that isolates him, but, more obviously, the resemblance to Kafka's short-story "The Burrow," a book which Coetzee has studied and written about as I mentioned earlier, and *A Hunger Artist*. Probably the literary critic who has best provided us with an exemplary insight into the Kafkaesque intertextuality in *Life & Times of Michael K* is Patricia Merivale in her article "Audible Palimpsests: Coetzee's Kafka," where she mentions that: "*Life & Times of Michael K* plainly deploys the more postmodern intertextual strategies of palimpsest and bricolage, so that we may read the tectonic plates of Kafkan episodes as they slide across each other, submerged, yet legible, under Coetzee's text" (1996, 160). Like the main character in "The Burrow," Michael suffers from an inner enemy, which is his own health (headaches and weakness) and an outer enemy he becomes obsessed with. In both cases, the enemy is the ultimate reason to hide and dig the tunnels; in *Life & Times of Michael K* the enemy materialises just once, in a group of soldiers who recruit Michael against his will.

On the other hand, his efforts to hide from society and from its instruments of control are linked with his wish to disappear and leave no trace on earth, in other words, with the great love and respect he starts to feel towards nature. After arriving at the farm, he kills a goat and then discovers that he is repelled by its flesh. He decides not to "kill such large animals" (Coetzee [1983] 1998, 57). He then starts working the deserted farm and begins to reduce his meals drastically, being able to eat only what he has produced himself or small insects. Here we can draw a parallelism with Kafka's *A Hunger Artist*, where an artist decides to starve to show what lengths he will go to in order to prove himself a true artist, and finishes up unnoticed in the end. Laura Wright points out that both characters starve for a political purpose: "Not eating in

<sup>2</sup> "On the charge sheet he was listed: Michael Visagie-CM-40-NFA-Unemployed" (Coetzee 1998, 70), CM standing for "a coloured male."

the face of food availability marks food refusal as subversion and situates starvation as both an affront to and a withdrawal from dominant ideological audience" (2001, 110). In spite of the similarities, we believe that the reasons why they starve are different. The hunger artist starves to prove to himself that he can do it. Michael's starvation is an ethical quest to disappear and become part of nature, as his mother did when he scattered her ashes on the ground, exactly where he later started to cultivate the earth. Michael starves because he does not want to kill animals. This is a very important subject in Coetzee's novels. If we have established a hierarchy where humans treat other human beings as second-class citizens and consume animals, Michael shows us how a normal person can live without becoming a slave and without taking advantage of his prerogative as a human being over certain kinds of animals. We would like to interpret his acts as a protest against the way we have structured society and the economy. However, they both mention that they have stopped eating because they cannot find the food that can really satisfy them:

I had to fast. I can't do anything else," said the hunger artist. "Just look at you," said the supervisor, "why can't you do anything else?" "Because," said the hunger artist, lifting his head a little and, with his lips pursed as if for a kiss, speaking right into the supervisor's ear so that he wouldn't miss anything, "because I couldn't find a food which I enjoyed. If had found that, believe me, I would not have made a spectacle of myself and would have eaten to my heart's content, like you and everyone else." (Kafka 1923, 7)

Another main difference we need to point out is that Michael K is alive at the end of the story and the hunger artist has died, unnoticed, from starvation. This fact, according to Wright, separates both characters in their fates, because although it is unlikely, in Coetzee's novel there is hope that another sort of life is possible.

We can find another similarity with Kafka's characters in *Michael K*. Like Georg Samsa in *The Metamorphosis*—who becomes an insect-like creature and is despised by his family—Michael is compared to different insects throughout the novel: "a termite" ([1983] 1998, 66), "an ant" (83), "a snail" (112), "a parasite" (116) and "an insect" (135). The protagonists of both *In the Heart of the Country*, his second novel, and *Life & Times of Michael K* are compared to insects, but we may also assume that Coetzee has gained an interest in animal rights in his later novels. While this may be another point in common between Coetzee and Kafka, it is an area that remains, to date, largely unresearched. One critic who has looked into this connection is Richard Barney, who points out in his article "Between Swift and Kafka: Animals and the Politics of Coetzee's Elusive Fiction" that both Swift and Kafka are Coetzee's literary sources to explore and defend animal rights. In his novel *The Lives of the Animals*, the character Elizabeth Costello draws on Kafka's short story "A Report to the Academy" to argue for a more humane treatment of animals.

Throughout this essay, I have tried to show that Coetzee is a master of intertextuality and that *Life & Times of Michael K* shows great influence from some of Kafka's novels and preoccupations. If Kafka questions the dominant Western cultural edifice, Coetzee questions the cosmetic morality of modern civilization and provides us with more layers with which to interpret his work. This is due to the fact that he has been influenced by various cultural movements, such as post-colonialism, existentialism and feminism, which started in the second half of the twentieth century and which have questioned relations of power. Obviously Kafka, being a modernist writer who died in 1924, never had access to any of those movements. As a consequence of having absorbed these ideas, one of Coetzee's main concerns is to reveal the violence implicit in discourses of power and its representation, but also racial and gender issues and, more lately, animal rights. This has made his sophisticated novels—even the most ostensibly realistic ones—not only hermetic and oblique, but also symbolic and eminently ethical. For these reasons, he has been widely misinterpreted by some intellectuals, such as Nadine Gordimer or Benita Parry. These authors have charged him with evading the South African political and social reality, especially in the novel *Life & Times of Michael K*. If it is obvious that if the reader can enjoy the references to Kafka's texts, it is precisely his creative adaptation of these allusions within the South African reality that makes the novel an outstanding piece of art. Furthermore, many critics have unfortunately failed to understand that Coetzee's novels do not offer explicit political solutions. They strive to question the politics existing within traditional literary representations.

It may be easy to read Coetzee's novels, but it is quite complex to interpret them because Coetzee is an unconventional and politically incorrect writer. *Life & Times of Michael K* has been criticised for being apolitical because the protagonist does not want to participate either in his historical context, or in the society which has tried to appropriate his mind and his body as a means of strength on different occasions. However, the truth is that Michael eludes all types of colonization, whether it is the colonization of the body through labour camps, which he manages to escape from, or the colonization of the mind through the doctor that represents wisdom. Michael, like most Kafkaesque characters, depicts an absurd society where policemen steal from people and nurses show no empathy for their patients. Nevertheless, Michael is probably Coetzee's most political character of all. If he operates outside a historical reality, it is because he needs to find and create a space where he can become a free man. It is more than significant that he is only able to survive and eat the food he has grown and harvested himself. He is not a conqueror wishing to explore the new world and steal its treasures, like Robinson Crusoe. He is a humble man trying to survive through the work he produces with his bare hands, being honest and living according to his beliefs. Being probably black, he stands for a new political and economic perspective, where blacks can return to the land that was taken away from them and live in peace. Dominic Head states: "The kind of gardening he practises is

inherently political in that it stands in opposition to the kind of farming the Visages practised" (2009, 58). The truth is Michael practises an economy of subsistence as opposed to accumulation and capitalism. The main difference if we compare Michael to some of Kafka's protagonists is that Michael stands for new hope, despite other interpretations; he has learned his lesson and can therefore be interpreted as a symbol of the colonised or oppressed and their power to become free, at least in a symbolic way; he finds himself at the end of imperialism: he starts the novel as an anti-hero, deprived of love and physically marked by his harelip, and finishes the novel as a postcolonial hero, deprived of a history but wishing to explore the world as a free person.

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“A Fictitious Title Not Very Dissimilar to the Real”: Edgar Allan Poe’s  
Influence on Paul Auster’s Novel *The New York Trilogy*

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The aim of the following contribution is to analyze the intertextual relation between Paul Auster’s *The New York Trilogy* and Edgar Allan Poe’s short story “William Wilson” in the postmodern context of the novel. This article studies how this influence illustrates both a reinterpretation of the literary genre and Auster’s theory of writing. Moreover, the intention is to focus the analysis on how Auster uses Poe’s short stories in order to redefine the issues of identity of the character through the existence of the concept of the double and its fictional consequences.

Keywords: contemporary American literature; postmodern literature; intertextuality; comparative literature; literary theory

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Paul Auster’s first novel, *The New York Trilogy*, is one of the most important works in the literary career of the American writer. The most relevant influences in his works are the American Renaissance and specifically the reading of authors such as Nathaniel Hawthorne, Edgar Allan Poe or Herman Melville. In the case of Edgar Allan Poe, from the beginning of the first novel, his short stories seem to write, together with Auster, the lines of the plot. Many critics, such as Anne Hopfzapel or Bernd Herzogenrath, point to the fact that the detective fiction that Auster constructs in this novel has its most immediate referent in Poe’s short stories “The Murders in the Rue Morgue” (1841) and “MS. Found in a Bottle” (1833). Apart from this, the central character of the novel, Daniel Quinn, writes detective novels under the pseudonym of William Wilson, making explicit the connection with Poe’s short story “William Wilson” and, furthermore, the relation with the novel’s plot, as this duplication of a character introduces the topic of doubles into Auster’s work. My intention is to analyze how Auster uses Poe’s short story in order to create and discuss his particular concept of identity, and to consider the notion of the double as a way to construct Auster’s theory of writing.

*Ghosts* is presented as an example of anti-detective story. The protagonist, Blue, is a private detective hired by a man called White to solve a very simple case: watch what a man called Black does and report his actions and movements. The case starts to get complicated when Blue finds that there is nothing to report, since Black spends most of his time sitting in a room and writing. The narrator's first impressions of the two characters suggest an indirect relationship. Both are described as men of the same age, Black with a "face pleasant enough, with nothing to distinguish it from a thousand other faces one sees every day" (Auster 2004, 141), a statement that transforms Black in a normal man, much to Blue's disappointment, since "he is still secretly hoping to discover that Black is a madman" (2004, 141). Basically, this description makes both characters equal and each easily identifiable with the other. Some lines later, the narrator describes how the case starts to become boring and the protagonist inactive. This situation opens a new perspective in the relationship between the two central characters: "Now, when he himself is the boss, this is what he gets: a case with nothing to do. For to watch someone read and write is in effect to do nothing. The only way for Blue to have a sense of what is happening is to be inside Black's mind, to see what he is thinking, and that of course is impossible" (2004, 141).

Here, the narrator suggests that Blue get into Black's mind so as to see how it works as a way to solve the case. It could be argued that what seems to be an impossible alternative in the investigation turns into a possible interpretation for the novel, that is, the construction of Blue and Black as doubles in this fiction. While the topic of the double is found in many of Auster's works, it could be stated that in *Ghosts* we find one of the most explicit examples. Several critics follow this line of analysis. Carsten Springer in his work *Crises: The Works of Paul Auster* (2001) proposes a latent schizophrenia in the character that "in the apparent personality split into Blue and his *doppelgänger* Black, the observer and the observed, corresponds to the breakdown of the connection between signifier and signified" (2001, 117). This hypothesis accords with Aliko Varvogli's interpretation of the protagonists as metaphors for creator and object created: "Blue and Black, who both sit in their rooms looking at each other and writing, reflect the situation of the author as creator of fictions. On the other hand, he is the one who looks, enquires and records, but he is also the one looking at himself writing. In this sense, Blue and Black are two aspects of the same entity" (2001, 49). Although both critics propose different creative and theoretical perspectives on the subject, the two coincide on the explicit complementary duality of the character. In this context, the analysis of the text as an anti-detective story is left behind in order to focus on it from a more existentialist and metafictional perspective.

Blue's most significant task becomes to write what the other character does. In this sense establishing a creative relationship between them in terms of inspiration and object created, where Blue, in his act of watching and writing, is inspired by another character, Black, apparently his double, who the reader learns at the end of

the novel, is doing the same. This thesis would coincide with Springer's analysis of the two characters as signifier and signified. In relation to this, the narrator comments, "If thinking is perhaps too strong a word at this point, a slightly more modest term—speculation, for example, would not be far from the mark. To speculate, from the Latin *speculates*, meaning mirror or looking glass. For in spying out at Black across the street, it is as though Blue were looking into a mirror, and instead of merely watching another, he finds that he is also watching himself" (Auster 2004, 146).

According to Varvogli, "Blue is watching himself in two ways: since he does not have to follow Black, as he sits in his room he starts thinking about his own life; he is also watching himself because Black is doing exactly the same thing: like Blue, he sits in a room, takes notes, reads, and looks out of his window" (2001, 49). The text explicitly compares and identifies the two characters with each other, thereby making Blue and Black doubles and, furthermore, Black becomes the projection of Blue's mind. This would link with one of Blue's first reflections about the case when he realizes that the only way to find out something about Black is by entering his mind. Black's room can thus be considered a metaphor for Black's and Blue's mind.

In relation to this, Ilana Shiloh asserts in her book *Paul Auster and Postmodern Quest* (2002) that Blue's task is framed more in the existentialist thought than in the detective fiction genre, quoting Sartre and his concept of existentialism and concluding that "The quest is not about crime, but about the self and its relation with the Other. And the role of the Other—for Sartre and for Auster—is ambiguous. He is the subject's salvation, and his damnation. While the Other's look makes me a gift of my identity, it at the same time destabilizes my universe" (2002, 62). Thus, it could be argued that two lines of thought can be brought together to interpret the relationship between Black and Blue: that of the double which is then employed for the protagonist to journey into his own mind in a quest for his own identity.

Contrary to Auster's representation of the double, Poe presents two independent characters in the fiction but with a mysterious connection. From the first lines of the story, the narrator calls himself William Wilson, an extremely important detail bearing in mind that the story introduces another character with the same name. Moreover, it is also in the first lines where the narrator creates a gloomy, mysterious and frightening atmosphere in relation to what the central character, William Wilson, has to tell: "The fair page now lying before me need not be sullied with my real appellation. This has been already too much an object for the scorn—for the horror—for the detestation of my race" (Poe 2003, 110). Some lines later, he continues, "I would not, if I could, here or to-day, embody a record of my later years of unspeakable misery, and unpardonable crime" (2003, 110). However, there are significant differences between the two stories, the first being the fact that in "William Wilson" the two Williams are physically equal and get to know each other from the beginning. The narrator explains,

The words were venom in my ears; and when, upon the day of my arrival, a second William Wilson came also to the academy, I felt angry with him for bearing the name, and doubly disgusted with the name because a stranger bore it, who would be the cause of its twofold repetition, who would be constantly in my presence, and whose concerns, in the ordinary routine of the school business, must inevitably, on account of the detestable coincidence, be often confounded with my own. (2003, 117)

Firstly, what bothers the narrator is the name as a symbol of his identity and usurpation of his existential space since as he says, “it is the cause of a twofold repetition.” What seems to be a simple coincidence becomes illogical and inexplicable when the two characters have the same physical appearance despite any familial connection particularly when people start to confuse them and that implies a total dependence of the central character with the other William Wilson:

The feeling of vexation thus engendered grew stronger with every circumstance tending to show resemblance, moral or physical, between my rival and myself. I had not then discovered the remarkable fact that we were of the same age; but I saw that we were of the same height, and I perceived that we were even singularly alike in general contour of person and outline of feature. I was galled, too, by the rumor touching a relationship, which had grown current in the upper forms. In a word, nothing could more seriously disturb me, (although I scrupulously concealed such disturbance,) than any allusion to a similarity of mind, person, or condition existing between us. (2003, 117)

This passage reminds of the narrator’s first recounting of Blue’s first impression of Black. The physical resemblance between the characters in the two narrations is treated slightly differently. Whereas in “William Wilson” the narrator depicts the explicit physical similarity, considering it rather mysterious and frightening, in *Ghosts* the narrator insinuates a parallelism between the two characters which never confirms a physical similarity. However, in the two cases, the main character seems to have a dependent relationship on his other who represents a part of the central character’s identity. The narrator of Poe’s story is trapped in a constant rivalry with his other while Blue is trapped in a constant search for his. It could be therefore asserted that the other, in these two cases, acts as a psychological projection of the character. In the case of Poe’s story, it is projected in the text to represent one aspect of the character’s self; in Auster’s novel, it is a projection of inspiration and the act of writing. Specifically, in the case of “William Wilson,” I think it is relevant to mention the fact that the narrator and his other are presented as being like twins. In his article “William Wilson and the Disintegration of the Self” (2002), Robert Coskren asserts, “The imitation of appearance is a necessary requirement for Wilson as a psychological construct, for it must present to the imagination a self apparently identical to its own.

But the repugnance of the narrator is again the reaction of the inner self to a vision of itself as a particular being.” (2002, 159)

In my opinion, it is in this confrontation when the conflict of the plot resolves. This is depicted in both stories in the final scene; the final scene of *Ghosts* in fact being a rewriting of that of “William Wilson” end. In the second half of *Ghosts*, the meetings between Black and Blue are more frequent. However, they never meet with their real identities, as Blue constantly disguises himself as different characters. Whereas in “William Wilson” the two doubles meet in a masquerade in Rome, the encounter in *Ghosts* is more violent. The central character, Blue, decides to usurp and break into Black’s room. There Black is waiting for him with his face hidden behind a mask, as the double of William Wilson wears a “mask of black silk” (Poe 2003, 129) covering his face. Surprisingly, Black is waiting for Blue and in a revealing confession he tells Blue that he needed him from the beginning “to remind me of what I was supposed to be doing. Every time I looked up, you were there, watching me, following me, always in sight, boring into me with your eyes. You were the whole world to me, Blue, and I turned you into my death. You’re the one thing that doesn’t change, the one thing that turns everything inside out” (Auster 2004, 196). Here, Black explains clearly how his whole existence depends on being on Blue’s sight, adding that this has brought about his death. From a creative perspective, this mutual interdependence refers to the relationship between them as creator and object created and as such Black would be claiming his entity as object created, asserting that his existence is only possible if his creator reminds him of what he was supposed to be doing.

The end is unavoidable and the forthcoming elimination of the two characters involves a violent act in both cases. The most noteworthy event of the two final fights is the removal of the masks. In other words, the whole final fight only takes place in order to remove a symbolic mask that covers the real identity of the character. In the situation of William Wilson, the discovery is both frightening and astonishing since what the protagonist finds out is his own image in the character of his double:

A large mirror—so at first it seemed to me in my confusion—now stood where none had been perceptible before; and, as I stepped up to it in extremity of terror, mine own image, but with features all pale and dabbled in blood, advanced to meet me with a feeble and tottering gait. Thus, it appeared, I say, but was not. It was my antagonist—it was Wilson, who then stood before me in the agonies of his dissolution. (Poe 2003, 129-30)

The mirror as symbol produces a psychological effect since William Wilson does not recognize himself face to face in the image of the protagonist but rather as a reflection in a mirror. This creates the alternative of an open ending in which the definite identification of the two characters is not completed. The same effect is

created by Auster in *Ghosts* in which he borrows the resource of the mask in order to suggest an open ending:

Eventually, when Blue's fury begins to abate and he sees what he has done, he cannot say for certain whether Black is alive or dead. He removes the mask from Black's face and puts his ear against his mouth, listening for the sound of Black's breath. There seems to be something, but he can't tell if it's coming from Black or himself. If he's alive now, Blue thinks, it won't be for long. And if he's dead, then so be it. (2004, 197)

In conclusion, the two stories base their plots in the idea of the double and how it represents a projection of the central character's mind. While for Edgar Allan Poe the creation of a twin character turns into the projection of the central character's self and a psychological game, for Auster the double is also a projection of the central character's mind but in order to justify a process of writing creation. In terms of influence, I believe that although Auster mentions "William Wilson" in the first novel of the trilogy, he experiments with a rewriting of Poe's short story in the second, not only by using the topic of the double but also by introducing parallel scenes to complete his plot. Thus, it can be asserted that Auster proposes a postmodern version of the detective fiction started by Poe and also a new version of his idea of the double that apart from representing a projection of the central character's mind becomes a metaphor for the process of writing creation.

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Regaining Identity through Performance:  
A Feminist Reading of Don DeLillo's *The Body Artist*

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Criticism of *The Body Artist* has to date centered on the protagonist's experience of trauma and on the novel's form, poetic nature and self-conscious use of language. This paper focuses on the analysis of the self, the body and gender as fluid entities and on the way in which bodily performance allows Lauren, the protagonist of the novel, to reconcile with the presence abiding in her home and to regain her own identity as a woman and an artist.

Keywords: *The Body Artist*; Don DeLillo; identity; gender studies; Gothic fiction; intertextuality

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The publication of *The Body Artist* (2001) followed the immense *Underworld* (1997), a novel of more than eight hundred pages “that encompasses some five decades of history” and “is the story of one man, one family, but it is also the story of what happened to America in the second half of the twentieth century” (Kakutani 1997, 1).<sup>1</sup> *The Body Artist* is, by contrast, DeLillo's shortest novel to date. Yet, the novel's length is not the only significant change many critics have signaled with regard to DeLillo's prior narrative production. Its apparent turning away from the usual sociopolitical concerns, which had been the trademark of the author up to that point, has likewise been a cause for astonishment and even thwarted expectations: “Our sense of the importance, even the necessity, of having a writer like DeLillo in our midst makes the disappointment of *The Body Artist* especially keen. The book *is* a disappointment” (Kunkel 2001, 1; emphasis in original). Showing less regret but no less bafflement, Maria Russo warned readers of *Salon* magazine that, “Some of Don DeLillo's fans—the ones who worship the elegant, elusive sweep of his novels, their all-encompassing but somehow serene paranoia—will be puzzled by his new book. “The Body Artist” [*sic*] is short, even modest. It focuses almost relentlessly on one person's consciousness, with little interest in the forces of history and culture” (2001, 1). However, not all critical approaches to the novel have exhibited this same tone

<sup>1</sup> GENEID Research Project: Género e identidad en los lenguajes del cine y la literatura en inglés y español. PROFAL13/21, Universidad de La Rioja, sponsored by Banco Santander.

of disenchantment. Tim Adams (2001) presented *The Body Artist* as “Don DeLillo’s intriguing new novel.” J. Philip Nel (2002) drew special attention to the novel’s form, poetic nature and self-conscious use of language. Heath Atchley (2004) emphasized the novel’s attempt to explore the relationship between the loss of language and the experience of loss in mourning. Cleopatra Kontoulis and Eliza Kitis (2011) examined the linguistic techniques used in the novel to effectively subvert our common sense perceptions. In the following pages I suggest a feminist reading of *The Body Artist* which revisits the novel from a hitherto unexplored angle. It is my contention that *The Body Artist* strives to overcome the inadequacies of language and narrative to represent the inner consciousness and emotions of twenty-first century human beings as well as the fluid, always-in-process nature of their bodies, genders and identities. Thus, instead of offering the reader either a cohesive, temporally ordered narrative that would explain the main protagonist’s experience, or a fragmented, chaotic narrative that would point to the impossibility of the protagonist explaining her experience by means of language, the novel self-consciously exposes these two modes of representation as inefficient. It explores as well the potential of body language in theatrical performance as an alternative mode of expression which allows for the representation of the self, the body and gender as fluid constructs, rather than givens, much in line with Judith Butler’s theories of gender performativity (1988; 1990; 1993) and her more recent work “on the question of what it might mean to undo restrictively normative conceptions of sexual and gendered life” (2004, 1).

It is not by chance that DeLillo chooses a body artist as the central character in the story, nor is it casual that, in the course of the narrative, the reader witnesses the protagonist’s physical and psychological transformation in preparation for her powerful public performance “in a dungeon space at the Boston Centre for the Arts” (DeLillo 2002, 103). The plot of *The Body Artist* can be summarized in a few lines: the body artist of the title is a 36-year-old woman called Lauren Hartke, recently married to Rey Robles, a 64-year-old film director of Spanish origin who has committed suicide by shooting himself with a gun “in the Manhattan apartment of his first wife” (27). After the funeral, Lauren moves back to the old house by the seaside where she had been hearing strange noises and which Rey had either put aside as figments of Lauren’s imagination or explained rationally as animal noises. Alone in the house, Lauren encounters a figure who “violates the limits of the human” (100). He is half human, half ghost, both young and old, at times a boy, at times a man, and seems to have been living in a room at the topmost part of the house for almost as long as the couple has. Lauren calls him Mr. Tuttle because he is unable to construct coherent linguistic utterances. Yet, he has two rare, somewhat uncanny abilities. On the one hand, he can mimic Lauren and Rey’s voices and reproduces disconnected pieces of the conversations they engaged in whilst in the house before Rey’s death. On the other, he manipulates time to such an extent that he makes Lauren think that “he lived in overlapping realities” (82). Lauren’s strange, sometimes uneasy relationship with

Mr. Tuttle parallels her physical and psychological preparation for her breathtaking performance, significantly called “Body Time,” after which Mr. Tuttle disappears from the house in as silent a manner as he had entered it.

*The Body Artist* recreates the eerie atmosphere of Gothic fiction. The action begins “in the morning or any time, on a strong bright day after a storm” (25), has a man committing suicide and is set inside an old house by the seaside which hides a ghostly figure that is not a figment of Lauren’s imagination, as Rey might suggest, but physically real:

She found him the next day in a small bedroom off the large empty room at the far end of the hall on the third floor. He was smallish and fine-bodied and at first she thought he was a kid, sandy-haired and roused from deep sleep, or medicated maybe.

He sat on the edge of the bed in his underwear. In the first seconds she thought he was inevitable. She felt her way back in time to the earlier indications that there was someone in the house and *she arrived at this instant, unerringly, with her perceptions all sorted and endorsed.* (DeLillo 2002, 41; emphasis added)

Lauren has the impression that he may be “medicated” and she even thinks of calling “hospitals and clinics, psychiatric facilities, to ask about a missing patient” (72). The text also revisits the figure of the “madwoman in the attic” by proving Lauren’s perceptions right and by locating a “*madman/boy*” in the “attic” instead. Being significant in itself, this gender reversal is not the only disruption of the “madwoman in the attic” figure. Unlike Bertha Mason, Rochester’s first wife in Charlotte Brontë’s *Jane Eyre* (1847), who, deprived by patriarchal discourse of the capacity to give voice to her desires, sexual and otherwise, is accused of hysteria and is kept locked by her husband in the attic and thrown into madness, Lauren is no “sexual hysteric,” as she self-consciously tells both herself and the reader: “Maybe it was all an erotic reverie. The whole thing was a city built for a dirty thought. She was a sexual hysteric, ha. Not that she believed it” (124). Almost at the end of the novel and having got ready for her ultimate body performance, Lauren encourages herself, and the reader, to trust her own sanity as she voices her sexual desires in a very explicit manner:<sup>2</sup>

He sits on the edge of the bed in his underwear, lighting the last cigarette of the day.

Are you unable to imagine such a thing even when you see it?

Is the thing that’s happening so far outside experience that you’re forced to make excuses for it, or give it the petty credentials of some misperception?

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<sup>2</sup> In this respect, *The Body Artist* intertextually relates to what academics have called “female Gothic fiction,” which, contrary to classic Gothic fiction, permitted the introduction of feminine societal and sexual desires into Gothic texts and bridged the gap between reality and unreality by giving rational explanations for every supernatural event—the technique of the “supernatural explained,” introduced by Ann Radcliffe in *A Sicilian Romance* (1790).

Is reality too powerful for you?

Take the risk. Believe what you see and hear. It's the pulse of every secret intimation you've ever felt around the edges of your life.

They are two real bodies in a room. This is how she feels them, in the slivered heart of the half second it takes to edge around the doorpost, with hands that touch and rub and mouths that open slowly. His cock is rising in her slack pink fist. Their mouths are ajar for tongues, nipples, fingers, whatever projections of flesh, and for whispers of was and is, and their eyes come open into the soul of the other. (DeLillo 2002, 122-23)

Lauren's verbalization of her sexual desires eventually liberates Mr. Tuttle and brings about his disappearance from both her life and her house: "The room was empty when she looked. No one was there. The light was so vibrant she could see the true colors of the walls and floor. She'd never seen the walls before. The bed was empty. She'd known it was empty all along but was only catching up. She looked at the sheet and blanket swirled on her side of the bed, which was the only side in use" (124). Significantly, in *The Body Artist* it is Mr. Tuttle who has been kept in the attic until Rey's death and it is Lauren who liberates him. To that extent, Mr. Tuttle may be said to stand not only for Lauren's sexual desire but also for her creative potential, which have been contained and overshadowed by her husband and metaphorically kept hidden in the attic until then. Thus, while Rey's unexpected violent death might have caused Lauren to lose her hold on reality, it liberates her creative potential, which cannot conform to a traditional form of narrative but is rather expressed through her theatrical body performance. Lauren finds Mr. Tuttle in a metaphorical "room of his own"—paraphrasing Virginia Woolf. She liberates him, makes him visible, takes care of him and learns from him as a part of the process that will allow her performance to see the light of day. Lauren reconstructs her life into a form of art which is not an ordered narrative based either on cause and effect or on temporal chronology—Mr. Tuttle has taught her that such a narrative is no longer possible—but a theatrical piece, based on body language, that she performs in front of a selected audience and whose title is significantly "Body Time." In Nicole Ward Jouve's words, "Through theatre, the voice that was once threatened by hysteria, that had to articulate itself out of its inward-looking state, becomes many voices talking to many" (1990, 46). Lauren's performance even goes one step further because she not only becomes many voices talking to many. As Mariella, her friend and former classmate, writes in what looks like a critical review of her performance,

Then she does something that makes me freeze in my seat. She switches to another voice. It is his voice, the naked man's, spooky as a woodwind in your closet. Not taped but live. Not lip-sync'd but real. It is speaking to me and I search my friend's face but don't quite see her. I'm not sure what she's doing. I can almost believe she is equipped with male genitals, as in the piece, prosthetic of course, and maybe an Ace

bandage in flesh-tone to bleep out her breasts, with a sprinkle of chest hair pasted on. Or she has trained her upper body to deflate and her lower body to sprout. (DeLillo 2002, 109)

Lauren is capable of bridging the gap between word and world in a representation that enacts, almost literally, Butler's theory of gender:

Gender is in no way a stable identity or locus of agency from which various acts proceed; rather, it is an identity tenuously constituted in time — an identity, instituted through a stylized repetition of acts. Further, gender is instituted through the stylization of the body and hence must be understood as the mundane way in which bodily gestures, movements, and enactments of various kinds constitute the illusion of an abiding gendered self. (Butler 1988, 519-20)

It is precisely and paradoxically by performing a multiplicity of voices *and* bodies in front of others that Lauren manages to reconcile with the presence abiding in her home and to regain her own identity after her husband's death, while at the same time becoming a true, independent artist, the body artist that the title of the novel foregrounds. In its homage to modernism, the novel is, therefore, a *künstlerroman*, a gender-specific variation of James Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1916).

From the summary Mariella makes of "Body Time," the reader infers that the novel they have been reading, with its multiple narrative voices, most of them pointing to Lauren herself,<sup>3</sup> is in fact the narrative of Lauren's "slow, spare and painful" process of becoming a very special body artist, the one that offers "Body Art in Extremis" (DeLillo 2002, 103). Body language and performance allow DeLillo to move forwards and to propose a way of escaping from the feeling that

Our sense of the age of our culture in the last decades of the twentieth century, our very capacity for historical orientation, was so profoundly bound up with the late-cultural, millennial logic of the post that its expiry presents us with a kind of temporal nakedness, an estranged sense of passing time. There is no way that we can frame such time in the clunky narrative apparatuses that we inherit from the last century. (Boxall 2013, 39)

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<sup>3</sup> It is my contention that, with the exception of the two external voices used for the obituary and the critical review, the story is told and retold by Lauren, who, as a narrator, also multiplies herself and addresses herself at times in the second person "you" and at other times in the third person singular "she," or plural "they" when she includes Rey. Visually speaking, it is as if Lauren had suspended herself in what Virginia Woolf called "moments of being" (Nel 2002, 738) to introduce the necessary distance that allows her to make sense of her experience and overcome her fragmentation as a first step in regaining her identity.

To achieve this, *The Body Artist* necessarily has to do away with Rey Robles, the artist who has lost his creative power: “His subsequent movies failed commercially and were largely dismissed by critics” (DeLillo 2002, 29). The reader is not given much information about Rey’s life. In fact, the only direct definition the text provides of this character is to be found in a brief obituary published in the newspaper after his death. Yet, the meaningful parallelism between Rey’s obituary and Mariella’s critical review, added to the place they each occupy in the structure of the novel—Rey’s obituary is set immediately after the first chapter and the review of Lauren’s performance is set immediately before the last chapter—calls attention to the symbolical relationship between Rey’s death and Lauren’s artistic success. Symbolically, the death of Rey, the “cinema’s poet of lonely places” (27), stands for the death of the old modes of narrative which give way to the emergence of new forms of narrative based on what the novel calls “body time,” which are represented in Lauren, the recently acclaimed body artist and her performative art. According to Peter Boxall, “It is the temporal disorientation of these fictions that points, more surely than any of our shiny chronological devices, towards a new way of regulating being, a new way of feeling for our time in the new century” (2013, 39).

Far from Maria Russo’s affirmation that *The Body Artist* shows “little interest in the forces of history and culture” (2001, 1), this reading has tried to show that the novel is by no means a disappointment but, quite to the contrary, an “intriguing” novel with a multiplicity of layers of meaning and intertextual echoes that has given both DeLillo and his readers the opportunity to tread a so far unexplored sociopolitical territory, gender politics, and to experiment with a new form of representation based on the feminist notion of gender performance, body language and body time.

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## Filming Transcendentalism: The Place of Contemporary Independent Cinema in the Cultural Paradigm Shift

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The recent rise of a new type of independent film reveals a cultural paradigm shift from postmodernism to something beyond. This paper attempts to show that this shift is a return to the grand narratives of the unfinished project of modernity which, according to Jürgen Habermas, was interrupted by WWII and the prevalence of liberalism and capitalism. This shift is nourished by neoromantic ideas from the American transcendentalist movement.

Keywords: Film Studies; transcendentalism; post-postmodernism; independent cinema; paradigm shift

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Independent cinema from the USA is of late giving rise to new types of films which in many ways are different, although they share some essential characteristics which give them a common frame. The cascade of works of filmmakers such as Wes Anderson, Charlie Kaufman, Jonathan Dayton, Valerie Faris, Spike Jonze—and we could add here a long etc.—are concerned with a wide range of topics and their points of view are as manifold as there are authors, but they have something in common: they are the product of the postmodern and, although their gaze is the result of previous cultural standards, they move forward, into something else: post-postmodernism. Their cinema is a response to the current situation of crisis. In his book *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (1962), Thomas Kuhn introduces the concept of “paradigm shift” to analyse how after a period of crisis caused by the impossibility of answering contemporary problems through an established paradigm there must be a series of circumstances in “normal science” (1962, 10) in order to make possible a change in the way of conceiving reality and providing a solution to those problems. Those circumstances are occurring in the current cultural context post 9/11. The different solutions provided in the periods that occur between the decline of the old paradigm and the establishment of a new one are usually produced in a climate of divergent thinking that goes beyond what is permitted by the structures of thought established by the prevailing paradigm. This is done in order to accommodate the solutions to

the new circumstances that have caused the crisis and create a new frame. “I define *postmodern* as incredulity towards metanarratives” (Lyotard 1984, xxiv). With those words, Jean François Lyotard claimed that postmodernism meant the loss of legitimation for metanarratives as scientific and technological knowledge blossomed after the Second World War ended and liberal capitalism returned. Since then, science and profit have gone hand-in-hand, thus creating the current state of crisis, as science and technology (knowledge) are not used to search for the truth, but to consolidate power and economic benefit. Lyotard’s concept of parody is the tool necessary to test different language games and narratives, that is, to prove their legitimacy while maintaining their value and discovering new ones which can emancipate the people without returning to the old model. On the other hand, Jürgen Habermas sees modernity as an “incomplete project” (2003, 1123) because the problems it posed have not been seriously addressed and solved. The advent of postmodernism and the crisis it brought along must be redeemed by returning to the original project of the Enlightenment with the totalizing structures of knowledge—those that Lyotard rejects. It seems that the direction of the new paradigm, intended as the solution to the conundrum of the emancipation from the autonomous economic system, is a mixture of both views.

Taking all this into account, it will be argued that current creators are making use of that divergent thinking to propose a new paradigm, and that there is a desire to recover the unfinished project of modernity and the totalizing grand narratives which began to fade after the horrors of World War II, but with the postmodern distance (in the form of irony), which acts as a safety valve to avoid those narratives from becoming extremist thoughts. Timotheus Vermeulen and Robin van den Akker call the present moment *metamodernism*. In their article “Notes on Metamodernism” (2010) they say that postmodernism is over, and give different proposals for the new path. They describe metamodernism with “Jos de Mul’s distinction between postmodern irony (encompassing nihilism, sarcasm, and the distrust and deconstruction of grand narratives, the singular and the truth) and modern enthusiasm (encompassing everything from utopianism to the unconditional belief in Reason)” (2010, 1). They also cite film critic James MacDowell and his term “quirky cinema” (7) as a representative example of this modern/postmodern, enthusiasm/irony dichotomy. This new independent cinema, born at the beginning of the twenty-first century, is different from, and we could even argue that it is a kind of response to, what Jeffrey Sconce calls “smart cinema” (2002, 349), a kind of cinema made in the previous decade which is representative of the state of crisis to which these so called quirky films react. In general terms, we could say that quirky cinema is part of another broader movement: “New Sincerity,” a term coined by Jim Collins in his essay “Genericity in the Nineties: Eclectic Irony and the New Sincerity” (1993). According to Sconce, smart cinema is represented by filmmakers such as Todd Solondz, Neil LaBute and Alexander Payne, among others, and even by the early work of directors now considered to be in the

quirky category, such as Spike Jonze and Wes Anderson. The characteristic elements of this smart cinema are, Sconce argues, irony, black humour, fatalism, relativism and “pointlessly and simplistically grim” characters (2002, 364) who are aware of the weariness, distance and even disgust provoked by their situation.

New Sincerity offers a way out from that feeling of uneasy and nihilistic apathy which is depicted in a very clearly defined way as a neoromantic vision related to the sense of emancipating grand narrative. It is also linked to the recovery of the unfinished project of modernity because it provides the necessary modern enthusiasm described by Jos de Mul. In his article “Notes on Quirky” (2010), James MacDowell points out one of the main differences between smart cinema and the new independent films: the use of irony. MacDowell mentions Sconce, who says that “irony . . . is opposed to ‘sincerity,’ ‘positivity,’ and the opposite corollaries of the words singled out above: ‘engagement,’ ‘passion,’ ‘affect,’ and so on” (2010, 11), and goes on to say that the most distinctive characteristic of the new independent cinema is “a tone that exists on a knife-edge of judgment and empathy, detachment and engagement, irony and sincerity” (13). That sincerity, which forms part of the modern enthusiasm that Jos de Mul speaks about, is achieved through a neoromantic vision nourished by the ideas of the transcendentalist movement of the early nineteenth century, which can be traced in many of the characteristics of these films. This can be seen in representative films such as Wes Anderson’s *Moonrise Kingdom* (2012) and *The Darjeeling Limited* (2007); Valerie Faris and Jonathan Dayton’s *Little Miss Sunshine* (2006); Spike Jonze’s *Where the Wild Things Are* (2009); Sam Mendes’s *Away We Go* (2009); Jared Hess’s *Napoleon Dynamite* (2004); Miranda July’s *Me and You and Everyone We Know* (2005) or Jordan Vogt-Roberts’s *The Kings of Summer* (2013).

The romantic theme of lost childhood innocence is present in all of these films and it represents the lost innocence of postmodernism. All of them portray children, coming-of-age adolescents or adults with an unresolved urge to delve into their lost childhood innocence, trying to retrieve it. MacDowell suggests many instances of the relationship between what he calls quirky cinema and childhood: the use of medium-long shots with the subject in the centre of the image, which is a very characteristic stylistic device of these films and recreates that sense of innocence, as this is the type of framing a child would choose for a photograph; or the use of “simplified and two dimensional” (2010, 7) drawings in the promotional posters. MacDowell also mentions the music, which also reminds us of childhood in these films: “The pitch, repetitiveness, and insistent prettiness of much of this music often lends it a sound and feel reminiscent of the tinkling purity of a child’s music box” (2010, 8). Childhood is related to the core meaning of the New Sincerity movement. Being sincere in transcendentalist terms is also related to childhood. It means being true to oneself; to what one does; to what one is. In order to be true to ourselves, according to Ralph Waldo Emerson, we need to understand ourselves, understand our own truth. When we are children that truth is within us, but we lose it as we adapt and mould

our character to the society we are born into: “The sun illuminates only the eye of the man, but shines into the eye and the heart of the child. The lover of nature is he whose inward and outward senses are still truly adjusted to each other; who has retained the spirit of infancy even into the era of manhood. . . . In the woods too, a man casts off his years, as the snake his slough, and at what period so ever of life, is always a child” (Emerson [1836] 2003a, 1074). We lose this sincerity when we grow up and that is why many of these films are about coming of age or unresolved issues in adulthood which can be traced to a traumatic experience in childhood. A clear example of this is *Juno* (2007), directed by Jason Reitman, in which the rite of passage of the main adolescent characters is having to cope with becoming parents at the age of sixteen. Other films like *Me and You and Everyone We Know*, *Little Miss Sunshine*, *Napoleon Dynamite*, Peter Sollett’s *Nick and Norah’s Infinite Playlist* (2008) or *The Kings of Summer*, have coming of age as one of their main themes.

However, if the smart cinema of the nineties saw innocence as something lost and gave no alternatives, this new cinema uses many of the transcendentalist ways to recover the connection with lost innocence: childhood, the journey, going back to nature, intuition and individuality. In *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers* (1849), written during his stay at Walden Pond, Henry David Thoreau wrote a journal about a boat trip that he and his brother had made. The book is more about a journey into his own self to discover his own truth than about the real physical experience. This inspirational trip to recover lost innocence is a recurring theme in films like *Moonrise Kingdom*, *The Darjeeling Limited*, *Little Miss Sunshine*, *Away We Go* or Lynn Shelton’s *Your Sister’s Sister* (2011). In all of them, the characters set on a journey to discover who they really are and at the end of the journey all of them experience some kind of epiphany. Nature is more than the setting for a lot of these films: it is almost a character and it is also the main tenet of transcendentalism. The divine is concealed in nature and in everyone; therefore, being one with nature is being one with oneself. Apart from the obvious references to cabins in the woods resembling Thoreau’s own famous cabin at Walden Pond, like in *Your Sister’s Sister*, where the characters retreat to a cabin to find themselves, or *The Kings of Summer*, about three boys who go into the woods to build a cabin and live in nature, there are plenty of references to nature and what it symbolises when trying to find one’s own truth. The more you know nature, the more you will know yourself.

Reaching that knowledge is only possible through intuition, however, not through reason. The characters in these films do not know what their problem is. Reaching the epiphany is something which has to be done in solitude, or rather, individually. They cannot explain what they are going through because, according to Emerson, you must “Insist on yourself; never imitate. Your own gift you can present every moment with the cumulative force of a whole life’s cultivation; but of the adopted talent of another, you have only an extemporaneous, half possession. That which each can do best, none

but his Maker can teach him” ([1841] 2003b, 1141). The maker is found both in nature and inside each individual. That is why there are so many moments of silence in these films, where the spectator knows that the characters have understood something important about themselves, although nothing is said and it is open to interpretation. Emerson writes, “And now at last the highest truth on this subject remains unsaid; probably cannot be said; for all that we say is the far-off remembering of the intuition” ([1841] 2003b, 1135). Wes Anderson’s works are full of those moments where music plays a central role. Other times the characters say something, but their faces and their acts say something else. They are having that kind of epiphany where words cannot explain what they have learnt through intuition. On the other hand, children in these films can usually speak normally because they are true to themselves, they are not ironic—although maybe the situation is—their relationship with other people is sincere, and that is why, for example, the main characters in *Moonrise Kingdom* are perfect for each other. They have very candid dialogues:

SAM: It’s possible I may wet the bed by the way. Later, I mean.

SUZY: Okay.

SAM: I wish I didn’t have to mention it but just in case. I don’t want to make you be offended.

SUZY: Of course, I won’t. (Anderson 2012)

This new independent cinema offers sincerity as a solution to the previous feeling of weariness brought about by postmodernism with a modernist enthusiasm which is achieved through a combination of postmodern irony and the recuperation of sincerity through transcendentalism. There is a desire to retrieve the lost honest belief towards metanarratives but to keep them from becoming totalizing through the deflating use of irony. In “Notes on Metamodernism,” Vermeulen and van den Akker cite Jerry Saltz’s article “Sincerity and Irony Hug it Out,” where he explains this phenomenon: “I’m noticing a new approach to artmaking in recent museum and gallery shows. . . . They grasp that they can be ironic and sincere at the same time, and they are making art from this compound-complex state of mind—what Emerson called ‘alienated majesty’” (2010, 2). The change in the direction of the paradigm of postmodernism has brought tenets pertaining to a more totalizing kind of narrative intended to regain freedom and to recover the enthusiasm of the modernist project through the combination of irony and sincerity. The recuperation of these old values is making artists produce works which make them feel honest again and not be afraid of thinking outside the box so as to be able to offer working alternatives to the current paradigm crisis. The new independent cinema that we have analysed echoes all these ideas. It recovers sincerity through transcendentalism while maintaining the irony of the previous decades, thus creating a balance between postmodern apathy and modern empathy. They offer a possible solution to the current crisis by recovering

old values that look back to the old metanarratives in an engaging way but with the safety valve of irony.

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The Theatrical Power of an Ageing Voice: Inter-generational  
Reconstructions of Old Age in *Trying* by Joanna McClelland Glass

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This paper looks at the representation of ageing in one of the latest dramatic pieces by the Canadian-American author Joanna McClelland Glass. Her 2004 naturalistic two-hander, *Trying*, enables a close examination of old age through the realistic portrait of its octogenarian protagonist and the inter-generational exchange that it recreates. This paper ultimately hopes to demonstrate that drama and the theatre continue to be invaluable sources of investigation with regard to significant aspects of human life such as old age.

Keywords: Canadian drama; cultural gerontology; ageing; class; gender

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Despite the growing importance of the discourse of ageing in academic and social spheres, the field of cultural gerontology still lacks recognition in the area of Cultural Studies. As noted by cultural gerontologists of diverse backgrounds (Lipscomb and Marshall 2010, vii; Maierhofer in Worsfold 2011, xv; Dolan and Tincknell 2012, vii, xix), the abundance of images and renderings of ageing and old age across many contemporary forms of cultural representation is just beginning to permeate this interdisciplinary field.<sup>1</sup> By contrast, the recent proliferation of academic journals, network projects and international associations devoted to the exploration of ageing demonstrates the extent to which multidisciplinary studies of ageing and ageism have come to be increasingly regarded as a valid and crucial area of enquiry in our contemporary developed—and aged—societies.

Drama and the theatre stand out as enlightening creative media whereby the constructedness of old age and stereotypical visions of older men and women can be observed. As Age scholar Margaret Morganroth Gullette contends, the “meatiness” of bodies on the stage holds out the possibility of examining constructions of age (2004, 163). Despite the development of various approaches that have been employed since

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<sup>1</sup> This paper is the result of the author’s work for the research project of Grup Dedal-lit entitled “Aging and Gender in Contemporary Literary Creation in English,” which is funded by the Spanish Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness.

the 1990s from the interconnected areas of drama, performance and theatre studies, it is of note that the work of contemporary playwrights and, significantly, of older women dramatists in particular, has seldom been analyzed as a source of critical reflection on the experience of ageing. With the hope of beginning to fill this important gap and to contribute, at the same time, to the visibility of cultural gerontology in the broader field of Cultural Studies, this paper will look at the representation of ageing in one of the latest dramatic pieces by the Canadian-American author Joanna McClelland Glass, a writer who was born in Saskatoon in 1936, whose plays have been produced in North America as well as in England, Ireland, Germany and Australia (Toye 1983, 464-66), and who is currently working on her latest playscript, *Amsterdam to Budapest*. Her 2004 naturalistic two-hander, *Trying* (2005), which is based on the author's experience as secretary of the American judge Francis Biddle during the final year of his life, will enable a close examination of old age through both the realistic portrait of its octogenarian protagonist and the inter-generational exchange that it recreates.<sup>2</sup> Using Cultural Gerontology as the main methodological framework, this paper will explore the following questions: Does McClelland Glass re-present the experience of ageing as a homogenizing phenomenon or as a diversifying one in the text of this play? What weight does her piece give to gender, class and national origin in its representation of ageing? What do these markers of difference reveal about (old) age in the play's dramatic universe, and how do they affect the intergenerational relationship that it depicts? Through this case study, this paper ultimately hopes to demonstrate that drama and the theatre continue to be invaluable sources of investigation with regard to significant aspects of human life such as old age. At the same time, it intends to highlight the centrality of the experience of ageing and its complexities in contemporary cultural discourses.

The latest theories of cultural gerontology underline the need to recognize the singularity of every person's ageing process by focusing, in the words of Brian Worsfold, "on the individual and the human and social context of the individual" (2011, xix). Nevertheless, scholars like Evy Gunnarson draw attention to the dominant role that old age can play in its interaction with other identity markers (2011, 101). Following these apparently opposed theoretical stances, the present analysis will begin by identifying both the main dramaturgical mechanisms through which *Trying* represents ageing as a potentially homogenizing experience, and the poetic and socio-cultural connotations that these dramatic strategies generate within the play's fictional universe and beyond. The principal dramaturgical trait whereby age is presented as a homogenizing category in this text is detected through the emphasis that is placed on the extreme frailty of its ageing protagonist. The play reflects the vulnerability of Francis Biddle's arthritic body through many of the

<sup>2</sup> Francis Biddle was Attorney General under Franklin Roosevelt between 1941 and 1945, and in 1946 Harry Truman appointed him Chief American Judge of the International Military Tribunal at the Nuremberg Trials (McClelland Glass 2005, 4).

stage directions, which often indicate the character's arduous movement quality and slow tempo, as well as other temporary infirmities that condition his gestures and mimic expression throughout the play.<sup>3</sup> Biddle's failing short-term memory also becomes a source of anguish for the character at various moments, especially when Sarah, his new secretary, has to correct mistakes he has made in his personal checkbook or when it is evident that his delayed correspondence needs to be re-organized due to his memory lapses.<sup>4</sup>

The play's continuous allusions to the older character's growing fragility indicate the extent to which his "chronological age" is generally represented again and again in the play through the figure's "biological age," to use Kathleen Woodward's categorical dissection of the age category (Lipscomb and Marshall 2010, 5).<sup>5</sup> However, the author's recurrent dramatization of the biological aspect of old age does not lead exclusively to the one-dimensional theme of decline through which, as shown by Gullette's seminal study (2004), old age has often been interpreted. Rather, Biddle's aged corporeality enables the figure's personality and reflections to be viewed from a particularly enhanced subject position. Cultural gerontologists like Gunnarson highlight the correlation between the experience of the aged body, and the vision and interpretation of the world that emanates from its "lived" corporeality (2011, 91-93). In this light, Biddle's bodily representation can be regarded as the physical repository of the series of emotions and perspectives which the older character has gained only through the situational specificity of his aged embodiment.

Some of the judge's specific views also reveal the figure's "social age" (Lipscomb and Marshall 2010, 5), which constructs him as "old" by means of his scarce social interactions seem to conform to the negative expectation of social isolation in later life. However, once again McClelland Glass favours the character's singular perspective in her portrayal of this aspect of ageing. Despite the constant signs of public and private recognition that the retired judge receives, Biddle chooses to be partially segregated from his public and domestic domains in the last phase of his life. Whereas his public seclusion is indicated through his refusal to deal directly with the historians and publishers that constantly request information about his biography (25), his private isolation is suggested through the design of the play's presentational space, which recreates Biddle's office. As specified in the stage directions, the office is "located over a double garage" (7) which is not attached to his house and is connected to the lower level by fourteen stairs that Biddle painstakingly climbs every day after "limp[ing] across the yard" (9, 11). Despite its inconvenient location, the space's remoteness lets Biddle maintain a sense of control over his routine, a strategy that is

<sup>3</sup> These pages provide particular examples of the character's physical impairments: 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 30, 33, 34, 38 and 40.

<sup>4</sup> Examples of these and other similar situations can be found on pages 16, 25, 30, 31, 43 and 60.

<sup>5</sup> Whereas "chronological age" refers to the actual age of the individual, "biological age" is conditioned by "the state of health of the body" (Lipscomb and Marshall 2010, 5).

identified in studies of older people's everyday lives as the desire to "keep going" and which "prevent[s] oneself from losing heart" (Gunnarson 2011, 97).

Whereas the dramatization of Biddle's "biological" and "social" ages through kinetic, verbal and spatial signs highlights the physical, psychological and social challenges that often accompany the extension of late adulthood (Kaufman 2010, 225-26), the development of his relationship with his young secretary enables a closer look at the construction of the figure's old age. It is through the dramatic situations generated by the two apparently antagonistic personalities that the older character's "personal age" becomes defined, completing Woodward's tripartite classification of the age construct (Lipscomb and Marshall 2010, 5). As will be shown, most of the markers of heterogeneity that constitute Biddle's old age and which are unveiled in the evolution of his dialogues with Sarah are connected to forms of socio-cultural empowerment and disempowerment that enhance the so-often-neglected socio-cultural basis of ageing.

Gender is one of the identity traits that clearly condition Biddle's ageing process. At first sight, his public reputation and his conservative views about male and female roles (13, 46) suggest the empowered form of masculinity through which the judge has internalized his own self throughout his life. Hence, Biddle initially sustains a patriarchal model of gender relations in the private world of his office insofar as Sarah is expected to perform the traditionally "feminine" job of the subordinate secretary. However, the older man's growing dependence on his young assistant evokes the particular sense of disempowerment that old age inflicts on men at both biological and social levels. Viewed in this light, Biddle's office can be interpreted not only as a site of agency for the older character, but also as a masculine domain in which he tries to protect himself against "the seats of domesticity" (11), or, in other words, against his gradual emasculation. As Featherstone and Wernick contend, "to be an old man points to a loss of . . . empowerment and one image that remains is the old man as 'other'" (1995, 8-9). This particular form of "otherness" is also brought to the fore by the dramatic timeframe of the piece. The play's action unfolds between 1967 and 1968, a period which corresponds not only with the end of Francis Biddle's life, but also with the peak of second-wave feminism in the United States, as reflected through an ironic reference to Betty Friedan (17). Within this significant context of social transformation, the contrast between Biddle's and Sarah's age- and gender-conditioned characterizations, and the patriarchal and feminist ideologies that they overtly represent, discloses some of the complexities of male ageing in contemporary societies. As Jeff Hearn contends, if in pre-industrial communities "'maleness' and 'age(dness)' were usually mutually reinforcing and reaffirming as a means to power," in the modern world they may become dissociated as old age makes its appearance, and power may become "fragmented" for older men (Featherstone and Wernick 1995, 100). In a way, this fragmentation of manhood in old age causes a "feminization" of the older

male which renders him especially vulnerable to any external appreciation of the visible signs of advanced age. This is clearly reflected in the first act of the play when Biddle repeatedly discards Sarah's advice on health issues by claiming, visibly offended, that he is "*not* [her] grandmother" (33, 37, 40). Whilst in the first half of the play Biddle's "felt age" is strikingly imbued with the judge's painful loss of manly power, in the second act of the piece, especially towards the end, the older character gradually integrates the vulnerability of his ageing masculinity into his personal age.

Together with gender, class is the other social marker that plays a prominent role in the work's depiction of the complexities of later life. Contrary to the combination of gender and age, the interplay between age and social status becomes an apparent source of empowerment for the older character, thereby complicating McClelland Glass's portrayal of ageing. The vast distance created between Sarah and the judge through class is composed of social, economic and national features. Biddle's allegedly superior rank as an upper-class North-American is specified early in the piece through the description of the character as "the aristocratic scion of an old, Main Line Philadelphia family" (7), an origin to which he alludes repeatedly with visible pride (14, 27, 78). The original Cézanne that Sarah admires in his house (14) and the overseeing of the house staff (12) clearly point to the older man's affluent position. By contrast, the young secretary is defined as a "plain-spoken . . . girl" (7), "a prairie populist" (45) "from the . . . province of Saskatchewan" (7), who takes pride in not being "one of the pleated-plaid Ivy girls" who have attended elitist women's colleges (11). As with the interaction between gender- and age-derived markers of difference, the specification of Biddle's age through his class membership and its hegemonic national, social, and cultural components becomes evident when his privileged status is contrasted with that of Sarah. In the face of Sarah's defense of her Canadian, rural and working-class roots throughout the play, and her vehement attacks against the "outmoded, elitist, eastern-establishment snobbery" that the judge personifies (46), Biddle not only prides himself in his origins, but also becomes invigorated by the passion with which he protects the social order of his old world.

Although the figure's self-image as a senior member of the American elite is especially reinforced when his social loyalties are questioned by a member of the young generation, his complex characterization prevents him from becoming the "hectoring, domineering old man" (47) that Sarah accuses him to be at one point. Alongside his conservative origins, the play also enhances the figure's ideological conversion and his social concerns beyond his own position of social privilege. For instance, Sarah's personal research on Biddle's biography makes her aware of the judge's political evolution: originally a member of the Republican Party, he ended up joining the Democrats in the years of the Great Depression, a bold gesture which turned him into "a traitor to [his] class" in the eyes of Republicans (47). The reference to the assassination of Martin Luther King towards the end of the play also lets the

older character convey his views about the drama of racial segregation in the United States. Again, his advantaged position as a white man does not prevent him from recognizing the predicament of Afro-Americans.

Markers of gender and class certainly complete and destabilize the construct of (old) age in McClelland Glass' play, and help create the socio-cultural basis of the older figure's "personal age." Nonetheless, the judge's personal experience of ageing is also represented through more individualized traits which, once again, are brought into view through his relationship with the young secretary, and particularize further his old age and the elements of social structure that arise from it through "the humanizing lens of personal experience," to borrow the words of the gerontologist Simon Biggs (2004, 45). Even though Biddle is generally skeptical about the possibility of Sarah's understanding his views on life, and vice versa—as he says when he finds out about the 56-year age difference that separates them, "[they] cannot help but find each other extremely trying" (17)—it is through his conversations with her and the daily routines they share during the year that precedes his death that he comes to revise essential aspects of his life through the prism of his old age. One of the judge's most important revelations in this respect has to do with his concrete awareness of the scarce time he has left: as he tells Sarah at the beginning of the play, he is "fairly certain that he is living his final year" (13), a prediction that is fulfilled. This exact perception of his forthcoming demise situates the character in a mixed temporal frame whereby past and present become closely entangled. Thus, the death of Biddle's father when he was only six and that of his seven-year-old son, are alluded to several times in the play as the most intimate and poignant aspects of his biography (40, 60, 76, 77). These two paradigmatic losses allow for a paradoxical form of acceptance to emerge, one that has been observed in some real-life accounts of "suffering, loss and disillusionment that the human traveler faces" throughout the life course (Kenyon et al. 1999, 51) and which Biddle identifies with as, quoting Shakespeare, a "fondness for grief" (33). As for the judge's public profile, regrets are also given an important place amidst the successful recollections of his influential career. In particular, Biddle confesses to "review . . . almost daily" in his conscience the internment of 125,000 Japanese-American citizens during the Second World War, which he eventually approved in his function as Attorney General (54). As he approaches his own death, Biddle invests his qualms with a particular significance in the narrative of his life. Thus, in one of his autobiographical dictations to his secretary, he contends that "any man who goes to his grave without regrets is a man who has failed to comprehend his life" (54). Despite the dramaturgical fragmentation whereby Biddle's life revision is conveyed to reader and spectator, the character's life narrative vividly presents the judge's persistent attempt to make sense of his own life story as he feels its closure draw near. Significantly, his perceptive closeness to death also enables him to fully realize "that when we're born, we're just visiting the world for a little while,"

a realization that he confesses to have had “only recently” in his life (77). This newly acquired sense of ephemerality is also evoked through images of existential liminality whereby the character visualizes his own ending, as when he tells Sarah repeatedly that his “exit sign is flashing over the door and the door is ajar” (24, 58), or when he confesses to her, in their final scene together, that in what was his last afternoon walk he realized “it was time to say goodbye” to his own “shadow” (71).

Alongside the judge’s revision of his own past and his personal transition towards his death, Biddle’s continuous engagement with small but highly significant aspects of his life is also disclosed throughout the piece. Even though the older figure resents that “anything is expected of [him] in his final year” (24), he persists in his accurate correction of important historical episodes that he witnessed and on which he is enquired by publishers and historians. This entails the creation of a thorough life-review which also includes the revision of the language in which important biographical episodes are expressed (82). At the level of affective relations, Biddle repeatedly tells the secretary that he cannot “allow [him]self . . . even to be on the *periphery* of [her] domestic difficulties” (58). Yet, he repeatedly shows his genuine concern for her unexpected pregnancy (59, 63, 72), and at the end of the piece he encourages her to treasure it (64), a piece of advice that exudes the older character’s tragic experience of parenthood. The persistence of the judge’s passions and the gradual manifestation of his affection towards Sarah give way to a highly nuanced portrayal of the character’s “personal age,” one in which the figure’s memory lapses are compensated for by moments of exceptional lucidity, and his visible signs of public and private commitment undermine his seeming attempt to block his own emotional engagement.

As has been shown throughout this analysis, *Trying* represents the contradictions and challenges of a fictionalized process of ageing which deconstructs negative stereotypes of old age through some of its homogeneous features, while at the same time presenting markers of diversity that facilitate a more focused and, therefore, realistic gaze towards the heterogeneous phenomenon of growing older. The polysemic value of the title of the play itself and its recurrent use throughout the piece suggest the complexity of the phenomenon of ageing as well as the challenge that is posed by its intergenerational exchange, especially when a mutual sense of understanding is pursued from very distant subject positions. At the same time, Biddle and Sarah’s gradual adjustment towards their mutual demands portrays old age, in the words of Molly Andrews, “a unique phase of the lifecycle [that is] replete with continued developmental possibilities” (1999, 301) for both old and young. Ultimately, McClelland Glass’s piece enriches the contemporary dramatic discourse and associated theatrical scenes with a realistic depiction of the complex texture of life that may be found when the end of the journey is apparently near. In the theatre of our imagination, Sarah and particularly Francis Biddle become useful symbolic signposts that broaden our understanding of late life and enable us to envisage the

sources of diversity and homogeneity which inevitably shape and condition our own experience of ageing.

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Moderns and Beats—Women Poets in the City:  
Revisioning and Reinventing the Poetic Movements

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This study outlines a comparative analysis of the work by modernist poet Mina Loy and three Beat women poets. My aim is to suggest that these unrelated authors, separated by two world wars and half a century, were all urban poets that challenged the masculinist poetic precepts of the countercultural movements they belonged to: Moderns and Beats. Sharing the city of New York as their revolutionary locus, they envisioned a feminist experimental and experiential poetics as female participants of the modernist and Beat avant-gardes.

Keywords: Mina Loy; Beats; women's poetry; city; poetic movements; feminism

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This study suggests a comparative analysis between the apparently unrelated works of the modernist Anglo-American poet Mina Loy and three women poets of the Beat movement, Diane di Prima, Elise Cowen and Janine Pommy Vega. More than being simply an exhaustive study of the authors' poetry, the aim of this paper is to draw attention for the first time (since there is no published work on this matter) to the common feminist and poetic bonds between these bohemian women avant-garde poets that lived and wrote at either the beginning of the twentieth-century—Loy—or in the decades of the fifties and sixties—the Beat women—in New York. Although feminist literary criticism has long been studying how women poets in different historical periods and poetic movements developed particular strategies that helped create subversive female poetic traditions, I would like to suggest that Loy, as well as the Beat poets mentioned above, challenged the implicit masculinist literary principles of the artistic avant-gardes they belonged to through the creative synthesis of the conceptual opposition between experiment and experience in their poetry. Loy used, and undermined, the modernist poetic trends of anti-sentimentalism and impersonality; Beat female poets experimented with the Beat tendencies towards a Romantic subjectivity and a confessional naked *I*. Through these techniques in common, these Modern and Beat women reinvented female poetic traditions and re-visioned the avant-garde cultural movements they participated in.

Another important point of contact is their common bohemian locus—the city of New York—and the fact that their lives and poetry reflect a continuum within an urban countercultural feminine and feminist US poetry. Although the place of the city, and in particular New York, has been repeatedly recognized as essential in the development of countercultural movements throughout the twentieth century, its pivotal role in relation to gender construction and the development of female literary creativity and feminist emancipation has been given little attention. I would like to highlight, as the first step in a research project in progress, the particular importance of the city for the women of the poetic and cultural movements generated in the urban locus.

Common to the authors I want to bring together is that they belonged to two New York countercultural bohémias: Loy to the artistic and intellectual community of Greenwich Village and other parts of the city before and during World War I known as the Moderns; and the Beat women to the New Moderns, the revolutionary hipsters of the post-World War II Lower East Side in the fifties and sixties. The city, in both cases, provided them with the visibility and freedom women longed for in the modern world. As Elizabeth Wilson postulates, the cosmopolitan city with its labyrinthic and anonymous features became a special locus for women accessing public space in western modern societies (1991, 8). New York, especially for Moderns at the beginning of the century, offered, as Christine Stansell suggests, through its avant-garde cultural spaces, the perfect place for women to speak, create and live (2010, xii). In this paper the urban environment will be treated as a cultural nest for the production and generation of these authors' poetry, rather than as the thematic focus in their work.

However, bohemian women writers such as Loy and the Beat poets considered here still had to come to terms with the double bind of the woman artist, reinventing themselves and their poetry to overcome the inner conflicts of their artistic and female selves in the city and within the countercultural movements they belonged to. They not only had to struggle against the oppression of society, but also against the, albeit filtered, sexism of their own male colleagues who marginalized their artistic voices. They became somehow "dissenters within the dissenting movement" (Grace and Johnson 2004, xi), doubly marginalized bohémians in art and life. The following section of the paper will introduce briefly the work and lives of the female authors identified in the study.

Mina Loy was a British artist, poet and writer of Hungarian descent who started her career as a painter in Paris. Her exciting life is brilliantly portrayed in Carolyn Burke's biography, from which we will highlight specific events. In Florence she met Gertrude Stein, who initiated her into poetry, and was involved in the Futurist movement. She moved to New York in 1916 where she joined the avant-garde community, standing out due to her sophisticated beauty and creative spirit, and befriending, among others, Marcel Duchamp, W.C. Williams, Ezra Pound, and Man

Ray. She married Arthur Cravan, the Dadaist poet-boxer who had arrived in New York in 1917. She lived with Djuna Barnes on the Paris left bank before World War II, and finally returned to the States in 1937, becoming an American citizen. Even at the end of her life, when she experienced poverty, she stuck to her independence and philosophy of the visionary social artist. She was prolifically creative, working in various mediums, from poetry to collage. One of Man Ray's popular photos of Loy (found in Conover's and Torremozas' editions) shows her eccentric personality: she is wearing a big thermometer as an earring, symbolic of the mercurial fluctuations in her life, art and poetry.

Her work has been compared to that of Marianne Moore, Gertrude Stein or H.D., experimental poets who were influenced by modernist standards claiming a detached poetic self from personality, autobiography and feeling, as proposed by T.S. Eliot. According to Margaret Dickie, "these women shared this antipathy to sentimentality [but also a] hesitant search for a way to express their own way of seeing. [They experimented] within an experimental movement" (1993, 235). In the case of Loy, this *double experimental writing* includes a transformative poetics that moves from anti-sentimentality to an aesthetic space of interconnection between experiment and the expression of female experiences. Ezra Pound's poetic term *logopoeia*, "poetry that is akin to nothing but language, which is a dance of the intelligence among words and ideas" (Kouidis 1980, 99), coined to define Loy's and Marianne Moore's poetry, leaves aside the complexities of Loy's gendered poetic voice. From my point of view, Loy's poetry moves within the liminal border between not only intellect, discourse, and linguistic experimentation, but also sentiment, emotion and experience. We can experience this flux by reading the first poems of her love sequence "Songs to Joannes":

I  
 Spawn of Fantasies  
 Silting the appraisable  
 Pig Cupid his rosy snout  
 Rooting erotic garbage  
 "Once upon a time"  
 Pulls a weed white star-topped  
 Among wild oats sown in mucous-membrane

I would an eye in a Bengal light  
 Eternity in a sky-rocket  
 Constellations in an ocean  
 Whose rivers run no fresher  
 Than a trickle of saliva

...

## II

The skin-sack  
 In which a wanton duality  
 Packed  
 All the completion of my infructuous impulses  
 Something the shape of a man  
 To the casual vulgarity of the merely observant  
 More of a clock-work mechanism  
 Running down against time  
 To which I am not paced  
 My finger-tips are numb from fretting your hair  
 A God's door-mat  
 On the threshold of your mind. (Loy 1999, 53)

Pig Cupid opens the satirical realm rooting through stereotyped romantic waste. The pulled “white star-topped” weed “sown in mucous-membrane” represents her characteristic ironic sexualization of love, and the transformation of the “I” into an “eye in a Bengal light” symbolizes the visionary strength of her poetic task, as well as the tentative presence of an experiential poetic subject. Irony continues in poem II where the voice impersonates the voyeuristic role traditionally assigned to the male lover, and a feminine wish for sexual pleasure and maternal desire that the *anti-hero* fails to fulfill.

Her characteristic fluctuation between a distanced cold irony and a melancholic elegiac tone of romantic thralldom is introduced in poem III of the sequence:

We might have coupled  
 In the bed-ridden monopoly of a moment  
 Or broken flesh with one another  
 At the profane communion table  
 Where wine is spill'd on promiscuous lips

We might have given birth to a butterfly  
 With the daily news  
 Printed in blood on its wings. (54)

The theme of procreation (i.e., the bloody butterfly) is recurrent throughout the sequence, sometimes in surrealist visions such as “bird-like abortions” or “foetal buffoons” (poems IV, XXX). Loy’s experimental poetry, therefore, also positions her gendered poetic voice deep within the experience of love and maternity (a combination barely explored in poetry before), considering the physical and emotional complexities implied in the ideology of free love for the modern woman

at the beginning of the twentieth century. Belonging to the new century Moderns and attracted to New York and the American modern spirit, Loy was greatly influenced by the urban artistic bohemia of the city in the years following her arrival in 1916. Although the city will not be a thematic focus in her poetry during this time, my interest lies in considering how her position as a female member of the avant-garde in the urban locus permeated her work and life through the border poetics of experiment and experience, challenging and gendering the precepts of her poetic movement.

Although it was also originally founded in New York a few decades later, after World War II, the Beat movement ended up representing, during the fifties and sixties, a generation questing for change through transgressive artistic lifestyles. Women Beats have only been recently recovered from the predominantly male canon through several anthologies such as those by Johnson and Grace, Peabody and Knight. Beat literature, as predominantly male circles, reflected the sexism of the society and the dogmatic *rule of Cool*, which defined Beat women as “girls who say nothing and wear black” (Johnson and Grace 2002, 1). Reacting to Modernism, Beat writers fed from a Romantic tradition that claimed the assertiveness of individual expression: as Kerouac argued, Beat writing developed from “center to periphery, from within out” (Charters 1992, 58). This literary and vital attitude was alien to female writers of the generation, who were more influenced by women Modernists and a Dickinsonian poetics of closure as critic Terence Diggory points out (1979, 135). Beat female poets also had complex gender issues to negotiate in their search for a new identity as women artists. Therefore, early Beat women did not share the masculine Emersonian transcendence, instead they focused on the physical reality of relationships, their bodies and sexuality, suggesting a more physical *beat*. My view is that they practiced a poetic dance between revealing and concealing experience and poetic experiment in a constant dialogue with these two categories: a voice built through the fragmented and open forms of a body poetics.

I would like to highlight the bonds existing between Loy and three Beat women poets, Diane Di Prima, Elise Cowen and Janine Pommy Vega, all of whom share the influence of urban locus and the expression of a doubly marginalized poetry of experiment and experience. Their early works represent the transitional phase of a second generation Beat female poetry that portrayed individualistic experimentation with language and gender identity through intimate voices and intense female experiences. Di Prima, born in an Italian-American family in Brooklyn and by far the most popular Beat woman poet, made her mark in the New York Beat community publishing *This Kind of Bird Flies Backwards* (1958) and *Dinners and Nightmares* (1960). She supported natural procreation (a mother of five), and in relation to her early work it is worth mentioning her groundbreaking poems on abortion and maternal desire. Di Prima’s poetry reflected, according to Charters, “a characteristic mock-cynicism adopted as an emotional shield to survive as a poet in a bohemian

community inclined to regard women as minor characters” (1993, 598). This is easily perceived in the ironic “More or Less Love Poems” and in “The Practice of Magical Evocation,” a poem replying to Gary Snyder’s understanding of the feminine, as suggested in the dedication. Here the syntactic and line fragmentation, the visual playing with silence and absence on the white page and the words screaming and disappearing contradict the discourse of feminine *flowing*. The poetic voice contests conventions on female identity and negotiates self-assertion in its own terms:

The female is fertile, and discipline  
 (contranaturam) only  
 confuses her—Gary Snyder

i am a woman and my poems  
 are woman’s: easy to say  
 this. the female is ductile  
 and  
 (stroke after stroke)  
 built for masochistic  
 calm. . . .

woman, a veil thru which the fingering Will  
 twice torn  
 twice torn  
 inside & out  
 the flow  
 what rhythm add to stillness  
 what applause? (Charters 1992, 361)

The Jewish-American poet Elise Cowen bore the stigma of being Allen Ginsberg’s lover during his experimentation with heterosexuality. Emotionally unstable, she committed suicide in 1962. Leo Skir and Joyce Johnson’s memoir *Minor Characters* wanted to recover Cowen’s central position in the Beat community. A collection of her work has not yet been published, but we can see her poetic strength in one of her most celebrated poems:

Dear God of the bent trees of Fifth Avenue  
 Only pour my wilful dust up your veins  
 And I’ll pound your belly-flat world  
 In praise of small agonies  
 Suck sea monsters off Tierra del Fuego  
 Fuck your only begotten cobalt dream

To filter golden pleasures through your apple glutton heaven  
 Filter the uncircumcised sin of my heart. (in Peabody 1997, 27)

Cowen's poetry fluctuates between the power of masculine logos and the fragmentation of female flesh, abstraction and physicality, a dance between the metaphysical completeness of love and death. She also mixes conventional poetic forms and innovative experimentation (notice the iambic pentameter in the lines, filled with striking images and irreverent lexis).

Janine Pommy Vega joined the Beats in 1960 and was Cowen's flatmate for a while. She married the Peruvian painter Fernando Vega, who died suddenly in Europe some years later. *Poems to Fernando* (1968) is a delicate collection of love poems currently out of print. It portrays a poetic journey of mourning, overcoming loss and absence through traveling awareness, geographical and inner exile, and a cyclical return to completeness. The interesting thing about Vega's poems is that they reflect a search for reconstruction using (not rejecting) romantic love; a poetic experimentation on mystical elegy showing vital development through heterosexual union.

poem to your lean face, leaning down eyes  
 How you know  
 with length by heart & depth by fingers  
 stretching  
 to reach me.

...

I remember the first time New York overwhelming dread  
 tenements, halfweathers of sky-tattered phantoms,  
 Starcrossings only at corners: the Encroachment  
 graved in my palm,  
 for remembering; . . .

Until you  
 where the streak of lightning left  
 indelibly its imprint  
 came  
 & cleaved to  
 (with length of heartstring & fingers  
 reaching)  
 the glowing coals, the firmament's touchstone  
 O Vast narrowed into the map of your face!

O love pure love in the universe  
 pierce me and pour in . . . (Vega 1968, 27-29)

As a conclusion I would like to emphasize that the purpose of this paper was not so much to analyze in detail the works of Loy, di Prima, Cowen or Vega, as to draw an unprecedented connection between the beginning of the century New York female Moderns and the early Beat women writers of the city in the fifties and sixties. Not only did the poets introduced here reinvent masculinist biased precepts of the respective movements they belonged to in relation to experiment and experience, but also, by approaching the city as a new space of liberation and struggle (as their biography and work show), they were agents of a gendered revolution both in society and within their movements and contributed to the building of a countercultural female poetic tradition. Loy, di Prima, Cowen and Vega, although separated by two world wars and half a century, wrote from an urban locus that they experienced in a different light to their male colleagues, since, as feminist geographers have been arguing for two decades, space is intrinsically gendered and gender is inevitably spaced (McDowell 1999, 65). They experimented and experienced the city in the same way as they did their poetry, gendering their poetic space and language with issues of sexuality, maternity and love, and pursuing bohemian lives as women in their spatialized and gendered avant-garde poetic movements.

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“Don’t Be Too Sure that I’m as Crooked as I’m Supposed to Be”:  
(De)Constructing the Hard-Boiled Detective in  
Hammett’s Novel *The Maltese Falcon*

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The figure of the hard-boiled detective has traditionally been regarded as amoral, cynical, and unsentimental. That is, he has often been regarded as a mere archetype. In this paper I intend to demonstrate otherwise by analyzing the character and actions of Sam Spade, protagonist of *The Maltese Falcon*.

Keywords: hard-boiled detective; *Maltese Falcon*; Sam Spade; sentimentality; noir

\* \* \*

The literary and filmic figure of the hard-boiled detective is, beyond the shadow of a doubt, one of the most important and well known in American literature and cinema. It should come as no surprise, therefore, that he has been subject to some studies that have tried to describe his quintessential traits. The results of these investigations have not been especially benevolent for the hard-boiled detective. Indeed, scholars such as Breu (2005) and Kimmel (2006) have presented him, as will be explained later on, basically as a morally dubious character, incapable of showing any kind of affection or sentimentality and who, therefore, refuses to be involved in any type of relationship. These interpretations, important and enriching as they are, do not suffice to fully explain the depths of the figure of the private eye. Moreover, they also attribute to him some characteristics, such as a complete lack of sentimentality, which actually do not apply. Thus, in this essay, I intend to demonstrate that the figure of the private eye can indeed carry out moral actions, develop a personal relationship with others and that he can, in fact, be sentimental. In order to support my argument I will examine the attitudes and actions of Sam Spade in the novel *The Maltese Falcon* and show how some of them do actually fit the scholars’ criticism but how some go beyond the boundaries established. I have chosen this particular character because he has been regarded as the hard-boiled detective *par excellence* (Kimmel 2006, 141; Gates 2008, 7; Cassuto 2009, 4) and, therefore, he is presumably the character who most embodies the aforementioned traits.

As has been suggested, scholars tend to describe the hard-boiled detective as a rough, unsentimental and corrupted character. As a matter of fact, Breu argues that the hard-boiled detective is characterized “by a tough, shell-like exterior,” a “rigorous suppression of affect” and by “seemingly amoral actions.” Michael Kimmel argues that the hard-boiled detective is “suspicious of all relationships, romantic and otherwise” and typically “cynical” and “crusty” (2006, 141). Kimmel also claims that Sam Spade is even “more coldly cynical than his peers” (141). Similarly, Smith argues that Spade is “marginally corrupted” (1991, 79) and believes that the moral reasons Spade sometimes provides for his actions are nothing but a farce (79). Thus, one could easily be led to believe that the noir detective, especially Sam Spade, is, to a certain extent, a somewhat crooked, impassive, almost Machiavellian figure who abhors the mere thought of trusting or having any kind of sentimental relationship with anyone.

It would be preposterous to be completely oblivious to these traits, for Spade does partially act and behave along some of those lines. As a matter of fact, Spade’s “shell-like exterior” is shown from the very beginning of the novel, especially in his reaction to Archer’s death. When Spade receives the phone call informing him that his partner has been murdered, his response is as cold as ice. Indeed, the words he utters, which are either monosyllables or disyllables, show no pain or grief. He does not even bother to ask how Archer was killed. Moreover, when the conversation is over, instead of departing immediately, Spade takes his time to prepare a cigarette, light it and calmly and slowly smoke it. Later on, at the crime scene, he refuses to have a last look at the dead body of his colleague, arguing that the only reason he would like to see the corpse would be for mere police reasons (2005, 13). This disinterest in seeing Archer for one last time demonstrates, as Maxfield argues, Spade’s “total lack of sentimental attachment to his partner” (1989, 255). The fact that Spade does not even bother to give the sad news to Iva, Archer’s wife, himself further emphasizes his crustiness and lack of empathy and sentimentality towards his deceased partner.

Another instance of Spade’s toughness and lack of sentimentality occurs in the scene of the “palmed” one thousand dollar bill. Spade suspects Brigid, his client and the one who causes Archer’s death, of having taken the money and obliges her to take off her clothes in front of him in order to prove her innocence. This act is extremely degrading for Brigid, as she tries to make him see “I’m not ashamed to be naked before you, but—can’t you see?—not like this. Can’t you see that if you make me you’ll—you’ll be killing something?” (2005, 192). Spade answers Brigid’s pleas in the coldest, most brutal way possible, by claiming that he has “to know what happened to that bill” and that he will not “be held up by anybody’s maidenly modesty” (192). This unsympathetic, almost tyrannical action would seem to confirm that Spade is, indeed, a “crusty” and “marginally corrupted” man.

Likewise, Spade commits a series of immoral actions. First, it is revealed that he had been having an affair with Iva for a long time before Archer’s death. This relationship would have been arguably less immoral provided that Spade had started

it out of true love for her. However, it is clear from Spade's actions and words that he does not love Iva at all. Moreover, Spade has no qualms in continuing his affair with her after Archer's death, which further emphasizes the immorality of his action. Second, Spade asks, and almost demands, Brigid to pay him for his services with her body. This attitude not only belittles and insults Brigid, but also seems to suggest that Spade is a lusty character who can be "bribed" with sex. Finally, the fact that he presumably keeps the money he obtains—almost extorts—from Brigid and Cairo, another criminal who wants to hire Spade to obtain the Maltese Falcon, could also be regarded as another piece of evidence of his dubious morality.

This notwithstanding, Spade is by no means a completely corrupted character, for he actually shows morality in some of his actions. The first instance is his refusal to keep the one thousand dollar bill with which he was "supposed to be bribed" (211). The first reaction would be to believe that Spade does not want to take the money either to make sure that Brigid or the rest of the gangsters have nothing against him or, as Spade himself states, to have another piece of evidence against Gutman and his men so that there is no doubt about them being guilty. It could also be argued, as Maxfield suggests, that Spade refuses to keep the money so that he can defeat Dundy, the policeman who continually tries to arrest Spade, and ridicule him (1989, 255).

However, these explanations are not entirely convincing for a series of reasons. First, the fact that Spade provides the guns (2005, 202) with which the murders have been committed is evidence enough to imprison Gutman and his men. Second and intrinsically related to the previous reason, as Spade himself stated before, the district attorney is "more interested in how his record will look on paper than in anything else. He'd rather drop a doubtful case than try it and have it go against him" (176). Hence, even if any of the criminals tried something against Spade, the authorities would probably pay no heed to them. Third, even if the police believed the gangsters, Spade could simply argue that he had kept the money as payment for his work and probably no one would reproach him, especially after having wrongly accused him of murder. Fourth, by proving his innocence and by taking in Gutman and his men, Spade has already bested Dundy. Thus, if Spade was really an "amoral" or "marginally corrupted" man, he would have kept the bribing thousand dollar bill, since, as has been stated, he has nothing to fear from keeping it and he has already "defeated" Dundy and the other policemen. Therefore, the fact that he gives it back proves that Spade, after first failing in the case of Brigid and Cairo, has been finally able to resist the temptation of filthy, indecent money (Mooney 2011, 54-55) and thus has acted morally and ethically, even if he tries to disguise his actions with his amoral, tough-guy paraphernalia

Likewise, his stubborn will to solve the case also seems to suggest a moral character. For the most part of the novel, the reader might think that the main reason why Spade has to continue the case is, basically, to save himself, as the police forces are on his tail, especially after Iva's incrimination. Spade himself claims

several times that he wants to have someone to put the blame on so that he can be sure that no one will try to arrest him. If that were the case, and if he were, in fact, an amoral or corrupted character, he could perfectly well have dropped the case after handing in Gutman and his men, for he had no need to continue, he was not in any kind of danger. Indeed, as Maxfield argues, “the police . . . already have a ‘fall guy’ for [Archer’s] killing in the person of Floyd Thursby, who can’t even defend himself” (1989, 258). Nevertheless, Spade decides to carry on the investigation and ends up arresting Brigid. When the latter questions him about his action, he replies that “when a man’s partner is killed he’s supposed to do something about it . . . I am a detective and expecting me to run criminals down and then let them go free is like asking a dog to catch a rabbit and let it go . . . it’s not the natural thing” (2005, 209). This answer shows that Spade has a moral and ethical code, even if it differs from the dominant one.

Spade is also well disposed to be involved in personal relations, as can be distilled from his attitude towards Effie, Spade’s secretary, and Brigid. Regarding the former, Spade continually shows that he trusts her blindly. Indeed, he entrusts her with the Maltese Falcon, an item vital for his survival and for his chances of capturing Gutman and the rest. If Spade were “suspicious of all relationships” he would not place his life and his freedom in someone else’s hands. Also, the fact that Spade “bec[omes] as pale as his collar” (212) after Effie rejects his embrace shows how much he cares about her. Similarly, Spade asks Effie twice (39, 96) to use her “feminine intuition” to tell him whether Brigid is trustworthy. This interest indicates that he desires to have some kind of relationship with the irresistible O’Shaughnessy, which involves sentimentality. Otherwise, it would be preposterous to be so concerned with Brigid’s true intentions.

The final conversation between Spade and Brigid is the one that most clearly evidences his romantic feelings for the seductive Ms O’Shaughnessy. After providing the aforementioned moral and/or ethical reasons for his decision to continue with the case of Archer’s death, Spade opens himself to Brigid and expresses his feelings for her. He acknowledges that he feels something similar to love for her (210) and that he will be “sorry as hell” and will “have some rotten nights” (210) when he turns her in. He even takes Brigid by the shoulders and admits that he wants to forget about the case, escape with her and “say to hell with consequences” (210) but the fear of “play[ing] the sap” (211) prevents him from doing so. Indeed, it is precisely the apprehension of being used by Brigid and not Spade’s “crustiness” or his allegedly refusal to involve himself in relationships that prevents the love plot from playing out. As Cassuto argues, it is impossible for Spade to be able to trust Brigid (2009, 47) so he refuses to develop his affair with her since he is certain that she has started it only to “stop [him] asking questions” (207). This shows that Spade’s preoccupation is, in the end, that of a lover who fears that his beloved might in fact not love him at all. That is, Spade fears unrequited love. He is thus opting for putting an end—or a

temporal stop, if we believe him when he says that he will be waiting for her (207)—to his relationship with Brigid.

This essay has attempted to demonstrate that Spade, as a perfect example of the hard-boiled detective, is not as “crooked” as he says he is “supposed to be” (211). The scenes examined here show that although it is true that he sometimes acts according to the parameters established by the previous scholars, in the end Spade goes beyond the boundaries established and proves himself able to behave morally, get involved in relationships and be sentimental.

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The Absolute Surprise of the *Arrivant*: Meeting Vancouver's  
Specters in Jen Sookfong Lee's *The End of East*

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This paper will draw on the metaphoric possibilities of the Derridean notion of *hauntology* to propose a useful methodology for the study of contemporary Canadian novels and a possible way out of some of its current impasses. I will read Jen Sookfong Lee's *The End of East* from a hauntological perspective as a meaningful construction of urban space that offers, at the same time, an intriguing approach to the formation of a literary tradition.

Keywords: Canadian literature; hauntology; Derrida; Sookfong Lee; urban space; intertextuality

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This paper is part of a larger research work which deals with representations of the city in contemporary Canadian literatures, a project that also intersects with questions of literary traditions in Canada.<sup>1</sup> In particular, this section of my research attempts to find and articulate alternative methodologies to study contemporary Canadian novels which go beyond the impasse produced by critical practices that have focused on autoethnography, in some cases, to the point of discursive exhaustion (see Verduyn and Ty 2008). Drawing on the metaphoric possibilities of the Derridean notion of *hauntology* (1994), I will read Jen Sookfong Lee's *The End of East* (2007) from a hauntological perspective as a meaningful construction of urban space that, I will argue, offers, at the same time, an intriguing approach to the formation of a literary tradition.

In *Specters of Marx*, Jacques Derrida defines *hauntology* as a process of return of suppressed knowledge that constantly suspends ontological certainties (Derrida 1994, 10). This process, which Derrida applies to the history of Marxism, involves a certain dynamics of knowledge production. It also involves the recognition of a politics of memory that, in its openness and constant movement, has the potential of bringing about transformative practices. Derrida appeals to a notion of “the messianic” to express this radical possibility: “an alterity that cannot be anticipated,”

<sup>1</sup> “The City, Urban Cultures and Sustainable Literatures: Representations of the Anglo-Canadian Post-Metropolis,” funded by the Spanish *Ministerio de Ciencia e Innovación* (FFI2010-20989).

he writes, “awaiting what one does not expect yet or any longer, hospitality without reserve, welcoming salutation accorded in advance to the absolute surprise of the arrivant” (1994, 65).

Moving outside the context of Derrida’s writing, my aim is to explore the symbolic power of his hauntological project in the literary field. More specifically, the framework question would be: how could this project of transformation of the ways in which we produce or access knowledge affect reading practices of and critical discourses on contemporary Canadian literatures? I would argue that a look at the inscription of urban space through spectrality in *The End of East*, a novel about three generations of a Chinese Canadian family in Vancouver, could take the reader in promising directions. From a spatial perspective, a discussion of the haunted location would reveal the text’s deconstruction of the binary relationship between East and West, China and Canada, Vancouver’s Chinatown and Vancouver, and so forth; from an intertextual one, the analysis of the ghost (inter)texts would expose the dynamic relationships between *The End of East* and an important body of novels, such as SKY Lee’s *Disappearing Moon Café* (1990), Daphne Marlatt’s *Ana Historic* (1988), and Timothy Taylor’s *Stanley Park* (2001), that precede and haunt it and that have constructed the city of Vancouver in culturally meaningful ways. I will try to just sketch here the implications of the critical shift I am proposing.

Jen Sookfong Lee’s *The End of East* contains and, I will argue, transcends most of the elements that have characterized so-called multicultural fiction in the past twenty-five years: questions of cultural assimilation, authenticity, essentialization and racial discrimination have often been packed into the structure of an immigration narrative, including the representation of generational conflict. *The End of East* moves back and forth between China and Canada, first and third-person narrators, past and present, and tells the story of Seid Quan’s family from his arrival in Canada in 1913 on board a boat full of Chinamen. The story begins as Sammy, Seid Quan’s granddaughter and the novel’s narrator in the present, returns to Vancouver, from Montreal, to take care of her aging mother. Moreover, the narrative is initially (and typically) framed within the terms of her own need to see through a cryptic family history, to be able to read her grandfather’s silence and, at the same time, his refusal to forget.

Lee’s language is beautiful and sharp and her images highly evocative. Yet, given the typicality of the plot and the narrative elements, the novel has elicited almost no attention outside a few multiculturally-oriented reviews (see, for instance, Thiessen 2007; Lee, T. 2007). This fact may evince, I think, the exhaustion of certain forms of criticism and the need to think of alternative perspectives on diasporic texts. Aware of this impasse, recent discussions of literature in Canada have often drawn on the potential of ghost narratives to unearth silent histories and reframe the current parameters of nation narration (see, for instance, Goldman 2012). Taken literally, a spectral approach would prevent a straightforward reading of Lee’s novel’s title (“The End of East”), implicitly questioning the underlying binary East/West,

which together with the author's signature, frame the reader's expectation within the autoethnographic genre. In fact, I would argue that the narrative event happens in the liminal (and thus potentially spectral) space between East and West.

The function of the sense of smell in this novel may offer a particular instance of how the deconstruction of spatial coordinates takes place through spectral tropes. Originally attached to each specific geographic location, smells seem to float ghost-like in the story, often contradicting the sanctioned association. Thus, when Seid Quan first arrives in Vancouver in 1913, he is aware of his own dirtiness: "he can smell the boat on his own skin, the salty, rancid odour of cured fish, other men's hair oils, rotting wood" (Lee 2007, 14). For him, however, this particular boat smell is not identified with China but with the concrete material conditions of labour movements between China and Canada. That smell, which acts as the first shadow or ghost in the story, becomes the first element that interferes with the immigrants' initial hope for success. But this happens only after, by means of a reversed spectral logic, the whole city of Vancouver becomes identified with the smell of the arriving Chinamen:

[Seid Quan] looks out toward the city and sees the mountains, dark blue and hazy behind the wood frame buildings, which appear dirty and brown, larger manifestations of the smell on his skin. He fears that the stink will be mistaken for the smell of China, but he does not know how to say that there would be no smell if Canada never was, if the boats were not so full of desperation, men trading one kind of poverty for another. (2007, 14)

Moments like this make Lee's text politically relevant. Spectrality works here on the horizontal plane in a very literal way, the ghost-like movement of the smell on the subaltern's skin. But the narration's refusal to attach the particular smell to the arriving Chinamen and its identification, in turn, with the destination, the city of Vancouver, deliberately confuses dominant spatial and *readerly* expectations.

Particular fascinating in this context is the critical space created by the intersection between the spatial and the intertextual. Within it, there is the possibility of reading *The End of East* as imbued by the ghosts of other texts that have preceded it and that have constructed the city of Vancouver otherwise. I am thinking of novels like SKY Lee's *Disappearing Moon Café* (Chinatown), Daphne Marlatt's *Ana Historic* (the harbour), or Timothy Taylor's *Stanley Park* (Stanley Park), each of which focuses on a particular heterotopia: Chinatown, Stanley Park, and the Vancouver harbour.

Let us start with the most obvious. Both SKY Lee's *Disappearing Moon Café* and Jen Sookfong Lee's *The End of East* engage with the project of imagining Vancouver's Chinatown in ways that disrupt the commodification of multicultural urban enclaves, whose representing strategies have been spelled out: "The 'Chineseness' of Chinatown is made to seem natural by the European imagination, and thus conditions the spatial horizons of local history. . . . Such a problem is still especially prevalent in the walking

tour” as well as other tourist attractions motivated by a desire of consumption of the “ethnic” city (Martin 2004, 95-96).

In SKY Lee’s novel, the frequent troping of spectrality marks, as Daniel Martin argues, the ghostly foundations of the city of Vancouver, of which “the spirits of deceased Chinese railway labourers, the ‘white ghosts’ that haunt early Chinatown, and the insubstantial spectrality of Chinese women in historical records of early Vancouver” are just some examples (Martin 2004, 85-86). Written at the peak of state multiculturalism, *Disappearing Moon Café*, as I have argued elsewhere (Darias-Beautell 2001), both participates in and destabilizes the construction of an aestheticized Chinese Canadian identity “ready to be consumed by the global market” (Martin 2004, 87). At the base of this double-forked strategy, there is a highlighted narrative self-consciousness that insists on defining history as historiography, individual memory as collective memory, the novel’s careful construction of the localized urban space of Chinatown often disrupted by the troping of a spectral space between white ghosts and Chinese Canadians (Martin 2004, 97).

*The End of East* appears haunted by this spectral space/text but manages to break the symbolic enclosure of Chinatown through at least two strategies. In the first place, the text questions and refigures the “Chineseness” of Chinatown in both spatial (East/West) and ethnic terms (Chinese/Canadian). Secondly, it expands the physical location by pushing the boundaries of Chinatown into other urban and non-urban spaces (like the original village back in China) that haunt Chinatown and are haunted by it in an endless referential movement. This can be seen in the narrator’s own relationship with Vancouver Chinatown, a specific cultural location within the city invariably identified in the novel with a stink of “rotten produce, like a thick soup” (169). Sammy has never lived in Vancouver Chinatown. Yet, when she moves East, to Montreal, she believes she carries the stink in her skin, the smell of “durian and rain-soaked cardboard boxes—leaking out of [her] pores” and onto the streets of Montreal (11). Chinatown is both home and the *unhome*. And the narrative event happens in the uncanny space between the two, as the subject returns to the actual spatial location that haunts her, Vancouver Chinatown, and is then visited by the ghost of her grandfather. Since spectrality lives in the relationships between presence and absence, there is no end to East. Rather, ghostliness inspires what Derrida would call “a new *event-ness*” (1994, 74), an “unexplored *possibility*” (Lai 2003, 499). Chinatown becomes Montreal, becomes Toronto, becomes Vancouver.

Elsewhere, reading *The End of East* vis-à-vis Timothy Taylor’s *Stanley Park* would expose moments of clash in the representation of Vancouver’s emblematic Stanley Park, and the resulting palimpsestic history would necessarily transform both the park’s and the city’s cultural memory, this including their textual traces. Stanley Park, in the novel of that name, is a place on the margins of the city: it *is* and it *is not* the city, a liminal space that provides both a natural shelter for the homeless and freedom from the frantic rhythm of downtown life for the protagonist, a restaurant

chef in serious economic trouble. Trapped in spiraling personal debt and unable to devise a way out, Jeromy escapes to Stanley Park, where he hunts and cooks for its extravagant or derelict tenants, living a life of simplicity in which sustenance, and not consumerism, is the key word. In its capacity to contravene the logics of the neoliberal market outside its limits, in the city, the park acquires an heterotopic function: it is a compensation, an illusion, a real/utopian space (see Foucault 1986).

It is through the lens of heterotopia, literally meaning “other place,” that the representation of Stanley Park in *The End of East* may cast a shadow on Taylor’s highly romanticized take of the same location. Aware of this important literary antecedent, what Lee’s novel does is to qualify and politicize the re-known touristy spot by introducing elements such as race and class that profoundly disturb and transform its meaning. For Seid Quan in the early years of the twentieth century, Stanley Park is forbidden territory (18); for his son Pon Man, it is an accessible but threatening space (78-79). Significantly, for both, the park is the stage of their first racist encounters. When Sammy, in the narrative present, goes there to escape the pungent smells of Chinatown and the cracked driveways of her neighbourhood in East Vancouver, she is, significantly, followed by the ghost of her grandfather, who has a mission for her: the writing of the story (12-13). The emphasis on generational contrasts underlies the city’s social and historical transformation as it probes Taylor’s view of the park as an urban/wild haven.

Finally, the harbour that Mrs Richards arrives at in 1873, in Daphne Marlatt’s *Ana Historic*, necessarily haunts the docks that Seid Quan sees in 1913. In both novels, the harbour produces the *arrivant*’s first emotion towards the city. Yet, whereas Marlatt’s attempt to revise colonial history remains limited to the particular class and racial privileges of the white settler female subject (see Lowry 2005), Lee’s, by contrast, expands that project by introducing the questions of class and racialization at the heart of the colonial history of the city. I have already quoted a short passage that describes Seid Quan’s impressions as the surprised arrivant. Mrs Richards’ goes as follows: “She stood at the rail as the ship hove to, holding her bonnet against the wind and looking every inch a lady, lady-teacher that is, come to her first post. . . . She gazed at the piles of lumber, the heavy smoke, the low sprawling sheds. So many men, so foreign-looking, dressed in such an outlandish assortment of clothes” (Marlatt 1988, 14-15). The harbour being represented in both novels as a space disciplined by labour (logging in Marlatt’s text, unskilled Chinese work in Lee’s), a focus on the gaps and contradictions produced by a comparative reading of that same location, would provoke the spectral return of the colonial event and alter the sanctioned cultural history of Canada. In each of these examples, Vancouver is figured as a space composed of heavily disciplined areas of incompatible meanings. Contradiction disturbs as much as stimulates discursive possibilities.

I believe that an intertextual reading of the type suggested here would result in the development of a literary hauntology; that is, it would reveal how “literature

inscribes itself in a memory space into which earlier texts have inscribed themselves. It does not leave these earlier texts as it finds them but transforms them in absorbing them. The memory of a text is its intertextuality” (Lachmann 2005). In the case I have been discussing, the critical shift reveals how the novel inserts itself into and contributes to a literary tradition that has written the city of Vancouver in culturally relevant modes.<sup>2</sup>

In their introduction to a special issue of *University of Toronto Quarterly* on the topic of literary haunting, Marlene Goldman and Joanne Saul argue that “The trope of haunting can be a reminder that the space of the in-between is palpable” (Goldman and Saul 2006, 653). In *Specters of Marx*, Derrida approaches the spectral dynamics of intellectual inheritance by saying that “An inheritance is never gathered together. . . it is never one with itself” (1994, 16). In this paper, I have attempted to probe the potential of those ideas, drawing attention to the critical space produced between the text, as material and palpable, and its intertextuality, as the spectral return of previous texts that suspend certainties and set critical discourses in movement. On the one hand, I have argued for the trope’s imaginative power as well as its transformative possibilities. On the other, my brief reading of *The End of East’s* production of urban space has looked at the role of spectrality as trace of diasporic dissonance in Canada as well as proof of the need for an epistemic break.

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<sup>2</sup> For a more sophisticated development of that idea, see my essay “Haunted/Wanted in Jen Sookfong Lee’s *The End of East*: Canada’s Cultural Memory Beyond Nostalgia.”

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## Growing Up Global: Julia Álvarez's *Return to Sender*

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Boundaries continue playing their part in a global era that is predicated upon the dissolution of borders. This paradox is depicted in Julia Álvarez's *Return to Sender* (2009), which is told from the dual perspectives of a Mexican girl and an American boy both struggling for self-definition in a global context. This paper analyzes how both children develop a sense of self in the midst of the contradictions inherent in global societies.

Keywords: globalization; children; immigration; borders; exclusion; nations

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The present global era, as Sara Kalm contends (2005, 3), is characterized by two coexisting and contradictory facets that legitimize different types of actions: a globalist outlook justifies the dissolution of national boundaries so as to enable mobility, whereas a roots-oriented discourse emphasizes national homogeneity and the need to keep outsiders out.<sup>1</sup> These conflicting visions are depicted by Julia Álvarez in her children's novel *Return to Sender* (hereafter *RTS*). This literary work was named after a massive sweep operation of illegal immigrants by the US Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency that began in May 2006. The author herself claims to have written *RTS* in order to provide children with an explanation of what was happening in Vermont at the time Operation Return to Sender was conducted.<sup>2</sup> She explains that Vermont children were not fully aware of what it meant that their farms were raided and people expelled from the country, while Mexican children did not understand why they had to live in secrecy.

On the other hand, Álvarez also acknowledges the fact that Vermont is the state that has the smallest Latino population. She calls it "lily-white Vermont" (4),

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<sup>2</sup> *RTS* ends with a section entitled "In Her Own Words: A Conversation with Julia Álvarez," where the author explains what inspired her to write this novel and provides some information regarding the context in which the story is set. This section is numbered separately from the body of the novel, running from 3 through 10.

highlighting its lack of racial diversity. Similarly, geographer Robert M. Vanderbeck identifies this northern region as the whitest state in America and claims that it has historically been imagined as one of “the last remaining spaces of authentic Yankee whiteness” (2006, 641). This imaginary geography is implicated in the construction of particular individuals as abject and out of place, and can be deployed to support what David Sibley has termed “the purification of space” (1988, 409). As *RTS* reflects, these constructions have a significant impact on not only the many families of Mexican origin who have moved to Vermont in the last decade to work on dairy farms, but also on those Vermonters with a clear idea of what it means to be a “true” American. This novel thus draws attention to the seemingly irresolvable paradox of this northern state struggling to remain white while also demonstrating an increasing demand for the recruitment of Mexican workers to work on farms. This paradox can also be applied to the nation as a whole, where it often excludes those people deemed illegal while at the same time building bridges with other nations to attract low-wage immigrant workers (Sassen 1998, 55-59).

These paradoxes have an effect on the main characters in the novel: Mari, a Mexican girl who moves to Vermont after spending some time in North Carolina, and Tyler, a Vermont boy whose parents have hired Mari’s father and uncle to work on their dairy farm. It is my intention to examine the personal development of these two children as they encounter contradictory messages that instill in them identity dilemmas and feelings of exclusion. I will consider how both characters overcome their mixed feelings by envisioning a model of global citizenship.

Mari’s previous life in North Carolina was characterized by alienation and discrimination because of her illegal status. However, her deep disappointment with her life in America fades momentarily when she and her family are enthusiastically welcomed by Tyler’s mother, who calls them “angels” (32) and kindly asks them to feel at home on the farm. Yet, Mari soon realizes that Vermont is no different from North Carolina, since her agency is again limited by practices of exclusion which, as Sibley points out ([1995] 2002, 49), are informed by images of ethnic minorities as polluting. In this respect, I would argue that Mari is excluded at three levels, each corresponding to a particular site of exclusion: the locality, the nation and the home. In saying this, I am by no means suggesting that each site of exclusion is to be considered separately. Much to the contrary, and as Sibley contends (90), each conditions the other. Therefore, apart from describing cases of exclusion at the three levels mentioned, I hope to demonstrate the effects each has on the other and also the implications for Mari’s struggle for self-definition.

In a letter Mari writes to the President of the United States, she describes the difficult situation her family has faced since they arrived in America, focusing on their new life in Vermont. The girl stresses the fact that she is once again rejected by the immediate locality and by the nation at large. In particular, she recalls an episode of exclusion that took place at school, where a group of kids made fun of her because

she is an immigrant. She recounts that “these boys say the very same things as the kids in North Carolina used to say about me being an ‘illegal alien’ who should go back to where she came from” (65). Thus, she explains that her new life in Vermont has not brought any significant improvement regarding her relationship with her classmates. I shall argue that this episode can be considered as an instance of exclusion where the local and the national levels intersect.

That this northern state is marked as distinctively white is shown by the sign that reads “TAKE BACK VERMONT” (191) on the lawn of Mr. Rossetti, who wants Vermont to return to how it used to be before Mexican immigrants moved in. Vermont’s dynamics of abjection intersect with the nation’s exclusionary activity, fuelled by the threats posed by globalization forces. According to Catherine Dauvergne (2008, 17), the permeability of borders to influxes of people brings a range of pressures on nations to keep their sovereignty as regards entry into the country. In this sense, the continuous arrival of newcomers of different ethnic, racial and cultural backgrounds makes nations feel that their identity and power are being jeopardized. These fears explain the insults thrown at Mari by her classmates. The girl is told to go back to Mexico because she is an “illegal,” a term which, according to Dauvergne, “accomplishes this exclusion when the border itself does not” (2008, 17). Therefore, the labeling of people as illegal is part of a strategy employed by nations when their borders do not succeed in keeping immigrants out, thus asserting their power and identity. All of this makes it possible to argue that boundaries, either physical or symbolic, play an important role in a global era that supposedly promotes the dissolution of borders.

In addition to being insulted by other children, Mari’s life is highly conditioned by the surveillance mechanisms the nation uses to track and deport illegal immigrants. Because *la migra* might spot them easily in white Vermont, Mari and her family are forced to inhabit the margins of society. They are mostly isolated on the farm, except for when Mari and her little sisters have to go to school. However, their right to be educated is also constrained when their parents are caught by *la migra*, an episode which forces the girls to leave school and hide in a secret place. Therefore, the threats posed by surveillance apparatus also prevent undocumented immigrants from enjoying the so-called unalienable rights, such as the right to education.

The home is also a site of exclusion for Mari due to her father’s strict personality. On the one hand, he does not allow his daughters to leave the house alone or send letters to their relatives because that might alert the border patrol. These prohibitions reflect how the nation’s ideas about who is entitled to the country invade the home, showing how the nation as a site of exclusion conditions the private realm. On the other hand, because her mother is missing (having been kidnapped by smugglers) for most of the story, Mari is asked to bear the household burden on her own. What is more, she is not allowed to be alone with Tyler simply because he is a boy. These constraints on the female protagonist, I believe, are geared towards the reproduction of Mexican patriarchal values that rely on women’s passivity. For all the aforesaid it

becomes clear that, as Linda McDowell holds, the home is not always a safe haven, but it might be “a cage or trap, a prison and, for some women, a site of fear and abuse” ([1999] 2003, 88). This is indeed the case for Mari, since her home does not provide her with full comfort.

All these boundaries make Mari feel she cannot relate to her environment. America does not offer her any chance to belong and her native country is no longer a source of identification either because she does not agree with many of the Mexican values epitomized by her family: “Sometimes, even if I had been born in Mexico, I felt a huge desert stretching between my parents and who I was becoming” (102). Displacement is thus a common feeling in Mari’s life in Vermont.

The male protagonist also faces identity dilemmas arising from the arrival of Mari and her family at his farm. Although Tyler knows his family needs extra help to secure the survival of the farm, he is not willing to accept the newcomers. His view of Mexican immigrants is based on narrative stereotypes that make him doubt whether they are really angelic helpers as his mother suggests. He is thus torn between his mother’s view and his own suspicion about the Mexican family: “He didn’t like this angel talk . . . Besides, *angels* are just one step away from ghosts and the spooky thought that maybe their farm is haunted with bad luck” (14; emphasis in the original). Furthermore, Tyler considers America as a bounded space meant only for those people deemed to be American, thereby reproducing a roots-oriented discourse intended to secure national homogeneity. Consequently, he believes that Mari and her sisters have no right to go to an American school: “So, if they are Mexicans, how can they go to school? After all, you can’t vote if you’re not American” (41). His suspicion towards the Mexican family increases even further when he realizes that only Mari’s little sisters are legally in the United States. As this means disrespecting the laws of the country, Tyler refuses to be friends with Mari and confesses: “I’d rather lose the farm than not be loyal to my country” (70). However, Tyler never acts accordingly since he has too many doubts regarding the hiring of illegal immigrants. On the one hand, he believes breaking the law is something “true” Americans must not do, but on the other, he likes Mari and wants to keep the farm.

These mixed feelings gradually disappear. Tyler finally decides to agree to the hiring of Mexicans thanks to his grandmother’s explanations about his own family’s immigration experience. In addition, I shall argue that the friendship that develops between these children and the lessons they are taught at school are crucial for bringing both characters closer to a model of global citizenship. In their time together, these children are able to identify the striking similarities between them and learn that differences are for sharing and celebrating. With this in mind, I will consider the notion “repositioning,” a term coined by bell hooks to refer to a process that “has the power to deconstruct practices of racism and make possible the disassociation of whiteness with terror in the black imagination” (1992, 346). For the purpose of this paper, “repositioning” will be understood in a broader sense so as to include the

rejection of stereotypes concerning Mexicans. I shall argue that, in engaging with the other, Tyler repositions himself, combating the association of Mexicans with criminality that he had previously defended. Mari, in turn, considers friendship to be a space she can belong to: "I used to feel so alone, neither Mexican nor American. But now that I have a special friend, I feel like I don't have to be one thing or another. Friendship is a country everyone can belong to no matter where you are from" (202). In saying this, she implicitly points towards cultural hybridity and criticizes views of spaces as bounded and exclusive.

As stated above, the school also plays a major role in solving the characters' dilemmas. Mr. Bicknell, the schoolteacher, is a powerful actor in this process. He constantly preaches that "we are all citizens of one planet, indivisible with liberty and justice for all" (72), that is, people are bound together in a network built upon the values of freedom and equality, a message that gradually takes hold in Mari and Tyler. Additionally, it should be noted that Mr. Bicknell's lessons about justice are not only intended to indoctrinate children, but also adults. He takes his ideas about equality to a town meeting attended by adults and children, including Mari and Tyler. After witnessing people's intention to go along with a motion against illegal immigrants, Mr. Bicknell decides to talk people into doing otherwise and claims, "But the bottom line is that this country, and particularly this state, was built by people who gave up everything in search of a better life, not just for themselves, but for their children. Their blood, sweat, and tears formed this great nation" (191). With these words, Mr. Bicknell attempts to highlight the immigrant contribution to the progress of the nation so as to dispel anti-immigrant feelings in the community. His speech aids in the revalorization of immigration by pointing out the key role immigrants have played in building up the United States of America, a message that has a profound effect on Tyler, who passes a note to Mari expressing his gratitude "for helping save our farm" (191).

The knowledge both children have gained empowers them to take action regarding Mari's unfair situation. Her parents are caught by *la migra* and taken to prison because of an alleged relationship between her mother and the smugglers who held her hostage for more than a year. With the help of Tyler and others, Mari goes to the Homeland Security Office to get her parents out of jail. The girl tells the clerk at the Office everything related to the abduction of her mother and argues that, because of their illegal status, her father could not report her mother's disappearance, drawing attention to the lack of protection for immigrants. Her determination to tell their real story contributes to her parents' release from prison. Yet, in spite of this, she cannot prevent the whole family from being deported to Mexico.

Despite this bittersweet ending, the letters Mari and Tyler exchange following her deportation reveal that both have managed to resolve their dilemmas. They know that they are "not just patriots of one country, but citizens of the planet" (317). This self-definition is linked to Stephen Castles' demand for "a new model of global citizenship

[that] breaks the nexus between belonging and territoriality" (2000, 132). This model engenders a significant identity that relies on interconnectedness, thus transcending geographical and political borders. Consequently, the rights and responsibilities of global citizens are seen as being derived from membership of humanity, and not of a particular nation (2000, 132). Mari and Tyler have come to embrace this model; however, they know that Mari will not be able to claim place-rights in America unless she does it legally. Thus, both acknowledge that the granting of rights will still be up to the nation in question.

To conclude, *RTS* can be considered as a novel that not only shows how the main characters reconcile the contradictory positions that coexist in a global era, but also foregrounds their agency in their identity development by pointing out the actions that lead them to challenge society's attempts to systematically assert notions of bounded identities and spaces that enable the exclusion of individuals.

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# Mainstreaming the Duggars: the Representation of Christian Fundamentalism in the *19 Kids and Counting* Reality Show

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The present paper explores the way in which the Duggars, a Christian fundamentalist family of twenty-one, are portrayed in the TLC reality show *19 Kids and Counting*. The representational strategies deployed by the producers to market this countercultural family seem to be crucial to the show's success, for the cosmetic makeover to which they have subjected the Duggars has successfully mitigated the negative impact that the Duggars' patriarchal values would have had on the audience.

Keywords: Duggars; reality TV; representation; Christian fundamentalism; mainstreaming; gender

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## 1. FROM A "FREAK SHOW" TO A MAINSTREAM REALITY SHOW

Competing with other The Learning Channel (TLC) shows, such as *Toddlers and Tiaras* and *Say Yes to the Dress*, *19 Kids and Counting* (henceforth, *19 Kids*) is a favourite with the public, with twelve seasons—and counting—numerous specials and countless radio and TV interviews. With each new season of *19 Kids*, the Duggar family's popularity seems to soar despite their beliefs: the Duggars are Christian fundamentalists, born and raised in Arkansas, at the heart of the so-called "Bible belt" of the US. I contend here that the main reason for the Duggars' phenomenal success is to be found in the careful way in which Bill Hayes, Deanie Wilcher and Kirk Streb, the production team behind the show, have chosen to represent this ultraconservative family. If the first two documentaries on the Duggars, *14 Children and Pregnant Again* (henceforth, *14 Children*) and *Raising 16 Children*, were specifically construed as a twenty-first-century version of a freak show (Dovey 2000), by the time the other three pre-series specials were being filmed,<sup>1</sup> the format had gradually but decidedly moved in the direction of a mainstream reality show. The producers realised that more

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<sup>1</sup> By this term, I refer to the five documentaries about the Duggars that were filmed and released before they were featured in their own series, *17 Kids and Counting*, in 2008. Besides *14 Children and Pregnant Again* (2004) and *Raising 16 Children* (2006), the other pre-series specials are *16 Children and Moving In* (2006), *On the Road with 16 Children* (2006) and *Duggars' Big Family Album* (2007).

people than they might have initially expected had a genuine interest in the Duggars, not despite but *because of* their beliefs. Indeed, while statistics show millions actively subscribe to the same lifestyle as the Duggars (New 2012, 213-16), even more people perceive it as a positive return to the same puritan values on which many believe the US was founded (Joyce 2009, 11-18). When it was time to reap the results of TLC's investment in the Duggars and quantify the audience's response to the first season in what was now officially a show in its own right, *17 Kids and Counting* (henceforth, *17 Kids*), the production team was confronted with the fact that the Duggars were receiving a surprising amount of emails from critics of their fundamentalist beliefs, *as well as* from supporters of conservative Christian values. It was evident that there was room for growth for the Duggar show (Mesaros-Winkle 2012, 68-70).

According to Marvin Carlson, both onstage and offstage performances "imply not just doing or even re-doing, but a self-consciousness about doing and re-doing on the part of both performers and spectators" (2004, 5). In this case, a third element, the team of producers, faces the performer-spectator binomial. The interactive nature of the producer-performer-spectator triangle has thus eventually shaped the show. In order to market the Duggars to an audience beyond conservative Christianity, it became clear that a softening of the least palatable aspects of the Duggars' religious credo was in order. Hence, the significant changes brought about in the show's opening sequence for each new season. The opening sequence in *17 Kids* portrays a family with "very conservative values," who closely monitor their children's access to the Internet and does not allow them to watch TV at all. To the voiceover of one of the children explaining that "school happens around the dining room table" correspond images of the children leafing through the Bible and memorising scripture through word-action associations at said dining room table. Remarkably, the show opening for the first season of *19 Kids* bears no trace of their conservative faith, of TV and Internet restrictions, nor of homeschooling. According to the latest version of their show opening, they just do things "a little different than [*sic*] most families." We have, then, an inversion of Geoff King's theorisation of the spectacular in popular media. Within the conventional logic of spectacular films and TV shows, "everything is larger than life; not unreal but hyperreal" (King [2000] 2009, 1). On the contrary, TLC is making a spectacle of the Duggars by progressively taming the abnormal, the excessive, or the monstrous. *14 Children*, first aired in 2004, is structured in such a way that a clear demarcation is being constantly drawn between what a "normal" family do/look like, and what the Duggar family do/look like. Each of the different sections into which this first show is divided—schooling, budgeting for groceries, doing chores, having fun—begins with a voiceover narrator comparing how average American families manage themselves in one of the said situations with the way the Duggars cope. In *17 Kids*, this polarised depiction of the Duggars vis-à-vis a standard American family is maintained, with little captions stating "fun facts" that quantify in neat round

figures how different the Duggars are. By the time the fourth season was launched in 2010, this was no longer so. Not only, as we have seen, has the show opening been progressively tweaked over the years to the point that no references to the Duggars' radical Christian beliefs can now be found in it, but also the quiriness that was insisted upon in the first show openings has been surgically removed from the twelfth season. We now see Jim Bob passionately embrace and kiss his wife, while the statement that "it isn't always easy" has been edited out in order to emphasise the fact that they "make it all work." To distinguish a large Christian family from "white trash" families and other "benefits scroungers," the Duggars do their best to prove that they are perfectly self-sufficient and that the Christian patriarchal way is indeed a bountiful one. However, the close-ups of the Bible, which had already substituted the statement that they "have very conservative values" in the second season opening, have been altered in the fourth season so as to render the book unrecognisable. "Eventually," explains Michelle in the Duggars' first book, *The Duggars: 20 and Counting!*, "we called back the production company and said we would let them do the documentary, but only if they agreed not to edit out our faith, because it is the absolute core of our lives" (Duggar and Duggar 2008, 106). That was 2004. In 2013 their faith certainly does not hold centre-stage anymore.

## 2. ARE THE DUGGARS "QUIVERFULL"? AFFILIATION TO THE CHRISTIAN PATRIARCHY MOVEMENT

In their second book, *A Love That Multiplies*, we read that Michelle and Jim Bob's answer to the question above is a reassuring "no": they do not belong to the Quiverfull movement (Duggar and Duggar 2012, 92). Yet, they adhere to every single statement of faith and seem to obey every rule subscribed by it, as well as by the broader Christian patriarchy movement within which it is inscribed. In the last thirty years, an increasing number of Protestants—affiliated to practically every conservative Christian denomination, as well as to various independent megachurches and homechurches—have been turning to a fundamentalist, that is to say, literal reading of some of the most controversial aspects of the Bible, which has resulted in a return to patriarchy in its most quintessential version. Francis Schaeffer, often referred to as the founder of the American Christian right, was the first to promote "cobelligerency" among Evangelicals, Catholics and Mormons with the end of building an allegiance against reproductive freedom, women's and gay rights, and church-state separation (Joyce 2009, 42). Central to the most fundamentalist branches of all said denominations, as well as to the Duggars, is the belief that each child is a blessing from God and that, consequently, pregnancy should not be prevented, but actively sought. Significantly, both the biblical quotation with which the Duggars open their first book (Duggar and Duggar 2008, ii) and the term "Quiverfull" are culled from Psalm 127 5-7: "Lo: children are a heritage of the Lord; and the fruit of the womb is His reward. As arrows

are in the hand of a mighty man, so are the children of the youth. Happy is the man that hath his *quiver full* of them” (KJV; emphasis added).<sup>2</sup>

If the term “Quiverfull” may not yet ring a bell for many, the 1990s movement known as the “Moral Majority” is likely to be a more familiar one. Two of its most prominent founding members, Howard Phillips and Jerry Falwell, were not only good friends, but also shared the core beliefs of what was shortly to become a political attempt to return to biblical patriarchy. Their legacy has now been wrought into the two financial pillars of the Christian patriarchy movement: on the one hand, Bill Gothard’s *Basic Life Principles Institute* and its younger sibling, the *Advanced Training Institute*, in which most fundamentalist homeschooling families, including the Duggars, are enrolled; on the other, *Vision Forum*, which was led until recently by Howard Phillips’s son Doug and which has issued two DVDs containing several interviews with Michelle Duggar (*Tea with Michelle Duggar* 2010; *Hospitality with Michelle Duggar* 2012). Gothard’s and Phillips’s fundamentalist approach to biblical interpretations of gender roles, parental practice and proselytism was openly subscribed to by the sixteen-million-member Southern Baptist Convention, which makes the Christian patriarchal movement one of the most widespread Christian movements in the US (Joyce 2009, 3-30). Patriarchal constructions of masculinity and femininity as complementary stress a dichotomist view of, on the one hand, a passive womanhood, exclusively concerned with being a helpmeet to her male head and a nurturing mother to her children, and, on the other, an active, even heroically belligerent manhood, fighting back secularisation and the advance of other religions (Rushdoony and North 1973).

That fundamentalist Christians should have such a belligerent attitude is hardly surprising, for their understanding of family and their political agenda are inextricably entwined and both are claimed to go back to God’s very first commandment to mankind: “be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and *subdue* it” (KJV Genesis 1:28; emphasis added). According to a fundamentalist reading, God demands of *His* people that they grow Him an army so that godly people may conquer the world and, as the Bible says, rule “over every living creature” (KJV Genesis 1:28). The fact that Christians are called upon to fight God’s war to win over the earth seems to explain why fundamentalist imagery is riddled with militarist metaphors. To raise a family is to raise future soldiers to advance God’s interest. The larger the family, therefore, the more the parents are contributing to the cause. In order to raise a large family in accordance with biblical ruling, it is indispensable that women should agree to be the sole caregivers for their children and to be exclusively in charge of the practicalities of daily household life. This implies that, in order to embrace motherhood, women must first learn to accept their role as submissive wives to leading husbands. To put themselves in this subordinate position is to acknowledge the fact that a pyramidal

<sup>2</sup> The Duggars, like most Christian fundamentalist families, only use the King James version of the Bible.

structuring of both family and society is a direct reflection of God's intended order and thus holy and unquestionable. To submit to a husband is to submit ultimately to God. This is also true for the children, adult and underage alike, who are subject to the incontestable authority of their father just as he, in turn, is subject to that of his heavenly Father. Homeschooling constitutes, then, a strategic choice for any fundamentalist family who wish to train their children in the patriarchal ways.

### 3. A COSMETIC "MAKEOVER": MAINSTREAMING GENDER REPRESENTATION AND GENDER PERFORMANCE

It is surprising that a family with such beliefs on being "set apart" (KJV Leviticus 20:26), who forbid their children to watch TV because of its evil influence (Duggar and Duggar 2008, 30-31), would agree to *be* on TV. What is not so surprising is the fact that people are growing genuinely interested in and fond of a show that has been eminently designed to help the audience create a bond with this family, *despite* their fundamentalist views on women, sexuality and parenting. Gender representation is, in fact, central to the process of mainstreaming the Duggars, while other, perhaps less obvious, but still foundational elements of such an artificially reconstituted patriarchy are left untouched.

W. Bradford Wilcox argues that "in practice, the doctrine [on headship and submission] creates a benevolent patriarchy that domesticates men into responsible husbands and loving fathers" (Joyce 2009, 35). The very same cosmetic "makeover" to which patriarchal values have been subjected in certain Christian discourses is at work in a much more visual manner in the Duggar show. To counterbalance what many saw as a meek, less-than-masculine image projected by the male members of the family in the early seasons, a wide range of activities are staged to "re-masculinise" Jim Bob and his sons in the latest instalments of the show. For not every leader of the patriarchal movement agrees with an oxymoronic, gentle patriarchy being the Christian response to mainstream masculinity. Mark Driscoll, of the countercultural Seattle megachurch, "boasts that he could never worship a Jesus he could beat up" (Joyce 2009, 37). Given that biblical patriarchy is close to hegemonic constructions of masculinity as the embodiment of all the values that orbit the notion of power—strength, competitiveness, assertiveness, resilience and resoluteness—but given also the strict hierarchy of biblical social schemes, power must paradoxically be "under authority." Doug Phillips and Bill Gothard believe that a martial configuration of masculinity is, therefore, the only one capable of meeting all the requirements of Old Testamentary patriarchy, which obviously takes us back to the Quiverfull vision of an ever-growing "army" of believers steadily marching to (re)cover the earth. Consequently, frequent and carefully orchestrated scenes now show Jim Bob and his elder sons working out in full military style. Such strategies to "normalise" their gender identity in the eyes of the world are simultaneously complying with the Quiverfull

plan of using children as weapons of spiritual warfare (Maddux 2010, 151-52) only, in doing so, the focus is primarily on the corporeal dimension of masculinity, on *looking masculine* and literally *embodying* the ideals of moral strength, resilience and self-assertiveness. To have the Duggar boys assert themselves in any other way but through the sanctioned channels of sport and physical work would be at odds with the biblical principle of absolute submission to paternal authority. Conformity to the rule of the head of the family entails identifying with the father to the point that to cultivate an individual identity is tantamount to rebellion.

This becomes conspicuous in the coordinated outfits the Duggars wear in all the pre-series specials, a visual indicator of the fact that there is an “us” opposed to a “them.” As early as the first episodes of *17 Kids*, such a patent metaphor for the physical and psychological barriers that seclude the Duggar children from the rest of the world is progressively removed. The body, as the fundamental site of gender identity construction that Judith Butler contends it to be (1993), is in fact at the centre of the most obvious of all the cosmetic changes carried out on the show in order to make it appealing to mainstream viewers. The side-parted hairstyles of the boys, plastered down with hair-gel to tame any trichological rebelliousness, previously turned them into miniature versions of their father. The girls also used to wear their hair down to their waist to conform to their father’s love of conservative feminine hairstyles. After a photo shoot for *People* magazine, the professionally styled spiky hairdos sported by the boys have become a staple in their modernised look, while the girls have become ostensibly more adventurous and fashion-forward in their experiments with straightening irons and curlers. Over the years, the girls’ clothes have gone from frumpy-looking, floor-length dresses and jumpers in distinctive Little-House-on-the-Prairie patterns to washed-out denim skirts and graphic T-shirts. These changes have been accompanied by a remarkable shift in the family’s understanding of what constitutes modest apparel. According to the biblical modesty standards to which the Duggars adhere, a woman’s shoulders and knees should always be covered. Yet, the length of the Duggar girls’ sleeves and skirts has progressively shortened to the point that the cap-sleeves of the fashionable blouses and tops they currently wear barely cover their shoulders at all, while their knees are now clearly visible whenever they sit down.

Despite these skin-deep changes, the patriarchal family structure is still at work in the Duggar home, albeit that the show’s emphasis may no longer lie in it. All the Duggar girls are said to dream of becoming stay-at-home-mothers who will faithfully let their husbands be the sole breadwinners, and in the meantime, are content with being stay-at-home-daughters. They are in sole charge of housework and othermothering their younger siblings, while the elder Duggar boys are allowed to start their own businesses and work outside the house. The children, including adult children, need parental permission to do anything, from going grocery shopping to beginning a friendship with anyone outside the family sphere, and they are chaperoned by at least

one member of the family at all times. Josh, the eldest son, has been hired to work at one of the headquarters of the Christian patriarchal movement, the Family Research Council in Washington D.C., while Joseph, the sixth child, has recently attended Gothard's ALERT training camp, a paramilitary boot-camp designed to return leadership to its God-intended masculinity. Every time we see Jim Bob "counselling" with Michelle she is never filmed doing anything but quietly nodding at her husband. Indeed, the construction of each of these ostensibly artificial tête-à-têtes is such to provide a poor compromise between the need to refute interpretations of the Duggar marriage as patriarchal, while never actually undermining Jim Bob's authority as head of the house.

We could then conclude that TLC is *de facto* advertising a patriarchal lifestyle by simply broadcasting the fundamentalist ideas of the Duggars. However, it is possible to go further and say that the producers of the show are *actively* promoting Quiverfull values by minimising or blurring out the most radical and shockingly counter-stream beliefs, while effectually presenting the Duggars as a model family *from every point of view*. Not only no actual mainstreaming is taking place, but on the contrary, a sort of "counter-streaming" of US national television is at work. Instead of having a fundamentalist family adopt mainstream values and beliefs, we have fundamentalist beliefs and values injected into the mainstream of American culture.

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East Vancouver, or One's "Tiny Pocket of Neighbourhood":  
Ivan E. Coyote's Stories Cross Boundaries

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The aim of this paper is to analyze Ivan E. Coyote's collection of stories, *Loose End*, in an attempt to interpret her presentation of East Vancouver as a space where different issues dealing with identity, especially gender, can be blended. I will have recourse to the work of Michel de Certeau, as well as to J. Halberstam's *In a Queer Time and Place: Transgender Bodies, Subcultural Lives*.

Keywords: Ivan E. Coyote; transgender; urban spaces; queer archive; East Vancouver

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"Saturdays and Cowboy Hats," the first of the forty-seven stories contained in Ivan E. Coyote's book *Loose End* (2005), introduces readers to many of the concerns of the author, and certainly to the most relevant questions which I would like to consider in this paper. To begin with Coyote's first sentences in the book make reference to an urban space that is altered: "Every Saturday morning all summer long, the parking lot across the street from me is transformed. Friday night, it's full of sports cars and sparsely moustached, beer-guzzling boys with cell phones and car stereos that shake the glass in my front windows, but come Saturday morning at eight, it's a farmer's market" (9). Her description of a space that is not stable is persistent throughout the book and because this conforms with Michel de Certeau's conception of space as mutable and fluctuating, as presented in his seminal work *The Practice of Everyday Life* (1984), it will be one of my points of analysis in this paper. Then Coyote, always resorting to the first person and with the fluid tone of a storyteller, acknowledges in this story that "there is still something of the small-towner" in her: "I like to know my neighbours, I like to meet the guy who picked the cherries I'm about to eat" (9). It is her focus on herself as a city-dweller coming from the rural Yukon, and on how she relates to the people who inhabit East Vancouver, the urban space where she has decided to live, that becomes another important point in my analysis. And finally, when she describes her encounter with a six-year-old child at the farmer's market, another central issue is presented to her readers; when Coyote refers to the mother and her "little boy," who bends down to pet one of her dogs, the gender confusion is

displayed as the woman says, “Olivia, you have to ask the man if the dog is friendly before you touch it. Maybe it doesn’t like little girls” (10). Neither is the child that our narrator has met a boy nor is the narrator a man, even though both look like someone within the male spectrum; and that gender blur makes all the difference in Coyote’s narrations.

Coyote presents us with a space that can be transformed, and she shows how, as an inhabitant of East Vancouver, she contributes to that transformation. Her depiction of everyday life in that urban space, in fact, is a reminder of de Certeau’s reflections on the city as a place where pedestrians “give their shape to spaces” (97), where “the walker transforms each spatial signifier into something else” (98). Coyote walks East Vancouver, most of the time with her dogs; and her book shows the many things that can happen along those daily walks. If we follow de Certeau’s ideas on the tactical practices of the everyday to help us understand the urban space that Coyote presents in her stories, we could say that her tactic as a transgender walker of the city is neither that of imposing her gender identity, nor the militant occupation of spaces by gender-ambiguous people like her, but rather that of inhabiting the spaces of heteronormativity and transforming them into something else—sometimes taking advantage of the anonymity granted by the city. The transgender narrator of the stories in *Loose End* refuses to include herself in a specific gender category unless she finds it necessary, as is the case with the close-to-violent scene in a park in the story “Rumble in the Park.” Sometimes she is recognized as a woman, as in an incident at a payphone, when an aggressive woman calls her a “dyke” (134), but most of the time she allows the space where gender confusion is maintained to be the ground of her narration. She presents an image of herself keeping control of her identity while defending, and reflecting on the visibility of, queer people. In that sense, she gets close to Foucault and Butler as philosopher J. Halberstam reads them, asserting that both thinkers “clearly believe that resistance has to go beyond the taking of a name (‘I am a lesbian’), and must produce creative new forms of being by assuming and empowering a marginal positionality” (53).

Halberstam’s book, *In a Queer Time and Place: Transgender Bodies, Subcultural Lives*, which was published in 2005, the same year *Loose End* came out, focuses on how transgender subjects relate to place and time. Halberstam asserts, “Our relations to place, like our relations to people, are studded with bias, riven with contradictions, and complicated by opaque emotional responses” (22). That is precisely what Coyote shows in this book, which becomes a reflection on her twelve years as a resident of East Vancouver, a period that ended when her house was set on fire. After making the decision to leave Vancouver for the more rural and quieter town of Squamish, north of the city, she describes her feelings: “I was no longer seated comfortably in the centre of my tiny pocket of neighbourhood. Life had picked me up and dropped me somewhere else, outside looking in. Looking back. Looking around me, and finding nothing familiar to land on or rest up against” (175-76). That assertion comes in the

afterword to the book, and by the time readers get to that point, they have already realized that Coyote presents East Vancouver as a space where, having found comfort, she has also had to confront violence and problems. In order to analyze the way in which the author presents her life in the big city, it is helpful to resort to a passage from "Good Fences," where she shows how the experience of community life in her small town, Whitehorse, in the Yukon, influenced the way she approached life in Vancouver:

When I first moved to the city, the only way I knew to treat my neighbours was what I had learned from back home, which is you get to know them. You chat to them as you are walking with the dogs. You ask them their names, and tell them yours. You invite them over the fence to have a beer in your backyard, get to know them a little; strange, small-town customs like that.

I attempted to practice these habits in this new land that was East Vancouver. One of the first differences I noticed was that knowing your neighbours can be harder to stay on top of when they are constantly moving in and out, as people who lived in cities seemed more apt to do. (147)

One of the differences between life in rural Yukon or in urban East Vancouver lies, then, in the high mobility of people in the city. But Coyote decides to stay in the same place throughout twelve years, and keeping that "strange, small-town" custom allows her to put into practice those ways she brought with her from back home. Thus, as the narrator summarizes in "Good Fences," after those twelve years in the neighbourhood, "I have met, supped, chatted, played music, and even hot-tubbed with most of the folks who lived within a two-block radius of my house. I have what I always wanted since I left Whitehorse: my own little small town neighbourhood" (148). Certainly, what this collection of stories shows is that its author-narrator has actively and consciously transformed the space she has inhabited, even when it has not always been an easy task.

An important point to be made here is that, in the contrast between the Yukon and East Vancouver, neither place is presented as extremely suffocating for a transgender person like her, nor is either presented as a liberating utopia. That is one of the interesting things about Coyote's writing: her exercises in deconstructing binaries, be it the man/woman, the urban/rural or the public/private. Halberstam asserts in her book that "Some queers need to leave home in order to become queer, and others need to stay close to home in order to preserve their difference" (27), and Coyote tries to show that she can find comfort in both places, refusing to choose one or, the other: her stories blur the boundaries of the urban/rural. I must emphasize, though, that this does not mean she overlooks the many difficulties queer people can encounter in the different places they inhabit.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Questions of nationalism and sexuality, which would certainly enrich the analysis of Coyote's narrative production, are beyond the scope of this essay. For further references on queer

Before I focus on Coyote's connection to the big city, I would like to concentrate on two particular stories that describe her attachment to the Yukon combined with reflections on the development of a gender-variant personality. Coyote describes the Yukon as "the land of the postcard-perfect Yuletide setting" (65), and her references to her native town, Whitehorse, are normally connected to stories about her mother or about Francis, a gender-ambiguous seven-year-old child, the son of a beloved friend, who becomes one of the most pervasive obsessions of this author. "I Like to Wear Dresses," the story in which she introduces Francis at length, begins with two paragraphs describing Whitehorse as a milder place than Vancouver: a place where rush hour "is seven cars long" (72), and whose December cold is defined as clear and blue as opposed to "the grey edge of Vancouver" (72). She uses all that space contextualizing the idyllic setting in which Francis's personality is developing only to explain how, at that early age, the boy is being bullied at school by kids who have started to call him a faggot—the reason why he no longer wears dresses, skirts, or blouses to go out, but only in the safety of his home (72-73). Together with the introduction of the problems confronted by queer children when they begin to socialize, Coyote presents the public/private space binary, which she also tries to deconstruct in her stories.

In the above story, the author describes how Francis takes the opportunity to ask many of the questions that a child who is beginning to perceive a non-normative identity may ask, like which washroom Uncle Ivan uses in public places or, to be more precise, whether Ivan is really a boy or a girl. The answer he receives to the last question is that Ivan is "technically a girl," who has a whole lot of boy in her as well (73). The mirror effect is immediate, as the boy seems to find a definition that suits the way he feels. He says to Uncle Ivan in recognition, "I'm just like you, but the reverse," asserting that he is a boy, with "a little girl in me too"; to this he adds while lowering his voice, as they are in a public space, "I like to wear dresses" (74).

Francis's questions point to the need of queer children to find referents, an issue which Halberstam develops in *In a Queer Time and Place*, calling for the creation of a queer archive which should not be understood as "a simple collection of data," but rather in a Foucauldian way "to suggest a discursive field and a structure of thinking" (32-33). Uncle Ivan and her "dyke buddy Brenda" (73) engage in something like the construction of such an archive when they share some of their knowledge about queer people with Francis. The conversation takes place while they drive up a mountain to look at the town from above:

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Canadian literatures and cultures see *Here Is Queer: Nationalisms, Sexualities, and the Literatures of Canada*, by Peter Dickinson (1999); *Sexing the Maple: A Canadian Sourcebook*, edited by Richard Cavell and Peter Dickinson (2006); "Jane Rule and the Memory of Canada," by Richard Cavell, in *Unruly Penelopes and the Ghosts: Narratives of English Canada*, edited by Eva Darias-Beautell (2012); *In a Queer Country: Gay and Lesbian Studies in the Canadian Context*, edited by Terry Goldie (2001).

The three of us drove up Grey Mountain and looked at the tiny, snow-silenced metropolis below us. All the way up the mountain Brenda and I told Francis about our people: those of us who are boys with girls inside, and girls with boys inside, and all of the beautiful in-between and shape shifters that are his ancestors. We told him that since before even his older brother was in his mom's belly, there were people like us. . . .

We told Francis that his people have forever been artists and mystics and healers and leaders and librarians.

We talked about bullies and their ways. (74-75)

Brenda and Ivan wittily construct the imagery of a romanticized queer community for Francis; yet, what they do not tell the boy, what becomes the final afterthought of this story, is Coyote's reflection about what remained silenced in that conversation:

I cried with relief in the knowledge that my very existence in his life might make it easier for him to make it all the way through Grade Three. I wondered, as Francis's fairy godfather should, when is too soon to warn my young friend about gay bashers, and how exactly I would go about explaining to a northern boy-girl a thing as incomprehensible as what happened to Aaron Webster, who was found naked in Vancouver's busiest downtown park, beaten to death by a crew of teenagers armed with baseball bats and pool cues. Would I leave out the details, and not mention how the police couldn't find any witnesses brave enough to come forward? (75)

Coyote's narrative abounds with ethical questions about matters of silence and visibility concerning the lives of gender-variant people, mainly as regards confronting violence. The story about Francis is, of course, also about Ivan and her childhood in Whitehorse: "I cried for the hope he makes me feel, now that I'm not the only cross-dresser born in the Yukon in the family, that I will never be alone again. My own seven-year-old loneliness forged my promise to him to see that things will, indeed, be different for us as a team" (75). But it is also about Francis and Ivan's future, and Coyote's answer to the crossroads is that no matter where people like them have to make their way, their tactic must be to stick together, to engage in the queer archive and to transform the spaces they inhabit, be it rural Yukon or urban Vancouver.

Yet, Coyote's representation of life in the Yukon for people like Francis or herself is not only one of bullying and loneliness. In "Family Album," she recalls a trip north, "home to the Yukon." Amongst her favourite moments of that trip she highlights playing street hockey with her mom, a bawdy conversation with her grandmother from her father's side and a drive to the mountains with some non-Yukoners when she could still feel like a "real Yukoner . . . ; after all those city years" (155). But one of the best moments of that visit to her hometown took place at a gathering with buddies from high school. There, for the first time since the old days, Ivan felt that

she was recognized as the person she was, and it took a while for her to understand what had happened:

It was just as good as the good old days, but better somehow, and I didn't figure it out until later just what the difference was.

I finally got to hang around with the guys from the block, without trying to pretend I wasn't really one of them. No one told me I wasn't like the other girls. No one said I was almost like one of the guys. (156)

The final acceptance of her gender ambiguity by the people from her hometown, the consciousness that, at last, no one was trying to label her, to fix her gender identity, made her feel “a brief but exhilarating glimpse of what is actually important in my life” (154). This had to do both with the love she feels for and from her family and with the eventual acknowledgement from her buddies. And what is more important for the point I am trying to make here: this story gives us a representation of the Yukon as a place where transgender identities can be recognized, whatever initial difficulties young Ivan or Francis may have encountered. In fact, Coyote's perception and representation of transgender identities in the two stories I have just analyzed are reminiscent of Halberstam's definition of the term “transgender”: “Transgender proves to be an important term not to people who want to reside outside of categories altogether but to people who want to place themselves in the way of particular forms of recognition. Transgender may indeed be considered a term of relationality; it describes not simply an identity but a relation between people, within a community, or within intimate bonds” (49). When it comes to reflecting on the life of a transgender person in East Vancouver, Coyote uses, as I have already mentioned, a similar pattern to the one she uses when representing the Yukon. While refusing to be silent about the difficulties that life in the big city presents, she shows how, as suggested by de Certeau, the city walker can creatively transform spaces (1988, 98). In many of the stories in the book, the narrator represents herself in conversation with other men: the kind of conversations men usually have in the Yukon, talking of fishing, cars or women. The difference now is that they take place at “a little corner store sandwich bar place under the Skytrain cut, between the Vietnamese hair salon and the drop-off laundry place” (12), or at “the Continental coffee bar” (22); and that most of the men with whom she engages in conversation think they are talking to a man.

“Game On” seems to be a very positive story on the appropriation of public spaces, a reminder of those “ways of operating” defined by de Certeau when he announced antidiscipline as the subject of *The Practice of Everyday Life* (1988, xiv-xv). Coyote describes how she, together with other “butches,” organized games of street hockey in East Vancouver, something that started as a homage to their beloved Johnny Cash on the day of his death, later becoming a tradition that had lasted for two years at the time when she wrote the story. Coyote explains how a group of people of all

ages, "covering every corner of the gender spectrum," gathered every Sunday to enjoy playing a game with very few rules. But she refuses to present a perfect space where community life is smoothly enjoyed:

As perfect a game as street hockey is, sometimes the outside world and its ways infiltrate our utopia. Sometimes the dykes and the straight boys clash cultures. . . . The heterosexual women usually get caught in the middle, unsure whether to side with the sisterhood, or stick up for their boyfriends. We even had one half-assed fistfight. . . . Some said men are biologically unable to curb their aggression; some said it was social conditioning that leads to hockey-related fisticuffs. I wasn't quite sure, but I voted against making hockey women-only, because I can't still decide where that would leave me and the rest of my tribe. Also, if it were girls only and another fight broke out, who could we blame it on then? (152-53)

Very frequently, Coyote resorts to humour in order to cope with the many contradictions she comes across, amongst them those presented by the gender binary. Her refusal to "still decide" where to place her gendered-self is also a clear statement against the normative fixation of identities, and it reinforces Halberstam's assertion that "Transgender history should allow the gender ambiguous to speak," for, too often, "the histories of women who pass as men or the narratives of transgender men attempt to rationalize rather than represent transgender lives in the glory of all their contradictions" (56). One of the most disturbing stories of violence in the city is "Black, Blue, and Green," where Coyote ponders on our passive reaction to violent homophobia. Ivan describes an incident at a payphone when a woman she had not even addressed insulted her, calling her a dyke, spat in her mouth, and punched her in the head while the man she was really addressing and the crowd standing around a nearby theatre and bus stop remained silent and did not intervene. Ivan tried to confront the woman, who punched her repeatedly in the face until she had to protect herself, conscious that if she had dared to punch the woman back, the crowd could have mistaken her for a man trying to hit a woman. Ivan's first reaction was asking her girlfriend not to tell any of their friends, trying to forget the incident, but she eventually agreed with her girlfriend, who said that she "didn't think silence was very healthy" (135):

So here it is. I was gay-bashed on Friday, July 10th on Granville Street at 4:10 p.m. No one who actually witnessed the assault did anything to help me, or stop her. I think they thought I was a man. I am physically fine; the bruises on my forearms turned purple, then blue, then green, and disappeared. The swelling under my eye was gone by the next day; the cut inside my lip was healed by the end of the weekend. I don't have anything witty or deep or uplifting to wrap this up with. I guess I could have avoided the situation. . . . But that is not what happened. . . .

I am doing the only thing I know how to protect us. I am refusing to be silent.  
(135)

Coyote also shows in the book how the refusal to be silent can have a positive turn, how she can take advantage of her gender ambiguity when the situation is required. In “Rumble in the Park,” for example, she recounts a nasty argument with a young drug dealer when she was with a woman friend in a park in Vancouver. On that occasion, realizing that she was too old to run, she decided to confront the situation not by fighting, but by bluffing. Her first step was to make a phone call to a friend, pretending that he was someone tough and important who would come quickly and deal with this boy. While waiting for his arrival, a friend of the dealer boy told him to leave *her* alone, to which the boy answered:

“I’m not even talking to her, I’m talking to him.” He points at me. “This guy is moving in, and it—”

“I told you I’m not a loser drug dealer hanging around the park,” I said. “And I’m not a guy.” I wasn’t about to explain my rich and multi-faceted gender identity to him. He understood that it was okay to hit men smaller than him, and leer at women. It was in my best interest at that moment to have him include me in the latter category.

Ten long seconds ticked past. It finally dawned on him that I wasn’t just another punk to harass. He stuck out his yellow tongue and made that same motion that the truck driver in *Thelma and Louise* made shortly before they blew his truck up.  
(28)

For once relishing her gender flexibility, Coyote’s disclosing of her biological sex gives her the opportunity to take control of the rumble and even makes her feel brave enough to ridicule the boy in front of her friends by playing with heteronormative gender stereotypes. She continues the conversation, telling him, “Look at you, you probably don’t have any hair on your nuts yet and you think you can tell me what to do in my own park? I’ve slept with more women than you’ve met, you punk” (28). The empowerment implicit in the representation of the appropriation of that public space by a transgender subject needs no further explanation. Meanwhile, this particular tactic used by Coyote in the park can be interpreted as one of those “ways of operating” through which the “weak” may win a battle over the “strong” (de Certeau 1988, xix).

The story where Coyote most wittily presents many of the ideas that have been discussed in this paper is “Off-leash,” where she dares to categorize a group of inhabitants of East Vancouver as the “Dog People,” including herself in the category. The first paragraph is so ambiguous that the irony of the narrator is clearly displayed from the start:

You might not be able to pick us out of a crowd, especially in our streetclothes. We blend in well, because our kind crosses all boundaries; we truly are of all races, genders, and economic breeds. We gather in parks and on beaches, along trails and backstreets. We come together to address a very basic and common need.

We are the Dog People, and our little buddies have to go. At least twice a day, every day, sometimes more on weekends. (30)

If we take into account that Coyote conceives most of her stories to be told in public, the effect that such a beginning can have on the audience when told by a gender-ambiguous person like her can easily be imagined. Coyote is playing with the sense of community shared by the people that walk their dogs every day in her neighbourhood but because in the second reading of the story, the transposition from "dog people" to "queer people," is so obvious, the final lines are illuminating enough: "Come to think of it, we could easily organize and take over the world. Make this all one big off-leash area. But we won't, because it is not our way. We are, after all, a gentle breed, us Dog People" (32). The ironic categorizing, the positive depiction of that group of people, and her defense of lives across boundaries remain very powerful statements, while recalling de Certeau's assertion that walking "affirms, suspects, tries out, transgresses. . . , the trajectories it 'speaks'" (99).

Halberstam's stress on how important it is "to study queer life modes that offer alternatives to family time and family life" (153) is well reflected in "Off-leash," as it is in the rest of the book, where Coyote offers a queer time and space alternative to the heteronormative family. In fact, her recurrent reference to children crosses the axis of queer place with that of queer time for we could say that, in her own simple unpretentious way, she is engaged in creating the archive that may be useful for those queer children of the future: "We all need to hear stories about people like us. What do they call it? Positive representation of something we can see ourselves in? I call it knowing I'm not the only one" (87). It is the possibility of a sense of queer community and connection that she wants to convey. When she met and recognized Olivia as a transgender child at the farmer's market in the first story of the book, Coyote was left numb and she was about to cry: "I could still barely talk, I was still afraid the tears were going to spill over my bottom lids. I wanted her to remember me as being tall and dry-eyed, just in case I was the first one of her people she had met so far" (11). As in the stories in which she tells Francis about their queer community, she leaves the darker side for another occasion, maybe for the time when they both read this book.

*Loose End* proves, in my opinion, Robert Payne's assertion that "Premises, streets and neighbourhoods undergo a process of cultural transformation when temporarily inhabited as zones of social, sexual and commercial practice by queers, even if this may not always equate exactly to queer practice" (2007). His essay, "Gay Scene, Queer Grid," reflects on the importance of de Certeau's definition of space as an example of the transformative significance of cultural practices, and on how

“Everyday use of the institutions and enterprises of place opens up individualised spaces of tactical operation.” Coyote walks in the city, and her pedestrian itinerary spatially appropriates “within and across officiated bounds of urban place” (Payne 2007). The ambiguity of her transgender body helps her by actively blurring many of the binaries she encounters. She refuses to recreate permanent idyllic utopian scenes both in Whitehorse and in East Vancouver and, above all, she shows that both spaces are habitable if the transgender walker simply knows how to operate tactically. By the end of the book, looking back over the years she spent in East Vancouver, and remembering the house which by that time had been reduced to ashes, she acknowledges how important that space has been for her, since “that little blue house across from the lake let me be a storyteller” (175).

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Roger Ascham's Humanist Legacy in William Webbe's  
*A Discourse of English Poetry* (1580)

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William Webbe may be considered a representative figure of the average concerns of Elizabethan Humanists. Influenced by Roger Ascham's *The Scholemaster* (1570), Webbe assumes the correlation between the ripeness of a nation's poetic idiom and its political prowess. On this ground, he follows Ascham in hailing imitation and translation as the most efficient way of accomplishing England's total acculturation, and makes claims for a reformation of English verse through the incorporation of quantitative meters.

Keywords: Humanism; Poetic Theory; imitation; translation; versification

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Apart from the circumstantial achievement of being the author of “the first printed treatise to deal specifically with English poetry” (Pincombe 1993, 329), little is known about William Webbe's identity or academic background.<sup>1</sup> The epistle dedicatory of *A Discourse* reveals that he composed these reflections while serving as a tutor to Edward Sulyard's two sons—Sulyard was a squire living in a country manor in Runwell to whom he dedicated his treatise and his previous translation of Virgil's *Georgics* (not extant). The scholar adduces this geographical isolation from the metropolis and its literary circles to apologize for the omissions regarding English contemporary poets: “neither hath it beene my good happe to haue seene all which I haue hearde of, neyther is my abyding in such place where I can with facility get knowledge of their works” (Webbe, 244: 21-26). Webbe's modesty and self-awareness when it comes to acknowledging his limitations as a scholar and versifier are a pervading feature in *A Discourse* and determine the role of this treatise in the context of Elizabethan theories of poetry. Inferior in erudition to the two most influential, Sidney's *An Apology for Poetry* (c. 1580, published in 1595) and George Puttenham's *The Art of English Poesy* (1588), *A Discourse* is not conceived, like the latter, as an “ars poetica” offering a comprehensive catalogue of technicalities for poetic prosody and rhetoric, nor does it take the aristocratic, philosophical approach of the former. That aside, the

<sup>1</sup> This essay is part of the Research Project “English Poetic and Rhetorical Treatises of the Tudor Period” (MINECO-FFI2010-19279).

text provides an enlightening testimony of the basic principles of Tudor Humanism while tackling the question of national poetry on the grounds of the refinement of English verse instigated by Roger Ascham in *The Scholemaster* (1570) and attempted by the Elizabethan hexametrist, among whom Edmund Spenser and Gabriel Harvey seem to have been direct influences for Webbe.

As Richard Helgerson (1988, 278) points out, Ascham's treatise became for the younger Elizabethans "a book that in many ways shaped their non-literary, as well as their literary, self-presentation." Although principally aimed at prescribing a method for the effective teaching of Latin, *The Scholemaster's* interest resides to a greater extent in the cultural and ideological Humanist premises it represents than in its didactic methodology, which is in fact on occasions rather conservative and obsolete. Ascham's pedagogic and literary perspectives are strongly determined by a nationalist interest in English acculturation according to ancient classical parameters as a means for safeguarding younger generations from pervading Catholic (mainly Italian) cultural influence. *The Scholemaster* shows Ascham's urge to redefine the English cultural and moral identity through the imitation of ancient civil, aesthetic and linguistic models. Determined by the Ciceronian philosophical conception of oratory, Ascham extols Latin rhetoric on the grounds that it provides children with a discipline of learning that will contribute to moulding their national selves according to the elitist parameters of antiquity, while at the same time it works as a linguistic model for the refinement and embellishment of the English tongue, the principal instrument for national self-representation. Learning, with Latin at the core of the syllabus, becomes for Ascham a state affair: "the good or ill bringing vp of children, doth as much serue to the good or ill seruice, of God, our Prince, and our whole cuntry, as any one thing doth beside" (188).

Webbe's *Discourse* is significantly imbued with many of the Humanist anxieties that pervade Ascham's didactic theory; despite its incomplete record of canonical writers, or the vagueness of some of its critical commentaries, this approach to literature proves to be an eloquent portrayal of the average Humanist reader in the Elizabethan period. As Pincombe (1993, 329) states, *A Discourse* "is not without personal idiosyncrasy, but its virtual 'authorlessness' renders it a particularly important index to the typical concerns and anxieties of classically educated readers and writers in the late sixteenth century"; because, he continues, "Here is Tudor humanism in a nutshell" (330). This paper attempts to disentangle the terms on which Aschamite Humanism constitutes an ideological undercurrent for Webbe's reflections on English poetry. It will focus on the three main aspects influencing William Webbe's conception of literature that determined the scope and method of his *poetica*: Imitation, translation and versification.

#### 1. IMITATION AND TRANSLATION

In *Forms of Nationhood*, a "historical formalist" (Helgerson 1992, 7) approach to Elizabethan Humanist writings, Richard Helgerson argues that the anxiety revealed

by Humanist scholars regarding the consolidation of a national poetic language obeys the need for reshaping the “national sense of the self” (1992, 4) originated by the defining political changes England had experienced since the 1530s onwards, like its reaffirmation as an empire and the breaking of ties with the Roman Church. A new consciousness of nation needed to be consolidated through a coherent, unified cultural identity that equated the English realm with the paramount civilizations of ancient Greece and Rome. With the aim of setting the standards of national expression, Webbe provides a canon of English poetic authorities that enabled readers and novel poets to discern “betweene good writers and badde” (227: 14), thus marking the difference between the rhetoric perfection prescribed by Ascham and “infinite fardles of printed pamphlets, wherewith thys Countrey is pestered, all shoppes stuffed, and euery study furnished” (226: 3-5). Poetic eloquence is rendered in *A Discourse* a badge of national integrity; the profusion of plural possessive adjectives in references to English poetry and poets putting emphasis on Webbe's desire to instill in the latter a sense of patriotic responsibility and duty towards their country: expressions like “our owne Poets” (232: 18-19), “our English Poets” (239: 17-18), “our English Verse” (245: 22) or “our Englishe speeche” (262: 2) bestow on poetic idiom the quality of a state issue with national dimension. Webbe urges national poets to “labour to adorne their Countrey and aduance theyr style with the highest and most learnednest toppe of true Poetry” (228: 12-14).

This patriotic concern for the improvement of English style is evinced by Edmund Spenser's famous rhetorical question regarding the viability of a reformation of versification on the grounds of quantity; in his *Letters* to Harvey he wonders: “For, why a Gods name may not we, as else the Greekes, haue the kingdome of oure owne Language . . .?” (Spenser, 16: 32-33). Spenser's anxious question denotes, on the one hand, a sense of inferiority and frustration regarding superior cultures and, on the other, an ambition to frame a powerful linguistic identity that consolidated England's national prowess (Helgerson 1992, 274). Webbe shares this anxiety with Spenser—for him “the best of all English Poets” (263: 27), and attributes the category of *prince* of English letters to the author of *The Shepherds' Calendar*, thus acknowledging his leadership in the process of shaping the national poetic idiom: “Wherevnto I doubt not equally to adioyne the *authoritye* of *our* late famous English poet . . .” (232: 6-7; emphasis added).

In order to overcome this self-perception of cultural inferiority that prevented poets from attaining the aesthetic magnitude of allegedly superior nations (Webbe, 228: 7-8), Humanist intellectuals engaged in a project of “imitative self-transformation” (Helgerson 1992, 14) consisting in fashioning a new identity through the copying of idealized models from the ancient past. Roger Ascham's didactic method was entirely grounded on the imitation of Latin rhetoric; he shared the Ciceronian philosophical approach to oratory, which conceived eloquence as inherently linked with moral virtue: “This foresaide order and doctrine of *Imitation*, would bring forth

more learning, and breed vp trewer judgement, than any other exercise that can be vsed" (1904, 268). For Ascham, rhetorical perfection in the vernacular may only be attained through faithful imitation of Latin eloquence, as well as through the practice of double translation, as we will discuss later. Concerning poetic rhetoric, Webbe, like Ascham, believes in the natural capacity of English to emulate superior models, and strives to demonstrate that his native tongue is capable of perfect eloquence by, for instance, hailing John Lilly as the English heir to Demosthenes and Tully (256: 8-21), or by matching the worthiness of outstanding English authors with that of their ancient antecedents so that they may be authorized as canonical models for poetic imitation.

With the aim of providing tutors with a methodology for developing imitative skills in their pupils, the author of *The Scholemaster* urges young scholars to elaborate pedagogic manuals that juxtaposed Latin canonical texts with their Greek models, thereby shedding light on the specific places, motifs and methods of imitation; these manuals were designed to function as instruction on rhetoric through imitation of ancient models (Ascham, 267-268; 272; 274; 277). Webbe seems to assimilate the convenience of Ascham's suggestion for, when it comes to making a survey of ancient literature, whether in the introductory historical section or in the exposition of the origins of poetic genres, his critical commentaries on specific Greek and Latin authors are intended to display their mimetic connections as well as to highlight those aspects of their discourse that should be hailed as paragons for imitation. As such, when he introduces Virgil he declares: "And as he immitateth *Homer* in that worke, so doth he likewise followe the very steps of *Theocritus*, in his most pythy inuentions of his *Aeglogues*: and likewise *Hesiodus* in hys *Georgicks* or books of Husbandry, but yet more grauely, and in a more decent style" (238: 34; 239: 1-3).

Likewise, the exposition of English contributions to the consolidation of literary genres follows Ascham's method, rendering vernacular texts as direct imitations of their corresponding classical antecedents and deploying details of their departures from or improvements on these models: "Somwhat like vnto these works [eclogues] are many peeces of *Chawcer*, but yet not altogether so poeticall" (262: 35; 263: 1). Webbe's intention seems to be not only to prescribe vernacular models for poetic genres, but also to integrate English authors into the classical tradition so that they may be consolidated as part of the European canon. His apology for focusing too much on ancient antecedents in a treatise initially intended to explore English poetry hints that anxiety: "which though it may seeme something impertinent to the tytle of my Booke, yet I trust the courteous Readers wyll pardon me, considering that poetry is not of that ground and antiquity in our English tongue, but that speaking thereof only as it is English would seeme like vnto the drawing of ones picture without a heade" (247: 21-26). Webbe, therefore, estimates the poetic authority of English authors according to degrees of imitation, thus vindicating imitation as the main requirement to legitimize their incorporation into the English canon: for instance,

Spenser "narrowly immitateth" (232: 15) Theocritus and Virgil. Webbe also attempts to fulfill Ascham's demand for thorough cataloguing of places and examples of imitation by offering detailed textual parallelisms between English and Latin works, as in the section that analyses Spenser's use of Virgilian eclogues in his *Calendar*: "Virgil hath a gallant report of *Augustus* couertly comprised in the first *Aeglogue*; the like is in him of her Maiestie, under the name of *Eliza. . .*" (263: 18-22).

Imitation, as defined by Humanists like Jacobus Ompalius in *De elocutionis imitatione* (1537), one of Ascham's admired scholars, urges no servile copy or plagiarism but, as Ann Moss (1999, 109) explains, constitutes a "spur to emulation, as the imitator strives not only to reproduce the achievements of his forerunners, but to surpass them. There are implications for criticism here, as well as a challenge to new writers." Ascham renders imitation the most efficient method -besides translation- for the improvement of vernacular eloquence, not only in contrast to previous texts in mother tongues but also regarding their original, classical models. Once again, Webbe shares with Ascham the anxiety for encouraging poets to surpass their models, a goal almost attained by Spenser if it had not been for his use of rhyme: "if the courses of our speeche (I meane the course of custome which he woulde not infringe) had beene no more let vnto him then theyr pure natiue tongues were vnto them [Theocritus and Virgil], he would haue (if it might be) surpassed them" (263: 10-14).

As mentioned above, Ascham's pedagogical methodology hails imitation and translation as the two main strategies for the acquisition and improvement of rhetorical skills. Translation is extolled in *The Scholemaster* on the grounds of efficiency when it comes to instructing students on the transference of rhetorical devices from Latin into English: "by this exercise of double translating is learned easely, sensible, by little and little, not onelie all the hard congruities of grammar, the choice of aptest wordes, the right framing of sentences, comeliness of figures, and forms fitte for everie matter, and proper for everie tongue" (244-45). In consequence, translation also becomes for Webbe a reliable method when it comes to analysing the English poets' imitative skills and eloquence. He specially highlights the works of Thomas Phaer (Virgil's *Aeneid*, 1555), Arthur Golding (Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, 1567) and Barnabe Googe (Pallengeni's *Zodiac*, 1560), whose examples are meant to evince the natural suitability of English language for attaining the eloquence of Greek and Latin poets as well as demonstrating the qualification of national poets in this regard. Following Ascham's suggestion to elaborate contrasted studies of original texts and their copies, the author of *A Discourse* displays a thorough comparison of Phaer's *Aeneid* and Virgil's Latin text, quoting for this purpose passages from both versions: "But a more neerer example to prooue my former assertion true (I meane the meetnesse of our speeche to receiue the best form of Poetry) may bee taken by conference of that famous translation of Master D. Phaer with the coppie it selfe. . .and weigh with himselfe whether the English tongue might by little and little be brought to the verye maiesty of a ryght Heroicall verse" (Webbe, 256: 21-20).

## 2. VERSIFICATION

After this overview of Ascham's influence on Webbe's poetic theory with respect to imitation and translation, we will briefly tackle their approach to form as a determining element for rhetorical eloquence, paying specific attention to versification. As stated by Helgerson (1992, 4), English Tudor Humanism deployed "a dialectic between antiquity and the middle ages," style being one of the main grounds where this debate surfaces. Richard Helgerson (1988) and Deborah Shuger (1999) conceive aesthetic preferences among Tudor Humanists from a historical formalist position and ascribe ideological significance to form; we can certainly affirm that the predilection for quantitative meters was linked to a particular consideration of national self-fashioning that considered that classical antiquity provided the ideal parameters for the construction of a powerful culture.

Being the most influential instigator of the scorn for rhyme among the Elizabethan hexametrists, Ascham also seems to be responsible for fostering the association of the English medieval past with a period of barbarity and illiteracy, and for provoking the consequent anxiety to adopt prosodic forms borrowed from antiquity in order to endow English letters with the civility and erudition of Greek and Latin antecessors. Webbe (240: 14-21) quotes and paraphrases Ascham (327) in his explanation of the origin and process of consolidation of "our rude beggerly Ryming" (289) in the European tradition, attributing it to an uncivilized custom initiated in the times of the Huns and Goths.

The identification of medieval forms with an uncivilized past led Tudor Humanists to a "self-estrangement" (Helgerson 1992, 16) from their former national selves; they perceived themselves as indolent Calibans in need of the civilizing constraints of ancient Greek and Roman cultures. Ascham associates the "gothic" or "medieval" to historical periods characterised by the decay of learning, collective "ignorance" and "idleness" (330). Webbe theoretically shares with Ascham this estrangement from English medieval antecedents, but his national conscience makes him refrain from blatantly renouncing the erudite past of his country: "I may not vtterly dissalowe it [rhyme], least I should seeme to call in question the iudgement of all our famous writers" (266: 31-33). He does not assume that learning was neglected in any period of English history, and ascribes the adoption of rhyme to the carelessness—not the ignorance—of "men indeede of great wisdome and learning, but not considerate nor circumspect in that behalfe" (240: 21). Following Ascham, he attributes the predominance of rhyme to the "cankred enmity of curious custom" (228: 4-5); both of them using "custom" to mean easiness and indolence. Webbe also relates rhyme with the self-perception of inferiority that Helgerson ascribes to Tudor poets and referring to custom he observes: "which as it neuer was great freend to any good learning, so in this hath it grounded in the most such a negligent perswasion of an impossibilitie in matching the best, that the finest witts and most diuine heades haue contented themselues with a base kinde of fingering. . ." (228: 5-9). Custom hinders learning to

the extent of driving poets away from more valuable forms of expression, worthiness being identified with elaboration and artificiality, in contrast to naturalness. When discussing the attributes of the apt pupil, Ascham (193) emphasises the fact that those with limited smartness—the 'hard wits'—are more inclined to correct learning than those whose natural skills allow them an easy learning—the 'quick wits': "the harde witte proveth manie times the better learned, wiser and honester man." His criteria in the selection of apt students are related to the Humanists' preference for labor over natural aptitude, in learning as well as in poetic composition. Likewise, the supporters of the reformation of English verse show their inclination towards more elaborated meters, associating rhyme with spontaneity and naturalness. In his letters to Harvey, Spenser calls rhymed verses "toyes" (12: 242) and their composition is considered as "toying in Rymes" (16: 35). Quantitative meters are therefore obviously connected not only with aspirations to a sovereign English style, but also to the Humanist admiration for artificiality<sup>2</sup>.

As we have already hinted, Webbe is more indulgent toward rhyme than his radical Aschamite discourse denotes (Attridge 1974, 75); therefore, in his attempt to reconcile rhyme with Ascham's concept of learning and erudition, he suggests that rhymers should take several rules into account in order to confer their lines the appreciated artificiality (267: 1-5) and, with that aim, provides a list of precepts inspired by George Gascoigne's *Certayne Notes* (1575). Webbe conceives "natural promptnesse" (275: 8) not to be a satisfactory skill for the composition of any kind of verse and suggests that rhyming should be, like quantity is, "much helped by Arte" (275: 9).

*A Discourse of English Poetry* provides an enlightening display of the ideological convictions that nourished Tudor Humanism. Webbe's virtual anonymity and academic modesty, together with his enthusiastic approach to literature and issues related to national acculturation, render the first printed treatise on poetry a vivid portrait of the typical Humanist scholar of the Tudor period worthy of further analysis in order to shed more light to our knowledge of Elizabethan cultural history.

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<sup>2</sup> Harvey refers to quantitative verse as "Artificial Verses" in contrast to "Barbarous and Balductum Rymes." In Spenser's *Variorum Edition*, Appendix 1, 463: 15.

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# Sherman Alexie's Short Fiction: Hybridizing the Oral and the Written Tradition

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This article argues that *The Toughest Indian in the World* (2000) by Native-American author Sherman Alexie combines elements of his tribal (oral) tradition with others coming from the Western (written) short-story form. Despite the differences between the two modes of communication, Alexie manages to successfully blend features and techniques present in both traditions, thus creating a new hybrid short-story form that suitably conveys the trying experiences faced by most of his characters.

Keywords: oral tradition; Native Americans; Sherman Alexie; short stories; hybrid forms; survivance

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## 1. INTRODUCTION: ORAL VERSUS LITERATE CULTURES

Several scholars (Jahner 1983; Womack 1999) have remarked that contemporary Native American authors often combine in their works elements of their tribal (oral) traditions, which rely on distinct formal and cognitive devices, and Western modes of composition that give priority to the fixity of the written word. Native American cultures are not, of course, the only ones that have depended on orature for the transmission of their myths, key collective experiences and values. Other ancient cultures such as the Arab, the Greek and several Sub-Saharan peoples built a significant part of their history and worldview through the oral transference of their knowledge and visions. Nevertheless, as Levine has noted, contemporary scholars are “all too ready to forget” that “texts” such as *The Arabian Nights* or *The Iliad* first had an original life of their own as oral works (2013, 219). Walter J. Ong has gone so far as to suggest that literate people are no longer able to make much sense of the verbal and epistemological patterns governing the oral expression of ideas and emotions: “Persons who have interiorized writing not only write but also speak literally, which is to say that they organize, to varying degrees, even their oral expression in thought patterns and verbal patterns that they would not know of unless they could write. Because it does not follow these patterns, literates have considered oral organization of thought naïve” ([1982] 1988, 56-57). Both Ong and Levine are highly aware of

the difficulties faced by people who have been raised in either of the two traditions when they try to understand and appreciate works outside their primary mode of perception.

Beginning in the mid-nineteenth century, when missionaries and ethnographers began to transcribe the oral stories of the Native American peoples in their notebooks, attempts to blend the two forms of perception and expression flourished in the New World. Jahner notes that despite “the fundamental distinction between the oral and the written modes of composition and sharing” (1983, 66), Indian writers—such as John M. Oskison, N. Scott Momaday or Leslie M. Silko—have made great efforts to combine elements of both traditions in their works. Given the variety of the underlying aesthetic/ethical principles and epistemic assumptions involved across the different tribes and nations, one comes across very diverse ways in which the oral is incorporated into their written texts. Moreover, since the genres dependent on oral and performative skills—ritual songs, origin myths, trickster tales, hero legends, and so on—are multifarious in nature and each pursue their own specific goals, they often require various techniques in order to be properly integrated. However, what seems undeniable is that many Native American writers have tried, and are still trying, not only to bring echoes of their storytelling into their works, but also to transform the way in which the reader perceives the literary text and its place in the world. “In American Indian literature,” says Jahner, “the two modes [oral and written] exist side by side, the one nourishing the other” (1983, 66), so that what is unique to their art is these constant interactions that revamp the ways of communicating in both traditions.

We may need to point out, though, that the amalgamation and interaction of these two modes of communication in particular works is not so peaceful and amenable as some critics have suggested. Ong has expounded upon the different psychodynamic processes governing communication in primary oral cultures and in literate cultures. As he explains, in oral cultures words “do give human beings power over what they name,” but “oral folk have no sense of a name as a tag, for they have no idea of a name as something that can be seen. Written or printed representations of words can be labels; real, spoken words cannot be” ([1982] 1988, 33). Because orally-based thought and expression cannot count on the presence and stability of the written sign, they need to resort to mnemonic devices and formulaic repetitions to make their stories memorable. Not only that but, as Ong and others have argued, oral storytelling must necessarily rely on the additive (rather than subordinative), the aggregative (rather than the analytical), repetition (rather than spare linearity), and a conservative mindset (rather than experimental). Besides, what opposes these two forms of communication most clearly is that while the written text may distance itself more easily from the human lifeworld and become more abstract, oral renditions must remain attached to particular situations and involve the audience somehow in the action (see Ong [1982] 1988, 42-50). As a result, it is by no means easy to

try to get the best from the two artistic modes simultaneously, since they seem to trigger very different thought processes and to arouse incommensurable responses from the audience. No wonder, then, that several critics should conclude that specific “methods of analysis and criteria of judgment” need to be developed in order “to assess and appreciate” the kind of art resulting from the blending of the two modes (Jahner 1983, 73).

## 2. INTEGRATING ORAL ELEMENTS INTO WRITTEN TEXTS

In the last two decades, Sherman Alexie (Spokane/Coeur d'Alene) has become one of the most widelyread Native American writers because, among other reasons, he manages to artfully integrate recognizable elements of his peoples' oral tradition into others that belong to the (post)modern short-story form in English. Alexie has often stated in interviews that he prefers poems and short stories to express his thoughts and visions, since they provide a more natural and compact form: “Every novel could be a hundred pages shorter. I think short stories are a greater challenge. You can make fewer mistakes. With poems, you can't make any. It's more of a tightrope. I think novels are the white man's world” (Cline 2000-01, 201-2). Obviously, like other Native authors, Alexie holds the opinion that the tropes and features characterizing oral storytelling are more easily “integrable” into written artifacts when the latter show the kind of open-ended and agonistic nature usually accorded to the former. This paper will examine several stories in Alexie's collection *The Toughest Indian in the World* (2000) in order to establish the kind of impact produced in each case by the incorporation of features and techniques from the oral tradition. Often described as a very direct and provocative writer, it is clear that his dense prose contains elements—such as fierce indignation and wicked humor—reminiscent of Indian warfare tales and trickster stories. Because those tales are highly dialogical and performative in character, it is not surprising that many commentators should agree that, in order to get the best out of his works, it is recommendable to attend—or to see recordings of—his readings and impersonations of the stories, in which the key importance of voice, tone, and gesture soon become apparent (see Berglund 2010, xxi-xxii).

Now that so many people around the world have access to YouTube, it may be high time we thought of turning oral performance into both a regular feature of the classroom experience and an alternative way of enjoying literary works. It is becoming clearer every day that writing is no longer our only means of pedagogical and academic access to orature, and that we should exploit those other tools to show the richness and complexity of embodied performance. Alexie has also insisted on the importance of recognizing that for centuries most people relied on these oral forms of communication to establish connections, to interpret and understand reality, and to control it by means of speech-acts. Likewise, he is convinced, like Vizenor, that only the spoken word can truly help us to preserve shared memories and to

enact close relationships: “Words are rituals in the oral tradition, from the sound of creation, the wisps of visions on the wind . . . not cold pages or electronic beats that separate the tellers from the listeners” (Vizenor in Blaeser 1996, 21). Despite this radical distinction between both modes of communication, it is also important to change the pervasive assumption that printed works of literature can only very rarely enter into fruitful dialogues—and contentions—with their readers. In fact, several Native writers—Alexie, among them—have mined and exploited various strategies and techniques for engaging readers in their works and making them aware of their own responsibilities. Some foster this dialogue by showing deliberate transgressions of cultural and/or moral codes, others may decide to challenge widely-held myths and stereotypes, still others are prone to insert silences and gaps to be filled by the audience; but in all instances the final aim seems to be to entice the reader to take part in the construction of the meaning of the work. As will be seen below, Alexie’s *Toughest Indian* is a collection of stories that can definitely benefit from this kind of critical approach since, as Berglund has pointed out, his incorporation of oral-tradition patterns allows him to constantly tap “into the energy of the audience” (2010, xxi).

My analysis of a few stories in this collection aims to show that a great deal of the acclaimed “singularity” and “vitality” of Alexie’s short fiction derives precisely from his ability to blend the resources offered by the two traditions, thus creating a new syncretic form that proves particularly suitable for conveying the trying experiences of his characters. Like them, the author is seen to straddle two different worlds—that of his Indian roots on the reservation and the more comfortable, yet also hostile, life in mainstream society—that often come across as rather antagonistic. As will soon become evident, this antagonism is one of the main thematic strands in the stories under scrutiny here; but, more importantly, the writer himself can be seen to struggle to find a formal equilibrium between his peoples’ oral-storytelling patterns and those to be found in the Western literate tradition. Nancy Peterson argues that, in fact, Alexie’s poetics question dichotomies such as oral vs. written or real Indian vs. hybrid: “Alexie does not merely fight back against the white world but embraces and reshapes it so that Western traditions are remade as Indian ones and Western individualism yields to Indian tribalism” (2010, 139). One of this writer’s greatest achievements is, no doubt, the incorporation into his art of some basic ingredients of the oral tradition such as the lively dialogues, incantatory repetitions and empathetic sentiments in order to transform and revitalize some others associated with the (post) modern short story.

### 3. STRATEGIES TO PROVOKE THE READERS’ ACTIVE PARTICIPATION

Like other contemporary Native writers, Alexie seems to be aware of the threats posed by the literate tradition to the integrity of tribal culture and, more specifically, to the

survival of orature as an integral component of that culture (see Blaeser 1996, 11). Yet, he has shown that by borrowing from the dialogic elements present in orature—such as ritual formulae and trickster ambivalence—it is possible to compose new narratives of “survance” that compel the reader to recreate and engage imaginatively with those actual situations. In order to do so, Coulombe and other specialists have argued that Alexie’s sophisticated use of wit and humor and his deconstruction of stereotypes and myths contribute to “allowing Indian characters to connect to their heritage in new ways and forcing non-Native readers to reconsider simplistic generalizations” (2011, 12). No doubt, to achieve this double play the writer needs both to retrieve some of the so-called “shadows” of oral storytelling and to do so in ways that do not completely close off the possibility of the interpretation/participation of non-Native audiences. Following some of Ong’s ideas on orality, we will see that several stories in *Toughest Indian* define the role that the reader must play in order to provide sense to the narrative, either by the recurrence of certain refrains or themes that guide his recreation, or by the inclusion of silences and indeterminacies that invite the reader to complete the textual meaning using his/her own imagination and interpretative skills.

As mentioned above, because oral cultures cannot rely on written records to preserve their knowledge and values, they need to resort to mnemonic aids—in the form of repeated, patterned thoughts—to make them memorable and to convey their full significance. In the story “Saint Junior,” for example, we are privy to a Native couple’s efforts to recover some of the excitement of their previous life, before they decided to settle on a squalid Indian reservation. At several points in the story, we hear, as some sort of refrain, basketball star Michael Jordan stating that he is coming back to play again after one of his premature-retirement announcements: “On the Spokane Indian Reservation, on the morning of the first snow, Roman [Gabriel Fury] sat down to piss. He could hear the television playing in the living room. He could hear Michael Jordan’s voice. *I’m back*” (TIW, 176). Roman and his wife, Grace Atwater, find in this short statement the kind of strength and inspiration that they need to go on with their life together, despite their “failed dreams” (176). Ong has explained that this “backlooping” to particular thoughts or memories is characteristic of oral cultures that need to use redundancy to inscribe on the human mind what cannot be fixed on paper ([1982] 1988, 39-40). Another good instance of the importance of quasi-ritual repetition in Native storytelling is found in the closing story of the collection, “One Good Man,” in which the narrator is taking care of his slowly dying father. Again, the story is sown with flashbacks telling the reader of some momentous episodes in the narrator’s life and the crucial role played in them by his progenitor. In spite of the apparently broken structure of the story, a certain continuity is achieved in the teller’s evocations of the city/reservation experience as he keeps posing the question “*What is an Indian?*” (italics in original) and trying to give tentative answers. For example, when the narrator

thinks of his son, Paul, now living in Seattle with his mother and white stepfather, he muses: "The nontraditional arrangement, this extended family, was strange when measured by white standards, but was very traditional by Indian standards. *What is an Indian?* It is a child who can stroll unannounced through the front doors of seventeen different houses" (*TIW*, 217). This rhetorical question and the varied and often ironic answers resonate through the narrative and provide a different kind of unity and coherence to the story as a whole.

If Alexie can be seen to rely on the redundant and ritualistic formulae that, in a way, compensate for the lack of linearity of some of his tales, something similar could be said about his use of silences and open-ended structures that invite the reader to draw his/her own conclusions from the story s/he is witnessing. This is the case in chapters such as the title story or "Class," in which new variations on the question "*What is an Indian?*" emerge, but here framed within issues of sexual orientation and social class rather than ethnicity. The protagonist of "The Toughest Indian in the World," for instance, has a kind of spiritual awakening through which he gains a new understanding of his sense of Indianness after an unlikely sexual encounter with a Lummi boxer in a hotel: "The fighter walked out the door, left it open, and walked away. I stood in the doorway and watched him continue his walk down the highway, past the city limits. I watched him rise from earth to sky and become a constellation. I closed the door and wondered what was going to happen next" (*TIW*, 33). With typical Alexian irony, this story and "Class" conclude on a rather uncertain note, since it is unclear whether the main characters have really managed to recover from their loss of Native identity to the mainstream culture—one as a writer, the other as a company lawyer married to a white woman. But perhaps the story that best illustrates the integration of oral techniques in the whole collection is "Dear John Wayne," in which Etta Joseph, an extremely old Indian woman, is interviewed by an arrogant anthropologist, Spencer Cox, who eventually discovers that her silences and imaginative reconstructions of her past carry more weight than any of the "factual evidence" he may have hoped to gather during their exchange: "Sitting alone in his car outside the retirement home, Spencer ejected the cassette tape from his recorder. He could destroy the tape or keep it; he could erase Etta's voice or transcribe it. It didn't matter what he chose to do with her story because the story would continue to exist with or without him. Was the story true or false? Was that the question that Spencer needed to ask?" (*TIW*, 207-8).

Like many other white characters in Alexie's collection, this anthropologist initially fails to see that the dialectical and antagonistic nature of his conversation with the old Indian woman is full of opportunities for innovative and reflective thought, beyond the boundaries of his own discourse. It is only as we approach the end of the narrative that the awareness of the immense transformative power that Etta's oral storytelling has had over the scholar dawns upon the reader too.

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## Mutations: Conceptual Poetry and the Persistence of Romanticism

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Most literary and historical criticism recognises the influence of Romanticism upon the present. In the field of poetry in English, this has been equated to aesthetic domination, thus complicating the prospects of a post-Romantic poetry. In this new century a group of wilfully anti-Romantic poets, self-dubbed as Conceptualists, have received increasing critical attention and readership. By analysing their works formally, their self-proclaimed deviation from the tenets of Romanticism reveals itself as superficial rather than ground-breaking.

Keywords: conceptual poetry; Romanticism; Romantic legacies; poetics; self-expression

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Few critics and literary historians can fail to note the influence of Romanticism upon cultural production at present. Most recent revisions of literary periodisations show an implicit consensus that Romantic aesthetics—particularly the realm of poetry written in English as lyricism, idealism and creative propensities—are still operating. This conceptualisation of Romanticism as a projective movement is far from new, partially because Romanticism itself has strongly resisted theorisation: what cannot be defined cannot be superseded. Writing through WWII, Martin Heidegger already acknowledged that “Romanticism has not yet come to its end” and that its elusive nature “attempts once again a transfiguration of beings, which as reacting against the thorough explaining and calculating strives only to evolve beyond or next to this explaining and calculating” (Heidegger 1999, 349). More recently, Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe and Jean-Luc Nancy also agreed that Romanticism remains relevant because “we still belong to the era it opened up,” being “in most of the central motifs of our ‘modernity’” and allowing our “so-called modernity to use romanticism as a foil, without ever recognizing—or in order not to recognize—that it has done little more than rehash romanticism’s discoveries” (1988, 15). A central role in the persistence of Romanticism might have been played by criticism itself, as it has been “dominated by a Romantic Ideology, by an uncritical absorption in Romanticism’s own self-representations” (McGann 1983, 1), so that cultural production, its theorisation and appreciation have shown a far from desirable circularity. Whether

it can be circumvented is another matter: as Paul De Man noted, “the problem of Romanticism continues to dominate the other problems of historiography and literary criticism. The main points around which contemporary methodological and ideological arguments circle can almost always be traced directly back to the romantic heritage” (1984, 48).

Material aspects have also played a part; by 1830 the rise of mass readership, the use of the mechanised printing press or stereotyping, the improvements in communications and new editorial practices—such as breaking down costs into editions and preferring to publish out-of-copyright texts rather than venturing into the editing of new poems by living authors—began to produce a mass market of books which greatly resemble ours. Poetry as aesthetic offering has remained within the limits of Romanticism, and thus it has become a medium for the lyrical self-expression of the thoughts, reflections or feelings of a marked subjectivity.

As a consequence of the persistence of that primary mode of communication with the reader, those aesthetic tenets developed around Romanticism have been sustained, so that it is no exaggeration “to say that poetry in English . . . [in] the past 200 years represent[s] the endurance and continuities of Romanticism” (Spiegelman 2010, 589). Indeed, recent contributions in the field of poetics have explored these legacies in modern verse. While there is more to be done in the field, the textual connections of modern verse with Romanticism have been largely explored in the last decade (Davies and Turley 2006, Moscovici 2007, Casaliggi and March-Russell 2012, Sandy 2012), which has helped to unearth particular influences hitherto unnoticed. In recognising that “poets writing after 1900 engage in strenuous tussle as they respond to Romantic poetry,” one must acknowledge that even if poets were to avoid the expression of their selves “the desire to escape mere self-expression cannot stifle the sense of the poem as a place where modes of self-revelation occur. If a poem serves only the autotelic circle of itself, it is also a way of happening” (O’Neill 2007, 1). Consequently, just as “it has often been claimed that Modernism is essentially a remoulding of Romanticism, . . . Postmodernism is also yet another mutation of the original stock” (Larrissy 1999, 1).

For others, such as Alain Badiou, the issue at hand is not whether Romanticism is central to our culture but whether we can move forward from the aesthetics of Romanticism once both production and its appreciation have become Romantic. What is “ultimately at stake here can be formulated in terms of the following question which weighs upon us and threatens to exhaust us: can we be delivered, finally delivered, from our subjection to Romanticism?” (2004, 23). In case that liberation is possible, what paradigmatic shift would it entail for poetry? What “will become of the poem after Heidegger, after the age of poets, in other words, in what will a post-romantic poem consist?” (Badiou 2008, 40). Operating within the Romantic paradigm, one can hardly fathom the form of a poem which is neither lyrical nor self-expressive, particularly one that is not interpreted in such a way: how can verbal

signs not mean anything to anyone, or be directly traced to an agency which supports their proliferation? Whatever entity is given to the creator of the poem, verse after Romanticism has become a personal affair between a voice and its reader, seeking a communication which is systemically personal and expressive.

However, there is a number of poets in both the US and Canada—with ramifications in Europe—who claim to have found the way out of Romanticism in the application of 1960s Conceptualism to the production of poetry in this new century. In the works of Craig Dworkin, Caroline Bergvall, Christian Bök, Kenneth Goldsmith, Vanessa Place, Darren Wershler, Juliana Spahr, Derek Beaulieu and others, Conceptual writing describes a variety of practices which aim deliberately at the elision of the subjectivity of the author, usually by way of appropriation, reproduction or transformation of other texts. The conceptual comes as a way to state the pre-eminence of inception and process over final product in their compositions, which they often refer to as “uncreative literature” (Goldsmith 2011, 16). They produce transcriptions of pre-existent speech—such as media reports, newspapers, radio broadcasts, webpages and everyday spoken communication—into the form of verse or marketed in such a format. At times gleefully plagiarist, at times serving as a record of those sounds and signs around us, Conceptualist poetry aims at raising awareness about the overproduction of language in Western mass societies and the poetic inherently present in discourses usually not labelled as poetic. These poets also act as critics and theorists and have produced a consistent body of anthologies and theoretical work to accompany their artwork; some examples are *Notes on Conceptualisms* (Place and Fitterman 2009), *Against Expression: An Anthology of Conceptual Writing* (Dworkin and Goldsmith 2011), *Uncreative Writing: Managing Language in a Digital Age* (Goldsmith 2011) or *I’ll Drown My Book: Conceptual Writing by Women* (Bervall, Caroline; Browne, Laynie; Carmody, Teresa; Place, Vanessa 2012). Their reception has been notably widespread; leading critics have written extensively on the movement (Perloff 2010, Bernstein 2011) and it has generated a number of controversies with fellow poets and less favourable critics (Abbs 2004, Yankelevich 2012, Bedient 2013, Martens 2011).

Extending beyond the efforts of L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E poets and French Oulipo to create a more open and less subjective body of work, Conceptualists have strived, in their exegesis and explications of their own art, to specifically attack Romantic creative stances: by capitalising on previous material they have aimed at eliding a subjectivity or agency which seems to be central to the Romantic concept of authorship as subjective expression. They envisage a “model for the artist [that is] less the unique Romantic visionary and more the Enlightenment philosopher-mathematician or the witty pata-physician” (Dworkin and Goldsmith 2011, xxxii), setting the goal for the artist in the playful invention of artefacts rather than meaning. Following the assumption of all modern poetry to be Romantic, their uncreative writing rejects what they term to be “some of the fundamental characteristics of poetry” such as “the formalist artifice of measure and rhyme, . . . [the] classical

rhetorical tropes of anaphora, apostrophe, and irony . . . the evidentiary disclosure of the writer's most private activities . . . ; and more than a few passages of unexpectedly, heartbreakingly raw emotion, undiluted by even a trace of sentiment" (2011, xlv). Reportedly unsentimental, conceptual compositions aim at avoiding Romantic legacies such as affect and representation in poetry, as they remark that their "poems are not referential in the sense of any conventionally realist diegesis" and they point more directly "to the archival record of popular culture and colloquial speech than any avant-pop potboiler or Wordsworthian ballad ever dreamed" (2011, xlvi). By setting themselves explicitly against Romanticism, they aim at a distancing from the aesthetics set in place in the last two centuries; at the same time, by wanting to serve the same purpose of pointing at the popular, they seem to follow Wordsworth's dictum to the dot: "I have chosen subjects from common life, and endeavoured to bring my language near to the real language of men" (Wordsworth 1802). I hope to make a case here for a number of ironic contradictions in Conceptualism, which emanate from their theorisation and works as they wilfully reject Romanticism but inadvertently embrace its tenets. They would insist that their difference with the Romantics is that their aim is to work with materials publicly available, not to fabricate as agents, since their art offers a "combination of an insistence on the cultural materiality of language and a rejection of the romantic author as a unified locus of interior authority . . . [in order] to imagine a poetry not predicated on interiority" (Dworkin and Goldsmith 2011, 290). Following Sol Lewitt's idea of art as "a perfunctory affair" (LeWitt 1967, 10), the modern conceptualist idea is that "what matters is the machine that drives the poem's construction . . . [as] language in a work—be it morphemes, words, or sentences—will carry enough semantic and emotional weight on its own without any further subjective meddling from the poet" (Goldsmith 2007, 1).

Conceptualist principles have been lauded extensively; one can read that Goldsmith's practice extends that of various avant-garde movements that "preceded him—Dada, the concrete poets, Fluxus, Oulipo—but succeeds where his predecessors failed by completely evacuating the locus of the creative author/ maker" and one learns that "it is not easy to locate traces of a lyric impulse" in Conceptualism (Rankine and Sewell 2007, 12). Also, it has been noted that the rise of technology and the Internet reveal that "our notion of genius—a romantic isolated figure—is outdated. An updated notion of genius would have to center around one's mastery of information and its dissemination . . . [so that] today's writer resembles more a programmer than a tortured genius, brilliantly conceptualizing, constructing, executing, and maintaining a writing machine" (Perloff 2010, 12). Indeed, poems such as "Fact" (Dworkin 2005), which lists the chemical elements of the page the poem is printed on, seem to support that emphasis on materiality and the avoidance of subjective or authorial thrust. The concept is the valuable idea, and whether the product is unreadable or not becomes secondary. However, that ingenuity is more Romantic than Baroque: the secondary status of the poem over its conception makes it less craft than art, as it does not aim at

becoming merely (re)productive but ingenious. It is true that the conceptualist work of art, once it is done, becomes a dead end for the author, and thus forces the artist to look elsewhere for further production; but this is more explicitly internal and subjective than external to the artist since, whatever the stimulus, the inception of the work of art is deeply subjective. The poem becomes the idea about the poem, and hardly anything can be more tied to a subject and thus be considered the expression of subjectivity.

Analysing the aesthetic proposals of Conceptualism actually unearths that their methods achieve quite the opposite to what they intend: by aiming at the rejection of Romanticism, they ironically promote an exacerbation of Romantic aesthetic proposals. Reading their works and theory closely can illuminate the ways in which that subjective creation creeps back into conceptual poems, despite the methodical efforts of these poets to elude authorial thrust. Their emphasis on “employing strategies of copying and appropriation” to pre-existent material allow to modify or use the originals in “extreme ways that weren’t intended by their creators” (Goldsmith 2011, 17), but whether those appropriations are neither expressive nor personal is another matter. For example, Vanessa Place’s iteration of *Gone with the Wind* (Place 2011) takes Prissy’s dialogues from the film adaptation of the eponymous novel and recasts them into transcribed Miltonic couplets. Place suggestively manages to illuminate the range of subtext concerns about power, gender and race, and in doing so she highlights her conscious exercise to excerpt and transcribe as an expression of her own interpretation of the original text. The proof is that she does not seem to be following the intended “debunking of the romantic impulse . . . [to avoid] trying to say something original, new, important, profound” (Goldsmith 2011, 127). Other conceptualists, at least on formal grounds, manage to circumvent that impulse more successfully. Derek Beaulieu’s reworking of Abbot’s 1884 *Flatland* (2007) rewrites the occurrences of letters on each page of the original, tracing a line among the first and subsequent appearances of the character. The outcome is a page of jumbled lines in which one-dimensional characters have, like polygons in the original, a life of their own. However, if the attempt is to remove authorial emphases, the effect is quite the opposite: Beaulieu’s agency is all we have to account for, and instead of eliding the author, what becomes blurrier is the artwork, exposing the agent.

This becomes even clearer when those works are analysed from the point of view of reception: it is the reader who, in the act of reading, acts as the catalyser for these interpretations. Whatever the complications are, readers ascertain meaning, which reflects back onto authorship—not as possession of discourse but as origin: by trying to erase meaning, conceptualists inadvertently point towards themselves—the very accusation and paradigm they try to overcome. Conceptual works of art are not as unreadable nor as fragmentary as their authors assume, for readers after Romantic poetry are trained to find meaning in various forms; as Jerome McGann notes, the

“archetypal Romantic” discourse is “brilliant, argumentative, ceaseless, exploratory, incomplete, and not always very clear” (1983, 48), so that the most remarkable legacy to modern aesthetics in Byron and others is not the lack of resistance to “the presence of fragmentation and imperfection,” but to make sense of those constitutive deficiencies in order to create poems which moved their readers (McGann 2002, 257). After two hundred years of tradition, reading poetry will entail making up for missing spaces, just as Conceptualists invite their readers “to redress failure, hallucinate repair” (Place and Fitterman 2009, 25). In cases such as *Soliloquy* (Goldsmith 2001), which is a written record of every word he uttered for a week, it becomes clear that agency and authorship are being foregrounded, whatever the intention to elide them is. Even when they thrive on their self-imposed limits, conceptualists cannot fail to communicate the expression of a self; we must note the paradoxical, implicit creativity of their attempts to avoid, precisely, being creative. Originality, Julia Kristeva reminds, is “affectivity struggling with signs, going beyond, threatening, or modifying them” (1987, 232).

One of the most lauded collections in recent history, *Eunoia* (Bök 2001) consists of five technically accomplished poems with words using a single vowel. Even under those constraints, the poet is able to function as the conveyor of meaning: “Writing is inhibiting. Sighing, I sit, scribbling in ink this pidgin script. I sing with nihilistic witticism, disciplining signs with trifling gimmicks” (Bök 2001, 51). Reworkings of Baudelaire and Rimbaud into poems which print line over line or change the original verse form into prose poems (Bonney 2007; 2011) complicate the reading by obscuring the original just as much as they point to the potential readings of the new version. The self-expressive does not cease to operate; rather, it engulfs the artwork into nothing but the trace of an agency which the reader cannot but interpret as conveying meaning. Thus, paying attention to the reception of these works by an audience helps curb the non-authorial expectations of these poets, and bring their aesthetics closer to Romanticism; extreme reformulation of previous non-poetic works such as *Day* (Goldsmith 2001), an oblique retyping of the *New York Times* issue of September 1, 2000, cannot avoid the appearance of lyrical impulses when the mind of the reader constructs the text as the product of an unified agent. The mundane, subverted role of language in mass media becomes through its reformulation a source of beauty and wonder, one which poetry has strived to offer since Romanticism. As Heidegger pointed out, the very transfiguration of the real which Romanticism proposes “‘calls upon’ the historical renewal of ‘culture’ urges its rootedness in the ‘people,’ and strives for communication to everyone” (Heidegger 1999, 350). Such renewal allows progress in art “because art can live only by creating new precepts and affects as so many detours, returns, dividing lines, changes of level and scale” (Deleuze and Guattari 1994, 193). Ultimately, through heavily aestheticized and varied methods, Conceptualism resembles Romantic-age efforts to adapt poetic diction to a society immersed in a perceived

period of constant technical progress, of mass dissemination, commoditization and monetization, in a way which ends up being deeply original and affective even if it attempts the contrary. Conceptualism is not post-Romanticism but a radical mutation of Romantic aesthetics.

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Global Terrorism Shatters New York and Madrid: Don DeLillo's *Falling Man* and Adolfo García Ortega's *El mapa de la vida*

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I analyze here how global terrorism shattered New York (9/11) and Madrid (11-M) and the way in which it is reflected in contemporary fiction by comparing two novels: *Falling Man*, by Don DeLillo, and *El mapa de la vida*, by Adolfo García Ortega. In these novels an argumentative parallelism can be found that is useful for thinking in “glocal” terms about the impact of global events.

Keywords: Don DeLillo; Adolfo García Ortega; global terrorism; post-9/11 literature; 11-M literature

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In what follows, I hope to show one of the ways in which the effects of global terrorism is reflected in literary fiction, taking as a departure point the analysis of two novels, *Falling Man* by Don DeLillo and *El mapa de la vida* by Adolfo García Ortega, which deal with two terrorist attacks: September 11, 2001 in New York City and March 11, 2004 in Madrid, respectively. The story of the consequences of global terrorism in cities like New York or Madrid, which results of the complexity of the social organization of a megalopolis, constitutes one of the novels' narrative nerves. What is shown is that the destruction of the Twin Towers and the bombs in the trains in Madrid has altered the map of the cities not only with regard to the emptiness of what is gone but also to the abrupt emergence of a state of fear and uncertainty. As urban geographers Mitchell Gray and Elvin Wyly point out in “The Terror City Hypothesis,” “cities are now seen as breeding grounds or targets, and sometimes both” (2007, 334).

The narration in *Falling Man* and *El mapa de la vida* takes a fragmented form. The city is also shattered into pieces and the victims have to put themselves back together starting from fragments. In these novels, the time and space of the narration share the impossibility of a unique and accurate explanation about what happened and its consequences. The city will never be the same: “Even in New York—I long for New York” says Lianne, one of the protagonists of *Falling Man* (DeLillo 2007, 42), paraphrasing the famous haiku by the Japanese author Matsuo Basho: “Even in Kyoto / Hearing the cuckoo's cry / I long for Kyoto.” *Falling Man* has a circular narrative

structure that situates its starting point in the moment immediately after the impact of the first airplane that crashed into the Twin Towers. Keith, the novel's protagonist, manages to escape from one of the towers but when he gets to the street he finds himself in another world, in a very different space from the one he had previously inhabited. Now he is immersed in a place that has been turned into ashes, full of threats and unsuspected fears: "It was not a street anymore but a world, a time and space of falling ash and near night. . . . This was the world now" (DeLillo 2007, 3). Keith heads to the home of his ex-wife Lianne and, without any sort of agreement or conversation, showing that they are now in a new age, they get ready to restart a matrimonial relationship that had been broken for more than two years. The only communication possible for him now is the one he starts up later with another victim of the attack; what unites them is the experience of the horror and the impossibility of recounting the facts to other people who have not been there. The time of the narrative action breaks down on various occasions, moving between the past and the present and finishing right at the moment of impact of the first plane against one of the towers. That is, the ending is situated a few moments before the beginning of the novel.

DeLillo shows the transformation and invasion into daily life as a profound effect caused by the terrorist act and attempts to clearly incorporate this into his narrative work. The change of perception in the characters, which happens because of the attack, has been emphasized by Leif Grössinger (2010), who has insisted on the new point of view the victims take on due to the intense cognitive variations produced in their mind stemming from the scenes of terror. These displacements show that the effect of the terrorist act has repercussions that go much further than the direct physical consequences produced on the victims because of the collapse of the Twin Towers. The difficulty in returning to normality, as much in the private space as in the public, is expressed everywhere in the novel. Undoubtedly, the attack has changed people's behaviour and how they live in the city; a change that is clearly expressed in the impossibility of going back to daily routine as if nothing had happened and in the manner the realm of the private life will be affected by what has happened in the public space. This can clearly be seen in the games played by three children who spend the afternoons watching the sky, looking up, just in case another plane appears. The resignification of public space is shown in a suggestive and disturbing way in the performance of David Janiak, a street artist who appears at odd hours in different enclaves of the city to perform a fall that clearly alludes to the victims who threw themselves into the void from the Towers.

In the representation of 9/11 in *Falling Man* there appears to be no place for mortal victims, which has a certain parallelism with a biased media representation of the attack that broadcasts the news while scrupulously avoiding the scenes of terror so that suffering and death are not directly shown. The victims were erased from the foreground of representation. In *Falling Man*, David Janiak occupies the space of the

victims by means of performing a jump from a great height. This act is reminiscent of the photograph *The Falling Man* by Richard Drew which, additionally, gives its name to the novel. *The Falling Man* takes on great symbolic importance, as it is one of the few pictures of the victims that have been preserved not only in the collective memory but also in the individual one. Janiak circulates through the city, reminding the inhabitants of the feelings of fear and insecurity that the attack have aroused in them, until he finally dies in one of his performances due to a malfunction in the harness used to stop his fall. In the representational space of what is *real* there is no place for the *real* human body that falls from the Towers. It will be in the space of artistic performance where the fall will take human form; it will be personified by the artist himself. Something incredible will be made vividly three-dimensional. DeLillo shifts the narration from what is immediately real to the terrain of what is real as mediated by art. The shock provoked by the attack is splitting apart the ties among inhabitants, and the story moves forward on two parallel levels, that of the terrorists who mainly seek to sow terror and that of the indiscriminate victims who try to reconstruct meaning in a city that has been shattered.

In the case of *El mapa de la vida*, by Adolfo García Ortega, the narration advances through the perception and description of the multiple layers that make up life in Madrid, a life that was attacked by global terrorism on March 11, 2004. Gabriel, the protagonist of the novel, just like Keith in *Falling Man*, is a survivor, in this case of the attack at Atocha train station. Contrary to what happens in DeLillo's novel, he decides to leave his home and end the relationship that connected him to Eva, the woman he has been living with for the past few years. Gabriel needs to cut all the ties that bind him to what his life had been before the train explosions. In a visit to the Prado Museum, contemplating the painting *The Annunciation* by Fra Angelico, he meets Ada, another survivor of the 11-M terrorist attack. The experience of shared pain is an unbreakable point of connection that is expressed in a way similar to that in *Falling Man*, as Keith can only manage to communicate with Florence, another victim of the attack on the Twin Towers, with whom he will end up having a romantic though fleeting relationship.

The map that gives the title to García Ortega's novel is one of the basic narrative elements in the work. It appears not only as an expression of place, but above all as a sign of estrangement from a new territory that has opened up under the feet of the two main characters, Gabriel and Ada. The city has changed and the representation they had drawn in their minds of Madrid in their previous lives does not work anymore to guide them in their new lives. It will be necessary for them to wander the city in order to reconstruct it and draw a new map that allows the inclusion of their personal wounds and those of the city: "hay que tener el valor de asumir haber llegado al confín del territorio por el que hasta ahora se había transitado con mapa, la vida concebida con certezas, reglas, espacios por conquistar y espacios conquistados... De golpe, perdidos" (García Ortega 2009, 56). It is therefore about reconstructing

Madrid; above all, it turns out to be essential to know it in a new post-attack scenario. To recognize themselves, the survivors need to also recognize the city they lived in and the one in which they currently live; to see what remains in the present of what is familiar to them.

Ada, the protagonist of *El mapa de la vida*, is a specialist in the history of Italian Renaissance art and is writing a book on the life of Giotto and, in particular, on the endless mishaps that surrounded the difficult construction of the tower of the *Campanile del Duomo* in Florence circa 1340, known as *Giotto's Tower*. The symbolic power attributed to this tower inevitably harks back to the memory of those that were built in New York and were demolished on September 11, 2001. One of García Ortega's characters, who finds himself imprisoned in the Detention Camp at Guantanamo Bay, remembers a moment from his childhood saying, "Su padre le contaba que dios derribaba las torres más altas, y que las que no llegaban a erigirse era porque las hundía la soberbia de querer tapar el cielo" (2009, 309).

In *Falling Man*, Martin Ridnoeur, another character in the novel, in order to explain why the Twin Towers were picked as a target for the attacks, points out the arrogance that buildings of that size symbolized, that they could only be built with the fantasy that one day they would come down:

"But that's why you built the towers, isn't it? Weren't the towers built as fantasies of wealth and power that would one day become fantasies of destruction? You build a thing like that so you can see it come down. The provocation is obvious. What other reason would there be to go so high and then to double it, do it twice?" (DeLillo 2007, 146)

Mitchell Gray and Elvin Wyly, in their article on "terror cities" quoted above, remember some works by urban planners from the United States published not long after the Twin Towers were destroyed in which they predicted the end of the skyscraper era: "Less than a week after the September 11 attacks, Kunstler and Salingaros concluded, 'We are convinced that the age of skyscrapers is at an end. It must now be considered an experimental building typology that has failed.' They predicted the end of skyscrapers" (2007, 338). They do not appear to have been correct in their prediction, especially when, after years of discussions, a tower even higher than the ones that fell has been built on New York's Ground Zero.

As I mentioned earlier, in *Falling Man* the victims are not given corporeality, theirs are not tangible deaths, shirts are seen falling but not bodies: "A shirt came down out of the high smoke, a shirt lifted and drifting in the scant light and then falling again, down toward the river" (DeLillo 2007, 4). In *El mapa de la vida*, by contrast, the bodies take on enormous meaning. The two protagonists are seriously injured in the attack, and Ada ends up mutilated, the explosion tearing off one of her breasts. From this moment on, her life and death will depend on rediscovering her physical self,

on the possibility of remaking the map of her broken body. At the same time that Ada needs to find herself once again within her new corporality, the city also takes shape as a live organic body, with both fusing together in the thoughts expressed by Gabriel:

Por delante se abrían las calles de Madrid. A Gabriel se le volvieron una retícula orgánica. Entonces se figuró la ciudad como un cuerpo, un organismo vivo, tal vez el cuerpo de Ada, y a ellos, en el coche, como un proyectil que penetraba por él. La bala-Fiat traspasaba la piel y las vísceras de la ciudad-Ada, producía sangre y destrozaba nervios. Se venía a alojar en el vacío-pecho. Una bala fingida en un pecho inexistente.

—Ada, si cierro los ojos te veo como una ciudad. Voy avanzando por ti, así, como un disparo—dijo. (García Ortega 2009, 431)

In spite of the difference in the direct presence of the victims, in *Falling Man* as well as in *El mapa de la vida* the collective terror is not shown in the foreground. Both novels are about characters, about individual psychologies, about direct and indirect victims who define the collective experience after the attack. Nevertheless, by adding the background of the city and the obvious massive presence of possible victims (*todos íbamos en los trenes*, that is, we were all on those trains, or we all see ourselves represented in the performance of the falling man), a contextual effect is produced, a tension upon which the narrative action unfolds, transforming the cities into active characters in the narration. Whether it is the absence of the victims or their direct presence, what stands out is the structured human grouping that defines the city as a global and collective victim, one who is hopelessly wounded, even in its most everyday meanings, by an indiscriminate terrorist act. Evidently, the impact of the terrorist attacks has not been the same in the United States (9/11) as in Spain (11-M). The conditions that produced the attacks were different despite the greater or lesser media impact of each of the attacks. Terrorism was not an unknown phenomenon in Spain, given the fact that the country had lived for decades under the permanent presence of the nationalist-shaded terror of ETA. A good part of global terrorism is demarcated in the generalized space of the fight against crucial points in international politics. Although Spain did not hold a central spot, a generic relationship existed between the government of José María Aznar and the international politics of George Bush, which was reflected in the so-called Azores trio. There could even be a connection in the claims for a lost *Al-Andalus* on the part of Islamic groups, who link the Spain of today with what happened five centuries ago in the same territory.

In spite of the local differences between New York and Madrid, the terrorist acts appear in both cities, giving a certain tone of global homogeneity. In this enormous and emerging collective social agent of contemporary cities, we perceive how fundamentalism as a uniting factor in terrorist activity can be generated and structured, we also see the resentment and emotional elements that contribute to the origin of

terrorist acts, and, at the same time, how the most praiseworthy acts of solidarity take place in these same cities (as, for example, what is narrated by the people on the trains, by those who went to help, by the volunteers). The terrorist acts, which rip the city apart, force the space to be reconfigured after the battle. Both novels contribute to this resignification from a narrative perspective situated between the shock of the victims and the presence of those who generate terror. Something which at times has been characterized as a space of civil interaction, as a melting pot or as the mosaic of macro-cities, appears in the most shattered way as a condition of the possibility of terrorist acts and as their objective. Literary fiction about contemporary terrorism in a certain way structures and also shows this new role of the city.

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“Something there is heere I must giue forme to”:  
Romance, Satire and the Passions in Massinger’s *The Picture*

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The present paper examines Philip Massinger’s *The Picture* (1630) in an attempt to shed some light on the author’s conception of tragicomedy and on his particular handling of the techniques and conventions of the genre. The analysis and comparison of specific scenes and speeches from the play reveals a dynamics based on the constant juxtaposition and combination of contrasting literary traditions, from highly idealized romance to low comedy and satire. The conflation of motifs and strategies deriving from these different modes plays a central role in the shaping of the characters’ passions and contributes to the creation of a type of tragicomedy that allows for the representation of a broader spectrum of human emotion.

Keywords: Philip Massinger; *The Picture*; Jacobean and Caroline drama; tragicomedy; romance; passions

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Philip Massinger succeeded Shakespeare and Fletcher as leading playwright for the King’s Men, and together with James Shirley and John Ford became one of the most important figures in the late Jacobean and Caroline period.<sup>1</sup> Although his critical reception has varied greatly throughout history, Massinger’s production has been subject to a general critical neglect in the twentieth century at least until the Clarendon edition of his plays and poems by Colin Gibson and Philip Edwards.<sup>2</sup> Anne Barton’s “The Distinctive Voice of Massinger” (1977) contributed to a reawakening of the interest in the playwright, not simply as Fletcher’s inferior and “untalented” collaborator, but as an individual author with his own distinctive artistry, language and purpose.

In the search for this distinctiveness, the question of genre seems initially to be a hindrance. Many critics have emphasized the extreme generic diversity in the corpus of Massinger’s plays. Russ McDonald, for instance, defines the “canon as whole”

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<sup>1</sup> This essay is part of the Research Project “English poetic and rhetorical treatises of the Tudor period” (MINECO-FFI2010-19279).

<sup>2</sup> For a comprehensive account of Massinger’s critical reception, see Martin Garrett’s introduction to his *Massinger: the Critical Heritage* (1991, 1-50).

as “a gallimaufry of tragedies, satiric comedies, tragicomedies and permutations of these kinds” (1985, 83). Admitting the multifariousness, or even some degree of incongruity (formal and thematic), in his dramatic production, my arguments here rest on the certain grounds that most of the plays attributed to his sole authorship reflect a mixed mode, and on the fact that many of them were published under the label of tragicomedies. It seems, therefore, ineluctable on the way towards a definition of Massinger’s dramaturgy to turn our attention to and reassess his tragicomic production. In the line of critics such as Ira Clark (1992) or, more recently, Verna Foster (2004), who have provided illuminating views on Massinger’s “moral tragicomedy,” the purpose of the present paper is to contribute to the discussion about Massinger’s conception of tragicomedy and about his handling of the formal conventions and techniques of the genre. To that end, I will focus primarily on the analysis of one of his tragicomedies, *The Picture* (1630).

Although the Renaissance conception of tragicomedy as a hybrid form consisting of a mixture of tragic and comic elements is still widely accepted, an initial examination of the play soon makes evident that approaching its generic nature exclusively on the basis of the conventions of tragedy and comedy is to offer not only a simplistic but also a misleading analysis. Verna Foster has observed that Massinger “reduces tragicomedy’s tragic potential” and, that in an even more prominent way than in Fletcher, danger “is sexual rather than mortal” (2004, 90). In *The Picture* the possibility of a tragic outcome cannot really be felt at any point in the play and the connection between the constant moral threats and dilemmas and a mortal result is extremely weak. The reason is not that the passions portrayed are not appropriate to tragedy: jealousy, envy, pride are potentially (even essentially) tragic, but the way in which they are fashioned and presented is not.

As the title of the paper suggests, the central concern of this discussion is precisely the idea of “giving form” to thoughts and passions, of accommodating literary form to the expression of emotion, and in this process genre conventions play an essential role. It is necessary, however, to expand the analysis beyond the standards of comedy and tragedy and to incorporate two other modes and traditions which play a no lesser role in the configuration of the tragicomedy of the period in general, and of Massinger’s tragicomedies, in particular: romance and satire. The blending of romance and satire in tragicomedy has been explored by Eugene Waith (1952), who quite convincingly places Fletcherian tragicomedy at the confluence of these two important literary traditions, and also by Kirsch who, in the same vein, argues that “the theatrical style which Beaumont and Fletcher and their collaborators created at once encompasses and dilutes the polarities of romance and satire” (1972, 38).

These general observations become extremely pertinent when focusing on *The Picture*, a play which contains serious moral questions and comic, even farcical, situations alike, and which combines elements from the idealized world of romance with what Cruickshank calls “strokes of satire” (1920, 135). These are especially

visible in the observations by Eubulus, the King's counsellor, but also in some of the remarks by the two lustful courtiers, Ubaldo and Ricardo, and the servants, Hilario and Corisca. Through the analysis and comparison of specific scenes and speeches and focusing particularly on the realm of the representation of human emotion, I will try to demonstrate how the dynamics of the play is based on the constant tension, the moving back and forth between the contradictory forces of romance and low comedy and satire.

The plot of the play is structured around two married couples—Mathias and Sophia, and King Ladislaus and his wife, Honoria—and is set in motion and complicated by the characters' excessive passions—Mathias's groundless jealousy and the king's excessive love for his wife. The action focuses on testing fidelity and chastity and is built upon artificial situations created by the characters themselves in which virtue must be proved and in which a variety of emotions are shaped according to contrasting literary modes. The play opens with an apparently moving parting scene in which Mathias, a Bohemian lord, bids farewell to his wife, before leaving to fight on the side of the Hungarian king in the war against the Turks. The recognizable elements of the discourse of chivalric romance (the exotic setting, the war against the infidel, the hero's journey) are introduced, but our expectations to accommodate into this well-known world quickly vanish, as the true motivations of Mathias's decision are revealed: it is their financial needs that compel him to the war, neither honour nor the search for glory on the battlefield:

Nor is it in me meere desire of fame,  
 Or to be cried vp by the publicke voyce,  
 For a braue soldier, that puts on my armour:  
 Such aerie rumours take not me. You know  
 How narrow our demeanes are, and whats more,  
 Haying as yet no charge of children on vs,  
 We hardly can subsist. (I.i)

From the very beginning of the play there is a clash between the timeless and heroic atmosphere of romance and the pressing down-to-earth necessity of money.<sup>3</sup> Romance is challenged by blunt realism. As Sophia, Hilario and Corisca exit and Mathias is left alone on the stage, his real thoughts are revealed. It comes as a surprise, after the farewell, in which Mathias describes Sophia as "an obedient wife, a right one" (I.i), that jealousy has started creeping over him. In Mathias's subsequent speeches, we are offered an eloquent description of jealousy, of the inconsistencies and paradoxes that conform and define the passion: its irrational nature, the lack of real evidence, and yet the urgent necessity to confirm the suspicion:

<sup>3</sup> For a more extensive analysis on the role of commercial and economic exchange in Massinger's tragicomedies, see Turner (1995).

I am strangely troubled : yet why I should nourish  
A furie heere, and with imagind foode.

Hauing no reall grounds on which to raise,  
A building of suspition

...

I haue already

Dealt with a friend of mine, a generall scholler  
One deeply read in natures hidden secrets,  
And though with much unwillingnesse haue won him  
To doe as much as Art can to resolute me  
My fate that followes to my wish, hee's come. (I.i)

Mathias is not portrayed as a character who is out of control because of a sudden outburst of jealousy. His speech is balanced and his actions to confirm his suspicions carefully planned in advance. In short, his words say he is disturbed but neither his speech nor his actions show such disturbance. The type of confirmation Mathias needs is also surprising. The resort to magic and the introduction of the "scholar" Julio Baptista takes us back to the world of romance and folktale. Mathias asks Baptista for help, who though reluctant, finally agrees to help, giving him a "little model of Sophia," a magic miniature portrait, which will change colour if his wife is tempted or unfaithful to him. The introduction of this folktale motif contributes to maintaining the tension between romance and reality that characterizes the play as a whole.

In I.ii, the Hungarian court, the king and the queen are presented to the audience through the eyes of Ricardo and Ubaldo. They praise the queen's beauty and virtue and comment on the attitude of the king, who is portrayed as a ridiculously dotting husband who does not care for the proper political functioning of the kingdom. Ladislaus is "indulgent to her humours" and "all his imaginations and thoughts / are buried in her" up to the point that "the lowd noise of warre cannot awake him" (I.ii). From his first appearance, king Ladislaus is always accompanied by the opposing voice of his old counsellor Eubulus. The king's grandiloquent description of Honoria as a "goddess" transcending time and "sanctify[ing]" the court contrasts with the satiric comments by Eubulus, who constantly warns the monarch against the dangers of his "dotage" in the private and public spheres. Not only the king, but also the queen and women in general are favourite targets for Eubulus, who even attacks monarchy as an institution and the theory supporting and justifying the authority of the king, using irony as his main weapon:

Eubulus. Well, since you hugge your fetters  
In loues name weare'em. You are a King, and that  
Concludes you wise. Your will a powerfull reason,



One fair and loyal woman! 'twas the end  
 Of my ambition to be recorded  
 The only wonder of the age, and shall I  
 Giue way to a competitor? (II.ii)

The comparison between the two parallel processes of temptation to which the main characters (Mathias and Sophia) are subjected also conform to the dynamics of combining different tones and modes. As Colin Gibson states, these processes “are given distinguishing modes of language. Abstract moral rhetoric for the first, and physical, witty sex-language for the second” (1985, 35). The intention is identical—corrupting the virtuous couple—but they are radically different in form. In the case of Mathias, he’s captured and brought to a room in the palace. The atmosphere there created is magical and dreamlike. Elements such as music and masks are incorporated and make it sophisticated and mysterious. Mathias is astonished and describes the scene as if he had been suddenly transported to the supernatural world of romance, populated by “aeriall inhabitants” and “magical enchantments”:

I cannot imagine  
 Where I should be: though I have read the table  
 Of errant-knighthood, stuff’d with the relations  
 Of magicall enchantments; yet I am not  
 So sottishly credulous to beleue the devil  
 Hath that way power. Ha! Music?  
 . . . whosoere you are  
 That doe inhabit heere, if you haue bodies,  
 And are not meere aeriall formes, appeare, [Enter Honoria]  
 And make me know your end with me. (III.v)

Meanwhile, the two lascivious sycophants arrive in Bohemia and start teasing Sophia with stories about her husband’s unfaithfulness, making her feel “a foolish ieaousie” (III.vi). She compares her emotional state to one in which the boundaries of sleep and waking are not clear and describes herself as “incredulous” of what she “see[s] and touch[es]” (III.vi). Sophia’s description of her emotion at this point is more complex, vivid and subtle than in other characters. The possibility of her husband’s infidelity makes the foundations of her world shake. The psychological alteration affects physical reality, which becomes a “fading apparition” (III.vi). However, as Verna Foster contends, “Sophia’s rival tempters are presented as comic, ineffectual and thus hardly dangerous” (2004, 95). Their reports of Mathias’s unfaithfulness are not only comic but farcical, extremely exaggerated, and bordering on the grotesque:

Sophia. [to Vbaldo] You would put, now,  
A foolish ieaalousie in my head, my lord  
Hath gotten a new mistris.

Vbaldo. One! A hundred;

...

Sophia. Are they handsome women?

Vbaldo. Fie! No; course mammets: and whats worse, they are old too,  
Some fifty, some threescore, and they pay deere for't,  
Beleeuing that he carries a powder in his breeches  
Will make 'em young again; and these sucke shrewdly. (III.vi)

The salacious, bawdy language they use and the methods they employ in their attempts to corrupt Sophia are the complete opposite of the magical atmosphere in the palace. Exaggerated as they are, these accounts trigger an equally exaggerated reaction on the part of Sophia, who inexplicably renounces “chastity” as name without content and decides to become “a servant of voluptuousnesse” (III.vi).

In *Alba Regalis* after an initial rejection of the queen’s aspirations, the change in colour of Sophia’s picture, originates a new change in Mathias’s mood. But now it is the queen who rejects him. Sophia, for her part, after questioning her two guests, Ubaldo and Ricardo, and witnessing their mutual defamation, concludes they have been slandering her husband too and decides in the end to remain virtuous and to punish the two courtiers. Such “suddaine Metamorphos[e]s” (IV.i) in the passions and behaviour of almost all the characters are constant in the play. The flexibility and permeability of tragicomedy allows for the representation of a broader spectrum of human emotion by providing a framework in which there is room for the excesses of passions but also for the overruling, the taming or the purging of those passions.

The processes that work those quick and normally unlikely changes are radically different in the main characters and in the minor, often socially inferior, characters. The excesses of the king, the queen, Mathias and even Eubulus are corrected by means of rhetorical processes of persuasion leading to an intellectual realization or moral conversion. “How his reasons / Worke on my soule” (IV.iv), exclaims Honoria after listening to Mathias’s moralizing speech. The low characters’ passions, on the other hand, are corrected and purged physically. The punishments meted out to Hilario and, especially, Ubaldo and Ricardo reflect the early-modern connection between mind and body, between psychology and physiology. Sophia resolves that “[e]ase and excess in feeding” (IV.ii) was the cause of the courtiers wantonness: “A plurisie of ill blood you must let out / By labour and spare diet” (IV.ii). As Bennett puts it, Massinger’s comic scenes “are built around serving men and women who are hungry for food or hungry for sex” and who “attempt to get laughs by their gluttony. . . or by being deprived of food (or drink) and exhibiting an extreme longing for it” (1966, 213). These two models of emotion purgation are

in tune with the genre dynamics that I have been describing throughout. Romance idealization fosters moral or spiritual recognition and low comedy is allied with corporeality and materiality.

The type of tragicomedy that Massinger creates in *The Picture* exploits elements deriving from different traditions which are carefully incorporated into plot and character in order to then be questioned within the play itself. The focus on the tradition of romance and its relation with satirical and farcical elements has helped illustrate the wide range of emotions that can be accommodated in this tragicomedy and the various ways in which these passions can be codified. It is this type of tragicomedy, in which likelihood is sometimes sacrificed for the sake of variation, that allows for the shifts and swerves of the passions involved and prevents the otherwise unavoidable tragic outcome. In *The Picture* heroic, romantic, satiric, farcical and even magical elements coexist: an exotic setting, a magic portrait, the need for money, a heroic soldier and jealous husband, an absurdly uxorious king, a tempting queen and a constant wife. I have tried to prove that the conflation of motifs coming from different literary modes is not random, that it responds to a particular artistic intention on the part of the author, namely the creation of a dynamics of tension of opposite literary modes that can be observed at the level of speech, plot and character and that plays a central role in the shaping of the characters' passions. All of which contributes to the creation not only of an entertaining and dramatically effective play, but also of a formally and thematically coherent tragicomedy.

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Rhetorical *Amplificatio* and the Origin of English Tragedy:  
Jasper Heywood's Translation of Seneca's *Thyestes* (1560)

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Jasper Heywood's translations of Seneca's *Troas* (1559) and *Thyestes* (1560) can be considered the first tragedies in English. This paper analyzes the prefatory materials of *Thyestes*, the translation, and the addition of a final scene in the light of Heywood's attempts to construct a discourse of origins and a poetics of the genre. The use of rhetorical techniques of amplification is taken here as the basis for an idea of tragedy that explores the emotional boundaries of the self.

Keywords: English Renaissance tragedy; Seneca; Jasper Heywood; Elizabethan translation; rhetorical amplification; emotions

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In the "Preface to the Reader" of *Thyestes* (1560), Jasper Heywood, who had already published a version of Seneca's *Troas* (1559), recounts a dream vision in which the Roman author appears to him with an embarrassing request:<sup>1</sup> "In miter of thy mother tongue to geue to sight of men / My other woorks: wherby thou shalt deserue of them and mee, / No little thancks: When they them selues my Tragedies shall see / In Englishe verse, that neuer yet coulde latine vnderstande" (Heywood 1560, Pref.55-58).<sup>2</sup> Seneca's injunction that these translations serve a readership with no command of classical languages is rather at odds with the dedication of the earlier *Troas*, where Heywood imagines young Queen Elizabeth's pleasure "to se some part of so excellent an author in your owne tong (the reading of whom in laten I vnderstande delightes greatly your maiesty) as also for that none may be a better iudge of my doinges herein, then who best vnderstandeth my author" (Heywood 1559, Ep. 31-34). It also contrasts with the assertion in the "Preface to the Readers" of *Troas* that the enterprise was undertaken "for mine owne priuate excercyse" (Heywood 1559, Pref.11). Heywood confesses his fears to "haue swerued from the trew sence, or not kept the

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<sup>1</sup> This essay is part of the Research Project "English poetic and rhetorical treatises of the Tudor period" (MINECO-FFI2010-19279).

<sup>2</sup> Although Heywood's texts are quoted in old-spelling form from the first editions, and although I quote, when possible, by signature from the originals, I also provide act, scene (or prefatory matter) and line numbers from Ker and Winston's modern-spelling edition (2012).

royaltie of speach, meete for a tragedy” (Heywood 1559, Pref. 28-29). His reasons are commonplace: the insufficiency of the English language when compared with Latin, as well as the translator’s “lacke of eloquence” (Heywood 1559, Pref. 30-31). In fact, Seneca’s wish that Heywood should write for the unlearned reader loses weight when considered under an idea of translation which aims at 1) rendering the genuine sense and style of tragedy into a language in which it had no tradition; 2) levelling up the literary dignity of English with Latin, and 3) the successful employment of the figures and tropes of rhetoric to make up for what is lost in translation.

Seen in these terms, Heywood’s translation project can be assessed alongside Walter Benjamin’s contention that the translatability of a literary work is both an essential condition and an effect of its afterlife (*Überleben*). As he contended in his influential essay “The Translator’s Task” (1923), a significant translation of a literary work seldom or never takes place at the time of the original, and thus its aspiration must be, rather than to render the original intention for a distant reader, to have the target language possessed by the original work. Translation ascertains the fertility of a literary work, but that fertility cannot come without violence in the life of the target language: “Far from being a sterile similarity between two languages. . . , translation is, of all modes, precisely the one called upon to mark *the after-ripening of the alien word* [*jene Nachreife des fremden Wortes*], and *the birth pangs of its own* [*die Wehen des eigenen*]” (Benjamin 1997, 156).

In the present case, the ageing of a language (Latin), a work (Seneca’s play), or a hitherto unknown genre (tragedy) must leave their imprint through the act of translation upon the long and painful process of gestation of tragedy as a nascent literary mode in English. The analogy may seem clearer in the context of Heywood’s dream encounter with his author. As Seneca asks him to translate his other works, Heywood, then a Cambridge student, retorts that there are men in the thriving literary coterie of the London Inns of Court whose “paynfull pen[s]” are more gifted to “trauaile” in the “labour long” of Anglicizing a classic (Heywood 1560, Pref. 86, 76, 75). The lexicon of pain—in both Heywood and Benjamin—aligns translation with the idea of poetic imitation imagined two decades after Heywood in Sidney’s first sonnet of *Astrophel and Stella*: “Thus great with child to speake, and helpelesse in my throwes” (Ringler 1962, I.12). In contrast with the pains of literary labour, a therapeutic fantasy of effortless inspiration emerges in Heywood’s dream. Seneca insists that Heywood is his man and presents him with a beautiful manuscript of his plays containing the authoritative text, unblemished by editors’ mistakes and printers’ corruptions:

But for because the Prynters all haue greatly wronged mee,  
To ease thee of thy paynes therin, see what I bryng to thee.

...

These are (quoth he) the Tragedies in deede of Seneca,

The Muse her selfe them truly writ, that hight Melpomena.  
 In Parnase princely palaice highe, she garnished this booke,  
 The Ladies haue of Helicon great ioy theron to looke.  
 (Heywood 1560, Pref. 187-188, 207-210; emphasis added)

Heywood's narrative later expands on the description of the "paradise" that has made possible this unblemished codex, and which grants the classical author an unproblematic afterlife, untainted by the errors of interpretation—those of translation included. Unfortunately, however, the dream ends, the author vanishes, and the book of paradise is lost and replaced by the fallen text, resulting in the continuation of the translator's painful nightmare of literary labour:

My selfe without the poete there, thus lefte alone to see,  
 And all delights of former dreame, thus vanysshed to bee.  
 Somtyme I curst, somtyme I cryde, lyke wight that waxed woode,  
 Or Panther of hir pray depryude, or Tygre of her broode.  
 ...  
 In wondrous wyse I vexed was, that neuer man I weene  
 So soone, might after late delights, in suche a pangue be seene.  
 O thou Megaera then I sayde, if might of thyne it bee,  
 Wher with thou Tantall droauste from hell, that thus dysturbeth mee,  
 Enspyre my pen: with pensyuenes this Tragedie t'endyght,  
 And as so dredfull thing beseemes, with dolefull style to wryght.  
 This sayde, I felte the furies force enflame me more and more,  
 And ten tymes more now chafte I was, then euer yet before.  
 ...  
 My heare stooode vp, I waxed woode, my synewes all dyd shake,  
 And as the fury had me vext, my teethe began to ake.  
 And thus enflamde with force of hir, I sayde it shoulde be doon,  
 And downe I sate with pen in hande, and thus my verse begoon.  
 (Heywood 1560, Pref. 325-28, 331-38, 341-44)

Recent interest in Heywood's paratext has singularized its relevance to Tudor theories of textuality (Murphy 1999), to the early Elizabethan project of creating a new literature in English (Berek 2009), and to defining the crossroads at which English tragedy finds its birthplace (Pincombe 2012). Pincombe has noted in the Preface to *Thyestes* the clash between Heywood's classical aspiration—allegorized by the tragic Muse Melpomene—and his indebtedness to a medieval model assimilated through Chaucer, Lydgate and the *Mirror for Magistrates*—a model that Heywood represents in the Fury Megaera. The Fury's triumph over the Muse thus endorses a non-classical idea of tragic composition sustained by "imitative infuriation"—the

basis for a Renaissance theatre of cruelty whose aim is the exploration of the darkest, innermost regions of the human soul (Pincombe 2012, 543-44).

Pincombe's argument could be further enlightened by an interpretation of this Preface as a Benjaminian allegory of the translator's task—i.e., the derivative effort that ensues from the act of mourning a lost, perfect text that would have rendered all interpretation irrelevant. The tragic "pensyueness" and the "dolefull style" of genuine tragedy are materialized in Heywood's translating efforts in a painful search for unattainable authenticity—allegorized here through a Tantalus-like hunger for the irrecoverable book. If Heywood's Preface to *Thyestes* can be read as a myth of the origin of English tragic drama, origin must be understood in Walter Benjamin's sense of fracture from an already existing tendency or tradition—a sense that brings together, in a sort of oxymoron, *originality* and *derivation* as the consubstantial forces that make translation responsible for the birth of English tragedy.<sup>3</sup>

Pincombe convincingly argues that "the most obvious way to locate Heywood's version of Seneca's Latin in the literary-historical development of sixteenth-century drama would be to examine very closely the way he translates Seneca's Latin and thus contributes to the evolution of a specifically English tragic style" (2012, 532). And recent work on Elizabethan Seneca, most notably Ker and Winston's modern-spelling edition of three plays, has provided useful keys to the analysis of these translators' style. In the case of Heywood, they partially document his voyage from the free, expansive style of *Troas* to literal and interlinear rendering in the bilingual edition of *Hercules Furens* (1561), *Thyestes* being a transitional effort in disciplining his early tendencies toward addition and interpolation. They also exemplify Heywood's technique of unpacking strongly connotative words through variation in an attempt to explain difficult passages to his readers (Ker and Winston 2012, 39-44). While I agree on the general picture, I believe that linguistic examination should also allow us to assess the extent to which Heywood's—and the other translators'—English becomes impregnated with Seneca's tragic poetics. Gregory A. Staley's recent study has described Seneca's "idea of tragedy" in the light of Stoic epistemology and psychology "as a model for the cognitive process and thus as a means by which to clarify the nature of the emotions" (Staley 2010, 67). I propose that, rather than being seen as explanatory and reader-orientated, Heywood's additions be assessed in terms of their exploratory and genre-orientated impulse, which seeks conceptual adjustments of this idea of tragedy for a new linguistic universe. Heywood's experiments exploit Erasmian techniques of rhetorical amplification as instruments at the service of 1) a concept of translation as painful linguistic exploration, and 2) an idea of tragedy that

<sup>3</sup> Benjamin defines origin [*Ursprung*] by means of the very metaphor that lies at the etymology of *derivation*: "Origin is an eddy in the stream of becoming, and in its current it swallows the material involved in the process of genesis" (1977, 46).

privileges investigation of the emotional boundaries of the self.<sup>4</sup> The few instances sketched here will address rhetorical amplification at word-level through addition, synonymy, and repetition.

### 1. ADDITION

Seneca's opening scene introduces the Ghost of Tantalus as he is urged out of Hell by the Fury Megaera, who impels him towards vengeance against his grandchildren Atreus and Thyestes. The Ghost feels that the unknown force drawing him away from his eternal torment in hell will only procure him a worse fate. He invokes the familiar instance of Tityus, condemned for the rape of Leto to feed two vultures in Tartarus with his ever-growing liver. The quote below includes a) the Senecan text (substantive variants in italics), b) a literal translation, and 3) Heywood's version, with additions and/or alterations in bold:<sup>5</sup>

a) aut poena Tityi semper accrescens iecur  
visceribus atras pascit effossis aves?  
et nocte reparans quidquid amisit die  
plenum recenti pabulum monstro iacet? (1.9-12)

b) Or shall the punishment of Tityus—the always-growing liver in the digged-up entrails—feed the dark birds, and, at night repairing that which it lost during the day, lie a full prey for the ready monster?

c) Or shal **my paynes** be Tytius **panges** th'increasyng liuer still,  
Whose **growing guttes** the **gnawing gripes** and **filthy** foules do fyll?  
That styl by nyght repayres the **panch** that was deuour'd by day,  
And **wondrous wombe vnwasted** lieth a new prepared pray  
(9-12; Heywood 1560, A1r)

In conjunction with alliteration, addition becomes the main mechanism of amplification here. The semantic field addressed by "iecur" and "visceribus" ("liuer" and "guttēs") is expanded to "panch," and "wombe"—two synonyms with no counterpart in the original. Latin "accrescens," "reparans," and "plenum" become "increasyng," "styl repayres," "growing," and notably, through addition, "wondrous . . . unwasted." By stressing eternal hunger, Tantalus posits Tityus as a figural anticipation of Thyestes

<sup>4</sup> Erasmus expounds his theories of copiousness and amplification in *De duplici copia verborum ac rerum* (1512). For an abridged English translation, see Erasmus 1963.

<sup>5</sup> For Seneca's text I follow Tarrant 1985, except for the substantive variations of the A text that Heywood used, for which I follow Seneca 1554. On the translators' sources, see Ker and Winston 2012, 279-80.



Stil to dispose, ad what thou canst to all my deadly woe,  
 That keeper euen of dungeon darke would sore abhorre to knowe.  
 (13-16; Heywood 1560, A1V, 1.13-16)

The presence of “supplicia” (“tormentes”) may have persuaded Heywood to translate “poena” as “deadly woe,” thus adding to the judicial and physical sense of the former the emotional connotation of the latter. The use of *poena* as “grief” or “woe” in Latin is quite rare (it is not recorded in the *Oxford Latin Dictionary*), but Heywood seems to discover in it an index to the tragedy’s signification. The additions in this passage address not only the sadistic pleasure of the torturer (“delytes”) but also the prolongation (“styl”) of suffering, the intensity of grief (“my deadly woe”), and an uneasy concern with the other’s distress (“sore abhorre to know”).

Another revealing example comes in Tantalus’s resistance to becoming his grandsons’ tormentor: “Me pati poenas decet, / non esse poenam!” (86-87), which Heywood transforms into “To suffre paynes it seemeth well my parte, / Not woes to woorke” (Heywood 1560; 1.86-87). Ker and Winston treat this as an error in that it fails to convey the idea of Tantalus’s refusal to become himself the punishment (2012, 156, n72). I, though, see this differently, as an instance of Benjamin’s contention that translation’s ultimate goal is not to convey meaning (what the text intends), but to tease out modes of intention of particular words (1997, 156-57). Heywood privileges the conceptual potentials of *poena* over what the text intends to communicate. The pairs “suffre/woorke” and “paynes/woes” exploit here a dynamics of causative and passive which is essential not only for the understanding of the emotional complexity of Tantalus, but more particularly for the way in which the terms of these pairings later characterize the brothers Atreus (the inflictor of pain) and Thyestes (its recipient). But above all they mirror the violence and inner suffering implicit in tragic damnation and punishment.

### 3. REPETITION (*PLOCE*)

Tantalus’s invocation of Tityus in his first speech is preceded by mention of Sisyphus’s punishment: “Sisyphinum quid lapis / Gestandus humeris lubricus nostris uenit?” [shal Sisyphus his stone, / *That slypper restles, rolling payse* vppon my backe be borne?] (6-7; Heywood 1560, A1R). Syntactically, the long apposition to stone becomes Heywood’s most striking amplification (in italics above). There we find “payse,” a word with no direct correspondence in the original. There are six occurrences of “payse” in the translation, four of them translating the four occurrences of Latin “pondus,” one of them rendering the only occurrence of “onus,” and this one, an addition anticipating its later occurrences. Seneca’s first instance occurs in the Messenger’s narrative of Atreus’s lighting of the sacrificial pyres before the murder of Thyestes’ children: “He lights the fyres, no rites were lefte of sacrifice vndone. / The woode then quakte, and

all at ones from trembling grounde anone / The Palaice beckte, in doubtte whiche way the payse therof woulde fall, [*nutavit aula, dubia quo pondus daret*] / And shakynge as in waues they stood” (Heywood 1560, C7r; 4.1.73-76; 697). It depicts the palace’s weight imaginarily crumbling at Atreus’s cruel act. Also in this act, the Chorus describes the universe disintegrating after Atreus’s crime. In the detailed account of the falling of the constellations, the goddess of justice, Astraea, will be thrown down with her scales: “cadet in terras Virgo relictas, / iustaeque cadent pondera Librae” [“To lands once lefte the virgin shal be throwne, / And leuelde payse of Balance sway alowe” (857-858; Heywood 1560, D3v; 4.Cho.69-70). Later, in Thyestes’ woeful speech foretelling his disgrace, we read: “magnum, ingenti / strage malorum pressum fracti / pondera regni non inflexa / cervice pati” [“and great it is to him agayne / that prest with storme, of evyls feeles the smart, / Of kyngdome loste the payses to sustayne / with necke unbowde” (928-931; Heywood 1560, D6r; 5.2.9-12).

Finally, Thyestes’ fears are expressed through the impossibility of holding a wine-cup with his hands, burdened as he is by the weight of terror: “sed quid hoc? nolunt manus / parere, crescit pondus et dextram gravat” [“whats this? in no wyse will my hande / Obye: the payse increaseth sore, and downe myne arme dothe swaye”] (985-986; Heywood 1560, D7r; 5.3.16-17). Also, after realizing the death of his sons: “immota Tellus pondus ignavum iaces?” [“O slothfull soyle, unshaken payse, unmoued yet art thou?”] (1020; Heywood 1560, D8v; 5.3.51). Between these two moments (Tarrant 1985, 999-1000), a foreboding disorder in Thyestes’ stomach is rendered thus by Heywood: “What tumulte [*tumultus*] tumbleth so my gutts, and dothe my bowels gnawe? / What quakes within? With hevy payse [*onus*] I feele myself opprest” (Heywood 1560, D6v; 5.3.30-31).

By adding the first instance, and by concentrating all meanings upon one term, Heywood exploits the powers of *ploce*, or random repetition of the same word, to endorse the contiguity of the cosmic, religious, political, judicial and physical dimensions of the tragic crime with the emotional burden of its impact.<sup>7</sup>

The analysis can extend to a larger number of instances and rhetorical techniques. And the conclusions cannot simply invite us to judge the felicity of these translations by their effects upon the reader. The question should remain as to whether the aim of Heywood’s translations is accessibility for his English readership or emphasizing the very idea of tragedy ingrained in Seneca’s originals—an idea whose monadic unity can only be emblemized by the unattainable fiction of the dream’s unblemished, perfect text. Heywood’s mournful realization of the unavailability of that text is his greatest literary discovery in *Thyestes*. His practical solution was a rhetorical attempt to restore the translatability of the idea of tragedy. After Seneca’s translators, the history of the classical legacy in English Renaissance tragedy must address imitation (from Norton and Sackville to Elizabeth Cary), formulations of explicit poetics

<sup>7</sup> Puttenham describes *ploce* (or *ploche*, Lat. *conduplicatio*), which he Anglicizes as “the doubler,” as “a speedie iteration of one word” (1589, 168).

(Sidney, Puttenham, Greville), or influence (Kyd, Shakespeare, etc.). But the very origin of the genre in English is to be found in the most derivative of literary efforts. Heywood's realization of the painful task of the translator signals the path to the mosaic reconstruction of the innumerable fragments of which this idea of tragedy is composed.

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Constructing Ideology in Twenty-First-Century Supernatural Romance.  
The Salvatore Brothers in *The Vampire Diaries*

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*The Vampire Diaries* is a television series based on J. L. Smith's novels that follows the emergence of young adult vampire fiction in the first decade of the twenty-first century. This article explores how the show presents vampires in a reflection of changes in society and contributes to debates about marketability and ideology and the influence television has on its audience.

Keywords: vampires; television studies; *The Vampire Diaries*; young adult; supernatural romance; cultural studies

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Vampires have always been fascinating creatures that have captured the imagination of their audience. From the original folklore traditions and legends, they were transformed into a recurrent topic of the literature of the nineteenth century. But it is during the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, thanks to the cinema and television, that they have enjoyed more popularity and success than ever before, and this is partly due to their ability to transform and adapt to different periods. As Nina Auerbach (1995) explains, there is a vampire for every generation and it is precisely this “constant state of disintegration and renewal” (Abbot 2007, 5) that intrinsically links them to the contemporary world.

However, vampires in the twenty-first century have become a product that has gone beyond the literary or cinematographic domain. Mass consumer culture is present in most Western societies and, as a consequence of “the increasing commercialisation of culture and leisure” (Strinati 1996, 2), the vampire has been transformed into yet another product to be marketed and sold worldwide. As Valerie Wee explains, the “unprecedented degree of intersection across multiple forms of media and distribution outlets” (2004, 89) that started in the 1990s should be understood as a crucial factor when analysing how these days products are created not for a particular sector but for multiple ones. Media corporations have “expanded their holdings and interests across film, television, music, publishing, retail and the Internet” (2004, 89) and, as a product, the vampire has been sold and circulated in different media, including

“soundtracks, music videos, trailers, fashion, magazine features and television appearances” (2004, 91). The obvious consequence of this model of development is that popular culture has completely changed and now, as many might argue, “criteria of profitability and marketability take precedence over quality, artistry, integrity and intellectual challenge” (Strinati 1996, 3). This profit-driven nature of the culture industries means that media corporations are constantly looking for new products to sell, and vampires have proven financially successful on many occasions. From film series such as the *Blade* trilogy (1998-2004) to *Underworld* (2003-2012) or the TV series *True Blood* (2008-2014), their appeal to audiences is undeniable. But it is the instant success of Stephenie Meyer’s *Twilight* Saga that has helped increase the audience interest in what has been called the *supernatural romance*, creating legions of fans, first following the novels, later the films as well as spawning thousands of internet sites and generating a profitable merchandise market. The success of any product quickly generates copies and the American TV network CW created *The Vampire Diaries* in an attempt to profit from the popularity of Meyer’s story. L. J. Smith had written a series of novels for a commission from Alloy Entertainment in the early 1990s and these were used as the basis for this new TV series. In the case of *The Vampire Diaries*, the timing of its release seems obvious. Following the *Twilight* success in December 2008, CW began working on the project and the series premiered on air on September 10, 2009, not even a year after the huge success of the first *Twilight* film and a month before the second, *New Moon*, appeared on cinemas. As expected, it was CW’s biggest series premier with more than 4.9 million viewers and its success has continued ever since, with more than 2.5 million viewers on its first five seasons on the US alone and currently running its sixth season.

Media organisations do not only reflect however the “demands of profitability” (Strinati 1996, 251) that are at work in the American capitalist society, but they also become “channels for a dominant ideology” (1996, 251). In this sense, vampires become a reflection of the capitalist society, where profitability becomes a key element, but also, as part of the contemporary popular and mass-produced culture, they become a discourse for transmitting specific ideologies, values and behaviours. Glyn Davis and Kay Dickinson explain that we should pay attention not only to the way capitalism has embedded itself within the teen lifestyle but also analyse the “moral and ethical ramifications” (2004, 9). Media organisations are managed by an elite that provides “filters and frames through which many people view the world” and, therefore, control “what will be seen or how reality will be perceived” (2010, 42). They encourage certain attitudes and censure others, constructing a particular reality for their consumers, but it must be remembered that “that picture of reality is usually inaccurate” (2010, 42). Contemporary representations of vampires mirror not only the changes that have taken place in our society in the last decades but they also carry particular ideological constructions that should not be overlooked. One of the first aspects we should focus on is the fact that Mystic Falls, the place where

the action is set and that is supposed to represent the typical southern American town, does not offer any ethnic, racial or cultural variety. While other TV series, such as *True Blood*, portray a far more heterogeneous society, almost all the vampires appearing in *The Vampire Diaries* are white, middle-class. Although in the original novels the Salvatore brothers belonged to the Italian nobility, the TV series adapts to more recent representations of vampires. In the tradition of American narratives, status is not given through European titles of nobility, but in the TV series the main characters belong to the founding families of Mystic Falls. In this way, the tradition of the aristocrat vampire is updated and included within the heroic history of the creation of the United States, with frequent references to the Civil War and the romantic idea of the good old South as well as many flashbacks to the beginning of the twentieth century where we see the brothers leaving for Europe to bravely fight in the Second World War together with other young Americans, thus reinforcing their status as heroes. This element of heroism is confronted with the presentation of other vampires, such as Katherine Piers or Klaus Mikaelson, that are clearly linked to negative characteristics. They are presented as monsters, as the dangerous Other, and stand for reprehensible behaviour. Jeffrey Jerome Cohen has explained that “the monster polices the borders of the possible” (1996, 2) and is used as a warning against the exploration of the different. The subversive potential of the monster that is apparent in other types of narratives disappears in *The Vampire Diaries*. Instead, vampires are used to present behaviours charged with moral values. As happened with earlier representations of these supernatural creatures, the TV series uses these villains to reinforce “the formally dichotomized structures of belief” (Punter and Byron [2004] 2007, 270) and a dominant worldview. The vampire is, then, appropriated in the service of “a more conservative moral agenda that aims to reinforce threatened moral values” ([2004] 2007, 271) but also economic factors of profitability in the mass-market entertainment industries.

The main focus of this study is not analysing the vampire as a monster but as a romantic hero, and, as Susannah Clements points out, in order to transform them from the enemy to the sympathetic hero, they must be first “sanitised” and “domesticated” (2010, 149), a process that is present in the portrayal of the Salvatore brothers. Stefan is presented as a mysterious teenager arriving at Mystic Falls looking for the reincarnation of his long lost love, Elena Gilbert. But an element of danger is added; he is a vampire and his thirst, his desire, is dangerous. Like some previous vampires, including Edward Cullen in *The Twilight Saga* or Angel in *Buffy The Vampire Slayer*, Stefan is afraid of losing control. He is portrayed as a repentant sinner, always fighting against his true nature as a vampire, against his thirst, which is presented as an addiction. From a series of flashbacks, the audience witness how, soon after his transformation, there is a period when Stefan loses control, becoming a ruthless killer known as “the Ripper.” In a clear copy of the traditional formula, Stefan’s character is presented as a romantic hero who falls in love with a girl, but also as a repentant vampire

who willingly refuses to take human blood and seeks to “actively help other people” (Clemments 2011, 143) to compensate for all the deaths and pain he has caused. The other Salvatore brother, Damon, can also be compared to other traditional vampire heroes. Like Spike in *Buffy The Vampire Slayer* or Lestat in *The Vampire Chronicles*, Damon is a rebel who defies rules and does not care about authority. Although at the beginning of the TV series he is presented as a dangerous Other, as evil, the theme of redemption is present again. The audience will witness his transformation as the series develops and how his relation to Elena Gilbert, their friendship and the love he feels for her, changes him. Despite his sarcasm and apparent disdain for everybody’s welfare, Damon starts helping others and slowly becomes a member of Mystic Falls’ community, earning Elena’s forgiveness and love. This portrayal of the bad boy turned good because of love repeats a traditional formula of previous vampire narratives that has proven commercially successful, something that CW producers are well aware of and exploit in the TV series.

As in most supernatural romances, love is a central theme in the narrative but sex is also present in an attempt to bring vampires to the twenty-first century attitudes towards romantic relationships and sexuality. Although there are no explicit scenes, sex is part of the characters’ lives. However, it is neither presented as a taboo, as in *Twilight*, nor does it appear intrinsically linked to the fact of being a vampire, as happens in *True Blood*. Once again, it is worth noting that in all six seasons heterosexuality is presented as the norm and it is not discussed or questioned any further. This offers its viewers a biased perspective of reality that has ideological consequences, since it monitors and shapes what attitudes are acceptable and at the same time it silences alternative voices. As Lorna Jowett explains, the definition of self and normed is “constructed by dominant groups and work to exclude characteristics or identities that do not match those of the dominant group” (2005, 6). This tendency towards homogenization, which audiences perceive as real, though not at all accurate, is safer for the network and avoids any type of controversy, since it inscribes itself in the current mainstream ideology. Likewise, other aspects in the description of these supernatural creatures follow the same tendency. Vampires have always represented the human desire to overcome death. They reflect the human wish for eternal youth and beauty and human “anxieties about the aging process and the desire for immortality” (Abbott 2007, 134). In fact, most vampires have always been, if not beautiful, at least attractive figures with a great degree of appeal. However, it is only recently that their youth has been stressed so much. This should be understood not only as part of the young adult narratives that have become so successful in the last few years but also as a reflection of today’s society and its present obsession with these aspects. The twenty-first century vampire is no longer understood as the enemy but has become a role model. They have some desirable characteristics that are emphasised in our society. Plastic surgery has become a common practice not only amongst public figures such as models, actors or even politicians, but also amongst average people in an attempt

to achieve eternal youth and perfect physical features. Being a vampire would, then, mean having those characteristics eternally and, for this reason, the focus on these elements is highlighted more than ever before.

However, it is not only women's beauty but also men's bodies that are objectified in these recent incarnations of vampires, reflecting the changes that have taken place in the portrayal of masculinities in recent decades. In the 1980s a new style of action film portrayed men with extremely muscular bodies, an obsession with fitness and the cult of the body that has continued into the twenty-first century in what Chris Barker refers to as *ornamental culture*, the culture of "celebrity, image, entertainment and marketing, all underpinned by consumerism" (2012, 315). Masculinity and the representation of the masculine body are now sold in the same way as that of femininity and women's bodies. Both are objectified and their bodies, their beauty and perfection become another characteristic that will help sell the product, presenting an ideal to be obtained and desired by their audience. Beauty has become such an important feature that its lack is usually translated into something negative. When vampires in the TV series show their true vampire nature, when they crave blood or act violently, it is not only their fangs that appear but they also change physically—their faces have beast-like features and their eyes turn black. In this sense, vampires continue to be understood as monsters when they do not follow the rules, and their ugliness becomes apparent. However, vampires in this TV series are offered a choice: they can turn off their humanity and feel no pain or regret, becoming no more than a beast, or decide to live like humans, with all the suffering and remorse, but be saved. Physical appearance is, therefore, linked to moral aspects. When vampires become monsters on the inside they also become monsters on the outside. Acceptable behaviours are rewarded but the audience can also witness the terrible consequences of unacceptable attitudes, which do not only lead to death or violence but also to physical ugliness.

The idea of beauty is not only linked to perfect physical features but also to other aspects. Money is a fundamental element that determines one's position in society. One is classified depending on what you own, and, therefore, material possessions are a symbol of status, something which typically appears in most TV series. As Glyn Davis and Kay Dickinson explain, it is a mechanism that ensures that teenagers engage "in the 'right' types of consumer culture" (2004, 9). Technology, the use of computers, smart phones and the latest state-of-the-art devices frequently appear in the series, reflecting new ways of communicating and socializing. Most of the characters, for example, constantly send text messages, search for information on brand new computers or use the most recent applications for their phones and tablets. But, as has been explained, this is not only a way of taking vampires into the twenty-first century but rather a reflection of a materialist modern society where success is measured by the amount of things you can buy. And the same happens with other luxury objects such as expensive cars and motorbikes—Damon, for example, drives a Chevrolet Camaro SS Convertible and Stefan has a T-100 Triumph motorbike and

a red 1963 Porsche 356B Karmann Coupe—contribute to inculcate “a worrying identification with commodities in young viewers” (2004, 9). It is also worth noting the importance of clothes in the series. All the characters, both human and vampire, frequently change their outfit, their hairstyle and their jewellery. Fashion is no longer restricted only to women and we frequently see Stefan and Damon wearing the latest trend in clothes and changing their outfit several times in each episode. Then, the very same clothes they use for the series appear in the cover of various fashion magazines. Vampires are no longer fearful creatures living in the dark, as we saw in many twentieth-century representations on screen, but they are turned into new fashion icons and teenagers following the TV series will become potential buyers of all the products appearing on screen.

With an audience of over 2.5 million viewers for its last season, *The Vampire Diaries* presents not only American but also worldwide audiences with particular values. They reinforce “ideological constructions such as the value of romantic love, the norm of heterosexuality, nationalism, or traditional concepts of good and evil” (Sturken and Cartwright [2001] 2003, 21) and, thus, modulate the way reality is perceived. Vampires have now become the heroes in the story and are presented as the ideal any teenager should aspire to become, but, most importantly, this ideological construction appears “to be natural or given, rather than part of a system of belief that a culture produces in order to function in a particular way” (Sturken and Cartwright [2001] 2003, 21-22). Therefore, *The Vampire Diaries* contributes to the continuing of the profit-driven industries within which this TV series was created and mirrors a tendency in many teen-oriented shows in these first two decades of the twenty-first century. It is a perfect example of how copying a successful formula becomes a highly profitable business and reflects a trend present in a great number of productions that no longer attempt to present their viewers with more complex plots or characters. Networks and media corporations aim at continuing the society of consumerism. They not only present vampires as fearful beings, following traditional trends, but a new concept of vampires also arises in a reflection of what teenagers should desire, what they should aspire to become. Television is a powerful tool for spreading ideology and vampires are the perfect product to sell to those eager teenagers looking for love, sex, beauty, money and success. These supernatural creatures do not only reflect the changes that have taken place in American society and how commercialisation and globalisation have affected popular culture but they are also a reflection of our own time and how the discourse of the vampire has become yet another instrument of the dominant socio-cultural order.

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Space and Gender on the Restoration Stage:  
Nell Gwyn, Susannah Centlivre and the (In)visibility of Women

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The Restoration disrupted established gender notions by allowing actresses onto the stage, women who abandoned the home for the most public form of entertainment. But, what happens when women go further, taking up their pens and writing for the stage? How does society negotiate the idea of women, no longer *carrying* meaning, but *creating* it? This paper explores these questions, and how successful these women were in their attempt at stretching and testing gender boundaries.

Keywords: Restoration; gender roles; visibility; Centlivre; Gwyn

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The seventeenth century saw a change in the ideas that sustained the political and social fabric of the time, a shift that would thrust Western European nations into modernity. In Britain, the execution of Charles I evidenced that the sanctity of Monarchy was in question, as the deployment of alliance was clearly on the decline (Foucault 1990, 106). The arrival of Charles II in Britain signalled a change in the discourses of truth that had sustained Medieval patriarchal rule, a shift to “adapt and transform patriarchy in England by replacing its ancient scriptural and medical basis . . . with a new secular ideology of gender which, in certain respects at least, has proved enduring” (Fletcher 1999, 283). The fracturing of the old system started with the questioning of the truths that had sustained it, especially the gender notions at its base. The deployment of alliance described men in highly positive terms, associated with physical and mental strength, while females were seen as a perversion of the male ideal, an inversion of the perfect creature, evil daughters of Eve. Although the new system still favoured men over any other social group, its justification for their supremacy was very different; the deployment of sexuality rejected this openly violent censure of women in favour of a more subtle and efficient approach: invisibility (Foucault 1990, 106). The new system highlighted the positive qualities of both sexes, praising them and arguing that “men and women were innately very different with different qualities of mind and soul, reflected in different social roles and the

different physical spaces that reflect those social differences” (Pearson 2003, 163). The scientific discourse gave way to “a new cosmology” (Fletcher 1999, 283) used to disseminate gender roles which “were as much social and cultural constructions” (Foyster 1999, 1) and which, although very far from the violently cruel images of the deployment of alliance, are by no means, any less repressive: “Rather than being considered merely inferior to man, woman began to be defined as the opposite, yet indispensable sex, excluded from the male spheres of public and professional life but vital in the field of domestic management” (Howe 1992, 21). In this way, the Angel in the House is born. Men, as the rational and strong part of humanity, are better equipped to deal with the outside world.

Such are the circumstances in which Charles arrives in the British Isles and such is the ideological arena upon which he introduces the ultimate innovation that will change the course of British history: actresses. The arrival of women to British theatre was a culture shock in the isles, and although at first they were the object of curiosity and novelty, soon the vision of petticoats onstage became less than palatable for many. For a society that firmly believed that the place of women was the home, the fact that actresses exhibited themselves in a public arena for all to see was the worst violation of the established gender hierarchy. The actress exposes herself and her body to public scrutiny, losing all consideration for decorum and decency; she thus turns into an object of abjection and fascination, she is the evil woman of the deployment of alliance and the unnatural woman of the deployment of sexuality: she is the stuff of nightmares: “Although the working actress was an exception to the typical domestic female, she was subject to the same ideological constraints and her gender difference emphasised by constant reference to her sexuality, both onstage and off” (Howe 1992, 21). Her break with the private sphere of the house and her visibility equals her to a prostitute: “anxieties . . . quickly led to parallels with prostitution, a link that has endured for generations in a patriarchal society employing the binaries of private/public, virgin/whore as its constructs of femininity” (Bush-Bailey 2009, 13).

Although many were the critical voices raging against the actresses, soon these women turned into stars, starting the celebrity movement that we nowadays take for granted. What is more, their visibility and popularity turned them from a nuisance to a critical challenge to the established order: when granted the favour of both king and audiences, these daring and shrewd women see their transgression of gender roles rewarded and are compensated for successfully breaking gender boundaries. Actresses are a risk that needs careful handling: they soon become dangerous and it is necessary to contain their subversive potential. Confronted with the impossibility of making them disappear from stage, many are the critics and authors that launch defamation campaigns against them, in an attempt at reining in their rebellious actions. Against these accusations devised to reinforce the patriarchal discourse, actresses have two choices: either they leave the stage, succumbing to the pressure, or they take advantage of the interplay that theatre creates between reality and fiction. At the time, actresses

specialised in certain kinds of roles. Those who favoured dramas usually portrayed wronged maidens, sweet heroines or dignified ladies. Others became experts at portraying the madcap, the quintessential heroine of Restoration drama. Since the public was used to seeing these women always in the same kind of roles and they came to identify the real person with the character, most actresses used this to their own advantage, creating a public persona that would allow them to navigate the social scene. Thus, the women who specialised in the role of the heroine were known for their virtuous lifestyle and unwillingness to be recognised. Although these women certainly resist classification and challenge patriarchal attempts at controlling actresses through public shaming, they achieve this by adhering to prescriptive gender roles, siding with the new woman.

But it is the women who represent the madcaps that are most interesting, especially Nell Gwyn, the most popular actress of the Restoration. Of uncertain origins, she embodies the spirit of the time like no other. Described as “pretty witty Nell” (Perry, Roach and West 2011, 72), she seems to have delighted everyone around her, both men, who fell at her dainty feet, and women, who sought to befriend such a delightful creature. Interestingly, and in spite of her success, her acting career only spanned seven years. With such a short time onstage, how can she have survived three centuries as not only a seminal part of the history of theatre, but as a symbol of Restoration Britain? The answer is the public persona she fashioned for herself. In her case, it is almost impossible to separate the truth from the legend created around her since “the glamour and scandal of the roles she played, carried over into her off-stage persona, and vice versa, never to be relinquished, neither during her lifetime nor after it” (Perry, Roach and West 2011, 64). Gwyn specialised in the role of the madcap, the witty heroine engaged in a verbal war with the sprightly hero; double *entendres*, sexual jokes and merry repartee were her speciality inside and outside of the playhouse. Although many authors created the madcap as a subversive character, others used her as the projection of their own sexual fantasies and desires. In these latter cases the madcap is an “exploitation of the actress [as] a first consequence of her visible assets, primarily her shoulders and breasts” (Styan 1986, 93), and she is created as the ideal mistress, the perfect body made for the use, enjoyment and satisfaction of the male libido. The roles that exploit the actress, turning her body into a catalyser of raw sexual desire, use actresses’ own power against them: through this objectification, subversive potential of the actress is limited and transformed into an instrument which perpetuates negative female stereotypes. It is up to the actress herself to not just *carry* meaning, but *recreate* it. This is what Nell Gwyn did, managing to survive not just the identification with her sensual theatrical counterparts, but also the association between actress and whore, fashioning a new character which was in fact a complex mixture of the wit of the madcap and the visibility of the actress. One episode of her life shows this very clearly: “she famously distinguished herself from the King’s despised Catholic mistress, the Duchess of Portsmouth, and

won over an angry mob of anti-Papists that had mistakenly assaulted her carriage by loudly identifying herself to them as ‘the Protestant whore!’” (Perry, Roach and West 2011, 67). Accused of public whoring and adultery, not just as an actress but as the royal concubine, Gwyn does not deny the charges, but publicly accepts them, adding yet another facet to her public persona. Nell accepts her role as a public adulteress and “she . . . played along with the title” (Beauclerk 2005, 271). With her acknowledgement of her status as a royal concubine, Nell created a legend where she was the royal madcap, the witty Protestant mistress. She appropriated the brashness of the madcap and the sexual availability of the actress. Although the introduction of actresses was, at first, a success, “it has been a common error in theatre history to assume by extrapolation that women were thereby also welcomed into other areas of theatre practice, particularly playwriting. They were not” (Donkin 1995, 1). The female playwright is a dangerous and challenging figure for the established order: if the actress is subversive and revolutionary in her visibility, the playwright is doubly so, and consequently, she is double the trouble: “Attitudes toward the female playwright are . . . complex but reveal an . . . anxiety circulating around notions of women in the public sphere with the public/private binary working in similar ways” to those at work in the case of actresses (Bush-Bailey 2009, 13). Once again, the visibility of these female wits entails grave danger: of all the genres, theatre is, undoubtedly, the most public, with its portrayals of the reality of the world around the author, an unsuitable theme for women, whose place is the home. A play is also most commonly written to be performed in a public space, in front of an audience. What is more, once a play is complete, the author must approach a company to get them to put it on the stage, attend rehearsals, direct performers and advise set designers, so playwriting was certainly a social affair that did not end with the writing of the manuscript. The creation of a play entails an absolute abandonment of the home and extended contact with the public. Unchaperoned by any man, female playwrights must venture into the world alone. These women seemed wellaware of the risks that such a break with female “nature” meant and still they risked their reputation to do it: whether it stems from deep economic need or in pursue of their own voice, “the prejudice and opprobrium that a female dramatist had to face was formidable” (Howe 1992, 16).

Three main strategies were used by the women who navigated the male-dominated world of professional theatre writing. Some decided to hide behind anonymity. Others did publish under their real names, but as soon as criticism started they indignantly declared that their work had only seen the light of day because somebody had “stolen” it and published it without consent. These women always argued, more or less sincerely, that their natural feminine discretion would never allow them to presume that their work merited any attention. In both these cases, the women adhered to the established gender roles, contributing to the invisibility of women in an attempt at surviving public censure. A smaller group of women, on the other hand, looked for acknowledgement and recognition, striving to make the general public

aware that the plays they had enjoyed were, in actual fact, written by women. This group suffered the scorn and criticism of the most conservative sections of society. In 1699, an anonymous play entitled *The Female Wits* “attacks Delarivier Manley, Mary Pix and Catherine Trotter for a range of transgressions against modest desires, from Manley’s sexuality to Trotter’s learning to the physical space occupied by Pix’s body” (Rosenthal 1996, 173).<sup>1</sup> This play is certainly one of the harshest in criticising female authorship, but its violence “also offers testimony as to how important these women had become” (Rosenthal 1996, 173).

Susannah Centlivre, although one of the best-known playwrights of her own time, found that her beginnings as a playwright were not easy and “throughout her literary career Mrs Centlivre fought a woman’s battle for recognition” (Bowyer 1952, 42) as many raged against a woman who not only insisted on signing her plays, but who took an active part in their production. Her wish for acknowledgement was seen as an attack on female nature. She was also a verbal advocate for female authorship, “acutely aware of the challenge her success might represent to the male literary establishment” (Gale and Gardner 2001, 8) and paid a high price for it. Not only did she have to assert authorship for some of her plays which had been, “accidentally,” published without her name to them, but she was accused of plagiarism and even ridiculed in a play in which she was “portrayed as absurd, obscene, plagiaristic, and . . . desperate for exposure” (Rosenthal 1996, 205). Centlivre’s ownership of her works is her self-fashioning as a playwright, her public acknowledgement of her role as an author and, in fact, “some of [her] self-representations and [her] representations by others emphatically identify [her] as [a] wom[a]n writer” (Copeland 2004, 6), a woman who boldly invades the manly realm of literature and meaning. By owning the authorship of her plays, she is portraying herself as a woman with a voice, willing to speak and be heard.

Centlivre certainly challenged the established ideas about women’s unsuitability for the world of theatre in her prologues and epilogues where “she energetically defends women’s authorial legitimacy, sometimes by demanding equality, sometimes by pleading that women can inhabit the masculine position of authorship . . . and sometimes by expressing amazement and disappointment that the promised parity

<sup>1</sup> Delarivier Manley was one of the most prominent female playwrights of the early seventeenth century, together with Aphra Behn and Eliza Heywood; deeply committed to the feminist cause, she was both revered and reviled by her contemporaries. She is described in this play as “A Poetess, that admires her own Works, and a great Lover of Flattery” (Morgan 1981, 392). Mary Pix also enjoyed fame in the earliest years of the Restoration, although her less firm political stance and her inclination towards sentimentality in her writing meant she received less criticism from contemporaries. In spite of this, she was ridiculed for her bonhomie and it was implied that she was simple and only interested in food in this play: “Mrs. Wellfed, One that represents a fat Female Author, a good sociable well-natur’d Companion, that will not suffer Martyrdom rather than take off three Bumpers in a Hand” (Morgan 1981, 392). Catherine Trotter is, for her part, portrayed as a woman who boasts great knowledge and wit, “a Lady that pretends to the learned Languages, and assumes to herself the Name of a Critick” (Morgan 1981, 392) but who, according to the anonymous author, is in fact ignorant and unlearned.

of individualism collapses into a hierarchy of gender” (Rosenthal 1996, 209). Apart from her insistence on being acknowledged and aside from her visibility, one of the main problems that Centlivre and all female authors of the time encountered was the fact that, not only did they *carry* meaning as visible and public women, but they also meant to *create* it: they were trying to take over not just the masculine public sphere, but the realm of creation. Women were not creators of anything at any point in their lives; contrary to current belief, the deployment of alliance and sexuality saw men as the givers of life, providing women, the “chosen Vessel,” with the seed necessary to create a new human being. Allowing women the chance to become *creators of meaning*, giving them a chance to air their grievances, was a dangerous concession which created a frightening anxiety in men, resulting in a discrediting campaign. The system labelled female writers as anomalies, abhorrently unnatural women who lacked any feminine quality: they were abject and masculinised creatures that came to upset the natural order of things.

In the case of Centlivre, shameful and scandalous episodes from her past, both real and imagined, were invoked to show how she displayed an utter disregard for decorum. She will be forever known, very much like Gwyn, as a woman with a scandalous past which not only includes episodes of cross-dressing and cohabitation at the tender age of fourteen, but also three marriages by the age of sixteen. As a matter of fact, Centlivre spends some years as part of a travelling company of actors, and only takes up the pen after her marriage to the Queen’s cook. However, she writes some of the most successful plays of the time, overcoming the obstacles that lay in her way through the open and sincere acknowledgment of their authorship, since, “for Centlivre, perhaps a woman can only truly own her plays by owning them” (Rosenthal 1996, 211). She never confirms nor denies any of the rumours circulating about her scandalous past, in fact taking advantage of these criticisms and using them for her own benefit: the story of her unusual past made her an intriguing character who had had to fend for herself from an early age. This vision of her childhood also helped understand the strength of character that made her acknowledge her merits publicly; thus, Centlivre turned the attempts at discrediting her into tools to create a public persona for herself which allowed her to continue writing.

Both actresses and female playwrights of the Restoration carried in themselves an astonishing subversive potential: their mere existence challenged the patriarchal attempts at making women invisible. Some of these women go even further, disturbing the established social order, not just with their presence, with their visibility, but with their relation to meaning and with their insistence on taking part on the creation of the discourses of truth that shape society.

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# Intersectionality: Opening Venues for Exploring Mechanisms of Oppression in African American Literature

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This paper presents an effort to show the effectiveness of “intersectionality” as a valid theoretical framework for academic literary criticism and, specifically within this, African American literature, based on the beliefs of certain pioneers in the field such as Kimberlé Crenshaw, Leslie McCall and Patricia Hill Collins, while examining Karen Gaffney’s article “‘Excavated from the Inside’: White Trash and Dorothy Allison’s *Cavedweller*.”

Keywords: intersectionality; intersecting categories; social location; mechanisms of oppression; African American literature

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It was not until the 1930s that the term “intersectionality” came into being, strong and powerful, by feminist and anti-racist movements as a vehicle to expose social locations. This approach was developed with a great deal of success initially by scholars, theorists and civil rights advocates in the field of Social Studies. However in recent years, intersectionality has sparked the interest of authors in other disciplines, such as North American literary criticism. Such a turn has left the door open for this concept to develop as a theoretical framework in the area of African American literary criticism. The aim of this paper is to show that intersectionality, as a tool of study, could work just as well and effectively outside the boundaries of Social Studies in North American literature, and within it, in African American literary criticism itself. In order to accomplish this, we will explore the nature of the term “intersectionality,” its origins and main theories, by examining Karen Gaffney’s intersectional approach to the analysis of Dorothy Allison’s *Cavedweller*, being as it is one of the pioneering articles in the field.

A clear definition of intersectionality has never been given in the Social Studies field. This is due, perhaps, to the complexity that the term entails. In defining such an analytical approach, we may run the risk of constraining all features, properties, and qualities that intersectionality may encompass. For the sake of being specific, a very broad definition of the term could be formulated as follows:

Intersectionality is that theoretical framework suitable for analysis of anything and everything concerning those converging circumstances (intersecting categories) that take part in the building of a very extreme social situation (a social location) for an individual, a group of individuals or several groups of individuals (known as the oppressed, the Other, the underprivileged). Although, perhaps, broad in its boundaries, this attempted definition clearly states the three components the concept comprises:

1. Intersecting categories. These have traditionally been those of race, gender, social, economic status and sexual inclination, though others, such as looks, appearance, level of education, etc. may come up as well.
2. Social location being seen as the point of no return, an extreme situation almost impossible to get out of.
3. An individual, group or groups of individuals that constitute the element of the Other, the underprivileged, the oppressed.

Three key theorists shed light on the concept of intersectionality by focusing on the elements mentioned above: Patricia Hill Collins (1998) directed her eyes towards the consequences the interaction of different categories had on a specific social group (the black family unit); Kimberlé Crenshaw (1991) concentrated her efforts on the manner in which these categories may come into play in the creation of social locations; and Leslie McCall (2005) explored the different approaches for their identification, understanding and analysis. While these authors explore the intricacies of intersectionality through different venues, all share the same intention: to provide a way out for the socially oppressed group, once the mechanisms of oppression (intersecting categories) have been understood, internalized and accepted.

Karen Gaffney, in her article “Excavated from the Inside: White Trash and Dorothy Allison’s *Cavedweller*” (2002), performs a literary analysis of the cultural myth of “queer female white trash” based on Crenshaw’s ideas on intersectionality. Crenshaw came up with three different manifestations of intersectionality:

1. Structural Intersectionality. In her study on the shelters for battered women in Los Angeles, “Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color” (1991), Crenshaw states that the treatment of black battered women is qualitatively different from that of white women, as only one intersecting category seems to be relevant (violence) while the others (gender and race), in her own words, are not “strongly addressed.” Their location, she goes on to explain, of “being victims of violence sits on a multi-layered crossroads where converging categories such as race, gender, social status play a crucial role in order to get them out of the abusive relationship they are in” (1991, 1245).

2. Representational Intersectionality. This approach deals with the mythical interpretation of marginalized groups in popular culture in Crenshaw's study: women of color (1991, 1282).

3. Political Intersectionality deals with the way different intercepting categories may come into conflict with one another due to different political agendas. Instead of addressing the issue of violence together, feminists and anti-racist groups have tried to work on such issues separately, resulting in a fragmented and, therefore, weakened effort to help black female victims of violence get out of their social location. This fragmentation can only hinder the effectiveness needed for the oppressed to escape oppression. Within the scope of Crenshaw's study, she believes that intercepting categories should not be "exclusive" but rather "inclusive" in order help each other in the process of aiding the oppressed group or groups (1991, 1252).

"Excavated" is a clear example of how intersectionality may be well used as a tool for critical analysis of a written text of fiction. Drawing on Crenshaw's notions of representational and political manifestations of intersectionality, Gaffney's article follows Allison's idea of coming to understand what being "queer female white trash" means on the road to identity. *Cavedweller* (1999) is the story of Delia, a woman who, running away from her husband's abuse, abandons her two girls and flees to the west with a rock star, Randall, who turns out to be abusive himself. The story is set in Cayro, GA, where Delia has returned to reunite with her daughters and to work on that family unit she always dreamed of but has never been able to have. Delia has brought Cissy, the daughter she had with Randall, back home with her. As the events unfold, *Cavedweller* allows the reader to see the myth of white trash from different perspectives through Cissy, who is charged with excavating the various categories, axes of convergence that conform and give shape to what being socially known as a "queer female redneck," "hick" or "white trash" is all about. Saturated with magical realism, the text symbolizes the cathartic process by which Cissy will make amends with her location, accept her reality and find her identity in order to be able to go on with her life. The novel exposes the multiple layers of the myth of "white trash" (and, within it, that of "queer female white trash") by having Cissy, the protagonist, resist each of them in an effort to get to know her own self.

As *Cavedweller* unfolds it is exposed as uncharted territory yet to be explored by academic literary scholars. The novel presents numerous examples of same-race social interactions that expose the mechanisms of oppression exerted by the stronger class composed of the townfolk of Cayro, which Delia considers home and Cissy perceives as a strange, alienating place. As we accompany Delia and Cissy on their return home, we breathe with them the air of hostility that surrounds them even from the beginning: "I know you," the cook in the shaggy restaurant at the road stop exclaims, only to go on to say: "You that bitch ran off and left her babies . . . You took

off with that rock band. Did all right for yourself, did you? Had yourself a good time? Well, don't think people don't remember. We remember. You the kind we remember" (1999, 39). The "people" the cook refers to are the oppressors, the dominant class which have already built around Delia and Cissy a social location, a place of vulnerability impossible to escape from. The town of Cayro has never forgiven Delia for running away with another man, for Delia abandoned her duty as a wife and as a mother. It is at this intersection of the categories of gender and "accepted motherly behavior" where Cissy will be forced to build a life of her own. Cissy, California-born, has no other option than to adapt to her new environment by internalizing her "inherited" condition of white trash. Although she tries her best to become one of her "kin," Cissy grows up despondent with and impotent to such a socially imposed sense of belonging. As she reaches her teenage years, the young protagonist will have to face another intersecting category, sexual orientation, for she is more attracted to her own sex than to the opposite. This new axis of convergence will set Cissy more deeply into a position of social weakness. Her condition of young, female, redneck-outsider, and lesbian forces Cissy to perform an analysis of her identity. The narrative, a blend between third person objective narrator and stream of consciousness, makes the reader an active accomplice to Cissy's own thoughts and actions. As previously mentioned, in the end, the author's intentionality is to expose, denounce and react against the popular myths behind the notion of "queer female white trash."

Karen Gaffney draws a perfect analysis of Cissy's defensive strategies against popular beliefs by introducing into the picture an intersectional approach. Based on Kimberlé Crenshaw's different manifestations of intersectionality, Gaffney states that "representational intersectionality" occurs as two powerful cultural images take part in the construction of the popular myth of white trash in the story. The first stereotype that the narrative presents is intrinsically related to the belief that white, low, dirt-poor classes are considered still superior to poor blacks. Society, explains Gaffney, has always held the stereotype that being born white, no matter what socio economic status this may hold, is a thousand times better than being born black (2002, 45). In order to back up her thesis she makes reference to the 1831 edition of the *American Comic Annual*, which depicts the anger of a black neighborhood deeply affected by a smallpox epidemic towards a less affected population, the poor whites, rather than towards the whites responsible for the precarious living conditions and limited medical care. Antagonism, then, between poor blacks and poor whites is fostered to divert attention and responsibility away from whites in power. Moreover, poor whites ultimately accept their class status in exchange for a racial alliance with the dominant whites, taking comfort in the fact that, though poor, they are at least white, which places them a step above blacks. The idea of superiority is thus instilled in the minds of America's poor whites for, should they form a coalition with the poor blacks, their "social status quo" would be in jeopardy (Gaffney 2002, 45). In the novel, Gaffney states that Allison seeks to resist this stereotype by depicting black

and white characters who challenge such a myth and form alliances with each other, as is the case of Tacey and Rosemarie, two black and white characters who form an alliance with each other, thus putting their “status quo” at risk.

The second stereotype depicted in the story deals with the belief that “white trash,” in other words, “trailer trash people,” bring it upon themselves to be poor because they are lazy and they lack drive and ambition in life; this is a genetically inferior species, an idea that lessens the burden of responsibility on the white middle and upper-middle classes. Gaffney refers to studies found in the Eugenics Record Office in this assertion where the poor are blamed for their poverty and living conditions and all their bad traits being ascribed as hereditary. For the ruling elite this idea is most appealing for it favors class stratification; that is, for some to live well, others must be oppressed (Gaffney 2002, 46). Allison resists this myth by depicting middle-class white women as ultimately exhibiting some of those bad traits allegedly attributed to white trash women.

Political intersectionality (Crenshaw’s theory that individuals are simultaneously positioned in multiple categories, inclusive of each other) is the other pillar on which Gaffney’s article rests. For Cissy to get out of the social location of “queer female white trash,” she will identify, analyze and come to terms with all the multilayered intersecting categories of “queer,” “female,” “white” and “trailer trash.” The protagonist, therefore, will live through a process that entails different phases or steps; firstly, Cissy will internalize the cultural image of “white trash” by hating herself, imagining herself eating garbage and even wanting to disappear (Allison 1999, 60). Hatred manifests through a strong desire to reject “white trash” and to disassociate herself from such a stigmatized social group. This strong feeling of self-denial is acted upon by Cissy adopting a hyper-masculinized response towards the concept of “white trash” (Gaffney 2002, 51). Yet, it will not be long before the protagonist is able to act on her desire to no longer belong to the “white trash class.” This is the second step that Cissy will take towards obtaining an identity of her own. Cissy desperately clings to the idea of cleanliness and, in so doing, the passage in which she finds peace and quiet in the laundry room after a process of thoroughly cleaning the room herself, transpires in the text as highly significant: “She put on two coats of white paint . . . She scrubbed the floor with a bleach solution . . . Afterward, the room was like a temple, purified and clean” (Allison 1999, 282). It is her obsession for keeping everything clean (room, clothes and herself) that warns the reader about her now hyper-feminized behavior, in other words, about a strongly exacerbated desire to no longer be trash.

The third step that Cissy takes towards her position at the intersection of race, class, gender and sexual orientation begins with an understanding of her perspective. Cissy’s view of the world is not only figurative but also literal as she was left with a scar on her eyeball after a car accident. Her vision impairment—“she sees a crack in the world” (Allison 1999, 144)—symbolizes the final shattering of the protected shell she had created around her. Incapable of holding

a clear view on the world around her, Cissy finds comfort in the darkness of cave exploring. This is a metaphor, according to Gaffney, for her ability to see beyond the dominant cultural stereotypes of white trash (2002, 52). Dirt, down in the caves, is no longer disgusting but comforting. Soil, being desirable, empowers Cissy into asserting her own identity, into coming to terms with it, embracing it. Caving also provides Cissy with a new perspective on the categories based on race. Light in the cave is manipulative, deceptive and illusory. The world outside unfolds as a mirror image of the world underneath. Cissy learns not to believe everything she hears about being white and black. The caves also provide Allison with an arena for Cissy to explore her feelings towards her own body and her sexual orientation. Cissy's caves are closely connected with the female body. The caves are to her a wonderful world of never ending light that transforms, twists and takes on unimaginable shapes, soothing and comforting. Cissy's caves hold something magical inside that, when unlocked, is capable of transforming any seemingly threatening place into something extraordinarily beautiful, as is the female body. Thus, the stereotyped ugliness of white trash women, instilled in the general public by popular imagery, is turned inside out by the concept of a cave as something not threatening but rather inviting, warm and beautiful. After several trips to the caves, Cissy feels happy in her body (Allison 1999, 307), which allows her to further explore her sexuality while, in such a manner, doing away with the last of the intersecting categories keeping her from personal growth. In the end, Cissy is ready to come into a world which she no longer finds menacing or destructive, but, quite to the contrary, one which is filled with opportunities for her to succeed in life. Once the intersecting categories of race, gender, class and sexual orientation have been properly identified, understood and come to terms with, Cissy frees herself from her position of "queer female white trash" and finds the way to her own self.

In conclusion, we have analyzed the intersecting categories of gender, race, class and sexual orientation which Cissy is up against, using Gaffney's essay "Excavated" which translates Crenshaw's ideas on intersectionality outside the field of Social Studies and into the discipline of Academic Literary Criticism, hence making intersectionality a plausible multidisciplinary method of analysis. Following Gaffney's example of using an intersectional approach on Allison's novel, intersectionality could also be employed in the analysis of works of fiction written by African American women authors in order to denounce and expose mechanisms of oppression while presenting alternatives to the encasement that fictional female characters (and, by default, some African American women in today's US society) may find themselves in. Let Karen Gaffney's research be an inspiration for the contemporary scholar to adopt intersectionality as yet another viable vehicle to identify, explore and analyze those social locations that marginalized individuals or groups of individuals are forced to move about in within the fictional reality of any given written text.

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The Amy Tan-Syndrome in Chinese Australian Literature:  
Two Case Studies with a Twist

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Amy Tan is a Chinese American writer whose novel *The Joy Luck Club* (1989) influenced many Chinese migrants in different countries. Two Chinese Australian authors whose novels show such an influence are Ang Chin Geok and Hsu-Ming Teo. In the analysis of two of their novels, this paper proves the existence of the Amy Tan-Syndrome in Chinese Australian Literature and questions the reasons for such influence.

Keywords: identity; Chinese Australian literature; Amy Tan-syndrome; Ang Chin Geok; Hsu-Ming Teo

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Chinese Australian literature is a recent discipline. It is part of Asian Australian Studies, a field which appeared in the 1990s (Ommundsen 2012) and which includes authors with various Asian heritages, such as Bangladeshi, Chinese, Indian, Indonesian, Korean and Vietnamese. Authors of Chinese heritage are the most numerous, although, according to the Asian Australian Studies Research Network, the main academic association in the field, there are less than thirty such individuals who have had their literary (rather than academic or journalistic) prose texts in English put into print since the 1980s and who consider themselves writers, most of them having published works which have won or been nominated for national and international literary awards. Having Chinese ancestry does not mean having migrated directly from the People's Republic of China or its Special Economic Zones of Hong Kong and Taiwan. On the contrary, the term also includes established Chinese communities in countries such as Singapore, Malaysia or Vietnam. Two such cases are Chinese Australian writers and academics Ang Chin Geok and Hsu-Ming Teo, who were both born in Singapore, in 1942 and 1970 respectively. Both are members of the Australian "multicultural middle class," to employ a term coined by Val Colic-Peisker (2009) to refer to those who have higher education qualifications and either work in liberal professions or are skilled workers.

Ang's *Wind and Water* (1997) and Teo's *Love and Vertigo* (2000) are, to the best of my knowledge, the only two novels in Chinese Australian Literature

whose plots completely follow the Amy Tan-syndrome. In 2003 academic Tamara S. Wagner defined it as a strategy followed by many first- and second-generation migrant writers who were inspired by the novel *The Joy Luck Club*, written by ChineseAmerican writer Amy Tan and published in 1989. Tan's novel explains the lives and relationships among four Chinese migrant women in America and their second-generation daughters. The four characteristics of the so-called Amy Tan-syndrome are: the combination of two plots, one contemporary and one historical; the inclusion of "war-time or post-war atrocities and postcolonial hybridity" (Wagner 2003, 25); the parallelisms between mother's and daughter's stories, and the contrast between traditional and "Western" or "Westernized" main characters. The following section analyses the existence of these characteristics in Ang's *Wind and Water* and in Teo's *Love and Vertigo*.

### 1. LITERARY ANALYSIS

Ang Chin Geok's *Wind and Water* spans over one hundred years, from the late nineteenth to the late twentieth century. It presents a Chinese-Singaporean family saga explained by the youngest daughter in each generation. The first character is Madam Seah, who was born into a wealthy family in China, was forced into an arranged marriage and migrated to Malaysia as a bride. The second character is her youngest daughter, Teen, who lived through World War II and the Japanese occupation of Singapore. The third is Teen's daughter, Peng An, who was born at the beginning of the Japanese occupation which she only narrowly survived. In her 20s, Peng An married an Australian man and migrated to Australia with him; their daughter, Lettie, was born there. The main historical plot focuses on the first three characters and is formed by the social and historical changes they lived through, such as the weakening of patriarchy, World War II and the Japanese occupation of Singapore and the economic boom which began in 1948 and lasted well into the 1950s. The contemporary plot is presented by Lettie. Thus, *Wind and Water* follows the first characteristic of the Amy Tan-syndrome.

The second characteristic of the syndrome is provided through the scenario of World War II, which allows the author to deal with the atrocities that took place during the fall of Singapore and the Japanese occupation between 1942 and 1945, such as the rape of one neighbour, the torture and beheading of others and the famine and struggle to survive. As Teen's husband is taken prisoner on the day the Japanese reach their neighbourhood, the main characters become Teen and her three children. In this part of the novel, most of the action explains their life under occupation and how Teen tries to help those in her household and neighbourhood.

Another example of the second characteristic is the inclusion of postcolonial hybridity, shown in the characters of Teen and Peng An. When Peng An is a child, she has a disease in one leg, can hardly walk and doctors say that if she does not have her

leg amputated, she will have gangrene and die. Teen is convinced there exists another alternative and does not allow Peng An to have the operation. One day, she helps a man who happens to be a healer. He says that the disease Peng An has is very rare and explains to Teen how to treat it, saying that a cure is not certain and they will only know if it has worked because the skin will have either one mark or another. Teen and her sons look for all the ingredients the healer says and follow the treatment as specified. After three days, when they remove the bandages from Peng An's leg, the leg has the sign that the cure has worked and they continue with the second part of the treatment and Peng An gradually starts to walk again. Through this we see that, although Teen was raised in a rich family and goes to Western doctors, she also trusts healers and follows traditions.

This duality is also present in Peng An, who feels deeply rooted rifts that lead her to defy traditions and the tight patriarchal ties her ancestors endured. She is caring and loving, literate and is allowed to choose her husband herself. Peng An's hybridity is developed through the causes and effects of the decisions she makes: she marries a man from a different culture and language, migrates to a Western country and has two Chinese-Singaporean-Anglo-Australian children. Only her father-in-law accepts her, but he dies five years after Peng An's arrival in Australia. Her mother-in-law and her sisters-in-law constantly question her role as wife and mother and, after eleven years, Peng An abandons her husband, son and daughter. She decides to stay in Australia, face her fears and fight for the custody of her children. Peng An accepts her mother's reassurance and encouragement, but refuses to move back to Singapore and let her mother take the reins of her life. The fact that she accepts her family's support but does not allow them to dictate her life is a crucial turning point in the family saga, and the novel hints that Lettie, Peng An's daughter, will continue this tendency.

The third characteristic of the Amy Tan-syndrome is the parallelism between generations of females. In *Wind and Water*, Madam Seah and Teen are illiterate, while Peng An and Lettie are educated. Due to her illiteracy, Teen is not able to help her husband in his business, just as she was not able to help her father and could not prevent the family from going into bankruptcy. A similar situation is lived by Peng An: not only do her grandfather and father have difficulties in their businesses, Peng An's husband is an idealistic man more interested in his projects than in selling them. Peng An's grandfather enjoyed the Arts, especially "classical poetry, music and songbirds" (1997, 15), and did not like working in the family construction company. Peng An's father started his own business as a mechanic, but after some very prosperous years, it went wrong. Peng An's husband was an architect "with a vision for Australian architecture which Australians could not comprehend" (282). Thus, these three women each dealt with fathers and husbands who were not good entrepreneurs, a fact which deeply affected their family members. In their patriarchal societies, these men failed to provide material security to their families, who were still compelled to obey them and fulfil their own roles as wives and daughters.

The fourth characteristic is the tension between traditional and “Western” or “Westernized” characters. Madam Seah is depicted as traditional in her beliefs and deeds, but with a strong personality. She forbids her daughters to study, as she considers investing on a girl’s education to be a waste of time, money and to have negative consequences in her future role as wife. Also, as she has no biological son, she forces a slave to have sex with her husband until she gets pregnant with one. Once the slave has a boy, she takes him from her, dismisses her and raises the child as her son. Her daughter Teen resents not receiving an education and, when she is a mother herself makes sure all her daughters finish school and even manages to support her youngest daughter through her university studies. With respect to marriage, Teen follows the tradition and guides her sons towards the wives they should marry, although she allows her daughters to choose their own husbands.

Like *Wind and Water* (1997), Hsu-Ming Teo’s acclaimed debut novel, *Love and Vertigo* (2000), can be said to follow the Amy Tan-syndrome. This text explores the lives of the narrator’s parents and grandparents and it scrutinizes family relations and the construct of filial piety. The narrator is Grace, the daughter of lower-middle class Pandora Lim and upper-middle class Jonah Tay, and she has an older brother, Sonny. Grace refers to her father as “The Patriarch” and, in her quest to understand her parents, she ceases to idealize her mother and demonize her father, and instead turns them into human beings, with their fears, faults, desires and miseries. The novel begins with Pandora’s wake in Singapore and finishes in Sydney once Jonah, Sonny and Grace are back. The rest of the novel is a flashback: first, to the events that led to Pandora’s suicide in Singapore and, then, it becomes a linear retrospective narrative beginning with Pandora and Jonah’s childhood in Singapore, these stories fulfilling the requirement of the contemporary and historical plots, respectively.

The second characteristic of the Amy Tan-syndrome, that is, the inclusion of war and post-war atrocities, also appears in the text, as Pandora was born during the Japanese occupation of Singapore, and Sonny during the Malaysian race riots of May 1969. *Love and Vertigo* hints at the consequences suffered by comfort women and details post-war living conditions.

The novel also provides examples of postcolonial hybridity in three of the four main characters: Pandora, Grace and Jonah. First, Pandora was educated in an Anglican school which annually received a letter from the personal secretary of the Queen of England and which taught “pseudo-BBC English” (Teo 2000, 62). Therefore, Pandora spoke Singlish, that is, Singaporean English, with her parents and BBC English on all other occasions. Even when she moved to Australia, Pandora did not change her accent. Regarding Grace, she feels Australian but her trips to Singapore make her realize how similar to her mother and mother’s family she actually is. This forces her to wonder about her identity and hybridity as she starts revising some of her personal attitudes and feelings towards her paternal grandmother and her mother’s family. The character of Jonah also shows postcolonial hybridity in his behaviour as

he confronts a duality: on the one hand, he wants to behave like a good filial son and he expects dutiful behaviour from his wife and offspring, but on the other, as his son and daughter do not share his Confucian values and, therefore, do not follow filial piety, in his frustration, he becomes a controlling and sometimes abusive husband and father.

The lives of mothers and daughters in *Love and Vertigo* show certain parallelisms, the third characteristic of the Amy Tan-syndrome. There are two pairs of relationships: Pandora and her mother, and Pandora and her daughter. In the first, neither Pandora's mother's marriage nor Pandora's own are happy: Pandora's mother, Ling, was forced into an arranged marriage and Pandora convinced herself she would fall in love with Jonah. In addition, Pandora's mother did not want to get pregnant and nor did Pandora want her first daughter, who was born dead. Furthermore, both husbands are abusive: Pandora's father physically hurts her mother and Jonah physically and emotionally mistreats Pandora. In the second female pairing, neither Pandora nor Grace has the full love of their mothers and both witness domestic violence. Both Pandora and Grace have low expectations of themselves and do not consider they are worth being loved as human beings unless they make themselves useful and needed.

Finally, the contrast between traditional and "Western" or "Westernized" characters is present in the relation between Pandora and her mother-in-law, Madam Tay. Madam Tay is an example of a domineering and egocentric woman who submits everyone to her wishes, basing her arguments on others' filial duties towards her instead of accepting what is best for them according to their own wishes. Madam Tay is intrusive, demanding and plays the victim to maintain her son's attention. She oversees and interferes in Jonah and Pandora's marriage and emotionally bullies Pandora. However, Pandora takes her revenge on her mother-in-law when she pays a three-month visit to Australia. Madam Tay dies shortly after her return to Singapore and Grace is convinced they have killed her.

## 2. DEBATE: BEYOND THE AMY TAN-SYNDROME

The characters in Amy Tan's novel *The Joy Luck Club* (1989) enhanced the stereotype that first-generation migrant parents were the guardians of Chinese tradition and culture and that their second-generation migrant offspring were constantly negotiating their identities as both Chinese and, in that case, American. Ang Chin Geok's and Hsu-Ming Teo's novels can be argued to defy the Amy Tan-syndrome as they question many stereotypes, namely, migration, assimilation and gender and family relations, among others. Chinese Australian writer and academic Adam Aitken explains that "Teo's novels . . . problematize the simple binary that separates nativist migrant mothers from assimilationist children" and, therefore, question "the myth of the assimilated second-generation migrant kid" (2013, 3). In fact, Aitken defends that the protagonists in Teo's novels "have outgrown the notion that the *authentic*

migrant subject must define him/herself in national terms, and what is interesting is how they achieve originality or an 'outgrowing' of Tan" (2008, 446-47).

Both *Wind and Water* and *Love and Vertigo* depict dysfunctional Asian families in Australia and, therefore, question the stereotypes of the ideal migrant. The roles that each family member is supposed to fulfil are not achieved: fathers fail to provide for their families, mothers are frustrated, brothers do not take care of their sisters unless ordered to or want something from them and sisters feel they do not deserve to be loved for whom they are but rather need to earn that love. Furthermore, by using the historical plot with war and post-war atrocities, both novels cope with the past in order to come to terms with the present. Ang's and Teo's novels reveal the dirty secrets of the two bourgeois families, a fact that becomes a catalyst for a possible happier future. As Adam Aitken says, these "are narratives generated by the need to reveal repressed memories that need to be told before the bourgeois family is whole or healed. For mothers and daughters, there is an important bond brought about by shared suffering, especially at the hands of men" (2013, 4).

These Chinese Australian novels emphasize the process of identity construction, its fluidity and malleability, the importance of immigration to the development of the characters, and how the notion of filial piety moulds their patterns of behaviour. The two novels are open-ended, a fact that stresses the flexibility of these constructs and the new opportunities the characters have: Peng An as an independent Chinese-Singaporean mother settled in Australia, Jonah as a Chinese-Singaporean widower living in Australia trying to understand how his life has turned out, and Lettie and Grace are given the opportunity to explore their identities as Chinese-Singaporean-Anglo-Australian and Chinese-Singaporean-Australian young women, respectively. These endings also contrast with Tan's novel as they do not correspond to the middle-class ideal of the happy family, but the open-endings provide room for development and stress the fluidity of identities. It can thus be concluded that, following the four characteristics of the pattern, Ang Chin Geok and Hsu-Ming Teo defy the Amy Tan-syndrome and deconstruct the stereotypes present in Tan's novel, therefore, introducing a specific twist to this literary strategy.

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Prostitution and Social Reform:  
The London Lock Hospital and Asylum at the time  
of the Contagious Diseases Acts

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The London Lock Hospital was a philanthropic institution founded in the eighteenth century to control and contain venereal disease. Throughout the nineteenth century prostitution and its consequences became one of society's biggest concerns, focusing on women's sexuality. The Contagious Diseases Acts were important pieces of legislation concerning prostitution and its regulation. The aim of this paper is to analyze the impact of these Acts on the running of the Hospital and on the way patients were treated.

Keywords: Contagious Diseases Acts; prostitutes; fallen women; London Lock Hospital; reform; venereal disease

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The London Lock Hospital was founded in 1746 by William Bromfield, following the trend of specialized hospitals in the eighteenth century. The perception of the need to establish a hospital for venereal disease can be found in many of the Annual Reports and Accounts that the Hospital produced as a way of raising money and moving middle-class minds to contribute to the running of the Institution. An example is the Account of 1837, where the following is stated:

The malady, to the cure of which the Lock Hospital is appropriated, peculiarly requires medical assistance; and if neglected, or improperly treated, it must terminate fatally by the most dreadful progress of lingering sufferings; while at the same time, it is more generable cured than most other diseases. We may, indeed, consider the dire distemper itself, as a declaration how greatly and holy God abhors licentiousness; yet hath he mercifully provided medicines which seldom fail, when judiciously used, to eradicate it completely. We ought, therefore, doubtless to imitate his compassion to the persons of the guilty, as well as his hatred of their crimes. (RCSE, MS0022/3/8)

These lines are a clear declaration of intent at a time when venereal disease was most despised, and associated with promiscuity and lack of morals. Common elements in the medical and religious discourses of the Victorian period are found in these words. On the one hand, venereal disease, as an illness with appropriate medicines for its treatment, must be cured; on the other hand, “the lingering sufferings” associated with syphilis are the just punishment of God and the consequences of licentiousness. Not only were the aims of the Hospital to cure the “undeserving poor,” but also to prevent the spread of a malady which was affecting various sectors of Victorian society, while simultaneously controlling the morality of the working-classes.

Two prominent figures contributed greatly to the medical and social debate concerning prostitution and morality: William Acton and W.R. Greg. Both men paved the way for the acceptance of some form of regulation in the 1850s. Acton was an example of a medical authority in favour of the Acts and was committed to expansionist sanitary reform. He had worked among the poor of Islington and was medical consultant to the London Lock Hospital as a specialist in venereology. He was also witness to most of the Parliamentary enquiries on the issue of prostitution, and with his two books, *Prostitution* and *The Functions and Disorders of the Reproductive Organs*, both published in 1857, contributed to the primacy of medicine and statistics in the prevention and cure of illnesses. He asserted that male continence was necessary but that it could not be guaranteed because of the nature of men; he grew alarmed at the number of the lower ranks of the Armed Forces who had contracted syphilis or other sexually transmitted diseases. However, according to Acton, women lacked sexual desire and he found in biology the explanation for this behaviour: he regarded maternity and domesticity as essential female instincts, and considered the sexual drives of the prostitute, the courtesan and the nymphomaniac as totally unnatural. In this way, he established the polarisation of pure and impure women, which informed the intellectual climate that endorsed the regulation of female behaviour in the 1850s and 60s (Mort 2000, 60-61). In the same way, Greg advocated the French system of regulation to be applied to British prostitutes when he talked about the “Great Social Evil” in his articles in the non-medical press, such as the *Westminster Review*. For him, prostitution and venereal disease were one and the same, since he ignored the role of men in the spread of the illness. Also, fears about the growing visibility of prostitutes and their degrading and troublesome behaviour contributed to the public awareness of the need for regulation (Spongberg 1997, 56-57).

The Contagious Diseases Acts of 1864, 1866 and 1869 have been the object of debate and analysis both by contemporaries and social historians, and have become an emblematic example of the regulation of sexuality in the nineteenth century. However, the changes they brought about in the London Lock have never been explored and evaluated, as far as their implications for the patients and the Institution were concerned. With the passing of these laws, the prostitute’s body became the site of discrimination and sexual exploitation, as well as the object of surveillance and

control, and their physicality was inscribed with reference to moral decay as vessels of disease.

This was certainly the spirit behind the first Contagious Disease Act of 1864, a provisional measure that operated for three years. It was introduced in Parliament under the title “A Bill for the Prevention of Contagious Diseases at certain Naval and Military Stations,” with a parenthetical note that read: “not dealing with animals.” This is because a Venereal Diseases Act had been just passed to be applied to animals. In fact, the Act equated women to a degree with the latter, as we can infer from the language and legal connotations of the text, although these veterinary measures had been less problematic (Spongberg 1997, 60, 63). A special body of policemen dressed in plain clothes was created from the Metropolitan police and worked under the supervision of the Admiralty and the War Office independently of the local police: if a member of this force or a registered doctor believed that a woman might be a common prostitute—a term that was left undefined by this legislation—he would inform a Justice of the Peace who would summon the woman to a certified hospital for medical examination. Women could submit voluntarily to inspection, but if they refused, the magistrate could order them to be taken to a hospital and examined by force. The examination had to take place within a period of twenty-four hours and if a suspected prostitute was found to have venereal disease, she could be detained in hospital for a period of up to three months. Hospitals had to be certified by an Inspector from the military, and for that reason they could not be more than fifty miles away from the military camp involved (Howell 2009, 38-39; Mc Hugh 1980, 37-38; Sigsworth and Wyke 1973, 94-95). This first Act was passed as an exceptional step to protect soldiers and sailors from venereal complaints in eight garrison and dockyard towns in England—Aldershot, Chatham, Colchester, Plymouth/Devonport, Portsmouth, Sheerness, Shorncliffe and Woolwich—and three in Ireland—Cork, the Curragh and Queenstown. However, only half of the English districts implemented this piece of legislation, and the same probably happened in Ireland (Howell 2009, 28, 43).

In the case of the London Lock Hospital, with the application of the Contagious Diseases Acts of 1864, 1866 and 1869, Admiralty cases from Woolwich, the War Department and the Government were admitted and discharged from the Hospital, and the number of patients increased considerably, as the records state, although London itself was not included in the subjected districts (RCSE, MS0022/2/4/2). As early as December 1, 1863, a letter was addressed to the Trustees of the Lock Hospital reading as follows: “Gentlemen, / I am commanded by my Lord Commissioners of the Admiralty to request that you will cause them to be informed whether it would be in their power to make an arrangement by which a certain number of Beds in the Female Wards of the Lock Hospital, London, may be placed at their disposal. If so, they would wish to know the actual costs for Beds” (RCSE, MS0022/6/3). Mr. Kinnaid and Mr. Hare (Chairman and Secretary at the time respectively) took care of the matter, and at the meeting of the Weekly Board of January 7, 1864 it was agreed that

the Governors would place a ward with 25 beds at the disposal of the Admiralty for a sum of 500 pounds per annum. The Lords of the Admiralty wanted the arrangement to be considered as an experiment to last for at least six months, and also agreed to pay for the women's travelling expenses from their parishes to the London Lock and their supply of linen and clothing as well as any charge for washing. Ten beds for women from the parish of Woolwich were also to be provided at a sum of 200 pounds per year, and 50 pounds a year were allocated for the Woolwich Board of Health to pay for their travel expenses to send them from and to London, and for washing and the supply of linen for destitute cases (RCSE, MS0022/6/3). The Admiralty and the War Office initially planned to make separate arrangements, but it was later agreed that the latter would supervise the whole process. The Army and the Navy appointed Inspectors to the London Lock and medical examiners were recruited.

In December 1864, a Committee of medical men was established chaired by D.C. Skey, FRCS, to enquire into the pathology and treatment of venereal disease, but in fact it had as one of its main aims to determine the advisability of extending the Act. Its findings reinforced the idea of the female body as a site of infection and disease and as a consequence it should be policed in the same way as sewers or drains. Hence this legislation was seen as a sanitary measure to improve the health of the population. Almost all the witnesses that testified before the Committee were in favour of regulation and the extension of the existing Act. The most important principle behind the Committee's Report of 1866 was to rid society of the visible signs of venereal disease, that is, the prostitutes themselves. In this way, the identity of these women was clearly defined as representing "the other" and their banishment from decent society served as a form of punishment for their immoral behaviour. It eventually recommended the extension of the Act to all naval and garrison towns, leaving the control and inspection of hospitals in the hands of the Government (Mc Hugh 1980, 41).

The Contagious Diseases Act of 1866 was of unlimited duration and its operations were extended only to Windsor—in fact, the Act would not be in full operation till 1870—and the Admiralty and War Office were given powers to appoint visiting surgeons and inspectors to registered hospitals or to add closed (i.e. locked) facilities in places where the system was in operation. When information was given on oath by the police that a woman was believed to work as a common prostitute in a particular district, the magistrate could order her to be subjected to examination every two weeks for a period never exceeding a whole year. In most cases, women volunteered and the power of magistrates was eroded as doctors themselves were able to order the detention of women who had not submitted to the fortnightly examination. Again, if a woman was found to have venereal disease she would be detained in hospital for up to six months, on the recommendation of a doctor. Additionally the Act included a clause which obliged hospitals to provide women with religious and moral instruction. This last measure was quite significant considering the light in which this

sanitary legislation was seen, i.e. its aim of restoring prostitutes, and society, to moral and physical health (Howell 2009, 41-42; Sigsworth and Wyke 1973, 95).

At the time of the second Contagious Diseases Act, the London Lock Hospital had already revised its accounts and was experiencing a period of financial stability. In 1865, new plans had been agreed to build a new wing at Westbourne Green, and on April 26, 1866, the War Office applied for 15 extra beds in the Female Hospital until the building was finished. Later in July the number of Government beds was increased to 80, and a subscription of £3600 was made to the New Wing, which was opened on June 1, 1867 by the Prince of Wales and named after him. The hospital rules were altered to make provision for extra medical staff. In the same fashion, and due to the considerable number of new patients and the lack of room in the Chapel, arrangements were made to hold additional services in the wards during the week to provide patients with the religious and moral instruction that the Act demanded. It was also approved that missionaries could visit the Hospital on Sundays and a resident chaplain was appointed. In 1868 the total number of beds required by the Government in the Lock Hospital was 120, and in April 1869 it was arranged that another new ward was to be built, elevating the number of beds to 152 (RCSE, MS0022/6/3).

There was a move to extend the Act of 1864 to include the civil population—so far, the legislation was only to be applied to prostitutes—a call based on a number of reasons including the presence of similar conditions for the spread of venereal disease, the universality of the benefits of regulation, the eradication of the problems associated with the “Great Social Evil” and the positive implications both for prostitutes and respectable society. The women under regulation could relinquish the trade and enter into decent employment while brothels and all signs of public vice could be eliminated from the streets (Howell 2009, 54-55). Such was the rationale behind the Association for Promoting the Extension of the Contagious Diseases Acts to the Civilian Population (known as the Extensionist Association) in 1866 and the Report produced by the Harveian Medical Society of London in 1867. The Report was made at the request of the International Medical Congress which asked participants to create a survey of the incidence of venereal disease and the existing closed facilities in their respective countries. The Committee set up by the Harveian Society discovered that there was not enough lock accommodation and that the incidence of venereal disease in the civilian and military population of Great Britain was alarmingly high, necessitating an extension of the system of regulation (Walkowitz 1991, 79). The Extensionist Association, instigated by the Harveian Report, was a campaigning pressure group which established a constituency of outstanding patrons from the professional and political classes. The support of the Anglican Church was even more prominent, and ministers were fervent defenders of regulation until at least 1881, with Catholic priests included in their ranks. Similarly, all public authorities such as policemen or magistrates, and even civil servants, were in favour of extension.

However, they did realise that the movement towards universal regulation had to be gradual and that opposition would occur. Likewise, the extension of the Acts to the capital would be a far more complicated step which would need exceptional legislation (Howell 2009, 54-61).

Thanks to the activity promoting the Extensionist Association, one of its members, Viscount Lifford, called for a Select Committee in the House of Lords to discuss the issue of extending the 1866 Act to the whole of the population. After examining 18 witnesses, 17 were in favour of the measure and the Report was published on July 2, 1868 (Spongberg 1997, 63-64). Another Select Committee on the 1866 Act in the House of Commons followed, set up on June 8, 1869. The Committee consisted of 21 members, and 13 witnesses were interviewed, most of whom were related to the Act or to public health. The Select Committee was conscious of the difficulties of extending the Acts to the whole country and produced a more cautious report. They suggested that the Commons improve previous legislation and elaborate a short list of additional districts and establish another Select Committee to consider further extension. The staff at the London Lock participated in the various Commissions that were established to discuss the extension and application of the Contagious Diseases Acts. As a result, in August 1869, the third Contagious Diseases Act was passed as an amendment to that of 1866, extending the limits of the subjected districts, lengthening the maximum time of detention in hospital to nine months, and allowing the detention of women for up to five days if they were not fit for examination. Visiting surgeons could stop the examination of women after police consultation, and women were no longer given their certificates of discharge but the latter were kept by the hospitals to avoid misuse. The application of the Acts was extended to Canterbury, Dover, Gravesend, Maidstone and Southampton, which became subjected districts, these laws remaining in force until their suspension in 1883 and their repeal in 1886 (Mc Hugh 1980, 51-52; Sigsworth and Wyke, 1973, 95).

During the period that the Contagious Diseases Acts were in operation, the London Lock Hospital received a significantly increased number of female patients coming from the garrison towns where the facilities for women with venereal disease were not ready or the number of patients exceeded the number of beds available. The peak year was 1868, when 1,133 women were accepted, with an average occupation of almost 100 beds a day. Private patients were no longer accepted during this period (Innes Williams 1995, 93-95). In 1866, the London Lock Hospital received patients from the subjected districts of Sheerness, Chatham, Woolwich, Aldershot, Windsor, Greenwich and Canterbury (Howell 2009, 45). According to Dr. James Lane, Surgeon to St. Mary's and the Lock Hospital, in 1867 the Government cases came from Woolwich, Chatham, and Aldershot after compulsory inspection. However, the total number of beds available at the time was 130, of which 30 were assigned to women who applied voluntarily to the Hospital in the usual way. The average stay of ordinary cases was 50 days, and that of Government cases was less than 31 days. Cases

could be divided into two types: those with syphilis and those with gonorrhoea. In the case of syphilis, the illness accounted for 80% of the ordinary cases, while in Government cases it did not represent more than 41.5%. According to this data, it appears clear that the incidence and severity of venereal disease on women subjected to regular inspection was less prominent than in women which constituted the regular voluntary cases, who were usually older. The explanation probably lies in the fact that the former could not leave the Hospital until a surgeon certified that they were completely clear of the disease, under the threat of imprisonment, whereas the latter not only came to the Hospital when the illness had got to a really serious state but also left the premises at their own request when the most virulent symptoms had disappeared. Nonetheless, when patients under the Acts returned to prostitution, the malady appeared again, and sometimes they were readmitted several times in the Hospital, which had not been the common practice before the CD Acts were passed (Lane 1868, 139-40).

The consequences of the Acts for the London Lock were significant in the alarmingly growing number of patients. This necessitated the extension of the buildings and an increase in Government funding. As a result, charitable support diminished considerably and the public perception of the Hospital changed. It came to be viewed more as a place of punishment and incarceration than as a place of refuge and cure for the destitute poor with venereal disease.

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Tyndale's Doctrine on Riches and Thomas Lupton's  
*All for Money* (1578)

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The present paper focuses on the play *All for Money* (1578) by Thomas Lupton (fl. 1572-1584) and, specifically, on its representation of social pecuniary corruption, analysing its debt to the Protestant doctrine on riches and the vice of covetousness presented by the influential religious reformer William Tyndale (c.1494-1536) in his *Exposition upon the Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Chapters of Matthew* (1533).

Keywords: interlude; Lupton; morality; Protestantism; Tudor; Tyndale

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The works of William Tyndale (c.1494-1536) had an enormous impact in the early stages of the expansion of Protestantism in England and his martyrdom, later depicted in John Foxe's *Acts and Monuments* (1563), firmly established his reputation as the Father of the English Reformation. His translations of the Bible and his commentaries greatly contributed to fuelling the controversy about and opposition to the Catholic Church in the first decades of the sixteenth century. In the second half of the century his influence can still be discerned in the handling of moral and doctrinal questions in late morality plays or interludes, such as William Wager's *Enough Is as Good as a Feast* (c.1570)<sup>1</sup> and Thomas Lupton's *All for Money* (1578). The present paper will analyse Lupton's text focusing on its debt to the Protestant doctrine on riches and the vice of covetousness as developed by Tyndale in his *Exposition upon the Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Chapters of Matthew*, which was first published in 1533, and reprinted in 1573 as part of *The Whole Works of William Tyndale, John Frith, and Doctor Barnes*. As the discussion will show, Tyndale's interpretation of the evil use of riches and its social impact lies at the core of *All for Money's* treatment of the social distortions deriving from an ungenerous—hence immoral—use of wealth.

Little is known about the life of Thomas Lupton (fl. 1572-1584), yet his political and religious works reveal a strong moral rigour and a Protestant nationalism, often accompanied by a deep concern about the social evils of England. In a manuscript

<sup>1</sup> The exact date of composition is unknown. R. Mark Benbow, following William Jackson's revision of the Short Title Catalogue, places it in about 1570 (ix).

work written before 1581 (Hunter) and addressed to Queen Elizabeth,<sup>2</sup> Lupton devised a detailed scheme for a general collection of funds towards repairing national infrastructures and providing relief and education to the poor. The same attitude is also perceived in works such as *Siuqila, Too Good to be True* (1580, 1581), an imitation of More's *Utopia* (1515) according to Elliot Rose (1982, 183), the dialogue entitled *A Dream of the Devil and Dives* (1584) and his only theatrical composition, *All for Money*.

Published in 1578 but probably written a few years earlier, *All for Money* is an interestingly unconventional late Tudor interlude which has not received much critical attention to date.<sup>3</sup> Hardin Craig considered it "a social play" and rated it as "one of the grimmest of moralities" (1950, 70). More recently, Leticia Álvarez-Recio has defined it as a "moral hybrid allegory" (2011, 79). The title page describes the text as a "moral and pitieful Comedie plainly representing the manners of men, and fashion of the world noweadayes." To that end, the plot rests on a loosely episodic structure composed of what Robert A. Potter identified as "a series of *tableaux moralisés*" (1975, 110).

We can identify a total number of thirty-two characters appearing in five different scenes: after the Prologue, the allegories of Theology, Science and Art discuss the corruption of the world and the sinful love for money; secondly, we see the personifications of several vices attending the central figure of Money which produces the figures of Pleasure, Sin and Damnation through successive *vomits*; thirdly, four allegorical characters—Learning with Money, Learning without Money, Money without Learning and Neither Learning nor Money—engage in a lengthy *colloquium*. This is followed by the main scene, where several personages bribe the title character, All for Money, who stands as a magistrate. The last scene presents the biblical figures of Dives and Judas regretting their past evil actions and then the allegories of Godly Admonition, Charity, Virtue and Humility warn the audience to repent and to eschew all greed.

## 1. MONEY AND USE OF RICHES

The central idea defended in Lupton's play is that money is not itself evil, but that it becomes evil through an "ill use" that is not only spiritually but also socially pernicious. As the Prologue tells us: "Thus the creature of God is not euill of him selfe, / But through our misuse from good to euill conuerted. / Euen so money ill vsed is a most wicked pelfe. / And also good where well it is bestowed."<sup>4</sup> The views put forward in the prologue seem to be inspired by Tyndale's exposition on the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew, Chap. 5). Tyndale discusses the significance of the opening

<sup>2</sup> Bodl. Oxf. MS Jones 16, summary catalogue 8924.

<sup>3</sup> A. Harbage considers the date of composition to be between 1559 and 1577.

<sup>4</sup> Line-numbering—starting after the prologue section—follows the transcribed version of the play from Literature Online (LiOn).

words of Jesus Christ "Blessed are the poor in spirit" as follows: "It is not without a great mystery that Christ beginneth his preaching at poverty in spirit; which is neither beggary, nor against the possessing of riches, but a virtue contrary to the vice of covetousness, the inordinate desire and love of riches, and putting trust in riches" (16). And he adds: "Riches is the gift of God, given man to maintain the degrees of the world, and therefore not evil; yea, and some must be poor and some rich, if we shall have an order in this world" (16). The logical consequence, emphasised by the Protestant doctrine of justification by faith alone, is that neither richness nor poverty brings damnation or salvation *per se*, a stance that is shared by *All for Money*.

In the dialogue between the four allegories of wealth and learning, Lupton develops Tyndale's ideas and shows that godly living does not depend on the lack of riches, but that it implies not placing our trust in money or seeking satisfaction from it. Thus, the character called Learning without Money says: "I euer haue ynough wherewith I am content, / So that contentation makes me as rich as a king." (532-33). On the contrary, another character, Money without Learning, is presented as the archetype of the covetous man: "If I should diminishe my money but one grote, / I should not be quiet these two dayes I wote" (776-77). These two characters represent the two cases described by Tyndale in his text—virtue and vice—but Lupton also introduces another two allegories that reveal further insights into the question of greed and how different attitudes regarding the same topic relate to each other. One of these other characters, called Neither Money nor Learning, claims: "For Christes sake I suffer this pouerty meekely" (738); however, he does not refrain from complaining of his plight: "I have neither learning nor money my selfe to maintaine, / Therefore to begge for my liuing I am both glad and faine" (719-20). And later again: "I do suffer much payne, hunger and woe" (750).

The opposing character to Neither Learning nor Money is, of course, Learning with Money, who might at first be perceived as the best possible combination if simply considering his name. As he says, "if you counterpease me Learning with money / Of all euils and mischiefe I am the best remedie" (517-18). However, we learn subsequently that he obtains his income from working as a kind of lawyer or legal counsel for the greedy Money without Learning in dubious cases "in Westminster Hall" (712). Specifically, Money without Learning seems quite content with his presence, as seen in his words:

What Learning with money I am glad to see you here,  
 I stande neede of your counsell in diuers cases:  
 Wherefore if you will helpe me I wil recompence you I swere  
 I haue manie frowarde matters in hande in sundrie places  
 I haue money ynough to defende me in maugre their faces  
 Manie beggerly knaues haue good matters against me,  
 But here is one will doe wel ynough, mine olde friend money. (559-65)

Lupton establishes a pecuniary relationship between these two personages, casting a shadow on Learning with Money, whose previous positive characterization is undermined by his role in the defence of the covetous man's riches and, thus, by the parallelism established with the corrupted magistrate All for Money. As a consequence, the allegory Learning without Money—personification of Tyndale's "poverty of spirit"—is confirmed as the only acceptable character among the four. By exploring Tyndale's idea, Lupton seems to point to the social consequences of greed and its deceitful evil practices.<sup>5</sup>

## 2. THE SOCIAL DIMENSION OF COVETOUSNESS

However, Lupton's play is mainly concerned with another aspect derived from a sinful attitude towards money. Beyond the moral individual dimension, covetousness easily leads to generalized social corruption, as we can see in the penultimate scene where All for Money appears "apparelled like a ruler or magistrate" (886.1) and administers justice according to whether the pleader is wealthy or not. In fact, his secretary, Sin, makes the following proclamation:

All maner of men that haue either matter or suite,  
 Let them come hether betvvene nine & ten, & none against them shal dispute.  
 So they come from money then they shalbe heard quickly,  
 Be their matter neuer so vvrong, they shalbe sped and not tarie:  
 And that they make speede, he hartily them prayes,  
 For he can not tarie past tvvo or three dayes. (911-16)

The parade of personages seeking what might be better called *injustice* illustrates different social evils: a thief and murderer, a professional litigant in search of cheap lands, a man attempting to get an unlawful annulment of his marriage and, the final character, Mother Croote, a lecherous old woman who wants to force a young man to marry her. Another character, a foolish Catholic preacher who has lost his job, stands more as a comical anti-Catholic figure than an actual social threat.<sup>6</sup> When he is asked how many epistles St. Paul wrote, he answers:

By the masse he writ to manie, I would they were all burned,  
 For had not they bene and the newe Testament in English,

<sup>5</sup> A similar idea is presented in William Wager's *Enough Is as Good as a Feast* (c.1570), where the character Worldly Man lets himself be convinced to return to covetousness by ignorantly assuming that he would be able to help the needy if he devoted himself to making money. His ultimate descent into uttermost greed crudely represents the fallacy of generous social concern and its risks for the individual.

<sup>6</sup> Álvarez-Recio uses the same excerpt to exemplify "a strategy to defuse the Catholic menace" to the audience (2011, 82-83).

I had not lacked liuing at this time I wisse.  
 Before the people knewe so much of the Scripture  
 Then they did obeye vs and loued vs out of measure:  
 And nowe we can not go in the streetes without a mocke. (1287-92)

The Catholic preacher, who even begs *All for Money* for a new occupation, does not pose an urgent threat to the moral and social customs of society. Unlike him, the other characters bribe the magistrate either to pervert justice—avoiding the rope, obtaining a piece of land—or to pervert social customs—through an illegal annulment or a forced marriage. One character called William and the Two Wives says: “I haue two wiues I must needs confesse, / I haue to manie by one I had rather haue lesse” (1047-48). And old Mother Croote argues her desire to marry a young man: “I wishe but one night with him for to lye, / Ohe, he would make me looke yong by and by” (1271-72). In this scene, that to a certain extent recalls some of the stories presented in the Tudor poetical collection *The Mirror for Magistrates* (1574),<sup>7</sup> Lupton finally presents his main concerns: secular lawlessness and social immorality, both expressions of the same pecuniary corruption.

Although Tyndale is chiefly preoccupied with the spiritual risks of covetousness for the individual, he also describes the social and political consequences of greed, giving them a national dimension. His explanations of the importance of abiding by the “temporal laws” and the idea of “outward righteousness”—that is, social responsibility—allow him to point out the risks that covetousness may pose to society. In general terms, Tyndale and Lupton share two main concerns: the possibility that the wealthy may oppress the poor and the relaxation of certain moral duties, mainly, those of matrimony and family. In one passage, Tyndale claims that “so are they accursed, which . . . for lucre, become the most cruel enemies [of righteousness and truth] and most subtle persecutors, and most falsely lie thereon also” (30). Later on he claims that to destroy the law, that is, justice, is “to set the people at a fleshly liberty, and to make them first disobedient, and to despise their spiritual prelates, and then to rise against the temporal rulers, and to make all common, and to give licence to sin unpunished” (39). The temporal laws—“which are the laws of God” in Tyndale’s words (53)—protect the poor from the oppression of the wealthy and, thus, he anticipates that the perversion of justice would bring about a situation in which “wealth [should] be among few that should oppress the rest . . . so that nothing they begin should have a prosperous end” (53).

Álvarez-Recio first pointed to the indirect criticism to the monarchy implied by the character *All for Money*, who not only appears on-stage “dressed like a ruler or

<sup>7</sup> Some of the tragic stories included in *The Mirror for Magistrates* represent the corruption of lawyers and magistrates, who were essential to maintaining the public order of “an imagined ideal Elizabethan public sphere,” and whose corruption “for covetousness and advancement” was consequently feared as a grave disruption for the realm. See Betteridge (2004, 183-87).

magistrate” but whose position makes him in any case a “representative of the power of the crown” (81-82). This notion, which connects the figure of the monarch with the right or wrong application of the law, can also be deduced from other works such as *The Mirror for Magistrates* and is also present in Tyndale when he concludes that evil rulers would “through the wickedness of unrighteous judges, made that law that was for our defence to be a tyrant most cruel, and to oppress us, and do injury above all other kinds of violence and robbing” (66).

However, oppression and tyranny are not the only evils to be expected from a rotten judiciary system, the corruption of moral social customs would also ensue, as illustrated by William with the Two Wives and Mother Croote in Lupton’s play. As Tyndale says, “a light persuasion is enough to make a lecherous man believe that fornication is no sin” (85) and he also predicts corrupt justice since favouring the liberty of remarriage “would be the next way to provoke all other [women] that were once weary of their husbands to commit adultery, for to be divorced from them, [so] that they might marry other which they loved better” (52). Also, in the case of men, Tyndale associates greed with injustice when he comments on what rulers should do to prevent husbands from abandoning their wives: “Verily, the rulers ought to make a law. . . . For what right is it that a lewd wretch should take his goods, and run from his wife without a cause, and sit by a whore, yea, and come again often a year or two (as I have known it) and rob his wife of that she hath gotten in the mean time, and go again to his whore?” (54).

By dramatizing Tyndale’s long exposition on the vice of covetousness and exploring its social dimension, Lupton adopts a strongly doctrinal Protestant perspective that, while addressing individual moral issues, could also reveal the moral tensions and the specific social disorders that Tyndale had described around forty years earlier. Both Tyndale and Lupton seem to be primarily concerned with the issue of the evil use of riches in a changing society and with the risks of an “inordinate desire and love of riches” (16) not only for the economic welfare of the less fortunate strata of society but also for the general moral quality of the common-wealth.

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## John Lyly's Aesthetic of Perfection

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This paper suggests that there is an atomist strain to John Lyly's aesthetic of perfection as formulated in the Euphues works and practiced in his early play *Campaspe*. Lyly's views on perfection, which anticipate a more baroque aesthetics, problematise the representation of Elizabeth I, while their atomist underpinning casts Lyly as a potentially subversive "atheist." In consequence, there may be more factors behind his professional decline than the conventionally invoked but historically inaccurate fall from fashion.

Keywords: John Lyly; atomism; baroque; perfection; *Euphues*; *Campaspe*

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This paper offers a few thoughts on John Lyly (1554?-1606) in relation to early modern baroque, early modern scientific materialism, or "atomism," and the cult surrounding the figure of Queen Elizabeth I. Lyly's star rose fast with the publication of *Euphues. The Anatomy of Wit* in 1578 and shone bright as *Euphues and his England* followed in 1580 and then his plays, written in the period 1583-1597.<sup>1</sup> Yet it also shone briefly, on conventional accounts fizzling out as the mighty drama of Marlowe and Shakespeare eclipsed Lyly's artificial squibs. Despite being an underrated influence on Shakespeare's early plots and stagecraft, Lyly is mostly remembered today for his euphuism—that characteristic combination of antithesis, parison, sound patterns and allusion—and then dismissed for wearing his art on his sleeve. According to G.K. Hunter's (1962) classic study, Lyly was a second-rate humanist, forced by academic disappointment to turn courtier. Arthur J. Kinney (1986) modified Hunter's view, turning Lyly into a

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<sup>1</sup> The dating of the plays is highly problematic. The end-date of 1597 might better be brought forward to the very late 1580s in view of Scragg's argument that the formal and stylistic characteristics of Lyly's last play, *The Woman in the Moon*, are not necessarily inconsistent with the conventions and characteristics of the Paul's Boys company, suppressed circa 1590. As Scragg (2006, 214) also points out, though Lyly's plays stopped being performed, they continued to enjoy wide popular success in printed form throughout the 1580s, 1590s and at least as far as Edward Blount's 1632 edition of six of the plays; that, together with the high esteem in which Lyly was held by contemporaries (except by pamphleteering opponents such as Gabriel Harvey) has led Andy Kesson to urge convincingly for a complete reassessment of Lyly (2014, 2-4).

first-rate humanist with misgivings about Renaissance humanist poetics. Leah Scragg, meanwhile, has built on Jonas Barish's (1956) pioneering study of Lyly's "doubleness" to rewrite disaffection as "modernity," manifest in his "radical destabilization of meaning" (Scragg 2003, 19). Michael Pincombe's (1996) portrait of Lyly as a "counter-courtly" playwright gives that radicalism a more overtly political strand.

This paper is an attempt to sketch some intellectual underpinnings of Lyly's works which might account for some of his purported misgivings and counter-courtliness. Various aspects of Lyly's thought seem to anticipate the baroque and early modern scientific materialism and as such lace his works with potentially subversive intellectual and political elements. The political unease Pincombe detects in Lyly's diegesis, and Marcia E. Picallo in his antitheses (2008, 83), which question the fixed concepts of the established order, may be due in part to the philosophical atomism which informs Lyly's drama and the aesthetic of perfection on which much of it rests. This paper therefore corroborates the new direction in Lyly studies, epitomized by Andy Kesson's recent assertion that "Lyly repeatedly calls attention to the failings of authority figures in his work, repeatedly confronts censorship and the abuse of power and spent much of his career in apparent disfavour at court," as well as being "a writer fascinated by monsters, necromancy and transgression" (2014, 12).

A convenient starting point is Wladyslaw Tartakiewicz's (1980, 77) account of baroque perfection, according to which what is perfect is always perfectible and therefore imperfect, or, as the Latin tag puts it, *perfectio propter imperfectionem*. Indeed, for some, the baroque is best conceived as a debate around Renaissance ideas and ideals of classical perfection (Checa and Morán 1982, 14). According to Tartakiewicz, the idea of imperfect perfection found its definitive statement in the fiftieth dialogue, "On God" ("De Deo"), of Lucilio "Giulio Cesare" Vanini's *De Admirandis Naturae*, published in 1619. Yet, a dozen or more years earlier, Shakespeare had written of how Cleopatra "did make defect perfection" (*Antony and Cleopatra*, 2. 2. 238) and, as readers of Blaise Pascal, not to mention Asterix, will know, if her nose had been shorter, the whole face of the world would have changed. A quarter of a century before that, in 1578, John Lyly wrote this on the first page of *Euphues: The Anatomy of Wit*:

And true it is that some men write and most men beleue, that in all perfecte shapes, a blemish bringeth rather a liking euery way to the eyes, then a loathing any way to the minde. Venus had hir Mole in hir cheeke which made hir more amiable: Helen hir scarre on hir chinne which Paris called Cos amoris, the Whetstone of loue. Aristippus his wart, Lycurgus his wenne: So likewise in the disposition of ye minde, either vertue is ouershadowed with some vice, or vice ouercast with some vertue. Alexander valiaunt in warre, yet gyuen to wine. Tullie eloquent in his gloses, yet vayneglorious: Salomon wyse, yet too wanton: Dauid holye but yet an homicide: none more wittie then Euphues yet at the first none more wicked. (Lyly 1902, 1. 184)

This idea that a blemish may improve “a perfect shape” receives a more explicitly aesthetic gloss in Lyly’s epistle dedicatory to Sir William West, Lord Delaware, where, in regard of portraiture, Lyly concludes “that in all perfect works as well the fault as the face is to be shown” (Lyly 1902, 1. 179). Such ideas run counter to art theory from Leon Battista Alberti to Giorgio Vasari.<sup>2</sup> The question arises, then, of whether Lyly is intoning a baroque credo almost fifty years before Vanini’s allegedly foundational text.

Several passages in *Euphues: The Anatomy of Wit* and *Euphues His England* return to the theme of perfection and imperfection, always in the context of painting, often in relation to the painting of Queen Elizabeth herself, where, obviously, political considerations also come into play. In this connection, the recently authenticated Manteo portrait of Elizabeth, which she herself may never have seen, is worth mentioning. Dated to approximately 1593 and attributed to the school of Marcus Gheeraerts, the portrait is a distinctly warts-and-all view of Elizabeth which bears little relation to the standard, mandatory idealizations of court painters but much to contemporary written descriptions and Lyly’s depiction of a decrepit Pandora in *The Woman in the Moon*.<sup>3</sup> Art historians proclaim Gheeraerts to have introduced baroque painting into England; but once again, this portrait postdates Lyly’s discussions of portraiture by fifteen or more years.

Lyly’s anticipation of baroque aesthetic notions is as remarkable for the audacity of its challenge to royal representational codes as it is for its precociousness. No less remarkable is the rhetoric in which it is couched. For no commentator on *Euphues* has traced any source for the *exempla*—the mole, the scar, the wart and the wen—Lyly adduces. One explanation could be that he was drawing on a source or sources that are now lost. Another could be that he dreamed his *exempla* up, anxious at all costs to apply a veneer of authority to an idea which would otherwise be completely unacceptable. But why should that be so? Because the idea’s origins lie in the cosmogony of the ancient Greek materialist philosophers, chiefly Empedocles—a cosmogony with little room for God and closely related to Epicureanism. Returning to Vanini, his position draws on the Empedoclean binary of “perpetuity” (*perpetuitas*), the ultimate end of the universe, and “generation” (*generatio*), the means to obtaining that end. According to Empedocles, the attributes of perpetuity are perfection and rest (*quies*), those of generation, imperfection and motion (*motus*). It is the antithetical nature of their respective attributes which leads to the paradox that if generation is a means to, or guarantor of, perpetuity, then rest depends on motion and perfection on imperfection. As Vanini put it, “the world for Empedocles must be perfect on account

<sup>2</sup> Leonardo is a possible exception (Blunt 1940, 30).

<sup>3</sup> A 1596 court order to the Privy Council commanded officers “to aid the Queen’s Sergeant Painter in seeking out unseemly portraits which were to her ‘great offence’ and therefore to be defaced and no more portraits to be produced except as approved by [the] Sergeant Painter” (Riehl 2010, 97). The well-known French Ambassador’s letter of 1597 is similarly unflattering (qtd. Montrose 1983, 63-4).

of imperfection and, as he states, perpetual on account of generation” (1616, 363; my translation).<sup>4</sup> Materialist ideas of this sort undermined conventional religious beliefs such as the immortality of the soul and creationism and would lead proponents such as Giordano Bruno and Vanini himself to the stake. For Empedocles and others, the material universe had always existed, had never been created, and was a perpetually evolving arrangement of immutable elements which Democritus and later Epicurus identified as atoms. Hence, in the late sixteenth century, advocates of materialist physics were known as atomists, and atomist was synonymous with atheist.<sup>5</sup>

As Stones (1928), Bercovitch (1968) and Passannante (2008), among others, have demonstrated, these ideas were in circulation long before Vanini or Bruno, or before Henri Estienne published Joseph Justus Scaliger’s text and annotations of ‘Empedoclis Fragmenta’ in 1573, or before the rediscovery in 1417 of Lucretius’s *De rerum natura*. Lyly may have been introduced to atomist ideas by Gabriel Harvey and Edmund Spenser, readers of Lucretius (Greenlaw 1920; Jardine 1974, 47–48n39) and fellow-lodgers at the Savoy around the time Lyly was working on *Euphues*, while he is likely to have read about Empedocles in Diogenes Laertius’ *Lives of the Eminent Philosophers*, easily available in Latin and Greek since the late fifteenth century, and in Plutarch’s *Moralia*, probably in the French translation of 1572 by Jaques Amyot, which Lyly’s patron the Earl of Oxford had bought for his library (Nelson 2003, 53). Indeed, Plutarch was a favourite source of Lyly’s and provided the plot for his play *Campaspe* with its love-triangle formed by Apelles, Alexander and its eponymous heroine. Plutarch also recounts an anecdote in which philosopher Arcesilaus visits Apelles in his humble abode and exclaims: “Here is nothing here (quoth he) I see well, but these four bare elements that Empedocles writeth of: Hot fire, cold water, sheer and soft: / Gross earth, pure air that spreads aloft” (Plutarch n.d., 73).<sup>6</sup> This conjunction of the materialist philosopher and the artist may have sparked in Lyly’s mind the possibility of an atomist aesthetic.

External evidence for Lyly’s atomism or atheism is only circumstantial. The atheism of his patron, Oxford, was attested to by many, though its precise nature cannot be ascertained with certainty. Oxford may have indulged in alchemy and prognostication, acting as the patron of a circle of mages and esoterists to which Lyly, accused of “dabbling in magic” (Bond 1902, 1. 29) also belonged, even if grudgingly: “Loth I am to be a prophett, and to be a wiche I loath,” he wrote in a letter to Burleigh in 1582 (Nelson 2003, 225). In a word, Oxford and his circle were subject to the same smears as Northumberland, “the Wizard earl,” and his, smears which used the stick of wizardry and magic to beat subversive science. Evidence for Lyly’s atheism in the

<sup>4</sup> “Ergo Mundus erit Empedocli *perfectus propter imperfectionem*, Est enim perpetuus per generationem, ut assertit” (emphasis original).

<sup>5</sup> See Sell (2014) for a fuller account of the transmission of Empedoclean ideas and their emergence in Vanini’s thought, and of the identification between atomism and atheism.

<sup>6</sup> In his *Life of Arcesilaus*, Diogenes Laertius makes no mention of this anecdote.

*Euphues* works themselves is scant and can be read either way. In *Anatomy*, there is a discussion on religious matters between Atheos and Euphues, the former subscribing to a materialist, pantheist view that “if there be any God, it is the worlde wherein we lyue, that is the onely God,” a view which Euphues brands as “detestable heresie” (Lyly 1902, 1. 292, 300). As it turns out Atheos is “somewhat easily overcome” (1. 365) by Euphues’ fallacious arguments, but, like Milton’s Satan, he does get the best lines.

*Campaspe*, probably Lyly’s first play, written around 1583, provides rather firmer evidence of atomist aesthetics. Its plot turns on the deliberate marring by painter Apelles of his portrait of Campaspe, the Athenian girl taken by Alexander to be his concubine. When commissioned by Alexander to paint Campaspe, Apelles doubts his capacity to accomplish the task: “Bewty is not so soone shadowed, whose perfection commeth not within the compasse either of cunning or of colour” (1902, 2. 333 [3.2.157-8]). A little later he identifies that beauty with Campaspe’s “absolute” (336 [3.3.7]) face, which is so complete that its perfection lacks nothing and destines any artistic representation of it to incompleteness and imperfection. To Alexander’s impatient question, “When will you finish *Campaspe*?” Apelles replies, “Never finishe: for always in absolute bewtie there is somewhat about art” (339-40 [3.4.80-2]), and that something (“somewhat”) sentences art to perpetual imperfection. Luckily for Apelles, the love-plight he is submerged in affords him the means to avoid completing the painting. For so keen is he to set his eyes once more on Campaspe that he conceives a ruse to see her again and confess his love for her: “As soone as Alexander hath viewed this portraiture, I will by deuise give it a blemish, that by that meanes she may come again to my shop” (343 [3.5.57-9]). Apelles, then, deliberately makes imperfect his perfect work of art so that the girl he loves is obliged to return for a further sitting.

Thus Apelles reflects on beauty in a language redolent of Empedoclean metaphysics and one strand of baroque aesthetics. Interestingly enough, as a foil to the love plot, in Act 1 Scene 3, Lyly also introduces philosophers Plato, Aristotle, Crates, Cleanthes and Anaxagoras onto the stage where, in the frame of a large debate over whether God or Nature is the first mover, they embark on an unfinished discussion of the relationship between the moon and the tides. How the moon might affect the tides if there was no contact between them was a question which had vexed materialist philosophers since Aristotle and was being debated even as Lyly wrote his play. Between 1583 and 1585 Bruno was wrestling with the issue in his London dialogues, *Cause, Principle and Unity* and *Ash Wednesday Supper* (Blum 2012, 36), dialogues Lyly read before writing *Endimion*. Whatever else may be claimed of Lyly, he was certainly conversant with one of the most controversial scientific topics of his day, a topic which forced one to take a stand; with the atheists or with the faithful.

So *Campaspe* brings together atomism and aesthetics in a fusion heralded by the warts-and-all notion of perfection touted in *Euphues*. Was Lyly then an atomist, atheist and precursor of Baroque aesthetics, one link in the chain of heretics which

according to Bernard de la Fontanelle writing in 1730 led directly from Empedocles to Vanini? And if he was, how unusual was he for it? If Lyly was familiar with parts of Empedocles, so too were close contemporaries Gabriel Harvey and Thomas Nashe, Sir Walter Raleigh, Thomas Kyd, Edmund Spenser, Thomas Watson, William Shakespeare, John Donne and Robert Herrick, or Francis Bacon, who considered Empedocles an atomist and incorporated important elements of him into his own cosmology (all qtd. in Bercovitch 1968, 73-79).

By way of conclusion I would suggest that conventional histories of early modern English literature need to take greater stock of the presence of atomist ideas.<sup>7</sup> One consequence of that might be a new take on Lyly's artistic eclipse: did his art simply fall out of fashion or did his dangerous ideas put him out of court? Certainly, he was permanently disappointed in his petitions for royal preferment. Lyly's own plays, with their undoubted courtly allegories, need new readings which consider atomist ideas of perpetuity and generation in the light of Elizabethan politics, royal marriage matches and the cult of the Virgin Queen. By insisting on her own perfection, by refusing generation, the Queen—*eadem semper*—ensured her own virginal perpetuity but put that of the crown as an institution in grave jeopardy. At the same time, by figuring herself under one aspect as Diana, goddess of the moon, she also potentially exposed herself to oblique scrutiny under the guise of astronomical debate. Atomism may not only have been a challenge to Christian doctrine; it may also have threatened the cult of the virgin, lunar queen herself.

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<sup>7</sup> Also in need or revision is the standard history of philosophy and science which according to which English Epicurean materialism took root in the wake of Pierre Gassendi's reconciliation of atomism with Christian doctrine in 1649, or slightly before in the Paris salon of William and Margaret Cavendish (Kargon 1964, 184; Wilson 2008, 27). So too standard histories of the baroque, part of whose origins may be sought in the same atomism.

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# *Don Quixote's* Cross-dressed Pirate on the Jacobean Stage: A Defence or a Challenge to Gender Essentialism?

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This paper analyses how the anxiety-inspiring subject of sexual ambiguity is addressed in two seventeenth-century literary works: the Ana Félix episode in *Don Quixote* (1615) and the Fletcher-Massinger collaboration *The Double Marriage: A Tragedy* (c.1621), which includes a character inspired by those of Cervantes. The analysis provided here aims to show that whereas the novelist subverts the stability of identity and the resulting social order, the playwrights reinforce the ideology of gender essentialism through the demonisation of androgyny.

Keywords: Early Modern; cross-dressing; androgyny; subversion; gender identities

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In 1621, the King's Men performed a play of quixotic influence co-authored by Fletcher and Massinger entitled *The Double Marriage*. At that time, England was immersed in a profound crisis of authority.<sup>1</sup> James I's refusal to take an active role in the Bohemian crisis, an armed conflict which pitted the Catholic Habsburgs against the Protestant German Princes, was resented by his anti-Popish courtiers, who advocated for an active defence of the Protestant faith. Apart from deeply unpopular, the King's refusal to take direct action in the Palatinate was ideologically problematic, since it challenged the legitimacy of the gendered binary active male/passive female, which lay at the core of the period's dominant interpretation of sexual difference. In fact, James's royal persona undermined the Early Modern patriarchal power structures: in presenting himself as the paterfamilias, he "metaphorically transformed the men of England, accustomed to playing Elizabeth's male consorts, into [his] submissive and obedient wives" (Allman 1990, 30).

As the man who occupied the apex of the country's power hierarchy James challenged the fixed gender categories that sustained the foundations of patriarchy. Written at this moment of ideological conflict, *The Double Marriage* participates in the debate about the stability of identity. The character of Martia, a sexually

<sup>1</sup> I gratefully acknowledge financial support from FICYT under the research grant Severo Ochoa (BP 10-028).

ambiguous pirate, embodies the Jacobean anxiety about the arbitrariness of gender. Claire Jowitt (2010) highlighted the influence that Ana Félix, a cross-dressing female pirate that appears in *Don Quixote*, has on Fletcher and Massinger's *Martia*.

By 1621, Fletcher had already given proof of his knowledge and delight in Cervantes's masterpiece.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, premiered only one year after the publication of Shelton's translation of *Don Quixote II*, *The Double Marriage* itself contains another episode of quixotic influence: Castruccio, a Court sycophant who covets the King's authority, reenacts some of Sancho Panza's experiences in Barataria. Given the playwrights' knowledge and fondness for the recently published second part of *Don Quixote*, it is reasonable to assert that Ana Félix "influences the representation of the martial maid and pirate *Martia*" (Jowitt 2010, 147). There are several similarities between the characters: they are both explicitly sexually ambiguous, both exhibit transgressive conduct that challenges the limits of feminine propriety and, as pirates, they live outside the prescribed legal and institutional order of their respective societies. What is more, through these characters, both Cervantes and the British authors address the same political issue. They provide an ideologically imbued exploration of the connection between piracy and female sexual orthodoxy, participating in the heated debate about gender essentialism. Interestingly, in both Counter-Reformation Spain and Jacobean England, the hegemonic need to reinforce the fixity of identity had taken on particular urgency.

During Cervantes's lifetime, the project of constructing and naturalising a homogeneous national identity relied upon the existence of essentialised categories of difference. In such periods of change any kind of "self-fashioning is achieved in relation to something perceived as alien, strange, or hostile. This threatening Other . . . must be discovered or invented in order to be attacked and destroyed" (Greenblatt 1980, 9). As required by the nationalistic enterprise, the Inquisition and the Crown undertook the task of defining the nation's ideological outsiders. In so doing, they resorted to the binaries of good/evil, Christian/heretical, masculine/feminine. In fact, the fashioning of the cultural other as sexually deviant played a key role in the construction of Spain's outsiders, masculinity being imagined as a key component of identity. In this context, Ana Félix, a cross-dressed Morisca who passes as a male Turkish corsair, poses a serious challenge to the fixed categories of difference on which the nationalistic project rested.

In the agitated context of 1621 England, an androgynous female outlaw provided the perfect means to discuss the anxiety-inspiring subject of gender essentialism. The aim of this paper is to analyse, from a New Historicist perspective, how Cervantes and the British playwrights contribute to managing the audience's/reader's anxiety about the stability of gender. The New Historicist criticism pays fundamental attention to instances of subversion of the dominant power structures. As such a literary text can

<sup>2</sup> The Shakespeare/Fletcher collaboration *Cardenio* (1613) and Fletcher's *The Coxcomb* (c.1608) and *The Wild-Goose Chase* (c.1621) have all been analysed as presenting quixotic influence.

be used either to provide an effective contestation to the hegemonic ideology or, on the contrary, to contain seemingly subversive elements, or even to produce them only to later contain them—and thus justify the need for power to operate. The main aim of this paper is derived from this double possibility: I intend to prove that, whereas the Spanish novelist subverts the fixity of subjectivity, Fletcher and Massinger contain the period's anxiety about gender essentialism, thereby serving hegemonic interests.

The New Historicist perspective rejects the existence of a human essence, and argues that identities are created, shaped and reproduced in and by historically specific power structures. Literature is but one among the myriad forces that fashion identity and produce a culture's understanding of reality. In this paper, attention is paid to the mechanisms that patriarchal discourse deployed to produce and naturalise the identity categories on which the dominant sexual hierarchy rested. This process of self-fashioning is articulated in a great variety of discourses, such as medical treatises, propagandistic pamphlets and moralising writings. It is in relation to these signifying media that the ideological functions of the works analysed shall be determined.

In Early Modern Europe, gender difference was defined in hierarchical terms. The one-sex medical model and the Judeo-Christian tradition articulated an understanding of women as essentially inferior to men. Eve was imagined as the prototype of all females, who were constructed as sexually weak, morally fallible and naturally subservient. As Laqueur (1990) has convincingly argued, the only difference between men and women derived from the latter's being cooler—less perfect—than men, and was thus hierarchical.<sup>3</sup> Gender was not yet determined by essential anatomical differences, so it had to be produced on different grounds. In this context, the semiotic systems of clothing and naming acquired immense importance as signals of identity. Paradoxically, the allegedly natural differences between the sexes relied heavily on mutable and arbitrary signifiers. “This paradox results in an insistence on the accuracy or transparency of apparel and language as signifying media, but at the same time, it produces an anxiety over the unavoidable instances of misrepresentation, such as cross-dressing” (Breitenberg 1996, 152).

In fact, cross-dressing was a subject of social controversy. 1620 England witnessed the publication of *Hic Mulier* and *Haec Vir*, two pamphlets which respectively condemned and defended female-to-male transvestism, suggesting that it had become a popular practice. In Spain, Father Juan Ferrer (1618) also complained of a transvestite fashion adopted at the beginning of the century and condemned the “impudence and shamelessness” of women wearing male attire,<sup>4</sup> a condemnation that reveals an intense anxiety about the instability of identity.

So far, attention has been paid to some of the discourses employed to produce and naturalise gender difference and to the internal contradictions which threatened

<sup>3</sup> “Men and women were arrayed according to their degree of metaphysical perfection, their vital heat, along an axis whose telos was male” (Laqueur 1987, 3).

<sup>4</sup> “Atrevimiento y desvergüenza” (Ferrer 1618, 50).

to subvert them. My analysis of Ana Félix and Martia is aimed at revealing whether these characters reinforce or undermine the dominant notions of gender and the resulting hierarchy.

The episode of Ana Félix tells the story of a Morisca who returns to Spain disguised as a male Turkish corsair after being in exile in Algiers, where she leaves her lover Don Gaspar Gregorio dressed as a female Muslim, in order to protect him from the Moor's alleged homosexual debauchery. Once her ship is captured by the Spaniards, Ana is forced to narrate her story.

The first thing about Ana Félix that attracts the narrator's attention is her extraordinary beauty. In fact, she is introduced to the readers as "one of the most handsome and elegant young men imaginable" (Cervantes 2001, 920). The text's pervasive insistence on the character's beauty disturbs from the beginning. The emphasis that both the narrator and the Viceroy put on Ana's looks suggests that she incites some kind of sexual desire in the male beholder. If she were, actually, a man, this desire would be of an unsanctioned and transgressive kind. Significantly, the Spanish Viceroy, the embodiment of hegemonic authority in the episode, feels the strange urge to spare the life of a Turk—believed to have killed two Christians—on the sole grounds of his/her beauty.

Ana's ability to pass as a male is already transgressive, since it points to the disturbing possibility of sameness between men and women. This possibility is more threatening in a culture where sexual difference cannot be grounded on biological evidence. To make matters more complicated, the Viceroy's uncanny reaction to Ana's physical appearance betrays a fear of the power of transgressive desire. As a "manly woman," Ana undermines the Viceroy's masculinity, since "distinct gendered identities require distinct forms of erotic desire" (Breitenberg 1996, 151). In this context, the subversive potential of cross-dressing is resolved by projecting the transgressive sexual desires that compromise the self's masculinity onto the "others."

Ana therefore projects onto the Moors the homosexual appetites that threaten the existence of a Spanish identity. Hence, she assumes that the demonic Moors will lust after a male even more cravently than after a female and, in order to protect Don Gregorio, decides to disguise him as a woman, arguing that "among those barbaric Turks a handsome boy or youth is much more highly prized than any woman" (Cervantes 2001, 922). However, the King of Algiers is astounded at the beauty of the "maiden" and resolves to keep her as a present for the Great Turk. Unable to trust in his own self-control, he encloses Don Gregorio in the house of some Moorish ladies.

The inclination to lust was defined by the hegemonic discourse as essentially female. Due to their greater mental strength, men were assumed to have more restraint over their sexual drive. Therefore, it was their natural task to control and regulate their wives' sexuality. In fact, sociopolitical stability was constructed as being dependent on men's ability to exert such control. In this context, the King of Algiers's lack of

capacity for self-restraint makes him an unnatural and effeminate man. Furthermore, the despicable and abominable sin of sodomy plays a key role in the construction of the Moors as the demonic "others" in opposition to which a Spanish "masculine" essence is imagined.

The construction of the sexually deviant "others" as a threat to the integrity of Don Gregorio's masculinity provides discursive justification for his blatant transgression of gender boundaries. Barbara Fuchs claims that "as the 'true' Spaniard in both racial and religious terms, he should clearly be the more powerful figure" (1996, 25). Nevertheless, Don Gregorio is totally emasculated: forced into a female disguise, he seems to have no choice but to wait passively to be rescued by his active (female) lover.

The projection of the Spanish self's effeminacy onto the pervert "other" masks, to a certain extent, Don Gregorio's problematic effeminacy, but it fails to contain anxiety about the arbitrariness of identity. Disguised as a boy, Ana incites, in the Spanish Viceroy, the same kind of desire that Don Gregorio triggers in the King of Algiers. The unsettling similarity between not only Ana and her lover, but also Christians and Moors, underscores the instability of the identity categories upon which the nationalistic project was based.

The ending of the episode plays a key role in this subversive effort. When Gregorio is rescued and brought back to Spain, he exchanges his female Muslim outfit for normative clothes. Through this exchange, Cervantes makes a concession to social orthodoxy. Nevertheless, the text still retains many traces of subversion that problematise a hegemonic interpretation. Significantly, Don Gregorio's problematic beauty is again emphasised once he has arrived back in Spain, thus eliminating the possibility that it may be a subjective appreciation of a "deviant" beholder. In this way, it could be argued that Don Gregorio's eroticised description within the boundaries of Spain poses a huge threat to the binary heteronormative self/deviant "other" that Ana's testimony attempted to reinforce.

Like Ana Félix, Fletcher and Massinger's Martia is a sexually ambiguous female pirate whose behaviour transgresses the boundaries of orthodoxy; through this character, they also take part in the debate over the fixity of gender. At the outset of the play, Ferrand, the despotic ruler of Naples, sends Virolet to rescue Ascanio from a pirate ship led by the Duke of Sesse. Martia, Sesse's daughter, is among the members of the crew. Explicitly compared to "an Amazon" (II.i.15) and defined as a "martial Maid" (II.i.14), she is emphatically portrayed in terms of sexual ambiguity and made to incarnate the Jacobean anxiety about gender stability.

Martia's fierce behaviour undermines the truths of a gender ideology that posits passivity as a fundamentally feminine trait. She is represented as unnatural and her manliness, defined as the consequence of an abnormal upbringing. The boatswain attributes Martia's raging temper to the fact that "Her noble Father got her in his Fury, / And so she proves a Soldier" (II.i.15). Since sexual prowess was constructed as an

essentially masculine asset, Sesse's assertive behavior is acceptable and even laudable. Nevertheless, the active and strong-willed character that his warrior daughter exhibits poses a threat to hegemonic femininity. This threat is dissolved by constructing her as an unnatural woman.

Martia's use of weaponry plays a key role in this construction. In the Early Modern period, the addition of a weapon to a cross-dressed woman's outfit was often interpreted as "a phallic appropriation" (Breitenberg 1996, 160). In a context where biology was not yet thought to provide a scientific basis for gender difference and clothing was regarded as a marker of identity, such appropriation posed a greater threat to the ideology of gender essentialism. Significantly, Martia literally takes the linstock from the gunner to attack the enemy vessels herself, in a blatant usurpation of the male sex and its prerogatives.

The paradox of Martia's androgynous nature is underscored by the gunner, who is amazed that "a Body made so delicate, / So soft for sweet embraces" can shelter "so much Fire, / and manly Soul" (II.i.14-15). While heightening social anxiety about the arbitrariness of gender, the gunner's words contribute to enhancing the audience's fear of the disturbing power of transgressive sexual desire, since prescriptive masculinity was constructed as contingent upon the existence of a distinct object of desire.

To make matters more complicated, Martia's sexual ambiguity is reinforced by the fact that the character was played on the stage by a boy. Given the status of apparel as a semiotic marker of gender, it was widely assumed that a female costume could actually adulterate the gender of the male beneath it. Moreover, the erotic appeal of a cross-dressed boy was highly problematic, since the men in the audience would not only lust after the female in the drama, but after "the youth beneath the woman's costume, thereby playing the woman's role themselves" (Orgel 1996, 26). This terror of effemination was heightened by the institution of the theatre, which incited a kind of erotic desire not clearly determined by the gender of its object. Nevertheless, in *The Double Marriage*, hegemonic anxiety about gender difference is effectively contained through the demonisation of androgyny.

After Sesse manages to defeat and capture Violet, Maria becomes infatuated with the Neapolitan and offers to liberate him if he accepts to divorce his wife and wed her. Tempted by the pirate's enticing presence, the prisoner accepts. From this moment onwards, Martia is portrayed as overwhelmingly lustful and sexually unorthodox. Not only does she manage to persuade Violet out of a divinely-blessed marriage, but in marrying Sesse's enemy, she dishonours the masculine figure to whom she owes most obedience. The Duke reacts by attacking her deviant sexual incontinence, shouting that "she runs hot like a Whore" (II.i.26).

As Jean Howard (1988) explains, the Early Modern hegemonic discourse constructed a powerful discursive association between female-to-male cross-dressing and sexual incontinence. For instance, it was common for women who were arrested in male apparel to be charged with prostitution. This connection is substantiated in

the play. Not only does Martia pursue an unsanctioned marriage, but she exploits her sexuality to take revenge on her spouse. When Violet refuses to consummate their marriage, she resolves to become Ferrand's whore, "a slave to lust" (V.i.67).

In a culture where the perpetuation of patrilineage was constructed as dependent on the control of feminine sexuality, women's sexual unrestraint posed a huge threat to the stability of society. In this context, the couple formed by Martia and Ferrand reinforces the relationship between feminine sexual incontinence and political and social conflict. Their respective murders at the end of the play symbolise the restoration of the dominant social order. Martia's potential to undermine the gender ideology that lies at the core of patriarchy is contained through her increasing demonisation and fashioning as the "other." "Only by destroying the other, will one assure the absolute reality and necessity of the order to which one has submitted oneself and hence fully justify this submission" (Greenblatt 1980, 113).

In conclusion, from a New Historicist perspective, the episodes analysed serve opposing ideological ends, each being located on one side of the subversion/containment paradigm. Whereas Cervantes challenges the "othering" discourse through which identity was fashioned in Counter-Reformation Spain, Fletcher and Massinger inscribe their androgynous pirate in the masculinist "othering" category of the whore: instead of subverting the fixity of identity, the playwrights effectively contain the anxiety they heightened in the first place, validating the established power hierarchy.

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Liminoid Joy Division:  
The Sublime Performance of a Rock Star's Identity

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A rock band can be considered as a special, “liminoid” cultural environment and a social structure with its own rules and rituals, where work and play are merged. For singer Ian Curtis, Joy Division became a threshold (Latin *limen*) to a different world. Observing his patterns of behaviour and his song lyrics, Curtis's progressive closing in on himself through this liminoid activity can be traced. Finally, we set this analysis in relation to the sublime.

Keywords: rock culture; performance; liminality; the sublime; biography; cultural materialism

\* \* \*

... A blindness that touches perfection,  
But hurts just like anything else.  
Isolation, isolation, isolation.  
Mother I tried please believe me,  
I'm doing the best that I can.  
I'm ashamed of the things I've been put through,  
I'm ashamed of the person I am.  
Isolation, isolation, isolation.  
But if you could just see the beauty,  
These things I could never describe,  
These pleasures a wayward distraction,  
This is my one lucky prize.  
Joy Division, “Isolation.” (Lyrics by Ian Curtis)

“Liminality is both more creative and more destructive than the structural norm.”  
(Turner 1974, 78)

“Isolation” encapsulates much of Joy Division's discourse in the two albums they released during the band's brief career: the song shows the solemn, reflexive, solipsistic and remorseful mood of the second album, *Closer* (1980), which it is on,

but the sublime pleasures alluded to in its final stanza, a brief opening of the sombre lyrics to fortune and beauty, recall their first album, *Unknown Pleasures* (1979), whose prevailing tone was more energetic and aggressive. While Edmund Burke's classic distinction opposed beauty and the sublime, Joy Division's song merges the ineffable pleasure of the sublime with beauty in a way that might be regarded as at once more medieval and more post-modern (Shaw 2006, 148-52). The identity of Joy Division's lyricist and lead singer Ian Curtis as a performer, and his approach to the sublime, can be fruitfully described from the point of view of anthropologist Victor Turner's distinction between the liminal, associated with primitive rites of passages, and a modern version of it, the "liminoid." As Turner (1974, 84-85) argues, liminal phenomena predominate in tribal and agrarian societies, whereas the liminoid, following the Industrial Revolution, are characteristically individual products (though they may have "mass" effects), fragmentary and experimental, originating in leisure activities and often connected with new technologies. The life of a rock band fits well this definition, especially since Joy Division and their producer Martin Hannett became seriously involved in the invention of new sounds by means of emerging forms of electronic and digital technology. Turner also makes an important connection of the liminal and liminoid experiences with the notion of "flow," an intense state of awareness and self-expression: "in post-Industrial societies, when ritual gave way to individualism and rationalism, the flow experience was pushed mainly into the leisure genres of art, sport, games, pastimes, etc." (Turner 1974, 90). Quoting Carlson, McKenzie (in Bial [2001] 2007, 27) explains how "[Performance] is a specific event with its liminoid nature foregrounded." Joy Division found in Curtis an extreme performer of the kind that "can be fully taken in by his own act" (Goffman in Bial [1959] 2007, 61). As every biography, film and documentary about Ian Curtis or Joy Division implies, the band played a decisive role in the (liminoid) cultural transition between crisis-laden post-industrial Manchester, and the revitalized post-punk, postmodern city.

Much of the liminoid experience of Joy Division can be put down to Curtis's character and circumstances. However, biography is a complex issue in cultural studies. In the seminal period of the Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural studies in the 1970s, Critcher made a decisive contribution to its defining: "For us, biography is the network of personal circumstances, decisions, and (mis)fortunes which occur within a situation already highly structured and with a limited number of available cultural options" (Critcher 1975, 170; Walton 2008, 168-69). As regards structure, the independence of their record company, Factory Records, gave the band a measure of freedom. However, *indies* (as independent labels like Factory would begin to be called) were no less a part of the capitalist system than neo-liberalism was; in fact they embodied a new, post-Fordist stage in capitalism, characterized by greater flexibility in production and labour (see Krims 2007, xxiii). The influence of economic structure would make Adorno's brand of criticism partly plausible,

particularly as regards the violence that monopolistic capitalism forces those in front of the microphone or the camera to inflict upon themselves (See Note 1 below). In addition, Curtis seems to have had an inclination for the rock and roll culture of fast living and early death. Both his biographies (Deborah Curtis's *Touching from a Distance*, and Mick Middles and Lindsay Reade's *Torn Apart*) register his admiration for rock's suicide culture (as voiced, for instance, in Bowie's "All the Young Dudes" and "Rock 'n' Roll Suicide") and for performers like Iggy Pop who were "pushing at the boundaries" (Middles and Reade 2006, 22) of popular music traditions, particularly the boundaries between life and performance.

As various biographical accounts suggest, producer Martin Hannett (Middles and Reade 2006, 127-32), manager Bob Gretton (Curtis 1995, 62; Middles and Reade 2006, 121, 185, 218, 246, 248; Nice 2011, 59-60, 118), and record company owner Wilson (Curtis 1995, 114-21, 137-38) created, in their different roles, a particularly isolated environment for the band to work and live in, separated from their social lives and families, so that they gradually gave up their jobs outside the band and devoted their lives to being rock musicians. The experience of "flow" (Turner 1974, 87-89) helped Curtis take control of his life within this liminoid environment. However, his dancing paroxysm on stage eventually came to be associated with the medical condition of epilepsy, from which he suffered.

A cursory look at the succession of events, drawing on the two complementary biographies of Curtis will suggest how Curtis's personal crisis precipitated. On 28 December 1978, Curtis suffered his first epileptic fit in the car while returning from a gig in The Hope And Anchor, Islington, London (Middles and Reade 2006, 105). Throughout 1979 the band earned a reputation for an intensity which was dead serious—Curtis's "trance-like" dance (Middles and Reade 2006, 219) led the band's rhythm. As Hook would admit when explaining the difficulties encountered reforming the group as New Order after Curtis died, "It was him [Curtis] that directed everything" (Nice 2011, 125): a dance which was variously described, for example, as the "dead fly dance" (Ott 2004, 86; Nice 2011, 82) or a "trapped butterfly flapping" (Morley 2008, 113). On 16 April 1979, Ian Curtis's daughter Natalie was born. He would be reluctant to hold the baby: apparently he was afraid to have an unexpected fit and drop her (Curtis 1995, 79). The band did not have any dates during that month, as they were recording *Unknown Pleasures* (1-17 April). But by October they were back on the road, doing twenty gigs in a month, on the strength of their album. From November 1979 to March 1980 the band were playing ever more gigs, while the "flow" seemed to balance Curtis's mounting depression. He found himself estranged from his wife, and feeling closer to a lover from the music world whom he met in August 1979 (Middles and Reade 2006, 154). Between 17 and 31 March 1980 the band recorded *Closer*. Curtis was visibly downcast during the sessions, his lyrics and melancholy voice seeming to express his real feelings (Middles and Reade 2006, 213), but the new album would demand new gigs for

promotion. From 2 to 4 April they played exhausting gigs at the Moonlight Club and The Rainbow in London: organizers often forgot Gretton's instruction not to use strobe lights, because they affected the singer. Curtis suffered his worst fits on stage (Middles and Reade 2006, 219-21). On 6 April 1980 Curtis attempted suicide taking an overdose of prescription pills, and his wife called an ambulance (Middles and Reade 2006, 222). Two days later the band were playing at Derby Hall, Bury. Replacing Curtis (who was only able to sing two slow songs) with other singers resulted in a riot. He was seen sitting in the wings, in tears and blaming himself for the disaster. The last two gigs in April had to be cancelled. The band managed one more gig on 2 May at Birmingham, their last. For the next few days, Curtis stayed at the homes of his music colleagues Gretton, Sumner, and Wilson, rather than his own house, as if they were trying to preserve his liminoid isolation. However, on 18 May 1980 the singer went back home, and hanged himself in the kitchen the night before departing on the band's first US tour.

Having entered the liminoid life through his band, Curtis had gone even further and locked himself into his own world (an inclination shown in his early, unseen, lyric "Out of Touch" (in Curtis 1995, 189) but most noticeable in the recording session of *Closer* (see Middles and Reade 2006, 210), until his communication with others became seriously impeded. Joy Division had become his "threshold" (Latin *limen*) to a different world, and at the gig at Derby Hall, Bury (8 April) he had realized, as he saw the band playing without him—an image matching something he had seen in moments of "clairvoyance" (Middles and Reade 2006, 234)—he definitively distanced himself from them, and there was no going back, as suggested by the last lyrics he wrote, "In a Lonely Place":

Hangman looks round as he waits,  
 Cord stretches tight then it breaks,  
 Someday we will die in your dreams,  
 How I wish we were here with you now." (in Curtis 1995, 185)

In hindsight many of his lyrics read like suicide notes, the musings of a self-tortured young man contemplating the ultimate abyss, like those romantic mountaineers who wondered at the limits of life from sublime heights. Biographers of the band agree that the Derby Hall gig pushed him over the edge: "Weeping uncontrollably . . . [he] in all likelihood crossed a boundary on the night of April 8<sup>th</sup> from which he never returned" (Ott 2004, 112). He had gone over the threshold. He did not seem to feel up to crossing another very important threshold (Turner 1974, 58), for the American tour would have given Joy Division a more international status, as well as a fresh lease of life. The other three members of the band stayed within the liminoid. In Hook's recent declarations, "We should have had some time off . . . but we watched Ian go . . . and we worked very hard, and that way we were able to block out the

awfulness” (2bitmonkey 2013). The remaining band members went on to become the highly acclaimed electronic dance band New Order.

The reason for Curtis’s death will remain *overdetermined*, an obscure side-effect of his artistic performance, an unhappy performative in the Austinian sense, as I argue elsewhere (Valdés Miyares 2013, 7-8). Whether he was psychologically frustrated by the disempowering escapism of the music industry and mass culture as set out in Theodor Adorno’s model of cultural materialism (Walton 2008, 60-62), a fashion victim of the romantic myth of the rock star’s early death as argued by his wife Deborah (Curtis 1995, 7), or “a people pleaser” split into more personas than he could cope with.<sup>1</sup> In the view of Joy Division bass player Hook’s recent memoir (Hook 2012, 54), he lost control of the band, and of the music which was giving meaning to his life. For he was not, as his lyrics seem to make him out to be, a tortured soul most of the time, he also got from the music scene what may be termed a Lacanian sense of *jouissance*.<sup>2</sup> He had begun, however, to feel like a freak show exhibiting his epilepsy for a paying audience (for an analysis of Curtis’s experience of disability in the context of countercultural freakery see Church 2006). This was bound to bring about a crisis, destroying the balance he had been carefully maintaining, as he anticipated in the song “Passover” from the album *Closer* (“This is a crisis I knew had to come, / Destroying the balance I’d kept”). Nobody though took his lyrics literally.

In the words of Paul Morley (2008, 270), the music critic who could be credited with the best understanding of Joy Division, “their music is about, finally, isolation.” Far from celebrating the artist’s creative world, “Isolation” is an expression of intense remorse for its results, interpreted as the personal failure of a human being who should be social, but cannot be—being a rock star, even one only just beginning to enjoy success and popularity, had taken up too much of Curtis’s personal life: it had become another, self-destructive, sublime existence on the threshold. As he repeated

<sup>1</sup> Adorno’s comments on the jazz musician may be partly relevant to the sort of pressure Curtis might have come to feel, as he states “the jazz musician . . . comes more and more to resemble the goal-keeper. The virtues required of him are undistractability, attention, preparedness and concentration. He becomes an improviser in a compulsory situation. The illusionlessness of his performance is turned into that sporting facility which consists on being unsettled by nothing. Nothing is more frowned upon than rubato. Under monopoly conditions the heir to the virtuoso is he who accommodates himself most efficiently to the team. In so far as he does stand out personally in any way, this is regulated by the function which he performs in the team, in the ideal case by effacing himself, leaping to save a goal and then serving the collective. The jazz musician and everyone in front of the microphone or the camera are forced to inflict violence upon themselves. Indeed the more rewarded are those who do not even require this violence to be exercised upon them in the first place, those who are so utterly compliant with the expected behaviour that they can even simulate the signs of resistance spontaneously precisely because they no longer feel such resistance in themselves” (“The Schema of Mass Culture,” Adorno 1991, 76-77).

<sup>2</sup> My thanks are due to Dr Eduardo Varela, from the University of Vigo, for this observation. The Lacanian concept of *jouissance*, which arguably has no English equivalent, stresses gratification even “beyond the pleasure principle” (Johnson 2002). From this perspective, Curtis found himself before a “forced choice of enjoyment,” and took his pleasure in the liminoid to the last, even knowing that it would eventually cost him his life.

insistently at the end of the song “Disorder,” “I’ve got the spirit, but lose the feeling.” His tragedy was an expression of sublime feeling, of a performance which “defies its own finitude, as if fascinated by its own excessiveness,” as Lyotard would describe it ([1991] 1994, 55).<sup>3</sup> Read in hindsight, some of Curtis’s lyrics, such as “She’s Lost Control,” “Atrocity Exhibition” or “Love Will Tear Us Apart,” reflect the agony of an artist who knew he was pushing himself beyond safe human limits. It was this love for the liminoid, the no-man’s-land between life and performance that tore Curtis apart.

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<sup>3</sup> According to Lyotard ([1991] 1994, 17), in Kant’s *Analytic of the Sublime*, “sublime feeling is analysed as a double defiance. Imagination at the limits of *what* it can present does violence to itself in order to present *that* it can no longer present. Reason, for its part, seeks, unreasonably, to violate the interdict it imposes on itself and which is strictly critical, the interdict that prohibits it from finding objects corresponding to its concepts of sensible intuition. In these two aspects, thinking defies its own finitude, as if fascinated by its own excessiveness. It is the desire for limitlessness that it feels in the sublime ‘state’: happiness and unhappiness.”

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II.

ROUND TABLES



Sacred Sexuality:  
Spirituality and Wholeness in African American Women's Texts

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Keywords: African American female identity; spirituality; wholeness; silence; ancestry

I. INTRODUCTION

As Evelyn M. Hammonds suggests in her article "Toward a Genealogy of Black Female Sexuality: The Problematic of Silence," (1997) there are certain aspects of black female sexuality which have been under analyzed, such as pleasure and agency. Departing from Audre Lorde's affirmation that black sexualities can be read as one expression of the reclamation of the despised black female body focusing on female desire and agency, our round table introduces and theorizes sexuality as a site where silence is disrupted, imagining a positive, affirming sexuality. To this end, we explore the concept of sacred sexuality as one dimension of the search for wholeness in African American women's literature, and the view of African cosmology that focuses on the principles of the interconnectedness, interrelatedness and interdependency of everything. Lorde warned us about the dangers of separating the sexual from the spiritual, bringing forward the role of spirituality and arguing that there is a simultaneous relationship between sexuality, spirituality, and the personal and political empowerment of women. Therefore our round table looks into the theoretical implications of eroticism and spirituality in the works of several African American women writers and their impact on oppression from the standpoint of intersectionality, multiple jeopardy, Black feminism, and Black queer studies.

## 2. DAMAGED SEXUALITIES, FRAGMENTED SELVES: SPIRITUAL RECOVERY FROM ABUSE IN PEARL CLEAGE'S *FLYIN' WEST*

In the last twenty years there has been an increase in the number of plays by African American women that address the issue of incest or sexual abuse. Pearl Cleage's *Flyin' West* (1992), Cheryl L. West's *Jar the Floor* (1995), Suzan Lori-Parks's *In the Blood* (2000), Kia Corthron's *Breath, Boom* (2002), and Katori Hall's *Hoodoo Love* (2007) are just some examples that illustrate this tendency. The characters who have suffered sexual violence are in different phases in their particular quest for wholeness: in some cases they choose not to be involved in a sexual relationship; in other instances they resort to violence towards themselves, their perpetrators, or other victims (Pineda-Hernandez 2012, 114); and yet in other cases they commit themselves to a spiritual search marked by collaboration with other black women. My research provides evidence that suggests that the level of success that the different characters will have in their involvement with other women, in the on-going development of their sexual identities and in the active performance of religious or spiritual acts will mark the extent to which they will achieve wholeness and recovery after these traumatic events in their lives. I focus particularly on Pearl Cleage's *Flyin' West* (1992).

*Flyin' West* is a play set in 1898, in Nicodemus, Kansas, where three sisters, Sophie, Fannie and Minnie, have recently been reunited. From the first act, audiences witness how Minnie behaves like the victim of domestic violence that she is, trying to conceal her bruises and acting submissive in the presence of the perpetrator. However, the emphasis of this first section is on the "sacred bond" between the sisters, which is staged both for the spectator and for the rest of the cast through a ritualistic dance. Following Patricia Hill Collins and Monica Coleman, two black feminist scholars, I analyze this quasi-religious interaction that the sisters have and the consequences it may have on Minnie's recovery from abuse. In this dance, Sophie acts as the "conjure woman," and just like Baby Suggs in Toni Morrison's *Beloved* (1987) or Gloria Naylor's *Mama Day* (1988), Sophie leads the simple choreography in a call and response pattern inherently connected to the historical African religious roots which served as the foundation for African American religious thought. Thus, with this simple ritual, Cleage establishes the connection between these "free Negro women," but she also links them to African American religious traditions brought in by African slaves, to previous literary texts stressing the importance of conjuring and also to other black women of African descent. Since slavery times, music and dance have been used as a source of agency and as a tool of liberation for the Black community at large. Through music Blacks have been able to articulate their struggles, empower themselves and resist oppressive forces (Sambol-Tosco 2004). By introducing music and choreography as a diegetic element in this section of the play, Cleage stresses the message of "trust, courage and love" that the sisters give to each other, stabilizing individual identity and emphasizing communal relationships to build liberating epistemologies.

### 3. IN SEARCH OF WHOLENESS: RECONSTRUCTING SPIRITUALITY, SEXUALITY, LOVE, AND THE EROTIC IN ALICE WALKER'S *BY THE LIGHT OF MY FATHER'S SMILE*

This is a reflection upon the search for the African American identity and, more specifically, for the identity of the African American woman, through the analysis of Alice Walker's novel, *By the Light of My Father's Smile*, which serves as a guiding light in the search for the Black self. Setting Audre Lorde's definition of the erotic as the basis on which to lay the groundwork for the analysis of wholeness, a parallel between Alice Walker's ideas and Donna Aza Wier-Soley's concept of the spiritual and the erotic is drawn in an effort to arrive at a better understanding of the African American female identity. Indubitably, and according to Lorde, Weir-Soley and Walker, such identity can only be complete upon the acquisition of wholeness of the self. In *Eroticism, Spirituality, and Resistance in Black Women's Writings* (2009), Donna Aza Wier-Soley states that for someone to be spiritual "is to be inwardly focused, relying more upon the acquisition of knowledge (intuition, messages from the body, insight gained from meditation or fasting, gut feelings, dreams, sensory and supersensory perceptions, prayer, praise and ritual) than upon external directives and epistemes to guide their choices" (2009, 4). Relying on the African cosmos, Alice Walker's *By The Light of my Father's Smile* fuses the spiritual and the erotic (life and death) by proposing a plane of existence in which the living interact with the dead. Characters already crossed-over, such as Miguelito (the whole, the pure at heart), and living characters, such as Mr. Robinson (the westernized male dominated world), engage in a dialogue of learning and teaching while searching for the wholeness of being. Such relationships parallel what Weir-Soley's calls the "loa-devotee" interaction (2009, 75), which is necessary to weed out the negative in pursuit of a complete state of being; in other words, it is through the guidance of a *loa* (a person from the other side in the African cosmology of Voodoo, signified by Miguelito in the novel) that black beings (like Mr Robinson) can become whole. In the novel, *loa* and devotee will explore the true meanings behind terms such as sexuality, spirituality and love, and their role in female-male relationships. Once these concepts have been understood, the need to possess others or the urge to hold on to those we love will no longer exist, as these are human feelings that fragment, divide and distance true relationships. Walker vouches for the wholeness of black being which resides in feeling at peace with oneself and giving peace to others (having crossed over or not) and can only be acquired by letting go off self-satisfying needs while understanding that death is not the end. In tandem with this, wholeness is the ultimate state of self-completion, only attainable through undoing the harm caused to those we love. It will be up to Miguelito, in this loa-devotee relationship to help Mr. Robinson remedy the harm caused to his daughter Magdalena in pursuit of self-completion. As a result Magdalena, a crossed-over character who, while alive, was tormented by her turbulent relationship with

her father will at last attain what in the African cosmology of Voodoo is known as a state of wholeness. In this fashion male-female relationships are dealt with from an ancestral perspective inwardly focused on Black human interactions, be those father-daughter or male-female. Relying on a world of indigenous ancestral practices, which Weir-Soley, a few decades later, will interconnect with the African-Haitian cosmos. *By the Light of my Father's Smile* presents us with an insightful, simple and clear message: black identity, and within it, female identity, will only be achievable by turning to the world of Black ancestry and reconstructing notions such as spirituality, sexuality, love, and the erotic, each so very much distorted by the male-dominated white world in which African Americans have been forced to live.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Female bonding, and religious and spiritual practices are used in *Flyin' West* as a strategy towards recovery from abuse, but in a broader sense, the sisters are just replicating what their African ancestors did in the past. Walker in *By the Light of my Father's Smile* posits a distinct approach to spirituality in her search for wholeness introducing a viable path against fragmentation. As theoreticians of black female sexuality, we need to develop a methodology that allows black women to contest as social and cultural agents the legacies of symbolic power in order to define the terrain of black women's sexuality, based on black women's sexual experience by exploring the expressions of sexual desire, enlarging not repressing, exploring instead of restricting, emphasizing pleasure instead of danger, focusing largely on the building of agency by reclaiming the body as well as subjectivity, transforming the "politics of silence" into speech and telling.

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## Cities of the West: The American West from the Top of a Skyscraper

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This article proposes a line of research that has been ignored when considering ecocritical approaches to Western American literature: the urban quality of the West. This urban perspective enriches contemporary Western literature, putting an end to restrictive notions of Western writing. The work of three different writers will be considered here to offer diverse approaches.

Keywords: Western American literature; ecocriticism; urban writing; Jonathan Franzen; Willy Vlautin; Sherman Alexie

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The American West has been persistently related with notions of raw individualism and conquest. The pioneer days, and founding concepts such as that of manifest destiny, were composed through the idealization of wilderness and natural landscape. Ethan Edwards' adventure to find her niece would not have been successful (or epic) if John Ford had not relied on the role played by Monument Valley.

New Western history stressed the tension established between romanticized or stereotyped notions and the real facts. Scholars vindicated the use of critical features previously overlooked, among them, the urban actuality of the West. Long ago, Walter Prescott Webb used the term "oasis civilization" to explain, as Wallace Stegner does, that the West "must be eighty percent urban" (Stegner 1998, 148). Richard

White agrees with this perception: “Although the popular image of the West was, and remains, one of scattered populations and isolation, the West in fact very quickly became an urban region whose cities held sway over vast hinterlands. By 1880 the West beyond the Great Plains was the most urbanized region in the country” (1991, 391). Statistics do not lie; the Census Bureau reveals that, of the nation’s four census regions, the West is the most urban, with 89.8 percent of its population residing within urban areas.<sup>1</sup>

This article focuses on three different literary examples that contribute to denoting the growing importance that urban landscapes play in Western American literature. We follow the literary freeway of these authors to drive from the Midwest to Puget Sound and thus offer a contrasting portrait of American literary cities of the West.

The American Midwest has traditionally been considered the depository of traditional moral and social values that make up the soul of the United States: the “real body of America” in Sherwood Anderson’s words (1969, 241-42). The typical vision of the Midwest (families, farm owners, small towns populated by “moral and social mediators,” Poole 2008, 265) forgets the importance of Midwestern cities like Saint Louis, Saint Paul, Detroit or Chicago whose features cannot be articulated with this agrarian imagery. An interesting writer in this respect is Jonathan Franzen, who explores the features and contrasts of Midwestern cities in three of his novels: *The Twenty-Seventh City* (1988), about St. Louis; *The Corrections* (2001), where St. Jude is a disguised St. Louis; and *Freedom* (2010), set in St. Paul.

Franzen’s first novel (*The Twenty-Seventh City*), in fact, refers to a Midwestern city in its very title and focuses its attention on St. Louis’s process of suburbanization. However, the novel does not really explore the Western (or Midwestern) dimension of this city. Franzen’s latest novel, *Freedom*, does seem to pay particular attention to the Midwestern locales (as well as, and in contrast to, the Eastern Coast) where it is set; and its focus shifts from the suburbs to the abandoned center of the city, and from suburbanization to gentrification. Walter and Patty Berglund are actually described as “the young pioneers of Ramsey Hill” in their effort to gentrify the “old heart of St. Paul,” which “had fallen on hard times three decades earlier” (Franzen 2010, 3). Like Walter’s Scandinavian ancestors, they “kill themselves for ten years” to recover this neighborhood, to “relearn certain life skills that [their] own parents had fled to the suburbs specifically to unlearn” (2010, 4). In fact, the contrast between the “old heart of St. Paul” and the suburbs, and these characters’ efforts to gentrify and recover this Midwestern city can easily be interpreted as a metaphor for the recuperation of the true American values represented by the pioneers and lost by a generation of suburbanites.

This line of thinking should also be linked to the constant movements of the characters between the East and the West, which seem to be narrated with a symbolic

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.census.gov>

function reminiscent of the most famous work of another Midwestern writer, F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*. At the end of Fitzgerald's novel, Nick Carraway says, "I see now that this has been a story of the West" (Fitzgerald 1925, 183). Edwin Fussell (1952) highlighted the symbolic meaning of this casual sentence: If the West has typically been seen as a land of promise and possibility, as the symbol of American ideals, Tom and Daisy travel East instead, and represent a betrayal of the democratic ideals associated with their country. The East in *The Great Gatsby* becomes, then, a symbol of the corruption of American values. In contrast, the West (or the Midwest) represents the moral roots to which Nick returns in the end, as well as Gatsby's dream, which Fitzgerald equates with the dream of the first settlers (the "American Dream"), through the identification between the "green light" of Daisy's dock and the "green breast of the new world" which the first settlers would have seen on their journey westward towards their desired destination.

Like Tom, Daisy, Nick and Gatsby, the characters in *Freedom* also keep moving between the East and the West. Patty goes West to escape from the corrupted East of her birth in search of her moral center, which she finds in Walter Berglund, a Midwesterner who represents the innocence and ethics she was looking for. Their subsequent efforts to gentrify the "old heart of St. Paul" should also be seen in this light; an idealistic identification with the spirit of the pioneers, as well as a rejection of the East and more contemporary values. Later on, having failed in their (Mid) Western pioneering experience, both Patty and Walter decide to go East in search of a new life. But, when they travel East, the result is disappointing; for them, once again, the lure of the East represents a displacement of the American dream, which brings nothing but moral and personal failure. Franzen's symbolic use of the East and the West, on the one hand, and city centers and the suburbs, on the other, can then be related to what Ronald Weber called the "fall from pioneer perfection" (1992, 17), which Midwestern novelist Willa Cather explained like this: "we must face the fact that the splendid story of the pioneers is finished, and that no new story worthy to take its place has yet begun" (1923, 238).

Although Patty and Walter's struggles to create this "new story" fail in the end, they certainly seem worthwhile. In fact, their efforts can actually be equated with Franzen's own as a novelist, through the use of the metaphor of the suburbs vs. inner cities. He used it in 1996 in a famous essay published in *Harper's Magazine* with the title "Perchance to Dream," which compared "the institution of writing and reading serious novels" to "a grand old Middle American city" (1996, 39), where "white male" writers had taken flight to the "clonal suburbs of mass entertainment," while the "depressed literary inner city" had remained home to "black, Hispanic, Asian, Native American, gay, and women's communities, which have moved into the structures left behind by the departing straight white male" (1996, 39). Franzen's latest novels (*The Corrections* and *Freedom*) could then be considered his own attempt at creating this "new [pioneering] story" and resettling the "depressed literary inner city."

Contemporary urban literature set in Nevada illustrates some of the main trends in recent western writing, and also contains unique portraits of the western urban landscape and scenery. Thus, a distinctive characteristic of contemporary Nevada writing is its peculiar representation of city life, due to the special characteristics of its main urban center, Las Vegas. However, the weight of the neon myth of Las Vegas has often eclipsed other Nevada cities, in particular Reno, the largest city in Nevada until 1960, overshadowed by the huge social and cultural popularity of Las Vegas since the mid-twentieth century. This is also true in literary realm, where Reno has often been neglected by major writers of the past century, with a few notable exceptions such as Walter Van Tilburg Clark's novel *The City of Trembling Leaves* (1945) and Arthur Miller's short story "The Misfits" (1957).

Reno has mostly inspired stereotypical novels and short stories stressing the topics of vice, gambling and divorce as the basis of Reno lifestyle. Their authors, mostly outsiders, have used Reno as a suitable setting for melodramatic tales, full of unrealistic characters, mainly intended for the popular market. However, it may be argued that in the last few decades Nevada writers have offered more realistic literary approaches to Reno. Thus, Monique Urza, a native of Reno herself, sets her poignant novel *The Deep Blue Memory* (1993) partially in Reno. Urza's father, Robert Laxalt, also employs Reno as the fictional setting of the last sections of *Child of the Holy Ghost* (1992), offering an interesting portrait of the city in the first decades of the twentieth century and its wide range of temptations for young shepherders. Other recent ethnic writers, such as Emma Sepúlveda or Verita Black Prothro, have written insightful non-fiction and short stories that testify to the multicultural condition of contemporary Reno life.

Nevertheless, none of the literary pieces published about Reno in the last few decades has been able to equal Willy Vlautin's impressive portrait of the city in *The Motel Life* (2006) and *Northline* (2008). Both novels are major examples of realistic fiction on contemporary Reno life, revealing the darker underside behind the neon lights, which explore human frailties with an eye for compassion and solidarity. Vlautin's novels have become a major source of inspiration for a new generation of writers who have written powerful coming-of-age fiction set in Reno. Their authors are insiders such as Claire Vaye Watkins, (*Battleborn*, 2012), Tupelo Hassman (*Girlchild*, 2012) and Ben Rogers (*The Flamer*, 2012), who offer complex, dark and vivid portraits of Reno, departing from traditional tourist geography associated with this city.

Sherman Alexie's early works of fiction (*The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven*, *Reservations Blues*, etc.) dealt mostly with the tribulations faced by American Indians on the reservations of the Northwest. But after moving to Seattle in the mid-1990s, the author began to depict a wider range of characters that encompass not only "rez Indians" suffering from indigent conditions, but also middle-class—and even affluent—Natives and non-Natives who have become an integral part of the human

landscape in Northwestern cities. As he has explained in interviews, this shift of interest seemed natural if only because more than two thirds of all Native Americans in the U.S. live nowadays in big cities (Nelson 2010, 39). Donald Fixico has noted in *The Urban Indian Experience in America* that for American Indians starting out in urban contexts in the 1950s was not easy: "Social alienation, community prejudice, and racism made urban life difficult, forcing 70 percent of the early relocates to return to their reservations and allotments" (2000, 5). However, it is a fact that two generations later, in the twenty-first century, many Natives have professional careers and are full members of the middle class: "Sure, he [William Loman] was an enrolled member of the Spokane Indian tribe, but he was also a fully recognized member of the notebook-computer tribe and the security-checkpoint tribe and the rental-car tribe and the hotel-shuttle-bus tribe and the cell-phone-roaming-charge tribe" (Alexie 2003, 109).

In Alexie's collections *The Toughest Indian in the World* (2000) and *Ten Little Indians* (2003), many of the stories take place in Seattle or the surrounding area. As several reviewers have remarked, theme, character and place come together to give a strong sense of the contemporary urban Northwest (Mead 2003). Most of Alexie's characters seem quite comfortable in this coastal seaport city due to its multicultural makeup and its openness to strangers. Not only is the percentage of Natives in the population of the city significant, but the history of American Indian presence in the Seattle area dates back at least 4,000 years before the first white settlers reached Alki Point in 1851, and the city itself was named after Chief Si'ahl, a famous leader of the local tribes of the Duwamish and Suquamish. Like many other cities in the Pacific Northwest, Seattle has gone through several economic booms and busts occasioned by the rapid inception and decline of particular industries. Alexie's post-turn-of-the-century short fiction catches glimpses of the protean and culturally-mixed character of the city, as the assorted human groups have left their imprint on the local arts, dress codes, music and cuisine: "After eating lunch alone in Good Food, a postcolonial wonder house that served Japanese teriyaki, Polish sausage sandwiches, Italian American pizza, and Mexican and Creole rice and beans, she sipped the last of her coffee and looked for a waiter" (Alexie 2003, 69).

Alexie has acknowledged in interviews that, since he has moved into the city, his fiction has become "less and less Indiancentric" (Peterson 2009). The fact that the city milieu generates constant changes and frequent interactions across racial boundaries has compelled him to contemplate the possibility of forming new alliances. Andrews has noted that Alexie has become more of a "cosmopolitan writer" in his attempt to counter the Manifest Manners of the dominant culture, which impedes the reconstruction of a particular heritage (2010, 51). Although he has retained some of the staple topics from his earlier fiction, such as identity issues, the fight against stereotypes, basketball or love, the new urban context requires interesting reformulations. Thus, his characters often see their self-definition and fate determined

as much by the jobs they hold, the company they keep or the neighborhoods they live in as by their ethnic roots: "After they left Tan Tan, they [Mary Lynn and Jeremiah, a mixed couple] drove a sensible and indigenous Ford Taurus over the 520 bridge, back toward their house in Kirkland, a five-bedroom rancher only ten blocks away from the Microsoft campus. Mary Lynn walked to work. That made her feel privileged" (Alexie 2000, 15). If this metropolitan context makes anything clear, it is that the fluid and dynamic urban spaces invite their residents to traverse lines of race and background so as to establish connections with other ethnic groups (see Ladino 2009, 37-38). In a way, Native Americans discover that cities such as Seattle provide room to do both: launch one's identity in totally new directions, and revamp and refashion one's tribal traditions: "Two Indians crying in the back of a used-book store. Indians are always crying, Corliss thought, but at least we're two Indians crying in an original venue. What kind of ceremony was that? An original ceremony! Every ceremony has to be created somewhere; her Eden was a used-book store" (Alexie 2003, 49).

It is our belief that these connections provide a network of perspectives to assemble a varied overview of the American West and its literature, one that considers urban western writing as a potential subgenre, and ecocriticism as a way to widen the cultural and social understanding of the West. This urban perspective puts an end to restrictive notions of contemporary western literature. The West is wild as much as it is metropolitan. This contrast between the paved and the unpaved becomes a rich element in Western American fiction.

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# The Short Story and the Verbal-Visual Dialogue

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This round table aims at examining the possibilities the short story offers for verbal-visual dialogue. Apart from approaching the generic implications of such a dialogue for short fiction using the work of A.S. Byatt as a referent, the round table explores the transformation of the conception of literature and artistic representation by writers of short fiction at the turn of the century, taking the works of Virginia Woolf and Edith Wharton as cases in point.

Keywords: short story; verbal-visual dialogue; genre; A.S. Byatt; Virginia Woolf; Edith Wharton

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## 1. THE VERBAL-VISUAL DIALOGUE AND THE GENERIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SHORT STORY

The interaction between word and image has emerged as one of the most prolific and enriching fields for contemporary literature and criticism, and in this context the short story occupies a predominant position because the defining characteristics of the genre make it an apt medium for interartistic dialogue. Short fiction, in its unity of effect and shortness, offers multiple possibilities for the development of different strategies and techniques in the *ut pictura poesis* tradition, such as the *ekphrasis* or verbal evocation of an artistic object. This can be seen reflected in the works of A.S. Byatt, and especially in her short story “Christ in the House of Martha and Mary” (1998).<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This essay benefits from the collaboration of the research project “Women’s Tales: The Short Fiction of Contemporary British Writers, 1974-2013” (FEM2013-41977-P). The contribution by Carmen

In its fictionalisation of the daily lives of the characters in Velázquez's *Cristo en casa de Marta y María* (c. 1618), and of the artist himself, Byatt's story epitomises the potential of short fiction for the verbalisation of the visual experience. Indeed, this ekphrastic narrative provides a detailed painting in words of the content, structure, and arrangement of Velázquez's work, paying special attention to the girl's "sulky, fleshy, furiously frowning face" (Byatt 1998, 229). As the angry expression of this character melts when she looks at herself in the painting, her frown turns into laughter thanks to the transformative power of art: "The momentary coincidence between image and woman vanished, as though the rage was still and eternal in the painting and the woman was released into time. The laughter was infectious, as laughter is; after a moment [the older woman], and then the painter, joined in. He produced wine, and the women uncovered the offering they had brought, spicy tortilla and salad greens. They sat down and ate together" (1998, 230).

This ending is very significant, illustrating two of the defining characteristics of the short story, as identified by Adrian Hunter in his discussion of the "difficulty" of the genre; a difficulty which goes hand-in-hand with the concepts of plotlessness, incompleteness, openness and allusiveness which Hunter associates with modernist aesthetics (2012, 29). Two of these notions (those of openness and allusiveness) find their way into the conclusion of the story, where Byatt leaves the long-term effect of the painter's lesson for the characters' lives open to the reader's imagination. This connects with another trait of the modern short story, according to Suzanne C. Ferguson: "The moral is no longer an easily abstractable truism verified by an implied author, but a complex and hardly won proposition whose validity remains conditional and implicit, unconfirmed by the authorial voice, giving the story both 'unity of effect' and a certain vagueness or mystery" (1996, 298).

This "vagueness" (or "allusiveness") leads Ferguson to describe the modern short story as "a manifestation of impressionism" (1996, 298), which acquires special relevance in light of the visual qualities of Byatt's story. Its examination demonstrates how the short story, with its characteristics of aptness for expansion and contraction, condensation and allusiveness, proves to be a fertile genre for the development of links with the visual and the pictorial in the field of relational dialogue.

## 2. THE SHORT STORY AND VERBAL-VISUAL DIALOGUE: VIRGINIA WOOLF'S *MONDAY OR TUESDAY* (1921)

In one of her most well-known essays, "Mr Bennett and Mrs Brown" (1924), Virginia Woolf enigmatically affirmed that "on or about December 1910 human character changed" (1988, 421). Despite the fact that British society was at the time undergoing substantial changes, it seems possible that Woolf was referring in her assertion to her

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personal involvement in the organization of the First Post-Impressionist Exhibition, held in London at the Grafton Galleries in December 1910, which was irrevocably to change the perception and tradition of the visual arts in England.

Woolf's famous affirmation in "Mr Bennett and Mrs Brown" has often been taken as her private acknowledgement of the influence that Post-Impressionist painting had on her own art (Gillespie 1988; Quick 1985; Stansky 1997) and, more specifically, on the short stories which Woolf was writing while helping Roger Fry and the Bells to organise the exhibition—to be compiled in the collection *Monday or Tuesday* (1921). Fry's interest in *avant garde* art springs from a reformulation of *mimesis*, with the conviction that nature is not to be imitated but rather subjectively conceived. In general terms, the stories compiled in *Monday or Tuesday* are highly experimental, moving away from traditional narrative patterns and literary elements (author, voice, narrator, setting, character) in favour of sensations and atmospheres, which is not to say that Woolf eluded representations of the physical world and of the tensions that prefigure it. The short story itself in its independence and hybridity favours a movement which would culminate with the works Woolf produced in the 1920s: in this sense, "Kew Gardens"—first published in 1919 and compiled in *Monday or Tuesday* in 1921—exemplifies the potential of the short story to reformulate a traditional conception of *mimesis* in order to contemplate new literary challenges.

Furthermore, "Kew Gardens" is an example of an intertextual dialogue between the verbal and the visual in Virginia Woolf's writing. As she herself argued, the short story genre seemed to her more suitable to convey the experience of the new which the narrative shows, especially working on a new conception of both "vision" and "design" after Fry's inspiring aesthetics in *Vision and Design* (1920). Woolf at points abandons what she defined as the "chains of anthropocentrism," the human measure of things and experience in order to provide an alternative vision of experience, which is paradoxically more effective in its communicative needs. The inefficaciousness of conventional verbal language is stressed in "Kew Gardens" by the characters, while they are, however, capable of emotionally reacting to the sights which the Botanical Gardens offer the viewer. By forcing readers to overhear and make sense of the incomplete, overlapping conversations, Woolf foregrounds the fragmentation of conventional language and its limitations in conveying meaning.

### 3. THE INTERACTION OF VISUAL ARTS AND LITERATURE IN EDITH WHARTON'S "THE DUCHESS AT PRAYER" (1900) AND "THE HOUSE OF THE DEAD HAND" (1904)

Many of Wharton's stories aimed to denounce the oppressing situation of women at the turn of the twentieth century, as is the case of "The Duchess at Prayer" and "The House of the Dead Hand." In the former, a sinister Duke commissions a sculpture of his wife which is to be set in the chapel just off her chamber, where the Duchess

spends most of her time, allegedly worshipping the relics of Saint Blandina during the long absences of her husband. The statue, though, is simply the alibi for the Duke to lock the entrance to the crypt where the relic rests and where the Duchess has secret encounters with the Duke's young cousin, who in fact dies imprisoned in the crypt. On the same night, the Duchess dies too, agued by her impotence to save her lover. In parallel to the real woman it represents, the statue undergoes a change of expression, and thus reflects thereafter the anguish experienced by the woman.

The choice of gothic elements in these stories reinforces the idea that women "are figuratively or literally killed into art" (Orlando 2007, 22). In "The House of the Dead Hand," an Englishman named Wyant travels to Italy seeking out Dr Lombard, who is in possession of a previously unidentified Leonardo painting—actually purchased by Lombard's fear-stricken daughter, Sybilla, with the money that was to be her dowry. As Wyant approaches the property, an ominous darkness takes over. This matches the description of the house, whose macabre name is owed to the sculpture of a dead woman's hand hanging on its door (Wharton 2011, 362). The hand becomes allegorical of the situation of Sybilla. Tied to her father's house and rule, she is metaphorically dead in life. Furthermore, as well as the inert and powerless hand of the daughter, the sculpture comes to symbolize the hand of the tyrannical father.

The description of the painting reinforces this idea of female confinement through art. It is governed by a sitting lady surrounded by some of the classical symbols of affluence and art and the legend "Lux Mundi," while the background is presided over by an image of the Crucifixion. The lady is posing with "one hand droop[ing]," relating her with the sculpture of the drooping hand on the front door of the house—and, consequently, with Sybilla, whose hand she has also metaphorically offered to her father through her absolute submission to his rule. As representatives of male deities, the hanging Christ in the picture and the Dionisus epitomize the overpowering presence of patriarchal authority, which guarantees the surveillance of female confinement and, therefore, of "light" in the world.

As discussed above, Wharton resorts to the inertness and immobility that characterizes any work of art in order to attest for the reality of women who, at the turn of the century, find themselves restricted within the demarcations designed for them by male artificers who continue to carve these women according to their standards.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The contributions to this roundtable have proved how verbal-visual interaction plays a crucial role for the configuration, structure and meaning of short stories. In this sense, apart from exploring the characteristics of short fiction in the light of strategies for the pictorial dialogue, the roundtable has revealed that, while Woolf moves in *Monday or Tuesday* from representational art to a more abstract understanding of

perspective and subjectivity, in the shorter fiction of Wharton the confluence of literature and visual arts chiefly serves as a testimony and a rejection of the systematic passivisation of women's roles.

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## Individual and Community in Modernist Fiction in English

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This round table aims at introducing the authors' research on the notion of "community" as theorized by critics Jean-Luc Nancy and Maurice Blanchot, as well as illustrating how this conceptual framework may prove fruitful for the systematic analysis of the interaction between individual and community in Modernist fiction. We concentrate on two case studies: that of the Irish modernist writer James Joyce and his contemporary successor Edna O'Brien, and that of Virginia Woolf's communities of dissolution and death.

Keywords: individual; community; singularity; finitude; Modernism

\* \* \*

### 1. OPERATIVE AND INOPERATIVE COMMUNITIES

Paula Martín Salván's presentation aims at introducing the key theoretical tools that constitute the basis of our research on the notion of "community" and its fictional representation in Modernist narrative. Our starting point is the critical tendency to read the modernist novel as the site of a conflict between interiority and exteriority. Most critics of modernist fiction endorse the idealistic-romantic version of the artist's conflict popularized by modernist writers themselves, that the modernist self, driven by a desire to know itself, sets out in a suicidal exploration of interiority against reality. The conflict arises when the internal self fails to commune with the external reality, and such failure stands as evidence of an emotional, moral, perceptive, cognitive or spiritual misalliance. Hence the associated themes of isolation, solipsism

and self-destructiveness commonly identified as central to modernist fiction. This line of thought is illustrated in Michael Levenson's preface to *Modernism and the Fate of Individual*, where he claims that "the dislocation of the self within society is recapitulated within modernist forms" as the "effort to wrestle an image of autonomous subjectivity from intractable communal norms" (1991, xii-xiii).

Our initial hypothesis argues a different case. We hope to demonstrate that the aim of the modernist self (narrator or protagonist of the modernist novel) is not so much a quest of interiority but an attempt to redefine communal ties within a societal milieu that has rigidified and eroded communal life to the point of extinction. The rather uncontested hegemony of the critical tendency sketched above may obscure the role community plays in the thematic and ideological structure of modernist fiction. We believe, with Jessica Berman, that "in much modernist fiction we can already see community being imagined over and over again" (2001, 2), against the grain of exhausted "knowable communities" (Berman 2001, 2; Williams 1975, 165).

We are persuaded that this modernist redefinition of communal ties can be adeptly explored with the help of a theoretical framework that takes into account both the conceptual redefinition of *community*, as carried out by thinkers like M. Blanchot and J.L. Nancy—influenced by Georges Bataille and working in a post-Nietzschean and post-phenomenological tradition—and the role that novels play in the imaginative fashioning of alternative communities. In the early 1980s, these thinkers engaged in an intellectual dialogue—Nancy's *The Inoperative Community* (1983) and Blanchot's *The Unavowable Community* (1983), followed by Giorgio Agamben's *The Coming Community* (1990) and Roberto Esposito's *Communitas* (1998)—which has greatly energized the theoretical status of the notion of community.

All these theoretical interventions take their cue from Nancy's functional distinction between an "operative" (worked, organic) community and an "inoperative" or unworked community, which could be articulated as follows:

1. An *operative community* is the result of the imaginative working (*ouvrement*) fostered by human discourses. This is the dreamed community (the *Gemeinschaft* in Ferdinand Tönnies' terms) humans have allegedly lost, the utopian community they seek to reconstruct, a cultural chimera that stems from the ideological saturation of human society (*Gesellschaft*), especially in its post-romantic version. This model of community is defined as institutionalized and transcendental, based on notions of shared identity and common purpose provided by stable discursive and ritual practices. It is based on an excess of transcendence (Nancy 1991, 18) in which communal intimacy is attained through the transfiguration of death into meaningful substance (mystical body, homeland or native soil/blood) (15). This community liberates the individual from the sense of his own mortality. The discursive articulation of the false community is arguably tied to the narrative and/or political productivity of various constitutive tropes: the sacred (as pure), the pastoral (as enclosed), the link

(as transfinite), the sacrifice (as past, secret-revealing violence) and the apocalypse (as future, secret-revealing violence).

2. An *inoperative community* is based on its members' constant recognition of otherness, finitude and death. This is proposed as a tentative, unstable model of community formulated as the momentary encounter between singular beings having nothing in common but their own mortality (Nancy 1991, 26-27). According to Blanchot, a community is what "exposes by exposing itself" (1988, 12) to an "exteriority" otherwise branded as "death, the relation to the other, or speech" (12). For Blanchot, this second kind of community is defined by its spontaneity (30), all-inclusiveness (31) and the sense of its imminent dispersal (33). It is an evental community, which "happens" (32) only momentarily, without duration and without a projection or aim. It does not liberate from the recognition of mortality. Rather, it is only possible through such recognition. It is "the presentation to its members of their mortal truth" (11). For Blanchot, as for Nancy, this second kind of community is not made up of individual subjects but of singularities.<sup>1</sup> Nancy speaks of "immanence" when describing the finite compulsion of true communities. In both cases, and despite the variety of the designation (*otherness, finitude, externality, immanence*), the true community is characterized by its refusal to alienate itself into transcendence.

In our view, the modernist self unworks the existing relations of operative communities so as to authorize a mode of communal life based on the recognition of finitude, contingency and singularity. The key questions that our research addresses revolve around the articulation of these confronting models of community, and the interaction between individual and community in the general framework of the "new Modernist studies" (Mao and Walkowitz 2008). Thus, we expect to engage in discussion on the tropes, themes and dialogic interactions which betray a concern with the issues of the finite body, the contingency of existential processes, the isolation and sacrifice of the singular ego, the failure of communication, the need to commune with a cause, the rejection of essentialized collectives, and the yearning for Utopian brotherhoods.

## 2. ORGANIC AND UNWORKED COMMUNITIES IN THE IRISH SHORT FICTION OF JAMES JOYCE AND EDNA O'BRIEN

Pilar Villar Argáiz analyses the Irish short fiction of James Joyce and Edna O'Brien from the perspective of the communitarian theories proposed in the 1980s by Jean-Luc Nancy and Maurice Blanchot. First, she examines James Joyce's literary representation in his short story "The Dead" of the two possible models of community discussed by Nancy and Blanchot: an organic, operative community and

<sup>1</sup> See Nancy's definition of "singularity": "A singular being *appears*, as finitude itself: at the end (or at the beginning), with the contact of the skin (or the heart) of another singular being" (1991, 27-28).

a community that unworks the first, making it inoperative, what Nancy (1991, 15) calls the “*communauté désœuvrée*” and Blanchot (1988, 56), in a similar context, the “unavowable community” or “the community of those who have no community” (88). Accordingly, she explores Joyce’s synecdochic portrayal of Dublin, in particular the Misses Morkan’s party, as a communitarian representation of Ireland. She specifically identifies and examines the five organic communities that Joyce depicts within his native country: the Catholic community, the nationalist community, the Dublin bourgeoisie, Gabriel’s family, and, finally, his marriage.

All these operative communities overlap, intersect, and are variously represented at the party by means of different characters. Joyce emphasises the essentialist rituals upon which these communities are based; in the process, he also highlights the instability and fallibility of the tropes of fusion and communion. Drawing on Heidegger, theorists such as Nancy, Blanchot, Esposito and Agamben suggest the existence of a truer community at a pre-ethical, ontological level. Their alternative communitarian proposal is composed of finite singularities which are exposed to the finitude of others. One such inoperative community is envisaged at the end of “The Dead.” Joyce is interested in exposing otherness and finitude through moments of death. In the moment that Gabriel comes to terms with his own finitude, false organic communities collapse and he glimpses a truer communication between singularities. This unworked community is conveyed indirectly in Joyce’s short story by means of allusion and symbol: the window, the many literary references of death, the sleepy atmosphere in the end, and, above all, the snow “softly falling” all over Ireland and “through the universe” (Joyce 2000, 225).

In the second part of her presentation, Pilar Villar Argáiz explores Edna O’Brien’s critique in her short fiction of all forms of saturated communities by drawing on her 1984 anthology of short stories *A Fanatic Heart*. In particular, this Irish novelist challenges the conventional foundations of rural and metropolitan societies. As O’Brien throws the immanence of traditional communities into doubt, she tries to devise alternative communitarian forms in which previously marginalized subjects (most notably women and tinkers) can be more truthfully accommodated. In this analysis of O’Brien’s alternative community, Pilar Villar Argáiz particularly focuses on one aspect of Nancy and Blanchot’s communitarian theories: the “openness” of the non-saturated community to an irreducible outside. One of the main traits that Nancy assigns to the “inoperative” community is exposure to others. For Nancy, the self is always exposed to an exterior. This leaning of the one towards (an)other is explained by means of the concept “clinamen” (1991, 3-4). When the self is exposed to the outside, sharing with the other occurs, at the borders, or the limits, of finite beings. It is here where genuine communication between singularities becomes a possibility: “finitude itself *is* nothing; it is neither a ground nor an essence, nor a substance. But it appears, it presents itself, it exposes itself, and thus it *exists* as communication” (Nancy 1991, 28). For Blanchot, this “openness” to the alterity of

the other is also a distinctive feature of the unworked community. In particular, the moment of absolute exposure happens when one witnesses the death of the other. As he claims, this experience takes the self out of its “self,” thus exposing it to the radical alterity of the outside (Blanchot 1988, 9). Together with Nancy and Blanchot, Lévinas is also an indispensable name which should be considered here, as the philosopher of alterity par excellence. Indeed, his work *Totality and Infinite* is subtitled “An Essay on Exteriority” (1969), and “radical exteriority” and openness towards the “Other” are key concepts in Lévinas’s philosophical training.

Generally speaking, it could be claimed that this “openness” of the “inoperative” and “unavowable” community to the outside is reflected in O’Brien’s short fiction at three different levels: the thematic-dialectic level, a symbolic level, and the formal level. At the thematic-dialectic level, O’Brien envisages an alternative communal formation by favouring the presence of marginal subjects, singularities who clearly stand outside their closest organic communities through their defiance of collectively-sanctioned norms, or by their close experiences of solitude and finitude. This unworked community is also suggested at the symbolic level by the reiterative presence in O’Brien’s texts of “inoperative” emblems, most notably open windows, damp walls, and isolated spots in the exurbia. Finally, O’Brien emphasizes the “openness” of this alternative community at the formal level, by finalizing her short stories with open endings which defy all sense of organic closure. James Joyce will be often mentioned in this analysis, given the impact of his work in O’Brien’s fiction. In many of O’Brien’s short stories, there are analogous moments to the climactic epiphany experienced by Gabriel Conroy in “The Dead,” and, in this sense, this study poses a counterpart to the analysis of the displacement of the male character in “The Dead.” Like Joyce, O’Brien shows an intense interest in otherness and finitude as modes of access to a new communitarian possibility.

### 3. COMMUNITIES OF DISSOLUTION AND DEATH IN VIRGINIA WOOLF

María J. López’s point of departure is the protean images of indefiniteness, change, transformation or instability that abound in Woolf’s fiction and that respond to her conception of the self as constant flux. This fluidity of selfhood is precisely what allows openness to the other, as we see in *The Waves* (1931), with its net of interwoven consciousnesses, “always shared” and “always exposed” (Nancy 1991, 28). The novel narrates “the ecstasy of the sharing” (Nancy 1991, 25), as conveyed by Bernard, the storyteller of the group: “I do not believe in separation. We are not single” (Woolf 2000, 36). This thought by Bernard outlines a vision of the self that very much recalls Blanchot when he says that “the existence of every being . . . summons the other or a plurality of others” (1998, 6), which is manifested in the blurring of physical and emotional boundaries between Bernard and his friends: “Here on my brow is the blow I got when Percival fell. Here on the nape of my neck is the kiss Jinny gave Louis. My

eyes fill with Susan's tears. I see far away, quivering like a gold thread, the pillar Rhoda saw and feel the rush of the wind of her flight when she leapt" (Woolf 2000, 163). In *The Waves*, borrowing Blanchot's words again, we find being "experiencing itself as an always prior exteriority, or as an existence shattered through and through, composing itself only as it decomposes itself constantly" (1998, 6). Hence, Bernard's inability to ascertain a fixed sense of identity: "'Who am I?' I have been talking of Bernard, Neville, Jinny, Susan, Rhoda and Louis. Am I all of them? Am I one and distinct? I do not know" (Woolf 2000, 162). María J. López completely agrees, then, with Berman's contention that community in Woolf "is not predicated on the traditional terms of kinship and proximity, nor on allegiance to a specific group or political party, nor even on participating in the broader groupings of region or nation. Rather, Woolf develops an expanded notion of personal identity, one that constitutes subjectivity as coming into being always in fluctuating relation to a small group of affiliated yet singular others" (2001, 121).

What the presenter would like to add is that it is often the recognition of mortality and death that creates a sense of community in Woolf's novels. That is certainly the case in *The Waves*. In this novel, Percival is an absent presence: we never get to hear his voice, but all the characters develop very strong feelings toward him as he provides a common link for all of them. When Percival goes to India and dies there, the novel pays detailed attention to how the six friends deal with the experience of death and of mourning, and to how his death is "a premonition of their own dissolution, the consciousness of their own mortality" (Utell 2008, 11). Nancy points out that "a community is the presentation to its members of their mortal truth" (1991, 15), as the six friends of *The Waves* learn, "And we ourselves, walking six abreast, what do we oppose, with this random flicker of light in us that we call brain and feeling, how can we do battle against this flood; what has permanence? Our lives too stream away, down the unlighted avenues, past the strip of time, unidentified" (Woolf 2000, 128). Something similar happens in *Between the Acts* (1941), in which, together with its concern with the national identity of England on the eve of the Second World War, we find communal encounters that cannot be subsumed into the national and the political, such as the following between Mrs. Manresa and Giles: "A thread united them—visible, invisible, like those threads, now seen, now not, that unite trembling grass blades in autumn before the sun rises. She had met him once only, at a cricket match. And then had been spun between them an early morning thread before the twigs and leaves of real friendship emerge" (Woolf 1992, 51).

This is an ephemeral moment in which two singularities are exposed to each other without any conventional social or even verbal anchor. It is an evental community, which happens only momentarily, without duration, projection or aim. Another such exposure takes place between Isa Oliver and William Dodge: "'I'm William,' he said . . . 'I'm Isa,' she answered. Then they talked as if they had known each other all their lives; which was odd, she said, as they always did, considering she'd known him

perhaps one hour . . . she paused and wondered, as they always did, why they could speak so plainly to each other. And added: 'Perhaps because we've never met before, and never shall again.' (Woolf 1992, 102-103). Again, this is a fragile, ephemeral and strange communal encounter. Turning to Blanchot, it can be seen as "less a gathering than the always imminent dispersal of a presence momentarily occupying the whole space and nevertheless without a place" (1998, 33). And "what founds community" (Blanchot 1998, 9), as William's following response to Isa highlights, is the sharing of death: "'The doom of sudden death hanging over us,' he said. 'There's no retreating and advancing . . . for us as for them'" (Woolf 1992, 103). With these words, William opens their experience of community to 'them', to the rest of the characters in the novel, founding their experience of community in the experience of mortality.

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“Prejudiced Hispanophiles”: Literary and Cultural Traces  
of the British Community in Huelva and its Province  
(Nineteenth and Twentieth centuries)

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This article updates the current research done on the rich British legacy in the province of Huelva. A close look at William Nash’s book, Ellen Wishaw’s travelogue, and the meticulous system of the English Library at Riotinto reveals the complex British process of assimilating into Spanish life. Literature and culture unveil a sophisticated discourse made up of feelings of surprise, admiration, attraction and rejection, constructed upon a permanent exercise of comparison with the Victorian homeland.

Keywords: British Legacy in Huelva; Nash; Wishaw; English Library at Riotinto

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1. INTRODUCTION

“Prejudiced Hispanophil” was a term used by Ellen Wishaw in her book *My Spanish Year* (1914) that could be applied to many British who, like her, became part of the community that was formed in the province of Huelva from 1860 to 1954, during the exploitation of the mines by foreign companies (The South Europe

Mining Company Limited, The Tharsis Sulphur & Copper Company Limited and The Rio Tinto Company Limited) took place. Made up mostly of English, Irish, and Australians, this group adapted to the ways of living of Andalucía, but firmly following Victorian standards. They learned to decode language and social habits, and to assimilate peculiarities whilst never losing the British codes that they recreated in the visited land. This process of accommodation can be analysed retrospectively proving the British ambivalent acceptance of the Spanish mores manifest in the province of Huelva turned into a British microcosm in the last decades of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth. Lately, many critical approaches to the topic—Acosta Ferrero (2003), Carrasco Canelo (2013), Delgado Domínguez (2006), Galán García (2011), García Sanz (2005), López Burgos (2009), Medina Casado and Ruiz Mas (2004), Méndez Naylor (2013), Navarro Domínguez et al. (2008), Pérez Macías et al. (2011), Regalado Ortega et al. (2010)—have analysed many aspects of the British in Huelva. However, more insight is needed to understand the nature of the process of adaptation. The British legacy ultimately shows the sophisticated attitude of these visitors with the mindset of colonisers. Educated, well prepared and visionaries of modernity, they sought social, cultural and political distance from the native community, creating an independent, self sufficient system, a simultaneous civilization with its own rules that allows us to see a picture of Victorian values as they were developed in a foreign land. This article analyses the British legacy from three different perspectives. Firstly, the firm belief and strong conscience of the British as a powerful industrial and cultural civilisation can be unveiled through Nash's book about Riotinto. Secondly, the interpretation of Spanish habits through Victorian eyes can be seen in the recollected experiences of Ellen Wishaw, and lastly, the careful Victorian pattern used in the creation of cultural institutions can be examined in the organisation of the English library in Bellavista (Riotinto).

## 2. "ROMANTIC" HISTORY AS COLONIAL PROPAGANDA: WILLIAM GILES NASH'S *THE RIO TINTO MINE. ITS HISTORY AND ROMANCE*

Nash's book was published in 1904, almost twenty-five years after the British started the mining works in the province of Huelva. Being the mine's first history, it was an attempt to justify the presence of the Rio Tinto Company in Huelva as an instrument of its civilizing process in the southwest of Spain. Traced by Avery (1974, 391), little is known about the author's life (1854-1935) except that, as early as 1883, Nash was already living in Riotinto, where he became Head of the Company's Department of Land Affairs and Health (1886-1917). A fellow of the Royal Colonial Institute, he explored several fields of Spanish economy and was interested in local history. He also wrote *America: The True History of Its Discovery* (1924), a book full of mistakes and misinterpretations. His amateur approach to history is also evident in his book on

the Riotinto mine. His intention was apparently to stand against the legends about it (like those of King Solomon or the Tartessos), stating: "much romance and tradition may have contributed to the providing of less authentic information" (Nash 1904, 6). However, romance seems not to be a vexation for the author, but rather a temptation: "The thirty centuries forming the record of the Rio Tinto Mine would almost seem to compel one, on contemplating such a history, to move at once into the world of romance and fiction, as it is a scene of absorbing practical interest and concern" (1904, 3).

In fact, Nash did not eliminate romance completely from his account, but applied it to the past, present and future of the mine. Thus, the nature of his book did not acquire a strictly historical tone, but rather a propagandistic one:

through the long vista of 3000 years the Celto-Iberian, the Roman, and the later inhabitants of this peninsula have been engaged in the extraction of the riches concealed within this locality, but it has remained to the Anglo-Saxon to prove the vastness of the national prosperity embodied in it and to illustrate to the world at large the noble and beneficial influence of the Mechanical Arts, the advantages of the application of human energy in the proper direction of technical skill, industry and labour. (1904, 214-15)

The history of the mine, displayed by the author as a series of failures by its previous operators, was used to highlight the successful operation by the British, a providential view typical to colonial discourse. Being based on the principle of civilisation, this same discourse needed to be adapted to the particular status of the Rio Tinto Company in Spain, a European country previously civilised by the Romans. That is why Nash used an image that could only be used in Spain and not in the colonies, mostly non-European: the comparison between the British and the Romans as civilising Empires. In terms of that comparison, British civilisation proved to be superior to Rome, both from a material perspective (since the richness the British extracted from the mine was not legendary, but rather real and tangible) and from a moral one (since the British exploitation of the mines had not been based on military force, but on science, and the workers were not slaves but free men). Throughout his book Nash relied on romance, presenting the old legends, which had vanished and yielded to a new one, that of the civilising British, a modern legend. Consequently, Nash's book became the founding text of the Victorian ideology in Riotinto.

### 3. A PECULIAR PROCESS OF ASSIMILATION: ELLEN M. WHISHAW'S TRAVELOGUE

Known as "la inglesa de Niebla," Whishaw made that village in Huelva her home in 1916, staying there until her death in 1937. Her records reveal an interesting

Victorian process of assimilating Spanish culture and customs. When Wishaw arrived in Spain in 1902, she already had a long literary career. In England she had published several novels, short stories in literary magazines like *Longman's Magazine*, and a few poems, and had been the editor of *Time: A Monthly Miscellany of Interesting and Amusing Literature. My Spanish Year* (1914) is a work midway between a travel book and a recollection of personal experiences, where she shows how, once in Spain, her interests changed towards historical and archaeological matters, as well as towards art, popular customs, politics, gastronomy, music and dances.

In the opening part of the book ("Introductory"), Wishaw clearly makes a defence of Spain's real essence against previous travellers' accounts, which had described a dangerous country full of bandits, where women were sensual and man-eaters. Acknowledging the influence of Ford's *Handbook for Travellers in Spain, and Readers at Home* (1845), *Wishaw's goal and style proved a new way of tackling Spanish stereotypes in a serious attempt to get to the heart of the country*. She argues that her long experience in Spain authorises her as recorder of the friendly, honest and hospitable Spanish: "He would rather give you the coat off his back than take a penny from you that he has not honestly earned; and he will do you all sorts of services with the native grace which has created the tradition that 'every Spaniard is a gentleman'" (1914, viii).

The four parts that follow are related to the four seasons of the year. They describe celebrations and festivities as they cover Wishaw's remembrances and her fixation on new aspects for English readers. In *Winter*, for example, Wishaw is surprised at the absence of Christmas trees and the use of *nacimientos*, described as a "representation of the birth of Christ . . . in as elaborate a form as the means of the family permit" (1914, 176). In a Christmas mass at midnight on Christmas Eve she is impressed at the religious fervour of the participants and shows her admiration for their music, listing guitars, tambourines, castanets and triangles as instruments that are employed. She carefully describes the *zambombas* as unfamiliar instruments to her compatriots: "If one can imagine a drum bellowing like a cow that has lost her calf, one would come somewhere near the sound of the *zambomba*" (1914, 180).

However, trying to avoid stereotypes, Wishaw falls into them. Her knowledge of Spain is intermingled with the Oriental traces that Victorian travellers had obsessively imposed on aspects of Spanish life and culture, and her narration is full of them. She finds the trace of the Arabic legacy in Spain in every custom she describes and in every place she visits. But, simultaneously, her account adds a note of modernity as she adopts the role of a "New Woman," denouncing aspects of the seclusion of women in Spain: "This is another aspect of the Oriental tradition—the inability of both men and women to realise that the husband or the father has not the right, simply because he is the husband or the father, to demand from his women-folk the service of slaves at all hours of the day and night" (1914, 130). Surprise, emotion and good humour abound in Wishaw's subjective account, which includes at times a

subtle patronising tone that describes Spain as a peculiar country to be discovered by the British reader.

#### 4. VICTORIAN RULES IN THE ENGLISH LIBRARY IN MINAS DE RIOTINTO

Among the British cultural contributions to Riotinto from 1873 to 1954, the Library in Bella Vista is the most significant one. Its development and catalogue prove how a literary canon became designed exclusively for the British reading public in Bella Vista. It shows the undeniable colonial ideology of the Rio Tinto Company, which ruled the mines and exerted its influence over all administrative procedures, including those of the Library, based on Victorian discipline, order, and perfection.

The use and enjoyment of this Library provides evidence of the British active cultural life. There are still 2,018 books in the Library of the Bella Vista Club, although most of the books of the British period (2,051) were donated to the University of Huelva. The Victorian management of this Library can be traced in official documents that show a strict system of cataloguing and exchange. Three different periods can be considered regarding the development of the Library:

1) The initial period. The present building of the Club and its Library were inaugurated in 1903. They marked the end of the Library's itinerant nature and offered a place for its fabulous collection, described in the official newspaper of the time, *La Provincia*: "Los estantes de la biblioteca encierran magníficas obras para todos los gustos . . . los mejores clásicos ingleses y de otros países" (December 6, 1903, 2).

2) The renovation of the Library, promoted by Walter Browning Spencer, the General Director of the Rio Tinto Company from 1908 to 1927. The renewal took place in 1917, and the records in the Minute Book describe it as a "NEW LIBRARY FOR THE CLUB LITERATURE, TECHNICAL BOOKS & PAPERS." Most of the existing documents belong to this period (agreements, economic investments, and transactions between the Company and some institutions in London, especially libraries and clubs such as *Boots Booklovers Library* and *The Times Book Club*).

3) The Spanish period, from 1954 onwards, where British patterns were imitated: "No habían cambiado las normas; se había cambiado de dueño" (Navarro Domínguez et al. 2009, 302).

The British recreated faithfully a Victorian library in Riotinto. The ordering of books shows the careful systems of their administrative procedures. Books were arranged on their shelves according to a meticulous subject-classification scheme that was mirrored in its catalogue. Four categories that can still be seen in one of the file cabinets in the Library showing the arrangement of books:

1. Biographies, History.
2. Fiction.

3. Literature, Poetry, Theology.
4. Art, Sports, Travels.

The library and its canon prove the attempt to gather traditional aspects of the Victorian culture in the British gated community of Riotinto. The books show the areas of interest at the time, with a conservative canon of English literature and books of other national cultures, like French, Russian and North American. Curiously enough, the study of the catalogue reveals the process of transformation it underwent as the reception of volumes of popular literature increased in the third decade of the twentieth century.

The books that are now kept at the University of Huelva are a part of the original collection. Many were lost over the years because of the system of lending books to libraries in London and due to the change of buildings, since the Club was founded in 1878 and located initially in Sanz Street, in Riotinto (Carrasco Canelo 2013, 73). Donations to the Seaman's Institute in Huelva were regular because of the lack of library space and "for the benefit of those visiting that place," as is stated in one of the letters by the Deputy Administrative Manager to S. Condie, Secretary of the Library Committee, as stated in one of the letters in the Minute Book that still exists (p. 34). Furthermore, censorship was a normal practice to purge the library of undesirable material such as *The Phantom Gondola*, *Serpents of Pleasure*, described as "prurient" by Philip Moore, a priest member of the Library, in his letter to P. S. Couldry, General Manager (Minute Book, 41). Every year auctions were convened to remove old newspapers (*Daily Mail*, *The Times*, *The Daily Telegraph*) meaning that unfortunately are no longer available in the library. However a significant number of technical books related to the Rio Tinto Company are safely kept in the Archivo Histórico Fundación Riotinto. The strict procedures of an exclusive British library with a selected catalogue of books demonstrates how the British followed colonial Victorian patterns and brought them to the remote land of Riotinto.

## 5. CONCLUSION

A close analysis of specific aspects of the British community in Huelva at the end of the nineteenth century and beginning of the twentieth reveals their careful adaptation to Spain's idiosyncrasy of the time, mirroring British patterns. Travellers observed the country, covering general aspects and recording anecdotic details. Nash's biased reflections on the differences between British and Spanish civilizations intermingle with Whishaw's happy encounters with the daily life of the province of Huelva. Well used editions of books in Riotinto and the systematic procedure to keep the catalogue at the Bella Vista Library prove the desire to keep Victorian standards in a remote land with very different ways of life. These approaches confirm that the

important British legacy in Huelva and its complex discourse of assimilation has yet to be thoroughly revised and recovered. Present day initiatives in Huelva such as the permanent exhibition at the Centro de Interpretación “Huelva, Puerta del Atlántico,” or projects such as the restoration of significant sites such as the Casa Consejo in Bellavista (Riotinto) explain the interest in promoting the process that reveals the Spanish and British entanglement in the period under study.

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III.

LANGUAGE AND LINGUISTICS



# A Corpus-Based Study of Infinitival Complementation Alternations Governed by *Need* in the Recent History of English

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The present paper aims to analyse the syntactic and morphological features of the double nature of the main verb *need* (main verb or modal auxiliary) and two types of clausal complements governed by *need* (bare-infinitive and *to*-infinitive clauses). To trace the evolution of the verb, the corpora used are the Penn Parsed Corpus of Modern British English for the subperiods 1700-1769, 1770-1839 and 1840-1914, and the British National Corpus for specific purposes.

Keywords: complement clause; *to*-infinitive; bare infinitive; modal; main verb

\* \* \*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

This paper traces the development of the main verb *need* and two of its main non-finite complements, *to* and bare infinitive (henceforth BI) clauses, in the recent history of English, and will offer an explanation as to the selection of either form of complementation in Late Modern English (LModE).<sup>1</sup> The Penn Parsed Corpus of Modern British English (PPCMBE), which covers exactly the span of time under study, will be taken as the main source of data. This corpus is divided into three subperiods of 70 years, here referred to as period 1 (P1), 1770-1839, period 2 (P2) and 1840-1914, period 3 (P3). These subperiods are intended to yield the greatest amount of evidence on the changes that *need* undergoes during LModE.

The outline of this paper is the following: section 1 provides a brief description of the *to*-infinitival and the BI complementation. Section 2 analyses the behaviour of *need* in LModE, dealing with its frequency and its categorization either as a modal or as a lexical verb (sections 2.1 and 2.2, respectively). Finally, the main conclusions are set out in section 3.

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## 2. TO-INFINITIVE AND BARE INFINITIVE CLAUSES

*To*-clauses, like BI clauses, profile a situation as a whole but differ from the latter in that they represent the ‘focused’ or ‘targeted alternative’. This means that the *to*-clause is profiled as the most likely of two or more alternatives in some specific domain, as in example (1), from Egan (2008, 103):

- (1) We expected people to just come and go, *but most didn't*—they had a great get together. (GX2 302)

BI complement clauses differ from *to*-clauses in that the former imply an almost certain eventuality, rather than one which is perhaps probable or merely possible (Egan 2008, 91). As Egan notes, “the semantic content of the infinitive will be taken to be identical to that of the verbal stem” (2008, 92). Langacker describes this infinitive/stem as a complex ‘atemporal relation’ which is scanned summarily rather than sequentially (1990, 80).

According to Biber et al., BIs occur with only a few controlling verbs and are less common than *to*-clauses (1999, 670). As Hamawand (2002, 11) observes, the superordinate verbs must imply a direct interaction between the referents of the main and complement subjects in order to be compatible with a BI. In most cases the complement event takes place concurrently with the main event, as shown in (2), which implies that the helper joined the person being helped in performing the complement content, thus denoting an action that is direct and coincident.

- (2) He *helped her achieve* success. (AmrE NEWS) (Biber et al. 1999, 736).

## 3. NEED IN MODERN ENGLISH

The Penn Parsed Corpus of Modern British English (PPCMBE) is the main source of data used here to provide a quantitative and qualitative description of the verb *need*. The British National Corpus (BNC) will also be used in an attempt to compare the results of *need* in LModE with those obtained for Present-Day English (PDE) (see section 2.1). The analysis of the LModE data is organized into two sections: section 2.1 deals with the frequency of *need* in P1, P2 and P3, and section 2.2 is devoted to lexical and modal features that characterize *need* in this period.

### 3.1. Diachronic variation

Warner notices that originally *need* behaved as a lexical verb, but “in the sixteenth century it starts to show modal characteristics” (1993, 203).<sup>2</sup> Krug corroborates this

<sup>2</sup> Visser ([1963] 1973, §1346) locates the first instance of *need* followed by infinitive without *to* at the end of the fourteenth century with personal *need*: *C1390 In a Pistel (in Brown, Relig. Lyr. XIV<sup>th</sup> C.) 75, pou maizt not longe endure, And nedes dye; henne pou mote*. Even though Visser emphasizes that instances

incipient modal behaviour of *need* in the language used by Shakespeare and finds that the ratio of BI vs. *to*-infinitives was approximately eight to one. The role of frequency, which has proved to be a valuable mechanism in the description of language and language change (see Traugott and Heine 1991, 9; Hopper and Traugott 2003; Krug 2000, 2003; Taeymans 2004, 97; Traugott 2012), will allow us to confirm whether Warner's and Krug's findings and/or tendencies are still exhibited with *need* in LModE and PDE.

Graphic 1 below shows the type of complementation that *need* selects in LModE. In P1 in my database, *need* only exhibits two types of complementation, NPs and BI clauses, the latter being the most frequent in 78.12 per cent of the total instances. The lack of examples of *need* plus *to*-infinitive in my database does not mean this type of complement was no longer a constructional option; in fact, Taeymans points out that the modal verb *need* develops "without completely discarding its more lexical counterpart" (2004, 98), a feature that Hopper and Traugott (2003, 118-22) term as 'divergence'.

The proportion of BI complementation in P1 gradually decreases in use with *need* in P2 and P3 (69.05 and 58 percent of the occurrences, respectively). Since the increase of the NP (from a 21.88 per cent in P1 to a 28.57 per cent in P2 and a 33.82 per cent in P3) is not statistically significant ( $\chi^2$ ;  $p=0.4677$ ), the decrease of the BI complementation may be favoured by the raising of the complement types *to*-infinitive and *that*-clause (see Table 1).<sup>3</sup>

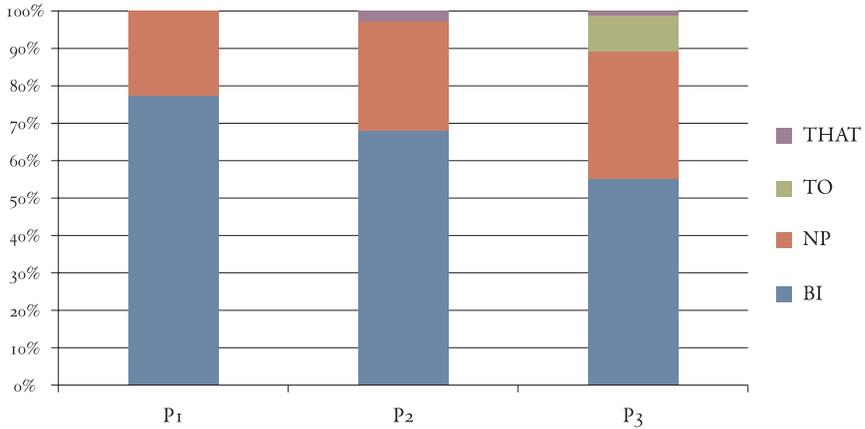
	P1	P2	P3	TOTAL
BI	25	29	38	92
NP	7	12	23	42
TO	0	0	6	6
THAT	0	1	1	2
TOTAL	32	42	68	142

Table 1. *Need* types of complementation in P1, P2 and P3

It is in P2 and P3 when other types of sentential complementation are attested with *need* in my data. One has to be cautious with the *that*-clause examples in P2 and P3, illustrated in (3) and (4) since, although one might think these examples are representative of an unsuccessful ModE innovation, these two only instances are from *Newcome-New* and *Erv-New*, two books which belong to the biblical genre. This fact may explain the similarity between both examples. The explanation given by

of these type are extremely rare, Fischer (1992, 405) maintains that modal characteristics were already present in the late fourteenth century.

<sup>3</sup> Normalised frequencies are not necessary at this point because the total number of words recorded in P1 and in P3 of the Penn-arsed Corpus of Modern British English are comparable, i.e. 298,764 words for P1 (1700-1769), 368,804 words for P2 (1770-1839) and 281,327 words for P3 (1840-1914).



Graphic 1. *Need* types of complementation in P1, P2 and P3

Loureiro-Porto (2009, 197-99) is that some modern versions of the Bible retain this archaic structure as a means of achieving a tone of venerability.

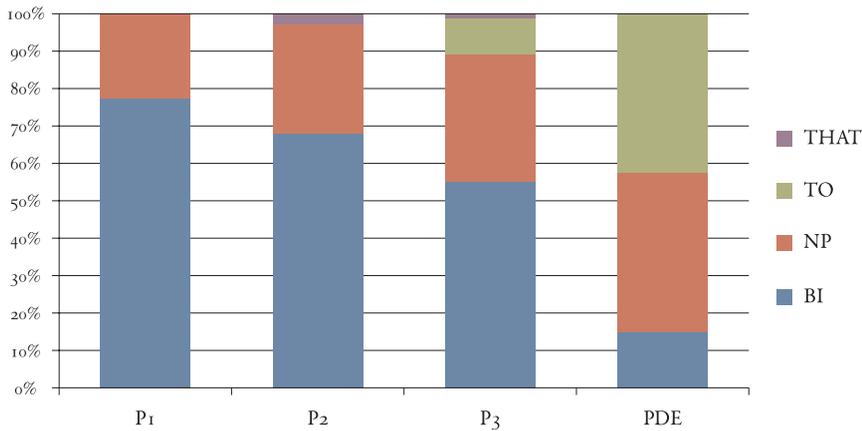
(3) But Jesus did not trust himself to them, because he knew all of them: and because he *needed not that* any should testify of man. (NEWCOME-NEW-1796, 2, 20J.153)

(4) But Jesus did not trust himself unto them, for that he knew all men, and because he *needed not that* anyone should bear witness concerning man. (ERV-NEW-1881, 2, 20J.152)

The fact *that*-clauses are not attested in the BNC as complements of *need* reinforces the archaic use of this type of complement (see Table 2). The complement types selected by *need* change completely from P1 to PDE, as Graphic 2 illustrates. The results obtained from a quick research in the BNC indicate that the *to*-infinitive complement together with the NP complement are by far the predominant complement types of the verb *need* in PDE (see Table 2). As Graphic 2 shows, BI clause complementation, which was the complement type most frequent in P1, gradually decreases in use until PDE, when it represents 15 percent of the data. The change from P3 to PDE is significant here ( $\chi^2$ ;  $p < 0.0001$  for both *to*-infinitive and BI). In the case of *need* plus NP, the chi-square test ( $p = 0.1834$ ) suggests that the statistical significance of the figures is practically identical in P3 and PDE. The selection of the *to*-infinitive complement supports that the verb *need* is undergoing a process of regularization.

In grammaticalization theory, the development of a modal verb into a lexical verb is a process which Lehman (1995 [1982], 16-19) described as ‘degrammaticalization’ (see also Haspelmath 2004, 22). The fact that *need* declines in use as a modal verb with a BI clause in favour of lexical status with a *to*-infinitive could initially be seen as

	P1	P2	P3	PDE	TOTAL
BI	25	29	38	4305	4397
NP	7	12	23	11919	11961
TO	0	0	6	11816	11822
THAT	0	1	1	0	2
TOTAL	32	42	68	28040	28182

Table 2. *Need* types of complementation in LModE and PDE.Graphic 2. *Need* types of complementation in LModE and PDE

a counterexample to the unidirectionality principle of grammaticalization. However, scholars such as Haspelmath (2004, 17-44) and Taeymans (2004, 104) argue that the development of *need* plus *to*-infinitive is not in fact a legitimate counterexample to grammaticalization. Taeymans (2004, 104) considers the apparent rise of modal *need* in the Early Modern Period as a “short lived innovation,” her conclusions being based on Traugott’s findings, which imply that “the earlier main verb use was marginalized in the early periods and then the grammaticalized one was marginalized in turn and then lost in the later periods” (2001, 9). Taeymans’s ‘short lived innovation’ has been termed as ‘retraction’ by Haspelmath, who maintains that this process takes place when a member of the right-hand chain of grammaticalization becomes obsolete (2004, 33). According to this, *need* is retracting to a previous stage in which it selected a *to*-infinitive clause.

### 3.2. Modal vs. Lexical Need

This section provides a broad description of the categorical behaviour of *need* as either modal or lexical in LModE. Linguists have provided various labels for the category of *need*: “Traugott’s term (1997) ‘quasi-modal’ covers Quirk et al’s (1985, 136-38)

categories of marginal modals, modal idioms and semi-auxiliaries. Biber et al.'s (1999, Ch.6.6) taxonomy subsumes these categories under the heading of semi-modals" (Krug 2000, 1).

According to Denison (1998, 164), modal verbs, the most prototypical auxiliaries, do not signal aspect or voice, and have meanings typical of modality: epistemic, deontic or dynamic. Denison's core modal verbs include *can* (*can/could*), *may* (*may, might*), *will* (*will, would*), *shall* (*shall, should*) and *must* (*must*). He quotes Palmer (1998; 1990), who also includes *ought* (*ought*), *dare* (*dare, durst*) and *need* (*need*) in this group. Krug includes marginal modals such as *need*, *dare* and *ought to* in the class of 'emerging modals' (2000, 199).

Denison (1998, 170) considers *need* a verb of obligation and relates it to *dare*, in that both have modal and non-modal doublets. However, *need* differs historically as it is not a preterite-present verb in OE like the majority of PDE modals. Denison provides example (5), from Visser ([1963] 1973), to exemplify the double nature of *need*. On the one hand, it shows lexical (non-modal) features, as it is regularly inflected for the past and is followed by a *to*-infinitive. On the other hand, its modal behaviour is suggested by the occurrence of the negator *not* between *need* and the *to*-infinitive.

- (5) She saw, of course, that she *needed not to fear* me. (Denison 1998, 170; 1869 Blackmore, Lorna Donne (Everyman, 1966) xvi 105)

Even though my data shows the quite consistent behaviour of *need* in P1 and P3 (see section 3.1 above), one instance dated at P2 corresponds to Denison's (1998, 170) observations, which patterns such blended status, illustrated in (6).

- (6) I told him that he *needed have no scruples* he was asking nothing for himself, nothing that would make him richer, or them poorer, and that he acted only as a Magistrate and one concerned for the interest of the University. (JOHNSON-1775, 2, 36.730)

To describe the status of *need* in LModE, in what follows I will consider Loureiro-Porto's claim that "modal verbs have a series of morphological, syntactic and semantic characteristics which differentiate them from other verbs, and which unite them as a class" (2009, 192), as well as Krug's claim about the oscillation of *need* between modal and non-modal verb. Since in P3 *need* and the BI clause decreases in use and *need* starts to select new types of complementation, the hypothesis is that this verb will show more features characteristic of lexical verbs rather than modal verbs.

### 3.2.1. Morphology

A corpus-based analysis of four morphological features, i.e. the presence or absence of the third singular person morpheme *-th* or *-s*, the past morpheme *-ed*, the *to*-infinitive

and *-ing* non-finite forms, and the attachment of negative clitic *n't* to the verb, has shown that, regardless the low amount of data, there is a clear morphological distinction between main-verb and auxiliary *need* and, in fact, this verb exhibits more lexical features in the periods under investigation.

The data indicate that, on the one hand, the presence or absence of the third person singular present morpheme *-th* or *-s* depends on the type of complement the verb *need* selects. This implies that *need* exhibits lexical verb properties when it has an NP or a *to*-infinitive complement, whereas it exhibits auxiliary features when it occurs with BI clauses. On the other hand, the diachronic study of *need* with third person singular present suggests that *needs* and *needeth* begin to fall into disuse in favor of *need*, mainly when the verb selects a BI clause.

The *-ed* past inflection is also a valid feature for the categorization of *need*. The uninflected form *need* for past tense is used when the verb selects a BI clause and behaves like a modal verb. The lexical status of the verb is attested in the form of *needed* and also when the latter is followed by either an NP or a *to*-infinitive complement. In the case of the non-finite forms, three instances reveal the lexical properties of *need* as a main verb in its *to*-infinitive and *-ing* form. Modal verb features are found when *need* contracts with the negative clitic *-n't* and selects a BI clause, but only two examples have been attested in my data.

The results obtained from the morphological analysis of the data support Haspelmath's retraction process since it is not the more grammaticalized *need* in a BI clause construction that starts to exhibit inflections, but the emergence and prominence of the marginalized *to*-infinitive that provokes that *need* shows more lexical verb-like morphological features.

### 3.2.2. Syntax

I have also considered a number of syntactic features which can describe the behaviour of *need*. Firstly, the type of complementation that *need* licenses, which is indicative of the status of this verb as either main or auxiliary, varies from one period to another. In P1 and P2 of my data, all the sentential themes correspond to BI complementation, i.e. *need* shows modal verb features. By contrast, in P3 *need* can also select *to*-infinitives, that is, *need* exhibits lexical verb characteristics. This fact may suggest the incipient regularization of this verb as lexical.

A second syntactic feature is the lack of subject selection, which takes place when a verb selects a passive infinitival complement and, as a result, ceases to select its experiencer/subject and adopts that of the passive infinitive as its own (see Warner 1993, 160-63). In the passive infinitival clauses with BI complementation, *need* shows modal verb features, since the subject selected cannot experience the necessity expressed by the verb. However, the number of occurrences of *need* and BI clauses in these constructions is quite small (12 out of 92 occurrences), unlike the relatively high frequency of *need* plus *to*-infinitive (4 out of 6 times).

Similarly, the BI clause with relative pronouns is barely attested in P<sub>1</sub> and P<sub>2</sub> (with 4 out of 21 and 1 out of 28 instances, respectively) and altogether absent in P<sub>3</sub>, since these also involve a complex context (see Rohdenburg 1996). The *to*-infinitive is the predominant complement with *need* in these contexts (4 out of 6 occurrences), since it is more transparent and marks the beginning of the lower clause. The reluctance for BI clauses to occur in passive infinitival constructions and relative pronouns is supported by the doubly complex cognitive processing of these sentences: the complexity triggered by these constructions plus the degree of opacity which the BI clauses imply in marking non-finite sentences (see Langacker 1977; Rohdenburg 1996 and Fischer and Nänny 1999).

As for the co-occurrence of *need* with auxiliaries, I observe that there was an increasing reluctance of modal *need* to occur with other auxiliaries in LModE, especially in the case of BI clause complementation from 1770 onwards. However, a few examples of *need* plus another auxiliary are still found with NP themes in this period, as a consequence of the main verb status of *need* with this type of complement.

The test confirming that lightly stressed adverbs are placed after modals and auxiliaries has not proved consistent enough to describe the status of *need* in the sentence, since the position of these adverbs in my data does not vary according to the type of sentential complementation that the main verb *need* licenses. In the case of tag questions, only one example from P<sub>3</sub> is found with *need* functioning as the operator of the clause, which is characteristic of modal and auxiliary verbs.

#### 4. CONCLUDING REMARKS

The study of the categorial status of *need* in LModE shows a consistent tendency towards the regularization of *need* in terms of morphology and syntax, in contrast to the auxiliarization process that *need* and BI clauses are claimed to undergo in previous periods (Loureiro-Porto 2009). I have maintained that iconicity and structural/cognitive complexity play an important role in this change of complement selection. In turn, the change in the patterns of clausal complementation of *need* does not imply a change in the semantic shift of the verb, since it develops further modal verb meanings with the *to*-infinitive.

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On the History of the Subordinator *How(so/some)ever*.  
A Corpus-Based Study

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The purpose of this paper is to outline the diachronic development of the ‘ephemeral’ concessive subordinator *however* and its variants *howsoever* and *howsomever* from their origins in Middle English to their current status in Present-Day English. The survey is based on data from two historical corpora: *The Helsinki Corpus of English Texts* and ARCHER (*A Representative Corpus of Historical English Registers*).

Keywords: concessive adverbial subordinator; *however*; *howsomever*; *howsoever*; ephemeral subordinator

\* \* \*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The aim of this paper is to offer a preliminary approach to the historical development of the so-called “ephemeral” concessive subordinator *however* and its variant forms *howsoever* and *howsomever*.<sup>1</sup> Given that most ephemeral adverbial subordinators are, according to Kortmann (1997, 335), innovations of the Early Modern English period (hereafter EModE), the emphasis will be on the behaviour of the selected item in this stage of the history of the language, a period of change and instability. In fact, a high percentage of adverbial subordinators from this stage did not survive beyond the period and those that were added to the inventory at the time did not last long. Hence the label “ephemeral subordinator” (Kortmann 1997, 335).

Ephemeral subordinators have not received too much attention in the literature. Although Kortmann (1997) has demonstrated the major tendencies in the development of adverbial subordinators in English, there is no specific study devoted to ephemeral subordinators in the history of English as such. The present piece of research focuses on *how(so/some)ever*, which illustrates the notion of ephemeral subordinator within the domain of concessive adverbial relations. Among other

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issues, this diachronic study tackles the following: the patterns of distribution of *how(so/some)ever* across time with reference to its frequency, its position in the clause and its combination with the “pleonastic” *that* (cf. Beal 1988; Rissanen 1999) and *yet*. For my analysis, the data are mainly taken from *The Helsinki Corpus of English Texts* (henceforth HC) and ARCHER (*A Representative Corpus of Historical English Registers*), two multi-genre corpora that cover the entire history of English, and the electronic versions of the *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED) and the *Middle English Dictionary* (MED).

## 2. CONCESSIVE SUBORDINATORS IN THE HISTORY OF ENGLISH

The inventory of concessive subordinators has constantly increased over the course of the history of the English language. Consider in this respect the information provided in Table 1, adapted from Kortmann (1997, 333):

OE	ME	EModE	PDE
<i>þeah</i> ( <i>þe</i> )	<i>theigh, though</i> ( <i>that</i> )	<i>though</i> ( <i>that</i> )	<i>though</i>
<i>sam...sam</i>	<i>although</i> ( <i>that</i> )	<i>although</i>	<i>although</i>
<i>swa...swa</i>	( <i>g</i> ) <i>if</i> ( <i>that</i> )	<i>if</i> ( <i>that</i> )	<i>if</i>
	<i>suppose</i>	<i>suppose</i> ( <i>that</i> )	<i>for all</i> ( <i>that</i> )
	<i>notwithstanding</i>	<i>notwithstanding</i> ( <i>that</i> )	<i>as</i>
	<i>al</i> [inverted w.o.]	<i>for all</i> ( <i>that</i> )	<i>except</i> ( <i>that</i> )
		<i>gra(u)nted that</i>	<i>granted that</i>
		<i>albeit</i> ( <i>that</i> )	<i>albeit</i>
		<i>an(d)</i> ( <i>if</i> )	<i>whereas</i>
		<i>how(so/some)ever</i>	<i>while</i>
		<i>howbeit</i> ( <i>that</i> )	<i>when</i>
			<i>whilst</i>

Table 1. Concessive subordinators in the history of English (adapted from Kortmann 1997, 333)

As shown in Table 1, it was precisely in EModE when a large number of concessive subordinators not available in earlier stages were introduced, six in all: *for all* (*that*), *gra(u)nted that*, *albeit* (*that*), *an(d)* (*if*), *how(so/some)ever* and *howbeit* (*that*); however, only half of them survive in Present-Day English (henceforth PDE): *for all* (*that*), *granted that* and *albeit* (*that*), although the latter is considered to have a restricted use in the contemporary language, which explains why some standard English grammars (Quirk et al. 1985, 1098-1100; Biber et al. 1999, 843-44) do not even mention it. Furthermore, it is particularly remarkable that only one subordinator, namely PDE *though*, is attested in the four major periods of the English language. *Although* is the subordinator that lasted second-longest, from Middle English (hereafter ME) to PDE.

The catalogue of concessive subordinators provided by Kortmann (1997, 33), however, is not exhaustive. Thus, for example, Visser (1963-1973, II, 903-11) adds to the above list twelve further concessive subordinators, which are given in Table 2.

OE	ME	EModE
<i>in such manner (wyse)... that</i> <i>(wyse)... that</i>	<i>in such manner (wyse)... that</i>	<i>in such manner</i>
<i>though all</i>	<i>though all</i>	
<i>þeah all</i>	<i>þeah all</i>	
	<i>how so</i>	<i>how so</i>
	<i>how well</i>	<i>how well</i>
	<i>as though</i>	<i>as though</i>
	<i>as that</i>	<i>as that</i>
	<i>all but though</i>	
	<i>all but if</i>	
	<i>all if</i>	
		<i>even</i>
		<i>Set</i>

Table 2. Additional concessive subordinators listed in Visser (1963-1973, II, 903-911)

As Tables 1 and 2 show, the number of adverbial subordinators which can express concession in English has continually increased. Furthermore, the list of concessive conjunctions exhibits a strong tendency not only for expansion, but also for renewal. From this inventory, *how(so/some)ever* can be chosen as a prototype subordinator, since it illustrates well the tendencies shown by concessive adverbial subordinators, that is, it can be characterized as ephemeral.

### 3. BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON *HOW(SO/SOME)EVER*

#### 3.1. *How(so/some)ever* in the OED and the MED

According to the OED, the form *however* results from the combination of the adverb *how* and the adverb *ever*. It has six different senses, of which I will exclusively consider only the first, where *however* is described as a conjunctive element. In this first sense, *however* is used for “[i]ntroducing a subordinate clause, sometimes with *yet* in the principal clause.” The OED provides for this sense three possible uses:

a. “Qualifying a verb: in whatever manner, by whatever means,” as shown in (1) below.

- (1) *Hou-euer antecrist glauer, letteþ not god to do his wille.* (c1380 Wyclif *Wks.*; OED s.v. *however* 1.a)

b. “Qualifying an adj. (or pa. pple.) or adv.: To whatever extent. Hence often used ellipt. With an adj. or adv. alone”; see example (2).

(2) *A bodily þing of how euer litil price howiþ not to be bout, but wiþ þis wisdam.* (c1475 *Apol. Lollard Doctor.* (1842) 7; OED s.v. *however* 1.b)

c. “However much; notwithstanding that; although. Obs. or arch.” An illustrative example is given in (3).

(3) *How ever yet they mee despise and spight, I feede on sweet contentment of my thought.* (1591 *Spenser Teares of Muses in Complaints* 523; OED s.v. *however* 1.c)

For the present preliminary study, only the third use provided in the OED under the first sense of *however* will be considered, since, in my view, the first two uses cannot be as straightforwardly categorized as subordinators, as the OED suggests.

As regards *howsoever*, it is composed of the adverb *how*, the adverb and conjunction *so*, and the adverb *ever*. This form appears to have been derived from *how so* or *however*, modelled on *howsomever*. It has four senses, the first being the conjunctival use with two possible meanings:

1.a “In what manner soever. (Sometimes with ellipsis.) arch.” It equals the first meaning given above for *however*. Consider example (4).

(4) *We schulle present þe pleynte, how so euer þou be payde.* (a1500 *Pistel of Swete Susan* (Calig.) 202; OED s.v. *howsoever* 1.a)

1.b “Notwithstanding that, albeit.” This meaning, illustrated in (5), coincides with the concessive meaning of *however*.

(5) *It is a most innocent Animall, howsoever nature hath armed it most magnificently.* (1599 *H. Buttes Dyets Dry sig.*; OED s.v. *howsoever* 1.b)

In turn, the form *howsomever* shows a parallel formation and meaning to *howsoever*, but with *sum*, *som* instead of *so*. Consider (6) below:

(6) *How somere their hearts are seuer’d in Religion, their heads are both one.* (1616 *Shakesperare All’s Well that ends Well*; OED s.v. *howsomever* 1.b)

The first OED record of *howsomever* as a concessive subordinator is attested around 1300 (cf. (7) below), *however* with the meaning in (c) above is first recorded in the OED in 1591 (cf. (3)), while the first occurrence of *howsoever* in this function dates back to 1599 (cf. (5)).

(7) *Nu at Þe erth nu at Þe lift, or hu sumeuer* [v. rr. hou sum euir, how sim euer] *Þou will Þe scift.* (a1300 *Cursor Mundi* 2339; OED s.v. *howsomever* 1b)

Earlier attestations of *how(so/some)ever* are provided in the MED, which dates the oldest instance of *how(so/some)ever* as a conjunction in 1393. This is given as (8) below.

(8) *And thus, how evere that thei tale, the strokes falle upon the smale.* (a1393, Gower CA (Fr3); MED s.v. *höu-ēver* b)

### 3.2. *How(so/some)ever* in the literature

According to Kortmann (1997, 333), *how(so/some)ever* is a concessive subordinator attested in the EModE period which does not last far beyond that period. Nevertheless, the last record of *however* functioning as a subordinating concessive conjunction in the OED dates back to 1846. This is (9) below. The last examples of *howsoever* and *howsomever* in such a function are dated 1655 (10) and 1616 (11), respectively.

(9) *Humanity, however it craved a God for its deliverer, yet craved just as earnestly a man.* (1846 R. C. Trench *Christ the Desire of All Nations* iii. 57; OED s.v. *however* 1.c)

(10) *The parts of Musick are in all but four, howsoever some skilfull Musitians have composed Songs of twenty parts.* (1655 T. Campion. *Art Descant* in J Playford *Introd. Sill Musick* II 1; OED s.v. *howsoever* 1.b)

(11) *How somere their hearts are seuer'd in Religion, their heads are both one.* (1616 Shakespeare *All's Well that ends Well* (1623); OED s.v. *howsomever* 1.b)

Visser (1963-1973, II, 902) does not include *how(so/some)ever* in his list of concessive subordinators, which may be an indication of its ephemeral character in the domain of concessive subordination.

As regards the use of *how(so/some)ever* in PDE, the standard grammars of the English language (Quirk et al. 1985; Biber et al. 1999; Huddleston and Pullum et al. 2002) do not include it their inventories of concessive subordinators, thus proving its ephemeral nature.

## 4. *HOW(SO/SOME)EVER*: A CORPUS-BASED ANALYSIS

In order to trace the history of *how(so/some)ever* in greater detail, this section offers a corpus-based analysis of the use of this connective in different stages of the history of the language. As mentioned in section 1, for my purposes I have selected

two multi-genre corpora that cover the whole history of English: the HC (c.730-1710) and ARCHER (1650-1999). As regards the former, only the ME and EModE sub-periods are studied here, i.e. from 1150 to 1710. With respect to ARCHER, the first sub-period, i.e. 1650-99, was dismissed in order to avoid overlap with the last sub-period of the HC (1640-1710). Moreover, only the British English material in ARCHER has been taken into account, resulting in a total of 2,232,938 words being analysed.

The HC yields a total of forty-one examples of *how(so/some)ever*, of which only fifteen (36.59%) are adverbs, see example (12). The remaining twenty-six examples (representing 63.41% of the total) are cases of its use as a concessive subordinator, as shown in (13) and (14) below.

(12) *Howseuer, these three things it came in memory, and are for mirth incerted into stage plays I know not, but that Will Sommers asked them of the King, it is certaine: there are some will affirme it now living at Greenwich.* (HC, he2.byb).

(13) *Therefore Actes doe proue you Counsayler and Procurer, howsoeuer you woulde auoyde the matter* (HC, he1.byb).

(14) *Be sure, however you come not by my letters, that I write constantly by every Tuesday and Fryday post.* (HC, he3.byb).

As regards ARCHER, the corpus contains a total of eight hundred and fifty three occurrences of *how(so/some)ever*, of which only twenty nine (representing 3.39% of the total) are cases of its concessive subordinating use. Examples (15) and (16) illustrate the adverbial and the conjunctival uses of *how(so/some)ever* in the ARCHER material, respectively.

(15) *It was a pity that the young hand should turn chicken hearted, just when a minute might have completed that business, and got us the stuff; however, it was lucky for him and me, that we got off so well.* (ARCHER, 1819miln)

(16) *However circumstances may have darkened or steeled your heart, it is touched with humanity yet.* (ARCHER, 1832bulw)

Figures 1 and 2 below which present the compiled data from the HC and ARCHER reveal a radical change in the use of this word over time, as its function as an adverbial rose dramatically in parallel with its decline as a subordinator. Moreover, there is an unequal distribution of the form *however* and the forms *howsoever* and *howsomever* in the corpus material. The distribution of the three forms in my corpora is represented in Figure 1 and Figure 2.

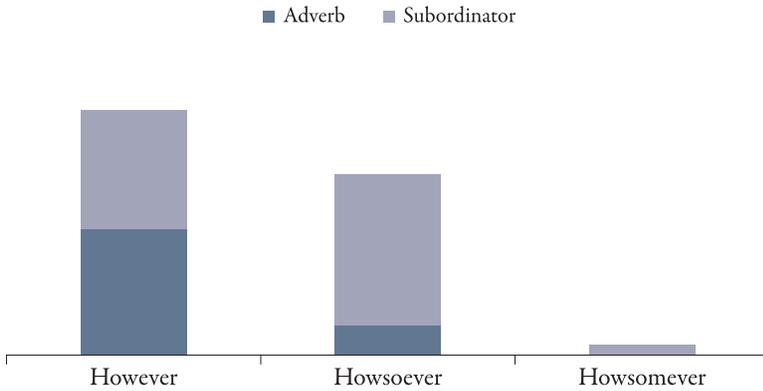


Figure 1. Distribution of the three forms before 1710 (NF per 100,000 words)

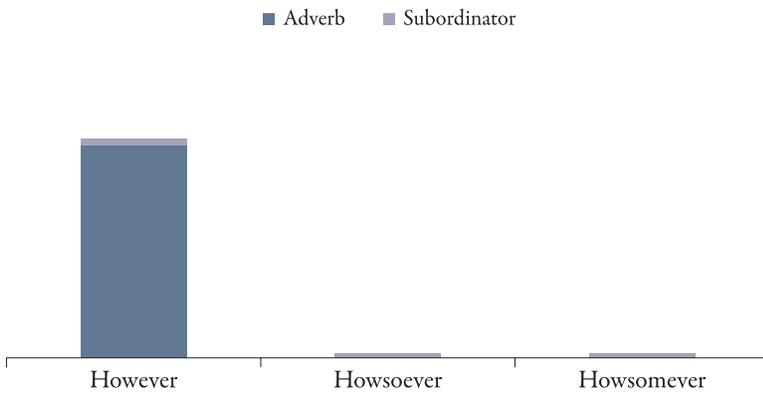


Figure 2. Distribution of the three forms after 1710 (NF per 100,000 words)

As shown here, the form *however* has always been the most frequent variant and the only one attested after 1710. The forms *howsoever* and *hosomever* are recorded only before 1710.

Table 3 below shows the distribution of the fifty-five occurrences of the subordinator *how(so/some)ever* from ME up to PDE in the HC and ARCHER. As the number of words varies from one sub-period to another, the table also provides normalized frequencies for a text-length of 100,000 words.

Sub-period	No. of words	Tokens	Normalized frequency frequency
ME1 (1150-1250)	113,010	0	0
ME2 (1250-1350)	97,480	0	0
ME3 (1350-1420)	184,230	2	1.09
ME4 (1420-1500)	213,850	2	0.94
EModE1 (1500-1570)	190,160	3	1.58
EModE2 (1570-1640)	189,800	7	3.69
EModE3 (1640-1710)	171,040	12	7.02
LModE1 (1700-1749)	177,726	4	2.25
LModE2 (1750-1799)	178,675	2	1.12
LModE3 (1800-1849)	180,793	2	1.11
LModE4 (1850-1899)	181,026	4	2.21
PDE1 (1900-1949)	176,907	2	1.13
PDE2 (1950-1999)	178,241	0	0
TOTAL	2,232,938	40	1.79

Table 3. The subordinator *how(so/some)ever* from ME to PDE in the HC and ARCHER

The evolution of *how(so/some)ever* as a concessive subordinator in the HC and ARCHER material is shown in Figure 3 below.

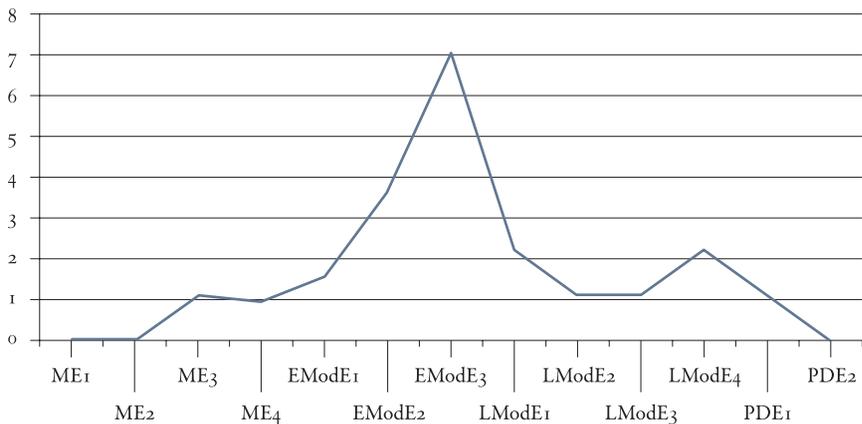


Figure 3. Historical development of *how(so/some)ever* in the HC and ARCHER (NF per 100,000 words)

As Figure 3 shows, the concessive subordinator *how(so/some)ever* is attested for the first time in the corpus in the ME3 period (1350-1420), thus coinciding with the evidence provided in the MED, after which it increases progressively until eModE3, when it reaches its peak. It then decreases dramatically, from 7.02 in the late seventeenth century (EModE3) to 1.12 during the second half of the eighteenth century (LModE2), later to rise again in the late nineteenth century (2.21 in LModE4). After that its frequency decreases notably in the course of the twentieth

century, until it finally disappears. Examples (17) and (18) are the earliest and the last occurrence of this subordinator attested in the corpora.

(17) *It is blasphemie unbyleue, howeuere Dat men spekon here.* (HC, hm3.byb).

(18) *However that may be, the indisputable fact remains that no garden in the woird can approach the Japanese for almost uncanny art.* (ARCHER, 1921nort).

Adverbial subordinators can be followed by the 'pleonastic' *that*, particularly in the ME period when, according to Rissanen (1997, 375), *that* functioned as an indicator of the subordinating role of words which could also be used as prepositions or adverbs. This tendency has been pointed out by several scholars, among them Kivimaa (1968), Beal (1988) and Rissanen (1999). In the HC and ARCHER material, pleonastic *that* with *how(so/some)ever* is only sporadically found: only two instances of such combination having been identified; cf. example (17) above and (19) below.

(19) *However that I may not conceal any the least material circumstance from you, I must acknowledge, that, in comparing the aorta with the iliacs, I took it where it appears smallest in his figures.* (ARCHER, 1735mart)

Interestingly, the two examples belong to quite separate periods, the mid-fourteenth century and the eighteenth century, respectively. The occurrence of pleonastic *that* in the LModE example in (19) is rather unusual, since, according to Rissanen (1999, 303), the marker of subordination *that* was more commonly found in the sixteenth century.

Moreover, although my corpora do not yield any examples of this combination, the OED states that it is common to find the subordinating conjunction *how(so/some)ever* with *yet* in the main clause. An example of this kind is (20) below, from the OED.

(20) *Humanity, however it craved a God for its deliverer, yet craved just as earnestly a man.* (1846 R. C. Trench, *Christ the Desire of All Nations* iii.57; OED s.v. *however* 1.c)

As regards the position of concessive clauses introduced by *how(so/some)ever*, in my data these can be placed in the sentence-final (twenty-five examples) (cf. example (17)), sentence-initial (twenty-three examples) (cf. example (18)), and even sentence-medial position (seven examples), the latter pattern being the least frequent. Consider example (21) below.

(21) *Be sure, however you come not by my letters, that I write constantly by every Tuesday and Fryday post.* (HC, he3.byb).

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The main conclusions that can be drawn from this piece of research are the following:

- Judging from the evidence in the HC and ARCHER, *how(so/some)ever* is a rather low-frequency concessive adverbial subordinator, its average normalized frequency in the two corpora being 1.79 per 100,000 words. Its first occurrences are dated in the period 1350-1420, while the last attested instance dates from 1921.
- The tendency of this subordinator to be combined with *yet* in the main clause mentioned in the OED is not corroborated by my data, which contains no examples of this pattern. By contrast, its combination with the 'pleonastic' *that*, which is not mentioned in the literature in relation to this subordinator, is attested in my corpora, though only sporadically.
- Subordinate clauses introduced by *how(so/some)ever* can be placed sentence-finally, initially and medially (in order of decreasing frequency) in the HC and ARCHER material.

Many questions have not been addressed in this preliminary approach to so-called ephemeral concessive subordinators, among them the study of other 'ephemeral' concessive markers, such as *and (if)*, *how well*, *how so*, and the analysis of the behaviour and development of the prototypical concessive subordinators *although* and *though* in order to compare them with these low-frequency concessive connectives. In addition, as ephemeral concessive subordinators are low-frequency items, they should definitely be studied in larger corpora than those used for the present investigation. Moreover, as there was a dramatic increase over time in the adverbial use of *how(so/some)ever* and with different meanings, some of them being derived from its use as a concessive subordinator, it would also be interesting to explore the history of its adverbial function.

#### SOURCES

ARCHER 3.1 = *A Representative Corpus of Historical English Registers*. 2006. Northern Arizona University, University of Southern California, University of Freiburg, University of Helsinki and Uppsala University.

HC = *The Helsinki Corpus of English Texts*. 1991. Helsinki: Department of English.

MED = *The Middle English Dictionary* <http://ets.umdl.umich.edu/m/med>

OED = *The Oxford English Dictionary online* <http://www.oed.com>

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# On the Nonprototypical Status of Reaction Objects and other Nonsubcategorized Objects

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This paper examines the grammatical features that characterize cognate objects (*She lived a good life*), *way*-objects (*She worked her way into the committee*) and reaction objects (*Pauline smiled her thanks*) as nonprototypical objects, devoting special attention to reaction objects, their subtypes (formulae, reaction and expressive) and some borderline structures that may have played a role in the evolution of the reaction object construction.

Keywords: nonsubcategorized object; cognate object; *way*-object; reaction object

\* \* \*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Reference grammars define prototypical objects as postverbal noun phrases representing one of the arguments, or participants, involved in the event coded by the clause, and usually having the semantic roles of patient and recipient, depending on whether there are one or two objects within a sentence. However, this correlation between semantic arguments and objects is complicated by the existence in English of various classes of postverbal noun phrases referred to as objects in the literature, which arguably do not qualify as arguments, and exhibit syntactic and semantic features that clearly set them apart from prototypical objects. Some examples are: the so-called reaction object (RO) as in *Pauline smiled her thanks*, where the postverbal noun phrase expresses a reaction of some kind, the cognate object as in *She lived a good life*, where the object is semantically and morphologically related to the verb, in this case the verb *live*, and the *way*-object, as in structures such as *She worked her way into the committee* and *He belched his way out of the restaurant*.

In this light, the aim of this paper is to provide an overview of the features that characterize these objects as nonprototypical. In particular, I will devote special attention to ROs since they remained unnoticed by linguists until very recently and consequently they have not received as much scholarly attention as the cognate and the *way*-object.

## 2. PROTOTYPICAL OBJECTS IN STANDARD REFERENCE GRAMMARS

The reference grammars of Quirk et al. (1985) and Huddleston and Pullum et al. (2002) provide a series of features that characterize prototypical direct and indirect objects. More specifically, they mention that objects are usually realized by NPs or other nominal constituents, such as noun clauses, and normally follow the subject and the verb. Moreover, the object is generally the subject of its passive counterpart as in *The work has been finished*, where the object in the active voice has adopted the subject position in the passive. From a semantic point of view, Huddleston and Pullum et al. (2002, 53) explain that the object expresses or represents an argument of the verb. More precisely, as Quirk et al. (1985, 727) put it, the direct object “typically refers to an entity that is affected by the action denoted in the clause,” as in *John killed her*, whereas the indirect object “typically refers to an animate being that is recipient of the action,” as in *John got Mary a present*.

Although these are considered to be the prototypical features of the object, as previously mentioned, cognate objects, *way*-objects and ROs *clearly* exhibit a series of syntactic features that set them apart from prototypical objects and they arguably do not qualify as one of the semantic arguments of the verb. In what follows, I will take each of these nonprototypical objects in turn and pinpoint those features that make them “special” and different from prototypical direct and indirect objects.

## 3. NONPROTOTYPICAL OBJECTS: COGNATE OBJECTS, *WAY*-OBJECTS AND ROs

Cognate object constructions are “constructions in which a normally intransitive verb occurs with what appears to be a direct object NP whose head is the event or state nominalization of the verb” (Jones 1988, 89). Table 1 below displays the features that have led linguists to think of cognate objects as a different linguistic phenomenon from the prototypical object. More precisely, Massam (1990), for instance, explains that cognate objects such as *smile* in *smile a silly smile*, *live* in *live a quiet life* and *death* in *die a gruesome death* do not behave like regular objects in that they cannot be passivized, topicalized, questioned, or pronominalized (see example (8)). In contrast to regular objects, cognate objects also show some restrictions on their form since they cannot be preceded by a definite article (e.g., \**He died the death*), and they are usually accompanied by modification, as in *He died a gruesome death* (13).

Semantically speaking, many linguists have equated cognate objects to manner adjuncts, claiming that the differences between *John died a gruesome death* and *John died gruesomely* is “more a matter of style than of meaning” (Jones 1988, 93).

With regard to *way*-objects, Jackendoff (1990, 216) claims that this object type is not an argument of the preceding verb but rather only a phrase that happens to be in object position. He supports this statement by explaining that this object parallels the nonobject *the bucket* in the idiom *kick the bucket*, which, similar to *way*-objects, cannot undergo passivization. If we now attend to the syntactic and formal features

FEATURES	Regular objects	Cognate object
<b>Passivization</b>	YES (1) The Irish jig was danced by Bernadette Dooley	NO (2) *A silly smile was smiled by Ethel
<b>Topicalization</b>	YES (3) The Irish jig, nobody danced	NO (4) *A silly smile, nobody smiled
<b>Can be questioned</b>	YES (5) What did Tosca sing?	NO (6) *What did he die?
<b>Free pronominalization</b>	YES (7) I sang the aria then Tosca sang it	NO (8) *Maggie smiled a silly smile, then her brother smiled it
<b>Definite object possible</b>	YES (9) Fred danced the slow number	NO (10) ?He lived the quiet life
<b>Restrictions on form of NP</b>	NO (11) She sang a song/ the beautiful song/the song you like	YES (12) ?He died a death (13) He died a gruesome death

Table 1. Features of regular objects and cognate objects (adapted from Massam 1990, 163-65)

of prototypical objects mentioned by Massam, we notice that *way*-objects behave similarly to cognate objects. As shown in Table 2, *way*-objects cannot be passivized, topicalized, pronominalized or questioned. Moreover, they show some morphosyntactic restrictions, since they have to be co-referential with the subject (18), and *way*-objects showing a definite article, in principle, do not seem to be possible (19).

From a semantic perspective, Jackendoff (1990, 213) points out that a close paraphrase of the *way*-construction *Bill belched his way out of the restaurant* is “Bill went out of the restaurant belching.” Apart from this interpretation of the *way*-construction in which the main verb indicates a manner of motion (*belching*), some *way*-constructions can additionally express the means by which some kind of motion is achieved. For example, the *way*-construction *Sam joked his way into the meeting* can be paraphrased as *Sam went into the meeting while joking* and *Sam got into the meeting by joking*, the latter meaning that by means of his sense of humour, Sam was able to get himself invited to the meeting.

Finally, as for ROs, Levin defines them as “nonsubcategorized objects that express a reaction (an emotion or disposition)” (1993, 98). However, despite this “nonsubcategorized” treatment of the RO, Kogusuri (2009) claims that ROs display a complex syntactic behaviour since they exhibit both argument and non-argument properties. Table 3 gives an overview of Kogusuri’s detailed account of the special properties of ROs, which the author bases on earlier works on nonprototypical objects such as Levin (1993), Omuro (1997) and Felser and Wanner (2001).

FEATURES	<i>Way</i> -objects
Passivization	NO (14) *His way was belched out of the restaurant by Bill (Jackendoff 1990, 216)
Topicalization	NO (15) *His way out of the restaurant, Bill belched (Jackendoff 1990, 212)
Free pronominalization	NO (16) *He belched it out of the restaurant
Can be questioned	NO (17) *What did he belch?
Restrictions on form of NP	YES (18) Bill <sub>i</sub> belched his <sub>i</sub> way out of the restaurant
Definite object possible	NO (19) *He belched the way out of the restaurant

Table 2. Features of *way*-objects

Like prototypical objects, ROs must be adjacent to the verb and they allow the modification of an attributive adjectival passive as in *a half-smiled goodbye*. Unlike prototypical objects, however, ROs cannot undergo pronominalization (examples (26) and (27) and some of them cannot be passivized (examples (29) and (30)).<sup>1</sup> Semantically speaking, Levin explains that reaction object constructions (ROCs) might be paraphrased as “express[ing] (a reaction) by *V-ing*,” where “V” is the basic sense of the verb” (1993, 98); for instance, the ROC *She mumbled her adoration* can be paraphrased as “She expressed/signalled her adoration by mumbling.”

To recapitulate, we have seen that cognate objects, *way*-objects and ROs do not behave like prototypical objects. Although they may look like direct objects, they exhibit syntactic and semantic features that do not correspond to those of prototypical objects.

A possible explanation for the nonprototypical behaviour of these objects may be that the verbs they occur with are “basically intransitive” and therefore, they do not permit or license an object. In this respect, these verbs differ from other verbs that allow multiple patterns of complementation, as is the case of the verb *read*, which shows both transitive uses as in *he read a book*, and intransitive uses as in *he read*. As a consequence of the intransitive nature of the verbs these nonprototypical objects

<sup>1</sup> The unpassivizable cases of ROCs represented in (29) and (30) can be accounted for on the basis of the so-called coreferential constraint by which the NP in the *by*-phrase cannot be coreferential with the subject (Zubizarreta 1985, 255-56). It should be noted, however, that this coreferential constraint is suspended when the agent in the passive is elided. As explained by Kogusuri (2009, 50), “without elements describing the agent, the semantic relationship between the agent and the entity described by the RO is pragmatically backgrounded, which makes it possible to suspend the coreferential constraint on the ROC,” hence passivization is allowed in examples (24) and (25).

Argument properties (= Prototypical objects)	
Adjacency condition	(20) *She nodded <i>gracefully</i> her approval (Felser and Wanner 2001, 108)
Adjectival passive modification	(21) a half-smiled goodbye (Felser and Wanner 2001, 108)
	(22) a nodded permission
	(23) her falsely smiled welcome
Passivization	(24) Warm thanks were smiled at the audience (Felser and Wanner 200, 108)
	(25) Final goodbyes were waved
Non-argument properties (≠ Prototypical objects)	
No pronominalization	(26) * Pauline smiled thanks and Mary smiled them, too
	(27) * George nodded agreement, so I nodded it, too
No passivization	(28) *Her assent was smiled (Huddleston and Pullum et al. 2002, 305)
	(29) *A cheerful welcome was beamed by Sandra (Levin 1993, 98)
	(30) *Satisfaction was smiled by John (Omuro 1997, 819)

Table 3. Syntactic properties of ROs (adapted from Kogusuri 2009)

occur with, when a postverbal NP is added to them the construction undergoes a process of semantic extension (Levin and Rapoport 1988). For example, in the reaction object construction *Pauline smiled her thanks*, when the NP *thanks* is added to the basically intransitive verb *smile*, the construction does not simply describe the act of *smiling* but the act of expressing a reaction by means of a *smile* (Levin and Rapoport 1988, 277).

The same process of semantic extension has been attested in *way*-constructions with the attachment of the *way*-object to other intransitive verbs, as in the *way*-construction *Jack moaned his way out the door* which does not simply mean that “Jack moaned” but that “Jack went out of the door, moaning”; and also in cognate object constructions such as *She smiled a beautiful smile* that can be paraphrased as “she smiled beautifully” (Massam 1990).

Having identified the features that serve to characterize these objects as nonprototypical, what follows is a more detailed consideration of ROs and their subtypes following Martínez-Vázquez’s taxonomy (2010). Note that the different types of ROs will be illustrated with my own examples drawn from the Corpus of Late Modern English Period (CLMET-EV; de Smet 2006), which comprises a great variety of texts written by British authors from 1710 to 1920. In this way, I will be dealing with Late Modern English material, whereas Martínez-Vázquez approaches reaction objects from a synchronic perspective.

#### 4. REACTION OBJECTS AND THEIR SUBTYPES

Martínez-Vázquez (2010) classifies ROs into three different types. These are *formulae* such as *thanks* and *welcome*, reaction nouns such as, for example, *apology* and *request*, and expressive nouns such as *contempt* and *tenderness*.

Formulae, such as *welcome* and *thanks*, are defined as “independent utterances associated with specific conventional situations” and “which may be recategorized into different grammatical elements” (Martínez-Vázquez, forthcoming). Some instances are represented in (31) and (32), where the independent utterances “Welcome!” and “Thanks!” have been recategorized as NPs in the ROC.

- (31) We’d have cracked our throats with *roaring a welcome*.  
CLMET-EV 1889, Jerome; *Three Men in a Boat*
- (32) The concierge *murmured thanks* and went off muttering indistinctly.  
CLMET-EV 1908, Bennett; *The Old Wives’ Tale*

The second type of RO is that of **reaction nouns**. These are deverbal nouns which are morphologically derived from speech act verbs, that is, verbs that refer to speech and denote actions of various types. It is important to note that the deverbal nature of reaction nouns allows us to paraphrase ROCs such as *he muttered out an apology* by the combination of the verb in question (*he muttered*) plus the verb the reaction noun derives from (*he apologized*). Hence, ROCs involving reaction nouns such as *murmur a request*, *mutter a promise* and *smiled acquiescence* stand for the combination of the verb involved in the ROC and the verbs *request*, *promise* and *acquiesce*.

Finally, the last group is that of **expressive nouns**. These are predicative nouns that describe the emotional states or feelings experienced by the subject (Martínez-Vázquez, forthcoming). Instances appear in the ROCs, *the philosophers muttered their sage contempt*, *the voice was whispering tenderness* and *James murmured out his ardent love*. In these constructions the subjects express their *feelings of* contempt, tenderness or love by muttering, whispering and murmuring, respectively.

It should be noted that Martínez-Vázquez’s three-fold classification excludes from the family of ROs neutral nouns which characterize an utterance in terms of its form (whether it is “formed” by *words*, *phrases* or other), as in (33) and (34) and other neutral nouns that serve to characterize the “content” of a sentence, quotation or paragraph, such as *design* and *opinion* in examples (35) and (36).

- (33) Jem *muttered some words*.  
CLMET-EV 1848, Gaskell; *Mary Barton*
- (34) Sydney Fellowes bowed over her hand presently, *murmured some conventional phrase*, and passed on.  
CLMET-EV 1911, Brebner; *The Brown Mask*
- (35) She had even dared to *murmur her design* to Dr. Bennet.  
CLMET-EV 1870, Yonge; *The Caged Lion*

- (36) At her departure she took occasion to *whisper me her opinion* of the widow.  
CLMET-EV 1751, Fielding; *Amelia*

However, it is obvious that some of these constructions with neutral nouns come very close semantically to ROCs when they are accompanied by an *of*-phrase containing a noun belonging to one of the three subtypes previously identified, as in the structures *a few words of thanks* and *an expression of suppressed disapprobation*. Although these linguistic expressions do not qualify as ROCs they are clearly related to them semantically, and historically they may have been transitional in arriving at the construction as we know it today. In fact, the expressions *he murmured a few words of thanks* and *he whispered words of tenderness* look like the extended versions of the ROCs *he murmured his thanks* and *the voice whispered tenderness*.

In light of these examples, it is clear that my data is more complex than the three-fold classification consisting of formulae, reaction nouns and expressive nouns since this classification cannot accommodate structures such as those just mentioned. This finding suggests that in order to arrive at a complete picture of ROs we will have to take into account a number of borderline constructions, which may have played a role in their historical development.

## 5. CONCLUSION

In this paper, the nonprototypical status of cognate objects, *way*-objects and ROs has been justified by showing how their syntactic and semantic features differ from those of the two basic prototypical object types. It has also been suggested that the nonprototypical behaviour of these objects may be due to the intransitive nature of the verbs these objects occur with, such that when these intransitive verbs take objects, the construction suffers a process of semantic extension.

Finally, some thought has been devoted to the RO and its subtypes: formulae, reaction nouns and expressive nouns. Although Martínez-Vázquez's classification is a good point of departure for the study of ROCs, further research is needed in order to fully elucidate the history and features of the construction, as well as the exact nature of its relationship to linguistic expressions with similar semantic content, such as *he whispered words of tenderness* (vis-à-vis the ROC *the voice whispered tenderness*).

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# A Comparative Study on the Importance Given to Grammar, Vocabulary and Pronunciation in EFL Spanish Secondary-School Course Books

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The present study aims to compare the role that grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation have in secondary-school EFL textbooks addressed at Spanish learners. Eight course books were thoroughly analysed, and aspects such as the presence of the aforementioned three language skills in the different types of units and the frequency, type and format of the activities were taken into consideration. The results obtained indicate that pronunciation has a clearly inferior role in comparison to vocabulary and particularly to grammar.

Keywords: teaching EFL; grammar; vocabulary; pronunciation; textbooks; Spanish learners

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, many EFL classes in Europe follow the indications of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (2001).<sup>1</sup> According to this document, each main language skill (or communicative event), i.e., listening, writing, spoken production, spoken interaction and reading should be emphasised and integrated in the EFL classroom (Council of Europe, 2001). Learners will consequently be assessed on each of these skills in each of the six levels of proficiency the framework defines (A1-C2) and are thus expected to become competent enough, both at a productive and a receptive level, to be able to communicate efficiently in the target language. In order to fulfil this aim, EFL students should also acquire linguistic, socio-linguistic and pragmatic communicative language competences (Council of Europe 2001) and within the linguistic component, learners should develop their competences at the grammatical, the lexical and the phonetic level, among others.

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As a consequence, EFL textbooks should also have adapted to these changes and each language skill should now be emphasized in a similar manner. Moreover, attention should be paid to grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation, as the three main components of the linguistic competence mentioned above.

Elementary and intermediate Spanish learners of English encounter many challenges when facing English grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation. Regarding grammar, they commonly have problems with word order and subject-verb agreement (Alonso 1999; Martínez 2008) and tend to use articles incorrectly (García 2008). Concerning vocabulary, false friends such as *embarrass*, “*avergonzar*,” or *sensible*, “*sensato*,” tend to pose difficulties (Martínez 2008; Sánchez 2011). Finally, with regard to pronunciation, Spanish learners of English tend to have problems both at the segmental and suprasegmental levels (Alcaraz and Moody 1999; Estebas 2009; Kenworthy 1987; Walker 2010). Some instances of typical mistakes made by these learners are the confusions between long and short vowels, the pronunciation of schwa as a full vowel, guided by the actual spelling of the word in question, consonant pairs such as /θ-ð/, /s-z/ or /d<sub>3</sub>-z/ and consonant clusters like <st>, <str>, <spl>.

Of these three language areas, pronunciation is commonly considered the most difficult language competence for Spanish learners to acquire and develop (Aliaga 2007; Martínez, Usó and Alcón 2006) for several reasons: a) the lack of similarities between the phonological systems of the two languages, b) the fact that Spanish words follow a completely regular system of correspondences between spelling and pronunciation, whereas in English the orthographical and phonological systems have a non-transparent relationship, and c) the lack of exposure to English outside the classroom. Hence, it would be totally feasible to emphasize this area in language classes in Spain. Nevertheless, pronunciation has been traditionally neglected in the teaching of EFL classes (Derwing 2010; Fouz and Mompean 2012) since it is often regarded as time-consuming, and teachers do not feel confident enough to teach it (Dixo and Pow 2000).

The following paper aims at providing some empirical data on the importance that grammar, pronunciation and vocabulary receive by identifying, analysing and comparing the role that is currently given to each of them in EFL textbooks addressed at Spanish secondary-school students. Aspects such as the frequency, type and format of the activities and the presence of theoretical explanations to help students improve their abilities in each of these three language areas will be analysed.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

The sections related to grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation of a total of eight EFL secondary-school textbooks were analysed, two course books per academic year for this educational stage. They were representative of different publishers (Oxford University Press, Macmillan, Burlington). These particular eight textbooks were

chosen since: 1) they have been published in the last few years and thus, are expected to follow the indications of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (2001), such as skill-integration and paying the same amount of attention to each of the five main skills and language competences; and 2) they are currently being used in many high schools in Santiago de Compostela and other areas of Galicia and Spain. For an exhaustive list of the materials analysed, please see Appendix 1, below.

Once the materials had been selected, a database was created to enter the information extracted from each textbook, based on three columns: the first detailed the unit and page-numbers, the second, the actual activities and tips/pieces of advice present on each page, and the third, the type of activity (multiple choice, transformation, fill in the blanks, etc).

The aspects analysed were: a) presence of grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation in the table of contents and in the different units of work, b) the total number of sections devoted to each of these language areas, c) the number of activities present which focused on grammar, pronunciation or vocabulary, as well as the average number of tasks per textbook and per unit, d) the format of the different activities included in the textbook, and e) the inclusion of pieces of advice, tips and/or theoretical explanations to help students learn different grammatical, lexical or phonetic aspects.

### 3. RESULTS

#### 3.1. Presence in units

Vocabulary, pronunciation and grammar were always present in the textbooks' tables of contents; however, differences were still found. In particular, grammar was present as a main component in all of the eight textbooks considered, whereas vocabulary was included in only seven, appearing together with speaking in the eighth. Concerning pronunciation, a much more varied situation was encountered since it only appeared as a main component in three textbooks. In three of the remaining books, pronunciation was presented together with speaking, in one it was placed with vocabulary and in the last textbook it appeared in an indirect way, at the bottom of the table of contents page, in a section referred to as *pronunciation appendix*.

With respect to the presence of these three language areas in the different units, we will distinguish three types of units: a) introductory/starter units that appear in some textbooks before the main units in order to revise content learnt in previous stages of education, b) the main units a textbook is composed of and, c) revision units; within this last group, we will distinguish two subtypes: C1) revision units within the main units, i.e., those units commonly referred to as cumulative/test/revision units present after one or several general units and, C2) revision sections included at the end of the textbook.

Following this classification, grammar once again was the language area present in the highest number of units: it was present in five of the six textbooks that contained an introductory unit and it was consistently included in every main unit in all of the textbooks analysed. Furthermore, the eight course books analysed included some type of cumulative/test/revision units and, once again, grammar was present in all of them; finally, in three out of the eight textbooks, grammar was also emphasised in the review sections at the end of the textbooks. The majority of textbooks included vocabulary in all of their main units and revision within main unit sections. Moreover, vocabulary sections were considered in all of the six course books that included an introductory unit and in two out of the eight textbooks analysed, vocabulary was present in the revision section at the end of the book. Pronunciation, finally, was also detected in the majority of main units and, on some occasions, in the revision section at the end of the textbook. However, it was not present in any of the introductory units or in any cumulative/test/review units within the main textbook units.

### 3.2. Total number of sections

Three hundred and seventy-four sections were identified for grammar, two hundred and seventy-one for vocabulary and a hundred and thirteen on pronunciation; averaging 46.75 sections per course book devoted to grammar, 33.875 to vocabulary and 14.125 to pronunciation.<sup>2</sup>

### 3.3. Total number of activities

Concerning the number of activities present to practise these three linguistic competences, a tallying system in which the number of tasks was independent of the numbering system was necessary since some of the activities presented as a single type of task entailed more than one type of linguistic competence (e.g.: *Listen and repeat the adjectives in the box. Then translate them*—Listen and repeat task + translation activity).

Following this criterion, the total number of tasks that emphasised grammar was 1268 with 755 tasks identified for practising vocabulary and 236 for learning pronunciation. In other words, an average of 158.5 activities per textbook focused on practising grammar, 94.375 tasks per course book worked on the learning of English vocabulary and approximately 29.5 activities per book were concerned with pronunciation.

### 3.4. Activity format

As can be seen in Table 1 below, a total of fourteen types of activities were identified for grammar, twelve kinds of tasks were used to introduce lexical aspects and seven for focusing on pronunciation.

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<sup>2</sup> To calculate the average number of sections per book, we divided the total number of sections by the total number of textbooks analysed, i.e., eight.

Vocabulary	Grammar	Pronunciation
Matchings	Matchings	Listen and repeat
Multiple choice	Multiple choice	Matchings
Listen and repeat	Listening	Production
Games	Games	Discrimination
Productions <sup>1</sup>	Productions	Fill in the blanks
Translations	Translations	Arrange
Fill in the blanks	Fill in the blanks	Dictation
True or false	True or false	
Arrange:	Arrange	
Revision	Revision	
Transformation	Transformation	
Correcting mistakes	Correcting mistakes	
	Reading	
	Dictation	

Table 1. Classification of the grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation activities found in the textbooks analysed

The most frequent types of vocabulary activities were productions, matchings, fill in the blanks and listen and repeat tasks, for all of which more than a hundred instances of each type were identified; furthermore, between fifty and one hundred examples of multiple choice exercises and less than fifty exercises of the remaining activity-formats were found. Secondly, concerning grammar, two types of activities, namely productions and fill in the blanks, were the most common, each represented by more than four hundred examples. Moreover, between one hundred and two hundred instances of multiple choice questions were detected; less than one hundred examples each were found of identifications, transformations, matchings, games, dictations or true or false tasks. Finally, the most frequent type of pronunciation exercise was listen and repeat, with 139 instances identified, while less than fifty examples each of discriminations, productions, matchings, arranging, fill in the blanks and dictations were encountered.

### 3.5. Theoretical explanations/tips

A total of 151 pieces of advice, tips and/or theoretical explanations were identified, ninety-seven of which helped students with the learning of some grammatical aspect, forty-one emphasised some type of lexical feature and the remaining thirteen were aimed at helping students improve certain aspects of their English pronunciation.

## 4. CONCLUSIONS AND SOME REFLECTIONS

According to our results, it is clear that the language competence that receives most attention in EFL textbooks aimed at Spanish secondary-school students is grammar,

followed by vocabulary and, finally, pronunciation. In most of the aspects analysed, grammar was at the top of the scale: more theoretical explanations on grammatical features were present, a higher number of exercises and types of activities were identified, more sections devoted to grammar were included and it was continuously present in the table of contents section as a main component and in all the different types of units distinguished (main, introductory, revision within main units and revision sections at the end of textbooks).

On the other hand, pronunciation is the area that receives less attention in these textbooks, evidenced by there being fewer activities, sections, activities per unit, types of activities and theoretical explanations. Furthermore, it seems that grammar and vocabulary activities are more varied than those for pronunciation, more than ten types of exercises for the two former language areas having been identified whereas only seven kinds were detected for pronunciation. Moreover, only one type of pronunciation activity, listen and repeat, was frequently found while at least four types of grammar and vocabulary activities were classified as (quite) common such as, productions, matchings, fill in the blanks and multiple choice questions.

As mentioned in the introduction, pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary are three sub-competences that students should develop at a linguistic level in order to become efficient language learners; hence, attention should be paid to each of these language areas in EFL teaching materials. However, on the basis of our results, pronunciation clearly continues to have an inferior role in secondary education in Spain. A possible reason for this situation could be the fact that the oral component is still not present in university entrance exams; hence, both editors and EFL teachers give more attention to other language areas and linguistic competences at secondary-school level, such as grammar, reading and writing, since students will not be assessed on their oral abilities as much as on their written ones in the next level of proficiency, i.e., post-compulsory secondary education, or *bachillerato*. Moreover, teacher training courses in Spain do not normally include sections on how to teach pronunciation and therefore EFL teachers would not be able to exploit pronunciation sections as well as they do with other language skills, even if the former were more frequently present in the course books.

Although pronunciation is rather undervalued in these EFL materials designed for Spanish learners, this is quite surprising since, as mentioned in the Introduction, pronunciation is commonly the language area Spanish students have more problems with and hence, more attention should be devoted to it.

This study is part of a larger project on the role of pronunciation at different levels of education and teaching materials in Spain and the results obtained in this paper provide insights into the fact that, although EFL textbooks used in Spain are expected to have adapted their contents to the CEFR's indications and thus, devote a similar degree of attention to each linguistic competence, they currently fail to do so when it comes to this oral component of language. Perhaps it is time for a change in

the Spanish educational system since many secondary-school students believe that knowing how to pronounce correctly in English is important but they also affirm that not enough time is given to pronunciation in their current EFL classes, less attention is paid to oral skills than to grammar, vocabulary, reading and writing and the pronunciation activities their EFL textbook contains follow a largely repetitive format (Calvo 2013).

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#### APPENDIX I

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# Collective Nouns in English: A Corpus-Based Study on Agreement

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This study investigates the patterns of verbal agreement of 23 singular collective nouns which take *of*-dependents (i.e., determiner + collective + *of* N). Different syntactic factors like attraction or syntactic distance, along with semantic issues like the animacy of the oblique were explored. The data obtained provide us with statistical support for the significant influence the *of*-PP exerts on verbal agreement in these constructions.

Keywords: agreement; collective; oblique; animacy; corpus

\* \* \*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Agreement is a controversial linguistic phenomenon which has been widely discussed in recent decades due to the cross-linguistic and language-internal inconsistencies or mismatches which it evinces.<sup>1</sup> One of the languages showing significant variation is English, particularly as regards agreement in number with collective nouns. Traditionally, these nouns can take singular or plural verbs depending on whether we focus on the group as a unit or on its different members, a pattern which is complicated even further if potential agreement-carriers (e.g., *of*-dependents) are involved.

The main aim of this study, therefore, is to explore the verbal agreement patterns of 23 collective nouns which take *of*-dependents (e.g., **A band of children** were careering about [BNC AN7 2024]). In this way, it will be argued that it is precisely the presence of such a prepositional phrase (often containing a plural noun)<sup>2</sup> that determines the number of the verb in most cases.

The paper is organised as follows: First, a brief theoretical background will be presented. Second, after describing the methodology and the data, the influence of

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<sup>2</sup> In this paper, “*of*-dependent,” “*of*-PP” or simply “oblique” or “dependent.”

different syntactic and semantic issues of the oblique will be considered. Finally, the main conclusions from this pilot investigation will be put forward.

## 2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Agreement can be defined as the “systematic covariance between a semantic or formal property of one element and a formal property of another” (Steele 1978, 610). In other words, this term accounts for the matching of either syntactic or semantic features between two elements in the sentence. According to Corbett (2006, 4-5), the “controller” is the item determining agreement whereas the “target” is the element whose form is conditioned by the “feature specifications” (“number” in this case) of the controller (here the collective noun and the verb, respectively).

Canonical agreement (1a) implies the formal matching between the features of the controller and the target (see Corbett 2006, 4-ff). Thus, any formal mismatch derived from semantic agreement (1b) (i.e., verbal number is based on the semantics of the controller) is considered to be less canonical (see Corbett 2006, 155ff).

- (1) (a) The **committee**<sub>SG</sub> **has**<sub>SG</sub> **decided**.  
 (b) The **committee**<sub>SG</sub> **have**<sub>PL</sub> **decided**.

Semantic agreement with collective nouns is usually reinforced by “attraction”<sup>3</sup> (Acuña-Fariña 2012, 7). Thus, regardless of the number of the actual head noun, it is the presence of the *of*-dependent, in particular the oblique noun within the *of*-PP, that often determines the number of the verb (2), especially when the *of*-PP is plural.

- (2) ... the next **batch**<sub>SG</sub> of **revelations**<sub>PL</sub> **were**<sub>PL</sub> made. [BNC: GWG 710]

## 3. CASE STUDY: VERBAL AGREEMENT WITH COLLECTIVE NOUNS TAKING *OF*-DEPENDENTS

This section introduces the corpora and the data supporting the conclusions of this paper and closes by investigating the syntactic and semantic issues involved in the relation of agreement in collective noun-based constructions.

### 3.1. Methodology and data

#### 3.1.1. *Methodology and data retrieval*

Using data from the written and spoken parts of the *British National Corpus* (BNC) and *The Corpus of Contemporary American English* (COCA), this investigation

<sup>3</sup> Note that “attraction” is taken here in a broader sense than in the psycholinguistic literature to denote the influence of the plural *of*-PP on the verb.

explores the agreement patterns of 23 singular collective nouns usually taking *of*-complementation: *band, batch, bunch, class, clump, couple, crowd, flock, gang, group, herd, host, majority, minority, number, pack, party, rash, series, set, shoal, swarm* and *troop* (list retrieved from Biber et al.'s (1999, 249) "quantifying collectives" and Huddleston and Pullum et al.'s (2002, 503) "number-transparent" nouns).<sup>4</sup>

Since the object of study is verbal agreement, only those instances containing verbs inflected for number were included in the database. Furthermore, due to the extensive nature of the corpora, this investigation was limited to a maximum of 6,000 instances per collective noun. Among those instances, the examples not valid for this study (i.e., those that did not show verbal agreement) were manually discarded.

### 3.1.2. *Data*

This study starts from the traditional idea that the number of the collective noun, it being the actual head noun of the construction, should determine the number of the verb. However, in the case of collectives taking *of*-dependents, this relation may be influenced by certain other factors. The working hypothesis of this work will therefore be that the *of*-PP exerts a significant influence on the number of the main verb.

In this investigation, only singular collective head nouns are taken into consideration. However, in general, both the BNC and COCA show there is a tendency towards plural agreement:

	BNC						COCA			
	abs.Freq.			%			Abs.Freq.		%	
Verbal	SG	PL	TOTAL	SG	PL	SG	PL	TOTAL	SG	PL
AGR	883	1,559	2,442	36.16	<b>63.84</b>	1,656	2,631	4,287	38.63	<b>61.37</b>

Table 1. Verbal agreement in the BNC and COCA

Since the nature of the oblique may have influenced the data presented above, the same data were analysed according to the number of the oblique noun within the *of*-PP: either singular (i.e., NN1, *population*) or plural (i.e., NN2, *boys* and NNO, *people*):<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Only the collective/quantificational meanings of these nouns were considered. Instances like *Our band of hearing includes all the sounds which are significant for us* [BNC: FEV 929] were excluded.

<sup>5</sup> NNO (nouns neutral for number; i.e., non-overt plural nouns like *people* or nouns like *fish*, which can be singular or plural) will be equated to NN2 (overtly-marked plurals) in this paper because of the high incidence of the non-overtly-marked plural noun *people*, though a more detailed analysis of NNO is needed.

	BNC						COCA					
	abs.Freq.			%			Abs.Freq.			%		
	SG	PL	TOTAL	SG	PL	SG	PL	TOTAL	SG	PL		
SG of- DEP	193	71	264	73.11	26.89	393	50	443	88.71	11.29		
PL of- DEP	690	1,488	2,178	31.68	68.32	1,263	2,581	3,844	32.86	67.14		

Table 2. Verbal agreement with singular and plural obliques in the BNC and COCA

Table 2 shows that, when the *of*-dependent is singular, canonical agreement (i.e., singular verbal agreement with the singular collective head noun) is preserved in more than 70% of cases in both corpora. Furthermore, Table 2 also evinces the influence plural obliques exert on the number of the main verb, triggering plural verbal forms in more than 65% of cases (i.e., attraction) in both corpora.

In order to test the significance of the figures presented so far and, therefore, the validity of the whole pilot study, below I will contrast the data obtained for agreement when the *of*-dependent is present with the data for the same structure without the *of*-dependent ( $\chi^2(1)$ ,  $p < 0.0001$  in each corpus):

	BNC						COCA					
	abs.Freq.			%			Abs.Freq.			%		
	SG	PL	TOTAL	SG	PL	SG	PL	TOTAL	SG	PL		
With of- DEP	883	1,559	2,442	36.16	63.84	1,656	2,631	4,287	38.63	61.37		
Without of-DEP	9,431	3,625	13,056	72.23	27.77	42,461	9,758	52,219	81.31	18.69		

Table 3. Verbal agreement with *of*-dependents vs. verbal agreement without *of*-dependents in the BNC and COCA<sup>6</sup>

- (3) (a) ... a group of **British skiers** were horrified to see a man ... [BNC: CCK 737]  
 (b) ... when a whole **group** is **having** a go ... [BNC: ATAW\_non\_ac\_soc\_science]

Table 3 shows that, in general terms, the presence of *of*-dependents (3a) influences the data towards plural agreement. In fact, when the *of*-dependent is absent (3b), both corpora show an overall preference for singular agreement (in over 70% of

<sup>6</sup> For the data without *of*-PP in the BNC, the interface of the Brigham Young University was used (<http://corpus.byu.edu/bnc/>). The rest of the data from the BNC in this study were retrieved from the Lancaster University interface (<http://bncweb.lancs.ac.uk/cgi-bin/bncXML/BNCquery.pl?theQuery=search&curlTest=yes>).

cases), a finding which suggests the validity of further investigating the *of*-dependent with regard to agreement.

### 3.2. Data analysis

So as to demonstrate the influence of the *of*-dependent, different syntactic variables like modification of the *of*-PP or semantic issues like animacy of the oblique were analysed.

#### 3.2.1. Syntactic issues

##### 3.2.1.1. Overt agreement on the oblique constituent

As already noted, although only singular collective head nouns are considered here, the predominant verbal number in both corpora was plural, a result which was explained on the basis of the presence of the *of*-PP. As Figure 1 below evinces, the data suggest a clear preference for overtly-marked (i.e., NN2, *boys*) and non-overtly-marked (i.e., NNO, *people*) plural nouns, which could have triggered the high proportion of plural verbal forms. Singular obliques (i.e., NN1, *population*) are quite marginal in contrast.

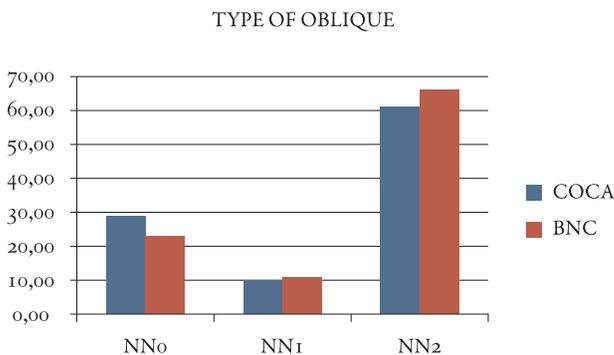


Figure 1. Percentage of each oblique noun in the *of*-dependent examples in the BNC and COCA

##### 3.2.1.2. Structure of the oblique constituent

The structure of the *of*-PP, i.e., the possible premodifiers and postnominal dependents of the oblique, turned out to be significant as regards the possible relation of dependence between the elements comprised in the *of*-dependent and the actual number of the main verb ( $\chi^2(1)$ ,  $p < 0.0001$  in both corpora).

Structure of the <i>of</i> -PP	AGR			
	BNC		COCA	
	SG	PL	SG	PL
1 <i>BARE NP</i>	35.21	64.79	38.19	61.81
2 <i>MOD + NP</i>	29.93	70.07	40.31	59.69
3 <i>NP + DEP</i>	41.98	58.02	35.46	64.54
4 <i>MOD + NP + DEP</i>	49.29	50.71	44.44	55.56
5 <i>BARE NP + REL CL</i>	30.23	69.77	16.67	83.33
6 <i>(MOD) + NP + (DEP) + REL CL</i>	40.00	60.00	46.94	53.06
7 <i>BARE CORD NP</i>	29.27	70.73	26.67	73.33
8 <i>BARE COORD NP + REL CL</i>	0.00	100.00	0.00	0.00
9 <i>(MOD) + COORD NP + (DEP)</i>	35.48	64.52	41.67	58.33
TOTAL	36.16	63.84	38.63	61.37

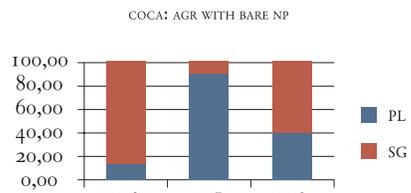
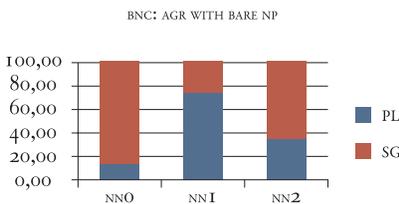
Table 4. Verbal agreement (%) with the different structures of *of*-dependents in the BNC and COCA

Table 4 illustrates the nine different structures categorised in both corpora, all of them favouring plural agreement. In this paper, only the most frequent structures, the first four (over 94% of the total number of instances in both COCA and BNC), will be analysed in detail below.

(a) Bare obliques

This structure, in which the collective head noun and the verb are only separated by two words (i.e., *of* + oblique noun), shows one of the highest rates of plural agreement. This finding was expected due to the high incidence of plural obliques in the whole database. In fact, the data retrieved from both the BNC and COCA confirm the significance of such plural *of*-dependents in the number of the verb, a phenomenon which is known as attraction and which is said to operate quite frequently with semantic agreement in structures similar to those studied here:

- (4) ... bunch<sub>SG</sub> of people<sub>PL</sub> were<sub>PL</sub> seated in an amphitheater of e[*sic*] kind. [COCA: FIC BkJuv: Charmed]



Figures 2 and 3. Verbal agreement (%) with each oblique noun in bare *of*-PPs

Despite the significance of attraction, canonical agreement with the collective is still remarkable in those instances containing (overt and non-overt) plural nouns within the *of*-dependent (5a, 5b), as evinced by Figures 2 and 3 above. Thus, this particular case, along with the absence of canonical agreement when the oblique is singular (5c), will be given further consideration here (§3.2.2.):

(5) (a)... a **bunch**<sub>SG</sub> of **guys**<sub>PL</sub> **was**<sub>SG</sub> **standing** around on the Sacramento River. [BNC: HPG 1400]

(b) A **crowd**<sub>SG</sub> of **people**<sub>PL</sub> **is**<sub>SG</sub> still **standing** around in front of Gideon's house. [COCA: FICMOV:ToSleepWith]

(c) . . . the **majority**<sub>SG</sub> of the **population**<sub>SG</sub> **are**<sub>PL</sub> implicitly absolved from responsibility. . . [BNC: CAF 1227]

(b) Extended obliques

According to Levin (2001, 95), as the distance between the collective controller and the verbal target increases, the likelihood of finding plural agreement becomes higher. Since in the structures analysed here we have not only a collective indicating plurality but also an oblique constituent which is frequently plural, such a likelihood is expected to be higher. Thus, to test the validity of this claim, three different variables were considered: the number of premodifiers of the oblique, the different dependents following the oblique and the number of words in between the oblique and the verbal target.

Firstly, as regards premodification, it must be noted that the instances in the database contain from between zero to three different elements (i.e., potential modifiers) preceding the oblique noun. Taking this into account, the data obtained were classified according to the number of premodifiers of the noun in the *of*-dependent, as shown in Tables 5 and 6:

AGR	BNC								
	0 (bare <i>of</i> -PP)		1		2		3		
	SG	PL	SG	PL	SG	PL	SG	PL	
NN1	73.13	26.87	69.23	30.77	<i>62.50</i>	<i>37.50</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>0.00</i>	
NN2/NN0	28.48	71.52	26.34	73.66	27.04	72.96	24.49	75.51	

Table 5. Verbal agreement (%) with the different number of premodifiers of the oblique in the BNC 7

<sup>7</sup> The figures in italics indicate that they are based on too few examples to be considered statistically significant.

AGR	COCA							
	o (bare <i>of</i> -PP)		1		2		3	
	SG	PL	SG	PL	SG	PL	SG	PL
NN1	88.89	11.11	87.50	12.50	100.00	0.00	50.00	50.00
NN2/NN0	30.42	69.58	36.19	63.81	35.99	64.01	25.61	74.39

Table 6. Verbal agreement (%) with the different number of premodifiers of the oblique in COCA

These data indicate that, overall, singular obliques collocate with singular verbs, while (overt and non-overt) plural obliques favour plural verbal forms. In this respect, we can observe that the likelihood of finding plural verbal forms slightly increases with the number of premodifiers in the case of the BNC, an increase which is only observed in category '3' in COCA. In principle, though these data seem to support to a certain extent Levin's claim on distance, the tests carried out so far have proved that such figures are not statistically significant.

Concerning the structures containing postmodification or complementation of the *of*-PP, the rates of frequency for plural agreement, already shown in Table 4, were, in general, slightly lower than those of bare *of*-PPs:

Structure of the <i>of</i> -PP	BNC				COCA			
	NN1		NN2/NN0		NN1		NN2/NN0	
	SG	PL	SG	PL	SG	PL	SG	PL
<i>BARE NP</i>	73.12	26.88	28.48	71.52	88.89	11.11	30.42	69.58
<i>NP + DEP</i>	77.50	22.50	37.96	62.04	84.93	15.07	29.12	70.88
<i>MOD + NP + DEP</i>	78.26	21.74	46.72	53.28	96.15	3.85	40.90	59.10

Table 7. Verbal agreement (%) in bare *of*-PPs vs. *of*-PPs containing postmodification in the BNC and COCA

Analysing the data in detail, we observe that the decrease in plural agreement affects not only plural but also singular oblique nouns. However, only the former provide us with statistically significant data. The type of modifiers and/or complements in this position have not been fully categorised as yet, but the analyses carried out so far have demonstrated that, in general, contrary to what happens with premodification, the probability of finding plural agreement decreases when the *of*-PP does not occur next to the main verb, as Table 7 evinces (one exception must be noted: structure *NP + DEP* in COCA, for which no explanation has been found yet).

The results in Table 7 allow us to state that Levin's claim on syntactic distance also does not apply when the collective noun-based constructions studied here involve postmodification. Resorting once more to the literature on the topic, the findings above are probably supported by the notion of 'markedness' (Levin 2006, 325),

especially in the case of the BNC. Though more research is obviously needed, since plural is conceptually more complex than singular number, and since the structures studied here are already complex, it may be that across long syntactic boundaries speakers might prefer the unmarked option as a way of easing the cognitive load in the processing of the sentence.

This argument seems to be supported to a certain extent by the data obtained for the final syntactic issue: the number of words in between the oblique and the verb, a variable accounting for the significance of attraction. It must be noted that only the data for plural obliques are provided since the figures for singular oblique nouns were not significant.

Words Oblique- Verb	PLURAL OBLIQUE (NN2/NN0)			
	BNC		COCA	
	SG	PL	SG	PL
0	28.17	71.83	33.51	66.49
≤5	37.45	62.55	29.39	70.61
≤10	38.14	61.86	36.82	63.18
≤15	33.33	66.67	31.88	68.12
≤20	65.00	35.00	35.71	64.29
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>31.68</b>	<b>68.32</b>	<b>32.76</b>	<b>67.24</b>

Table 8. Verbal agreement (%) in relation to the distance between the plural oblique and the verb in terms of number of words

As the figures clearly indicate, in the BNC the difference between singular and plural agreement is reduced considerably when the distance separating the two elements is between zero and twenty words (category '15' being an exception in this respect), a decrease which is statistically significant ( $\chi^2(1)$ ,  $p=0.008$ ). Conversely, the American variety shows higher rates for plural agreement as distance increases, though no statistical support has been found in this case. Therefore, in general terms we can state that the data from the BNC allow us to argue that Levin's claim on distance is not corroborated in the case of collectives taking *of*-dependents. As regards COCA, the differences it shows in relation to the BNC suggest the necessity of carrying out a thorough analysis in terms of regional variation.

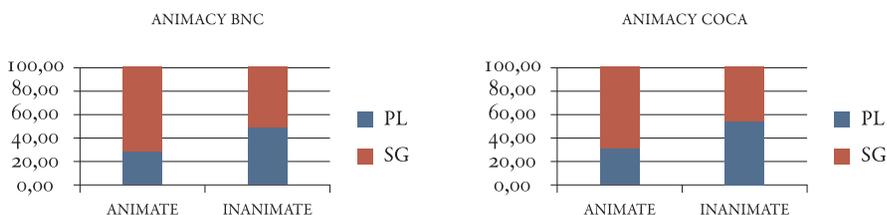
To sum up, in this section, it was argued that *of*-dependents have a significant influence on the number of the verb agreeing with the collective. However, syntactic factors cannot explain those cases deviating from canonical agreement (e.g.,  $N_{SG} \textit{of} + N_{SG} + V_{PL}$ ), and it is thus necessary to resort to semantic factors.

### 3.2.2. *Semantic issues*

The semantics of collective nouns, in particular their animacy, has been a topic explored by scholars such as Levin (2001, 126ff), who observes that animacy is closely related to agreement. According to Levin's findings (2001, 128-129), animacy is important in

that animate controllers usually favour plural verbs. Since this investigation is focused on constructions taking *of*-dependents, only the semantics of the oblique nouns has been considered so far.

Nonetheless, both the BNC and COCA clearly evince that, whereas inanimate obliques show similar figures for both numbers, animate entities clearly favour, in more than 70% of cases, plural agreement, as Figures 4 and 5 illustrate:



Figures 4 and 5. Verbal agreement (%) with animate and inanimate obliques in the BNC and COCA

This specific semantic criterion will prove useful to account for the formal mismatches (6a) and the lack of attraction (6b) observed in the previous section, two phenomena which could not be explained in syntactic terms:

- (6) (a) ... the **majority**<sub>SG</sub> of the **population**<sub>SG</sub> **are**<sub>PL</sub> implicitly absolved from responsibility... [BNC: CAF 1227]  
 (b) A **pack**<sub>SG</sub> of 11 **toddlers**<sub>PL</sub> **rolls**<sub>SG</sub> into the main lobby... [COCA: MAG WashMonth]

OBLIQUE	AGR	BNC			COCA		
		Animate	Inanimate	Other	Animate	Inanimate	Other
NN1	SG	25.39	74.61	0.00	26.46	73.54	0.00
	PL	70.42	28.17	1.41	62.00	36.00	2.00
NN2	SG	37.66	62.15	0.19	58.97	40.63	0.40
	PL	57.79	41.84	0.37	66.50	33.13	0.37

Table 9. Verbal agreement (%) with oblique noun and 'animacy' in the BNC and COCA<sup>8</sup>

Table 9 corroborates the data presented in Figures 4 and 5 regarding the number the verb takes with animate referents. As concerns singular obliques (i.e., NN1), it has been found that in formal mismatches, that is, when they take a plural verb, the

<sup>8</sup> Category "NNO" is not discussed here because, given the diversity of nouns it comprises, it needs a more thorough analysis in semantic terms. Category 'other' in this same table comprises examples of coordination of oblique nouns in which the two referents have a different semantic status or instances for which the nature of the referent could not be determined.

oblique tends to denote animate reference in 70.42% of the cases in the BNC and in 62.00% of those in the COCA.

Furthermore, in the case of overtly-marked plural nouns (i.e., NN2), lack of attraction can also be explained in semantic terms. In fact, as the data from the BNC illustrate, when a plural oblique collocates with a singular verb, the oblique is very likely to be inanimate (62.15%). Conversely, in COCA, 58.97% of the cases of lack of attraction correspond to plural animate obliques, a finding which proves the need to explore regional variation in these data in future research.

To sum up, this section has explored the influence of semantics on verbal agreement. It has been shown that animacy of the oblique is involved in this syntactic phenomenon, an argumentation that validates the importance of the study of *of*-dependency in the agreement patterns of collective nouns.

#### 4. CONCLUDING REMARKS AND FURTHER RESEARCH

This study has explored the influence of *of*-dependency on the patterns of verbal agreement of collective noun-based subjects. The investigation shows that, unlike the examples without *of*-PPs, the constructions with *of*-dependents entail important implications in terms of agreement.

The results indicate that the collectives studied show considerably frequent collocation with plural obliques, which influences the rate of plural verbal agreement. The analysis of the structure of the *of*-dependent demonstrates that, as different constituents and/or words are introduced in between the dependent and the verb, the likelihood of finding plural verbal number decreases considerably with respect to singular agreement, especially in British English, a tendency which suggests a possible shift in markedness or, in other words, a change towards less complex agreement.

It proved necessary to resort to semantic issues to explain cases involving either lack of attraction or formal mismatches. Features like animacy were considered to be significant for this purpose, since the formal mismatches observed derive from the fact that plural agreement is favoured when the oblique is animate, whereas lack of attraction stems from a low incidence of animate *of*-dependents.

Despite the conclusions put forward here, more research in this respect is needed in order to explore new variables as well as further varieties of English. Finally, the similarities between these constructions and already grammaticalised structures like “*a lot of N<sub>PL</sub>*” (Traugott 2008, 230) also deserve further consideration.

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# A Corpus-Based Analysis of Predicate Ellipsis in Late Modern English

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A corpus-based analysis of Predicate Ellipsis (PE) in Late Modern English has been undertaken making use of texts from the Penn Parsed Corpus of Modern British English (PPCMBE). PE refers to cases where there is ellipsis of a VP, PP, NP or AP after the following licensors: modal verbs, the auxiliaries *be*, *have* and *do* and infinitival marker *to*. Results indicate that PE is much more frequent in speech-related genres (Trial proceedings, Drama comedy, Private letters and Fiction) than in writing-related genres, except for the genre of Philosophy. Furthermore, the most frequent licensors of PE are *do*, *be*, *could*, *can*, *have*, *would* and *will*.

Keywords: Predicate ellipsis; Late Modern English; genre

\* \* \*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In this paper I will first define the concept of ellipsis by mentioning its main characteristics and restrictions, in order to then describe the term Predicate Ellipsis and three of its subtypes: VP Ellipsis, Predicate Phrase Ellipsis and Pseudogapping.<sup>1</sup> In section 3 I will state the goals of the present study. Section 4 describes the methodology used. Section 5 deals with the data analysis and, finally, section 6 contains the results and the conclusions, also making reference to issues that warrant further research.

## 2. ELLIPSIS DEFINED

The concept of *ellipsis* (from Greek ἔλλειψις, *elleipsis*, “omission”) refers to a syntactic strategy in which subcategorised elements are left unpronounced in certain constructions. This omission triggers a mismatch between meaning (the intended message) and sound (what is in fact uttered) (Aelbrecht 2010). Therefore, ellipsis

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illustrates indirect mapping between meaning and form (Gandón-Chapela 2013b). In fact, as Merchant (2006) claims, in ellipsis there is *significatio ex nihilo* (“meaning out of nothing”), which implies that the interpretation of an elliptical construction is richer than what is actually uttered (Aelbrecht 2010; Carlson 2002). Here is an example:

- (1) Alice has studied for the exam, whereas Peter hasn't ~~studied for the exam~~.<sup>2</sup>

In (1) ellipsis has taken place in the second conjunct under identity with the first (which acts as the antecedent), since the omitted material can be retrieved from the context fairly easily.

Elliptical constructions, however, do not occur freely. There are two restrictions that need to be complied with for them to be felicitous: (i) the recoverability condition and (ii) the licensing condition. The recoverability condition makes reference to the fact that elliptical constructions need to be recoverable from the context in which they take place, either linguistic or extralinguistic (Quirk et al. 1985; Aelbrecht 2010; van Craenenbroeck and Merchant 2013). As mentioned in Gandón-Chapela (2013b), the following example would violate the recoverability condition if uttered out of the blue, since it would not be possible to know what is meant:

- (2) \*I know he will.

The licensing condition dictates what exactly can be elided depending on the syntactic context in which ellipsis takes place (Zagona 1982; Lobeck 1995; Johnson 2001; Merchant 2001; Aelbrecht 2009, 2010). Aelbrecht (2009, 15) provides an example of this:

- (3) a. \*Max having arrived and Morgan not having, we decided to wait.  
b. Max had arrived, but Morgan hadn't, so we decided to wait.

Despite the fact that the VP has already been mentioned in the sentence and could be easily inferred from the context, one can only elide the VP occurring in the finite clause (3b).

After this very brief and general introduction to the phenomenon of ellipsis and its main characteristics, I will devote the following section to the description of the elliptical construction of my study, i.e. Predicate Ellipsis, and its subtypes.

### 3. PREDICATE ELLIPSIS

The term Predicate Ellipsis (PE) refers to “a type of ellipsis in which the main predicate of the clause is missing—often together with one or more of its internal arguments—

<sup>2</sup> Struckthrough words represent elided material.

but in which the inflectional domain and the canonical subject position are outside the scope of the ellipsis and hence remain unaffected” (van Craenenbroeck and Merchant 2013, 702). Therefore, PE would be ellipsis of a VP, PP, DP or AP after the following licensors: modal verbs, the auxiliaries *be*, *have* and *do* and the infinitival marker *to*. This type of ellipsis is also known as Post-Auxiliary Ellipsis in the literature (Miller 2011; Miller and Pullum 2013). In this study I will focus on three subtypes of PE: VP Ellipsis (VPE), Predicate Phrase Ellipsis (PPE) and Pseudogapping, illustrated in (4) to (6):

- (4) I have written a squib but he hasn't ~~written a squib~~. (VPE)
- (5) John is talkative but Sara is not ~~talkative~~. (PPE)
- (6) John invited Sarah, and Mary did ~~invite~~ Jane. (Pseudogapping) (Adapted from Gengel 2013, 23)

Below I will provide the general characteristics of these three subtypes of PE. As far as VPE, the most widely discussed subtype in the literature, is concerned, one could state that its main characteristics are that it involves the omission of a VP (examples (7)-(9) below), it is possible in contexts of subordination (as in (7)-(8)) and it can apply across sentence boundaries (examples (8)-(9)):

- (7) Will likes coke and I think Karen does ~~like coke~~ too.
- (8) A: Can you hear that noise?  
B: Yes, I think I can ~~hear that noise~~. What is it?
- (9) A: Did you ring Jeff?  
B: No I didn't ring. Sorry, I forgot. (Adapted from Carter and McCarthy 2006, 247)

Predicate Phrase Ellipsis (PPE) involves the Ellipsis of APs, PPs, or DPs after the auxiliary *be*, as in (10)-(12) below:

- (10) John is a doctor and Anne is [~~a doctor~~]<sub>DP</sub> too.
- (11) Paul is handsome but one cannot ignore that Peter is [~~handsome~~]<sub>AP</sub> too.
- (12) Bill's son is on the beach, although he shouldn't be [~~on the beach~~]<sub>PP</sub> because he's allergic to the sun.

The third subtype of PE considered here is Pseudogapping, an instance of ellipsis, similar to VPE, in which an extra remnant is left, as illustrated by the indirect object *me* in (13) below:

- (13) Does that make you mad? It would ~~make~~ me ~~mad~~! (Adapted from Gengel 2007, 20)

Unlike VPE, the acceptability of Pseudogapping is more constrained since it shows a preference for coreferential subjects and comparative contexts (Aelbrecht 2010), as in (14), where Pseudogapping takes place in a comparative sentence whose subject corefers with the one present in the antecedent (*he*).

- (14) He realized that he could make more money in some other position than he could ~~make money~~ farming. (Adapted from Levin 1978, 229)

#### 4. GOALS

Whereas the few recent corpus-based studies on ellipsis, mainly on VPE (Hardt 1993; Hardt and Rambow 2001; Nielsen 2003; Bos and Spender 2011; Miller 2011; Miller and Pullum 2013; Gandón-Chapela 2013a), have focused on Present Day English, Gandón-Chapela (2013b) has extended these works by investigating ellipsis in Late Modern English, though this work deals mainly with methodological issues. The main aim of the present pilot study is to carry out an empirical analysis of Predicate Ellipsis, both quantitatively and qualitatively, by means of data retrieved from the Penn Corpora of Historical English from Late Modern English to Present Day English (1700-1914). This study is part of a larger project which analyses Post-Auxiliary Ellipsis in Modern English (1500-1914) and pays attention to syntactic variation, genre distribution and discourse variables (type of anaphora, mismatches in polarity, aspect, voice, modality, tense; comparison of clause types; distance, linking, type of focus). Here I will describe the frequency of the three types of PE studied, i.e., VPE, PPE and Pseudogapping, their distribution per genre and their most frequent licensors in the period mentioned. The hypothesis is that PE will be more frequent in speech-related genres. 5. Methodology

I carried out the manual analysis of twelve raw texts of the total 102 files (12.24 percent, which comprises 112,347 words analysed out of a total of 948,895 words), all belonging to different genres and periods of time of the PPCMBE (Kroch et al. 2010). All the PE examples were stored in a database and sorted by the type of licensor and the genre. Then, the patterns of PE were examined in order to draw some generalizations that would allow an automated analysis by means of CorpusSearch 2, which achieved both a high precision and a high recall. The patterns examined showed that auxiliaries *be*, *have* and *do* were licensors of VPE which had already been

tagged in the parsed texts in the vast majority of cases. Here is one example illustrating the syntactic analysis of the sentence *He did*:

```
(15) He did.
      (IP-SUB (NP-OBJ *T*-I)
              (NP-SBJ (PRO he))
                (DOD did)
                ())))
      (..)
```

The tag *VB\** indicates that the verb has been elided. Simply searching for the tag *VB* indicating that it immediately dominates (iDoms) the \* symbol returns a fair amount of VPE instances. An algorithm was therefore designed in order to retrieve as many examples of PE as possible. Here is the algorithm:

```
node: *
query: (VB* iDoms \*)
      OR (HV* iDoms \*)
      OR (MD* hasSister !VB*|BE*|DO*|HV*)
      OR ((MD* iPrecedes HV*)
          AND (HV* iPrecedes [.,]))
      OR ((MD* iPrecedes HV*)
          AND (HV* iPrecedes BE*)
          AND (BE* iPrecedes [.,]))
      OR (BE* iPrecedes [.,])
      OR ((BE* iPrecedes NEG)
          AND (NEG iPrecedes [.,]))
      OR (HV* iPrecedes [.,])
      OR ((HV* iPrecedes NEG)
          AND (NEG iPrecedes [.,]))
      OR (CP* hasLabel CP-QUE-TAG*)
      OR ((HV* iPrecedes NP-SBJ)
          AND (NP-SBJ iPrecedes [?]))
      OR ((DO* iPrecedes NEG)
          AND (NEG iPrecedes NP-SBJ)
          AND (NP-SBJ iPrecedes [.,?]))
      OR (DOI iPrecedes [.,])
      OR ((ADJP iDoms ADJ)
          AND (ADJ iDoms able)
          AND (able iPrecedes [.,]))
      OR (BE* iPrecedes PP|ADV)
```

OR ((BE\* iPrecedes NEG)  
AND (NEG iPrecedes PP|ADVP))

CorpusSearch 2 algorithm to obtain examples of PE

This algorithm is designed to capture every possible syntactic context where PE could occur, and the reader is referred to Gandón-Chapela (2013b), where the main characteristics of CorpusSearch 2 are thoroughly explained.<sup>3</sup>

The databases used in order to carry out this investigation are commonly known as the Penn Corpora of Historical English, formed by a collection of running texts and text samples of British English prose from different historical periods which range from the Middle English period up to the First World War.<sup>4</sup> The collection is divided into three different corpora: Penn-Helsinki Parsed Corpus of Middle English, 2nd ed. (PPCME2), Penn-Helsinki Parsed Corpus of Early Modern English (PPCEME) and Penn Parsed Corpus of Modern British English (PPCMBE). The texts are available in three different formats: raw text, part-of-speech tagged text and syntactically annotated text. The syntactic annotation or parsing of these corpora provides the possibility of looking for words or word sequences, in addition to syntactic structure. Therefore, syntactic constructions which follow a general pattern can be easily retrieved automatically.

This corpus contains eighteen different genres, which I have classified into two groups: speech-related and writing-related. Speech-related genres include Diary, Drama comedy, Fiction, Non-private letters, Private letters, Trial proceedings and Sermon. Writing-related genres comprise Bible, Biography autobiography, Biography other, Educational treatise, Handbook other, History, Law, Science medicine, Science other, Philosophy and Travelogue.

## 6. DATA ANALYSIS

The total number of tokens obtained automatically was 7,813, out of which only 1,156 examples constituted correct cases of PE. The precision of the programme was reduced due to two factors: an incorrect analysis in the parsed files (probably because of the existence of many different annotators of the corpus) and the inclusion of cases of *be* followed by APs, PPs, AdPs in the algorithm so as to account for possible examples like (16), which created noise in the data:

(16) John is studying at the library and Mary is studying at home.

<sup>3</sup> For more information, visit <http://corpussearch.sourceforge.net/>

<sup>4</sup> For more information on the corpora, visit <http://www.ling.upenn.edu/hist-corpora/>

Table 1 shows the frequency of PE by the number of clauses (Inflection Phrases or IPs) in the different genres. The clause or IP has been taken as the unit to work out normalised frequencies because ellipsis is a phenomenon which takes place at the level of the clause. As can be observed, PE is most frequent in the Trial proceedings genre (occurring in thirty-five out of 1,000 clauses), followed by Drama comedy (15), Philosophy (12.78), Private letters (10.79), Fiction (10.63), Non-private letters (9.61), Sermon (8.65), Diary (6.68), Biography other (5.72), Educational treatise (5.27), Handbook other (4.81), Science other (3.58), History (3.08), Bible (3.06), Travelogue (2.84), Biography auto (2.02), Law (1.39) and Science medicine (1.14). The average number of occurrences of PE is 8.75.

Genres	Predicate Ellipsis	No. Clauses (IPs)	Normalised Frequency/1,000 IPs
Trial proceedings	312	8,913	35.005
Drama comedy	184	12,251	15.01
Philosophy	31	2,424	12.78
Private letters	114	10,558	10.79
Fiction	106	9,968	10.63
Non-private letters	45	4,679	9.61
Sermon	64	7,394	8.65
Diary	70	10,479	6.68
Biography other	23	4,019	5.72
Educational treatise	45	8,528	5.27
Handbook other	42	8,718	4.81
Science other	24	6,692	3.58
History	25	8,093	3.08
Bible	27	8,816	3.06
Travelogue	27	9,474	2.84
Biography auto	7	3,465	2.02
Law	7	5,001	1.39
Science Medicine	3	2,623	1.14
Total	1,156	132,095	8.75

Table 1. Relative frequency of PE per 1,000 IPs

Below, I have grouped the speech-related genres, which (with the exception of the genre of Philosophy, which belongs in the writing-related genres group) are those which happen to contain the highest number of occurrences of PE. The average occurrence of PE in speech-related genres is 13.93 per 1,000 IPs.

Genre	Predicate Ellipsis	Nr. of IPs
Trial proceedings	312	8,913
Drama comedy	184	12,251
Private letters	114	10,558
Fiction	106	9,968
Non-private letters	45	4,679
Sermon	64	7,394
Diary	70	10,479
Normalised Frequency/1,000 IPs	13.93	

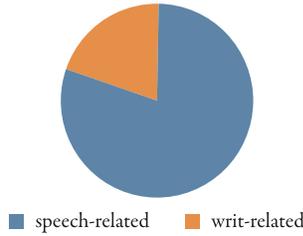
Table 2. Speech-related normalised frequency of PE per 1,000 IPs

Let us compare these results with those contained in Table 3, which represents the occurrence of PE in writing-related genres:

Genre	Predicate Ellipsis	Nr. of IPs
Philosophy	31	2,424
Biography other	23	4,019
Educational treatise	45	8,528
Handbook other	42	8,718
Science other	24	6,692
History	25	8,093
Travelogue	27	9,474
Biography auto	7	3,465
Law	7	5,001
Science Medicine	3	2,623
Normalised Frequency/1,000 IPs	3.96	

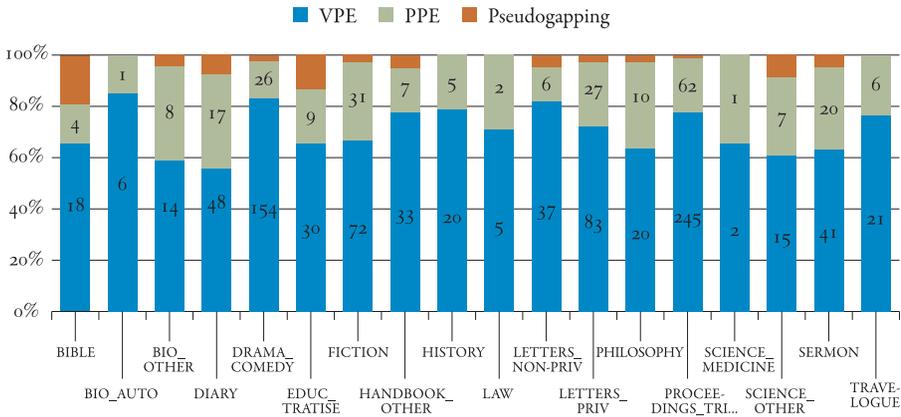
Table 3. Writing-related normalised frequency of PE per 1,000 IPs

Table 3 shows that the average occurrence of PE is over three times less frequent (3.96) than in speech-related genres (13.93). This shows that there is a tendency for PE to be more common in speech-related genres, whereas its presence is rather marginal in writing-related genres. Below I have included a pie chart which represents this asymmetric distribution:



Graphic 1. Distribution of PE per type of genre

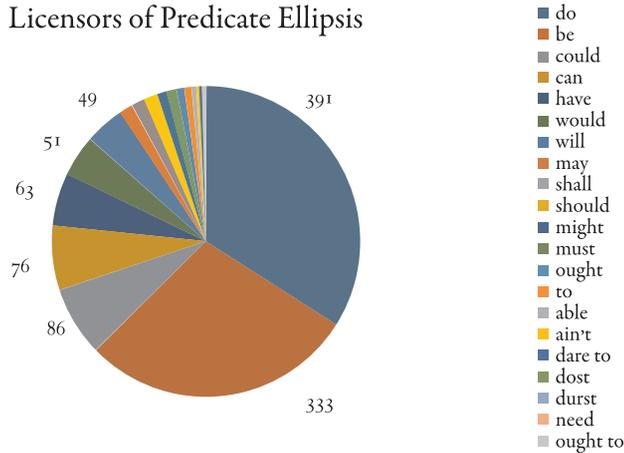
Let us concentrate now on the frequency of the PE subtypes per genre. As illustrated in Graphic 2 below, VPE is the subtype which occurs the most and is evidenced in all the genres. In contrast, PPE is much less frequent, although it is also found in all of the genres. Lastly, Pseudogapping examples have a much more marginal presence when compared with the other two subtypes, even being completely absent in some of the genres.



Graphic 2. Distribution of ellipsis types per genre

As far as the licensors of PE are concerned, it was found that the most frequent are *do, be, could, can, have, would* and *will*.

## Licensors of Predicate Ellipsis

Graphic 3. *Frequency of the licensors of PE*

## 7. RESULTS

The results indicate that the genres in which PE is more frequent are, in descending order, Trial proceedings, Drama comedy, Philosophy, Private letters and Fiction. In addition, it should be noted that PE is more frequent in speech-related genres than in writing-related genres, with the exception of the genre of Philosophy. Furthermore, VPE is by far the most frequent type of PE in all of the genres, followed by PPE and Pseudogapping, the latter seemingly the most marginal case of ellipsis. Finally, the most frequent licensors of PE have been found to be *do*, *be*, *could*, *can*, *have*, *would* and *will*.

There are still some issues that deserve further research, such as the genre of Philosophy, which contains many cases of PE (in comparison with other writing-related genres). Furthermore, I intend to analyse the results of the other discourse variables present in my database (type of anaphora, mismatches in polarity, aspect, voice, modality, tense; comparison of clause types; distance, linking, type of focus) so as to then extend the analysis to the Early Modern English period (1500-1700) and compare the results obtained with those presented here.

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# Syntactic Knowledge and Representation: The Case of Inner Aspect in Child Grammar

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Longitudinal and experimental analyses of early language aim to reveal the underlying syntactic knowledge of children, which includes the property of inner aspect. In this paper we consider findings in L1 acquisition and notice a curious contradiction that seems to arise between production and comprehension data: only production data reveal clear early inner aspectual knowledge. Our conclusion is that both types of data are necessary for a proper account of the acquisition of inner aspect.

Keywords: generative grammar; language acquisition; inner aspect

\* \* \*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Syntactic knowledge in adults within the framework of generative grammar is characterised by a representation incorporating certain projections of categories which have specific features. It also involves the application of operations like movement. The equivalent syntactic knowledge in children may be regarded as containing these same elements, but data gathered longitudinally and experimentally do not reveal the same degree of knowledge in the first stages of L1 acquisition. This paper deals specifically with the issue of internal aspect and, essentially, the notion of *telicity* of a predicate, which entails the possibility of an event having a natural endpoint. We will be considering what work by different researchers has revealed about early knowledge of events and telicity and conclude that, although there seems to be a contradiction between what data gathered in different ways tell us about aspect in child grammars, the two types of data exhibit different issues related to the many elements that integrate the complete picture of early syntactic development of inner aspect.

## 2. ASPECT IN ADULT GRAMMARS

### 2.1 Inner aspect and outer aspect

Sentences include two types of aspectual information which are referred to as inner, situation aspect or *aktionsart* and outer, grammatical or viewpoint aspect (Vendler (1967), Smith (1997), MacDonald (2008), among many others). These two aspectual types of information co-occur in sentences but are independent.

Given a pair of sentences like those in (1), the speaker knows, in Smith's (1997) terms, both "how much of the situation is presented" (outer aspect) and "to what situation type it belongs" (inner aspect).

- (1) a. John wrote a letter  
b. John was writing a letter

The verb *write*, a transitive verb, can occur in a sentence which depicts a complete event as in (1a), or only part of an event with no information as to whether or not the endpoint is reached, as in (1b). Outer aspect refers to how much of the event is viewed (viewpoint aspect) and this is usually expressed by morphological affixes on the verb. Perfective and imperfective are two terms used in relation to outer or viewpoint aspect.

We will focus on situation aspect, that which refers to the inner composition of the event, that is, whether or not the event can have a natural endpoint. This information has been characterised by many authors in terms of types of verbs (for example, Vendler 1957) or situation types (as in Smith 1997) and basically include the following:

- a) *States* are static, durative and atelic, as in "John knows French."  
b) *Activities* are dynamic, durative and atelic, as in "John walked all afternoon."  
c) *Accomplishments* are dynamic, durative and telic, as in "John built a House."  
d) *Achievements* are dynamic, instantaneous and telic, as in "John reached the top of the mountain."

### 2.2 Inner aspect and elements that can contribute to it

As can be seen in the listed features from a) to d), telicity is included in only some of the verb types, specifically accomplishments and achievements. However, telicity is the result of the properties of the verb plus other elements that co-occur in its context. An example of this is illustrated in (2) and (3), where the properties of the object make an activity, *write*, telic when the object is preceded by a definite article.

- (2) ... write letters for hours = atelic  
(3) ... write the letter in two minutes = telic

Thus, we observe how only (3) depicts an event which has a natural endpoint. There are other elements which may modify the inner aspect properties of an event. In Spanish and Catalan the particle *-se/es*, respectively can also have the effect of shifting an inherently non-telic event, (4) into a telic one, (5):

- (4) a. Juan come pollo cada día  
 b. En Joan menja pollastre cada dia  
 “John eats chicken every day” (atelic)
- (5) a. Juan se come un pollo en tres minutos  
 b. En Joan es menja un pollastre en tres minuts  
 “John can eat a chicken in three minutes” (telic)

In English, a particle like *up* can also contribute to the telicity of the event:

- (6) He ate up his soup in two seconds

This property of inner aspect suggests that telicity is a syntactic phenomenon in that it is not exclusively related to a feature of the verb itself but depends on elements that co-occur in the verbal domain.

### 2.3. The syntactic representation of inner aspect

It is by now a common assumption among researchers to posit a specific aspectual phrase (AspP) which incorporates aspect in its syntactic representation. Nevertheless, different authors relate it to either outer or inner aspect. We will assume it is a projection related to inner aspect. Of the different researchers who include an AspP projection, MacDonald (2008) interprets the possibility of activities—like *write* in (2) above—becoming telic as the consequence of specific structural characteristics shared by activities, accomplishments and achievements, but not by states. Thus, there is an essential difference between events and states: only events have *event features* that are syntactically active and contribute to aspectual interpretation in different ways. Specifically, event structure incorporates two interpretable features—[ie] and [fe]—which correspond to the beginning (initiation) and the end (finalisation) of an event respectively. MacDonald assumes these are the two grammaticalised parts of the event.

In such a framework, each verb type corresponds to a structural composition, specifically:

- a) no AspP and no event features (states);  
 b) AspP and only one event feature [ie] (activities);

- c) two event features, [ie] and [fe], in different heads—Asp and V— (accomplishments);
- d) two event features, [ie] and [fe], in the same head, Asp (achievements).

The corresponding structure entails *c-command* only in the case of *c*), accomplishments, and this is regarded by MacDonald as the structural correlate of a durative meaning.

Given the assumption that activities inherently only contain one event feature (the one corresponding to the beginning of the event), the possibility that these can become telic is necessarily related to the fact that other elements in the structure can incorporate an endpoint. The contribution of the object to the aspectual interpretation of the event, also known as “object-to-event mapping,” is formulated as another feature that has syntactic effects, a [q] (quantised) feature on the NP. This feature can have a positive or a negative value and, thus, the following possibilities arise:

- a) if a [+q] feature Agrees with Asp, the result is a telic predicate
- b) if a [-q] feature Agrees with Asp, the result is an atelic predicate

Notice that the operation that enables the [q] feature in the object to relate to Asp is here identified as *Agree*. There are other proposals of this object-to-event mapping, some of which involve movement of the object to the Asp projection. We will consider this option in sections 3.1.3 and 3.2.2 in relation to aspect in early language.

This section has briefly shown how the expression of inner aspect may be portrayed accurately by positing features in projections which give rise to specific relations that follow from the syntactic structural make-up of the event. This representation of aspectual knowledge is, we assume, what develops in the process of L1 acquisition.

### 3. INNER ASPECT AND EARLY GRAMMARS

Many researchers observe signs of knowledge of aspect in the speech of children and most of the work that analyses early aspect observes a relationship between aspectual verb type and verb form (Sections 3.1.1 and 3.1.2), but there is also a group of researchers who look beyond the verb form and discover signs of knowledge (or lack of it) in analysing other elements that contribute to the interpretation of inner aspect (Sections 3.1.3 and 3.2). As we will see in the following sections, observing knowledge, or the lack of it, may be related to the type of methodology used in looking for this knowledge. We first begin with a look at the discoveries revealed by longitudinal data of child production and then consider two proposals that have used experimental comprehension data in relation to aspect. Using the longitudinal method implies analysing the production of children over a period of time, observing

regularities with respect to inner aspect, while the experimental method involves testing a group of children on their knowledge of inner aspect.

### 3.1. Longitudinal data: early knowledge of inner aspect?

#### 3.1.1 *Aspect in child production*

From very early on researchers (Antinucci and Miller (1976), Gianelli and Mazini (1995), Hoekstra and Hyams (1998), Wagner (1998), Van Hout (1998), among many others) have noted a correlation between outer and inner aspect in the early stages of child production. It has been observed that children tend to use perfective forms with telic predicates and imperfective forms for atelic predicates in many languages (English, Italian, French, Spanish and Catalan). The following exemplify this correlation:

(7) Spanish:

Participles: *roto* (broken), *tirado* (thrown), *acabado* (finished)

Gerunds: *jugando* (playing), *trabajando* (working), *llamando* (calling)

(8) Catalan:

Participles: *tirat* (thrown), *escapat* (escaped), *trencat* (broken)

Gerunds: *dormint* (sleeping), *menjant* (eating), *jugant* (playing)

(examples from Bel 2001)

In examples (7) and (8) above, accomplishments and achievements appear as participles and activities are attested as gerunds. Bel (2001) assumes an AspP in the grammar of early Catalan and Spanish and offers as explanation the correlation between outer and inner aspect in terms of features. She analyses the production of 3 Spanish and 3 Catalan children from the age of 18 to 30 months and focuses her analysis on the production of nonfinite forms. The distribution of non finite forms in the corpus is accounted for by assuming an AspP, which provides the early utterances with a sentential status (when there is no overt tense marking). Asp, for Bel, is the functional category which contains the features associated to outer aspect: [+ perfective] and [-perfective]. This category is projected in all nonfinite forms (participles, gerunds and infinitives) and the positive or negative value is what determines the distribution of the forms. Bel observes that there are no achievement predicates produced in gerund form and explains this as a consequence of the fact that a structure which contains an AspP with a negative specification for the feature, [-perfective], will not allow a verb form that has a negative, [-durative] and a positive [+telic] feature, as is the case with achievement predicates. The result is that achievements are not found as gerunds, only as participles. Her analysis is, thus, also based on the feature composition of specific projections.

### 3.1.2 *Aspectual verb type and temporal interpretation*

Another correlation that has been widely studied which is related to early verb forms is what Hoekstra and Hyams (1998) initially termed the “Eventivity Constraint.” This constraint associates early “root infinitives” (RIs), (Rizzi 1993/1994) and aspectual class: only event-denoting predicates emerge as RIs. This correlation is also observed by other authors in other languages, but Hoekstra and Hyams relate this property of root infinitives to another characteristic of these early forms which is that they have an overwhelmingly modal interpretation. This is what they call the “Modal Reference Effect,” as in the Dutch example below:

(9) Eerst kaartje kopen

first ticket buy-INF

“We must first buy a ticket” (example from Hoekstra and Hyams 1998)

Hyams (2011) reconsiders the Eventivity Constraint with longitudinal data from more languages and observes a more complex pattern of correlations that she accounts for by the “Aspectual Anchoring Hypothesis,” which assumes that, in the absence of finiteness, the temporal meaning of the clause is determined by the event/aspectual structure of the clause. Through a series of general principles of aspectual and temporal interpretation, Hyams derives a restricted set of temporal options in early grammar. This systematicity in early speech is, thus, determined by the fact that early grammars incorporate knowledge of aspect.

### 3.1.3 *Inner aspect and word order*

Llinàs-Grau (1998) analyses the production of a Catalan monolingual girl (when aged between 18 and 27 months) and observes that in the early stages of her speech, there are constructions involving preverbal objects. Preverbal objects are not found in the adult grammar of Catalan, except for constructions involving higher levels of structure, such as focus fronting. The constructions under analysis are those in (10) and (11), where the object directly precedes the verb and there is no fronting involved:

(10) Sabates treure

*shoes take-off-INF* (Mireia 20 months)

(11) Mama pitet posa (Mireia 21 months)

*mum bib put*

These sequences reflect a systematicity in that they co-occur with specific types of verbs, namely those that have an inherent endpoint, i.e., incorporate a telicity feature, like those in (12):

- (12) *treure, portar, posar*  
take off, bring, put

The OV sequences in (10) and (11) are analysed as the movement of the object to the Spec of an AspP, which only projects in those constructions involving a verb with an inherent endpoint. These constructions are most frequently non-finite and are claimed to be instances of lack of V-movement to T, which would mask O movement to Spec, AspP. These constructions disappear from the data when V-to-T is compulsory, and when finite forms are acquired, as in (13):

- (13) a        *treu*                    a        *vambes*                    (Mireia 23 months)  
         a        *take-off-3psg*        a        *tennis-shoes*

Llinàs-Grau and Coll-Alfonso (2001) build on the findings of Llinàs-Grau (1998) and consider early OV sequences found in the early stages of two other Catalan children. In this paper, verbs were coded for telicity, finiteness and word order. A strong correlation between telicity and word order was found.

In line with these proposals, Tubau (2004 and 2009), analyses the production of more Catalan children and also the production of their parents and discovers that the early OV orders found in Catalan are not found in the input of the parents, so there is no observable adult counterpart. She takes this as strong empirical evidence for the Poverty of Stimulus argument. Thus, these papers offer new data on OV sequences and corroborate the fact that this is a creative child production, unattested in adults. Tubau also finds a significant correlation between telicity and word order.

The association of a specific word order and a specific verb type, involving an endpoint, which is found in these works suggests that telicity is indeed part of the grammar of the child. Moreover, as the child is combining verb type and non-adult word order involving the object, it can be claimed that these proposals reveal early knowledge of the fact that the object is involved in telic events.

### 3.2 Experimental data: problems with inner aspect?

#### 3.2.1 *Quantised direct objects and telicity*

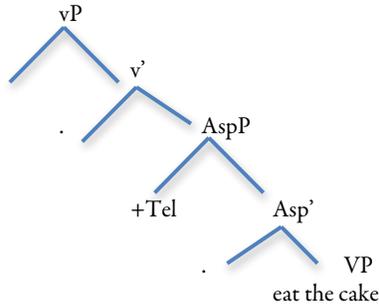
Van Hout (1998) is a study of the acquisition of inner aspect, specifically of telicity, which she regards as not being solely related to the semantics of the verb but also to the verb's morphosyntactic context. For transitive verbs, she notes that the semantics of the direct object play a crucial role and can make an event telic or atelic, as has been observed in section (2.2). Van Hout emphasises the complexity of the expression of telicity, which varies cross-linguistically since it goes beyond the verb type and expands to other elements of the VP.

In order to test if children know the role of direct objects for telicity, van Hout ran an experiment on 45 Dutch children and 46 American children of different ages (3, 4, and 5). The experiment was designed to test the aspectual interpretation of 4 types of sentences: intransitive, bare transitive, full transitive and particle verbs. The children were told a story where a character was placed in an event which was either telic (including a completion point, e.g., a piece of cake was finished) or atelic (including only a termination point eg. the activity of eating a piece of cake stopped, but the piece was not finished). Then children were asked a yes/no question framed in one of these four clause-types. Her results show that for both English and Dutch, only the particle verb clause type was clearly interpreted as telic. The other clause types were not (children allowed both telic and atelic interpretations in varying degrees). For van Hout this shows that “children have not yet picked up on the relevance of the semantics of the direct object for telicity” (99).

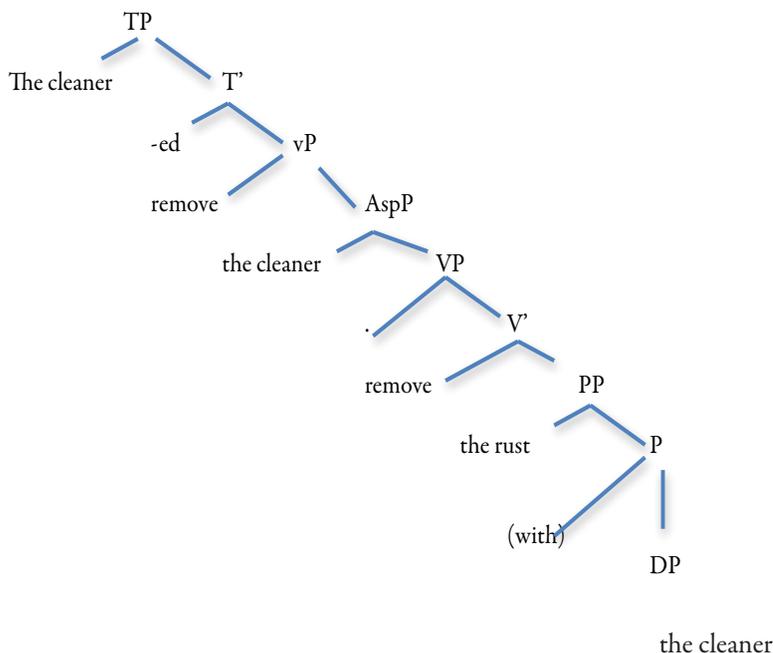
### 3.2.2. *Overt vs. covert movement and telicity*

Hodgson (2009) focuses on the attested difficulty in understanding the relevance of the properties of the direct object (as explained in the previous section) and conducts two experiments involving 16 adults and 60 monolingual Spanish children, one including simple telic predicates and one including locatum predicates, as exemplified in (14) and (15), respectively:

(14) John ate the cake



(15) \_\_\_\_ removed the rust with the cleaner ---- The cleaner removed the rust.



(examples from Hodgson 2009)

The children were told a story where the notion of completion of an event (i.e., telicity) was tested. All the examples involved an incomplete event, so the correct answer for all tokens was NO. Her results show that adults and older children (7-8 years) did not accept incomplete events for either type of predicate, the simple telic ((14), involving covert movement) or the locatum ((15), involving overt movement). In contrast, younger children (3-4 year olds) responded positively in many cases when the event depicted was an incomplete event. An essential observation is that children's performance was not deficient with respect to locatum predicates, which are assumed to involve overt movement of the whole NP to the Spec, TP position, as shown in (15).

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The results in van Hout (1998) and Hodgson (2009) reveal deficient performance with respect to simple telic predicates when knowledge is tested in experimental settings involving comprehension data. Conversely, the research summarised in sections 3.1.1 - 3.1.3, where only longitudinal production is taken into account, show systematic knowledge of the event properties of predicates. These contradictory results, though,

are only superficial. Both van Hout (1998) and Hodgson (2009) offer explanations that redirect seeming lack of telicity knowledge in early grammars to difficulties with or later development of operations involved in the expression of telicity, a complex phenomenon, as explained in sections 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3. Thus, both longitudinal and experimental data offer insight into the syntactic representation and development of inner aspect.

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# On Nominative Case, the D-feature on T and Locative Inversion

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In this paper we argue that the theme argument occurring in locative inversion structures cannot have pronominal status since pronouns, but not full DPs, must satisfy a nominative-Case feature, which is achieved by moving to Spec, TP in a language like English. We reject the view that the ban on pronouns in this structural type is due to any semantic/pragmatic role of presentation by comparing both the intonation and syntactic weight of specific pronominal vs. non-pronominal constituents. We suggest an explanation why nominative Case should work differently for pronominal vs. non-pronominal constituents.

Keywords: locative inversion; nominative-Case feature; pronouns; full DPs; T's D-feature

\* \* \*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In this paper we aim to propose an explanation for a major restriction that so-called *locative inversion structures* are subject to and according to which pronominal DPs cannot occupy the final position, that is, the position after V:

- (1) Over the bridge marched the soldiers / \*they

locative	verb	(agreeing)	subject
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There is a vast amount of literature on the topic of locative inversion structures, which could be said to typically represent the order OVS in English, with the specification that O stands for the locative complement, that is a type of complement indicating position or direction. As regards S, we assume the well-established theory that this is a theme and not an agent: more specifically, it denotes the entity moving

somewhere or being located somewhere, though it actually agrees with the verb in person and number, hence the label S(ubject).

In order to answer the dilemma in (1), we would like to focus on the following two aspects:

- a) In the first place, the impossibility of pronominal DP subjects in this type of structure has generally been argued to be due to the fact that locative inversion structures realise a pragmatic and/or discourse function of *presentation*, and that this entails the DP in question that represents *new information* (as opposed to *old* or *given information*), a requirement that is satisfied by *full DPs*, that is, by non-pronominal DPs. See the seminal work of Levin & Rappaport Hovav (1995), or also traditional referential grammars like Quirk et al. (1972, 949) or later Huddleston & Pullum (2002, 1389ff.).
- b) Second, the top-most functional category of a structure like (1) can be argued to be a T(ense)P(hrase) given the unaccusative (or otherwise passive) status of the structures in question, and given also the EPP property of T in a language like English.

In effect, as noted above, the S constituent *the soldiers* in (1) is a theme proper, which means that it enters the derivation by occupying the position of object of V. Further, and crucially, lexical verbs are not able to move to T in a language like English, which means that the verb *march* in (1) remains in the V node itself.

If we put together the above factors, then the structure for (1) will look like (2), that is, (1) will be a TP, in contrast with topicalisation structures like (3), which will be CPs, that is, Complementiser Phrases. Incidentally, only VP notation and not *vP*-shell notation is used in the analysis for the sake of simplicity.

- (2) [<sub>TP</sub>over the bridge<sub>i</sub> [<sub>VP</sub>marched the soldiers t<sub>i</sub>]]
- (3) a. Over the bridge(,) the soldiers marched  
a' [<sub>CP</sub>over the bridge<sub>i</sub> [<sub>TP</sub>the soldiers<sub>h</sub> [<sub>VP</sub>marched t<sub>h</sub> t<sub>i</sub>]]]
- b. That book(,) he really enjoyed  
b' [<sub>CP</sub>that book<sub>i</sub> [<sub>TP</sub>he<sub>h</sub> [<sub>VP</sub>really enjoyed t<sub>h</sub> t<sub>i</sub>]]]

With regard specifically to the initial position in (2), it is generally assumed in the literature that English is a language whose Spec, TP must necessarily be filled overtly in the course of the derivation, a condition that is of course known as the EPP (from the Extended Projection Principle of the GB era), or more specifically as T's EPP feature.

Quite interestingly, there appear to be languages where the locative constituent in structures parallel to English (1) behaves like a subject proper. In this sense, a classical work like Bresnan (1994) provides arguments based on agreement, or also on binding in order to support the subject status of the locative in a language like Chichewa,

and correspondingly the syntax of tag questions (e.g., *In the garden is a beautiful statue, isn't there?*) or subject-extraction phenomena are employed to support the subjecthood of the locative in a language like English.

We therefore endorse the view that the element [*over the bridge*] is in Spec of TP in (2) above. Locative inversion structures like (1) can then be said to represent a sentence-type in English where the cited EPP feature is not satisfied by an *entity* or *individual* proper but by a *place*. Their being marked structures would actually be due to their not following the so-called *Thematic Hierarchy*, which postulates that, for example, an agent is eligible for initial position before theme in an SVO language, or that a theme takes precedence over a locative in a locative sentence, hence the neutral status of *The soldiers marched over the bridge* as opposed to the marked status of *Over the bridge marched the soldiers*.

Assuming therefore that the EPP feature of T is satisfied in locative inversion structures by a non-D constituent, the aspect that interests us most here is that the actual D constituent occurring in locative inversion structures, that is, the DP denoting the entity moving in space or occupying some place in space, which is situated in sentence final position, is generally assumed to feature nominative Case. We are referring of course to an element like [*the soldiers*] in (1) *Over the bridge marched the soldiers*.

Now, it is precisely Case, which is incidentally one of the most widely-discussed topics in the generative literature, that we would like to hold as the cause of the ungrammaticality of a sequence like (1) with a pronominal DP. In order to be able to account in an explanatory way for the ungrammatical structure in (1), that is, a structure like *\*Over the bridge marched they*, we will focus first on a widely-extended justification that is based on semantic and/or pragmatic features of pronominal elements (but that we, nevertheless, do not consider fully explanatory).

## 2. THE PRESENT PROPOSAL

As noted immediately above, we would like to centre our analysis on the rejection of the idea that for the DP in (1) to be a full or non-pronominal DP is due to its representing new information—see division (A) above. Although we endorse the view that locative inversion structures can indeed be argued to express a presentational situation, this does not necessarily entail that the DP itself expresses new information, which should arguably mean that it cannot be a pronoun.

In order to show this, we would like to consider a pair like (4), only the (a) sentence of which would actually be considered to be a locative inversion structure by standard accounts, and argue that, nevertheless, both the (a) and the (b) sentences can equally be assigned a function of presentation.

- (4) a. There is John!  
b. There he is!

For us, the most relevant aspect of a pair like (4), where all constituents are short or light—in a relevant way, although *John* is a full DP, it consists of just one word—is that the difference between the DPs does not seem to rely on semantic/pragmatic factors such as new vs. old information, but on the fact that one of the DPs belongs within a pronominal paradigm, and it must satisfy one condition: specifically, it must value a Case-feature.

What is more, we would like to argue that (1), and indeed any locative inversion structure proper, can be used to show that the presentational force can be actually expressed by a structure featuring a pronominal DP. Let us consider the pair in (5), the (a) sequence of which is actually (1) above.

- (5) a. Over the bridge marched the soldiers (= (1))  
 b. Over the bridge they marched

Now, (5a) is, as just mentioned, a typical locative inversion structure, and one that would arguably be coupled with the configuration in (2) above. The aspect that we would like to highlight is that (5b) appears to be coupled with two possible configurations – and actually, the same would apply to (4b) above. In effect, (5b) can be analysed as a typical topicalisation structure, similar to (3a, and b) above, where the locative occupies the Specifier position of CP, and the DP *they* occupies the Specifier position of TP. The intonation of a sentence like this would be one in which there is clearly a pause or some kind of tonal differentiation between the constituent in initial position and the rest of the sentence. Nevertheless, (5b) can also be uttered in a parallel way to (5a), that is, without any interruption between the locative and the pronominal, which should actually be due to its being a TP, that is, a configuration with no constituents in the so-called left-periphery. For the sake of clarity then, a structure like (3a) without a comma, would be analysed as a structure with a constituent in the Spec of CP, or the same, in the left-periphery, and the same would apply to one of the possible readings of (5b)

In the case where there is no constituent in CP in (5b)—the second of the two configurations just mentioned—that is, if the locative is considered to be in Spec, TP, then we must resort to a hierarchical structure with multiple Specs (in TP) in order to be able to accommodate the pronominal *they*. In other words, T would have two Spec positions, one occupied by the pronoun and the other occupied by the locative.

In (6) below are the two distinct configurations that would arguably correspond to (5b).

- (6) a. [<sub>CP</sub>over the bridge<sub>i</sub> [<sub>TP</sub>they<sub>h</sub> [<sub>VP</sub>marched t<sub>h</sub> t<sub>i</sub>]]]  
 b. [<sub>TP</sub>[<sub>Spec</sub>over the bridge<sub>i</sub>][<sub>Spec</sub>they<sub>h</sub>][<sub>VP</sub>marched t t]]]

Regarding the Spec, TP position of a typical locative inversion structure like (1) above, which was argued earlier to correspond to (2), the EPP of T should be filled by a locative element, as discussed previously. As for a structure like (6b), where there are two Spec positions for T, the question is of course whether there are two EPP-features to satisfy, or whether the EPP feature is satisfied by the theme, in accordance with the Thematic Hierarchy. Such a question is however outside the scope of this paper. The more central question, which is why locative inversion structures do not allow for a pronominal DP in final position, is the one that we aim to answer in the following, and final, section.

### 2.1. THE PROPOSED EXPLANATION FOR THE RESTRICTION ON PRONOUNS

As observed above in this paper, Case is one of the most controversial issues in current syntactic theory. One of the hallmarks of GB syntax used to be the differentiation between abstract Case and morphological Case and, within current minimalist theory, a notable division of opinion in the literature is actually whether abstract Case is actually a condition to be fulfilled by DPs or not (see e.g. a seminal work like Marantz (1991), whose basic premise is that abstract Case is superfluous, or a recent work like Rezac (2013) for a brief revision of the two opposing views in the literature). Also of course, the view on Case in seminal works like Chomsky (2000, 2001) or Pesetsky & Torrego (2001, 2004) is an indispensable core component in the theory on Case.

The analysis of the restriction in (1) that is proposed in this paper hinges on the hypothesis that it is only pronouns—in other words pronominal DPs—that must satisfy Case, which only actually exists as a morphological condition proper. We therefore endorse the view that abstract Case is not a requirement that DPs must satisfy, and we go a step forward and argue here that locative inversion structures (in English) constitute evidence that only pronouns need to value a (nominative) Case-feature.

The hypothesis that only pronouns have a nominative Case-feature to satisfy actually comes from ongoing research by the present authors. The basic idea consists in the fact that pronominal DPs are radically different from full DPs, precisely with respect to morphological exponence. In effect, nominative Case on nouns in those languages exhibiting morphological Case, is typically a default Case in the sense that remaining Cases are constructed by adding morphological exponents to a so-called nominative Case-form. Whilst this can also appear to be the case for nominative pronouns as opposed to other-Case pronouns, that is, though pronouns exhibiting a Case other than nominative are typically or frequently made up of the nominative-Case form plus additional morphological material (note *he* vs. *him* or *his*, *you* vs. *your* . . .), there exists a crucial difference between full DPs in the nominative and pronominal DPs, which is that the former are typically exclusively 3<sup>rd</sup> person forms,

whereas pronouns make up a full paradigm of six persons for the majority of languages (at least within the Indo-European family). This way, nominative Case cannot be considered a default feature for pronominal forms, but rather a radically meaningful feature: for the reference capacity of full DPs (in the nominative) to be restricted to 3<sup>rd</sup> person in contrast to pronominal DPs, which range from 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> person, both singular and plural, must mean that person reference for each pronoun (in the nominative) is established relative to person reference for all remaining pronouns (in the nominative) within the paradigm.

The explanation that we would like to propose for the ungrammatical structure in (1) above, that is, for the structure where the pronominal DP appears after the verb (*\*Over the bridge marched they*, or also of course *\*There is he*), is not one based, therefore, on any semantic or pragmatic property of locative inversion structures, but in fact on a morpho-syntactic feature that pronominal DPs must satisfy. As has been suggested, we would like to contend that pronominal DPs in the nominative, but not non-pronominal DPs, must satisfy a Case-feature. A fuller discussion of Case would of course entail analysing in some detail other proposals on Case in the current literature, though due to lack of space that is dealt with in a separate work.

### 3. CONCLUSION

We have argued in this paper that the constraint that so-called locative inversion structures must obey, according to which the postverbal DP agreeing with the verb cannot be a pronoun, is due to the fact that pronouns must satisfy Case, that is, a Case feature. Nominative Case on pronouns is analysed as a morpho-syntactic condition that these elements must license by moving to Spec,TP. By contrast with pronouns, full DPs in a language like English lack (nominative) Case, whether as a morpho-syntactic feature or as an abstract feature, which means that they can remain in their original position within the VP. The type of sentence that has been used to reject the view that the ban on pronouns is due to semantic-pragmatic factors is one like *There is John!*, since this appears to be identical to a sentence like *There he is!*, except for a specific type of morpho-syntactic requirement.

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# Looking into the Relation between Imperatives and Isolated *If-Clauses*: Evidence from Spoken British and American English

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This paper provides a preliminary corpus-based approach to the variation between imperatives and isolated *if*-clauses. I will analyze the illocutionary force most frequently coded by each type of clause to ascertain whether they are used for the same communicative purpose or whether they are specialized for specific directive categories. Given that isolated *if*-clauses represent a more polite option, I will also examine their sequential ordering in those conversational interactions in which the constructions co-occur.

Keywords: isolated *if*-clauses; imperative clauses; directives; illocutionary force; variation

\* \* \*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

This paper forms part of a larger study on the characteristics of isolated *if*-clauses in contemporary English.<sup>1</sup> One of the aspects that deserves attention is that of the similarities and differences between this type of clause and imperatives, since both are employed in English to express directive meaning. For this purpose, the *Diachronic Corpus of Present-Day Spoken English (DCPSE)* and the *Santa Barbara Corpus of Spoken American English* have been used as data sources. I will first provide a brief characterization of the clauses under study, namely isolated *if*-clauses and imperatives, then proceed to the corpus study, the analysis of the data and the discussion of results. The final section summarizes the main findings and puts forward some questions for future research.

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2. BRIEF CHARACTERIZATION OF IMPERATIVE AND ISOLATED *IF*-CLAUSES

Imperative clauses, as in (1), differ formally from declarative clauses in that they usually lack an explicit subject and have a verb in the base form, or an auxiliary such as *do* in the base form followed by the appropriate form of the main verb, as in (2) (cf. Quirk et al. 1985, 827).

- (1) Open the door
- (2) Do open the door

In addition, English imperative clauses can also be formed with the auxiliary *let* preposed to the verb, followed by a subject in the objective case (Quirk et al. 1985, 829), as in (3):

- (3) Let's have a break

In turn, isolated *if*-clauses, as in (4), are similar in form to conditional clauses but differ from them in that they lack a main clause and have the illocutionary force of a directive, very often a polite request.

- (4) If you could open the door

Prior studies (Stirling 1999 and Mato-Míguez 2013) provide evidence that these clauses have undergone the process known as “insubordination,” i.e., “the conventionalized main clause use of what, on *prima facie* grounds, appear to be formally subordinate clauses” (Evans 2007, 367). In other words, despite their apparent origin in subordinate clauses, synchronically they need to be interpreted as independent clauses, as is reflected by the fact that they do not fulfill any of the criteria proposed in Quirk et al. (1985, 884-ff) and other important literature for cases of elliptical conditional clauses, including the recoverability of the alleged missing material from the structural or situational context or the fact that elliptical constructions are grammatically defective.

Additional evidence in favor of the main clause status of isolated *if*-clauses are the following: they can themselves govern a subordinate clause, as in (5); they can coordinate with prototypical independent clauses, as in (6); and they can be followed in writing by punctuation marks, as in (7) and (8) both taken from novels,<sup>2</sup> such as full stops and question marks, all of which seems to point to their independent status.

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<sup>2</sup> Taken from Jane Costello's *Bridemaids* (2008) and Sophie Kinsella's *I've got your number* (2012).

- (5) B: Well, if you can really very handsomely lend me your car on Wednesday that's me for Wednesday really because I shall go out to Stadlowe and get back a bit late to really go to anything
- (6) JUDGE: ... Okay. If I may look at that. And, ... have you shown that to uh Mister ~Collins?
- (7) "Right, if you'd just all move a bit closer together," he bellows. "Closer, please!"
- (8) Now, if you could please make way for our other guests?

### 3. CORPUS ANALYSIS

In order to examine the distribution and uses of the two types of clauses under consideration I carried out a corpus analysis. Given that directives are particularly common in conversation (cf. Biber et al. 1999, 221-222), the corpora selected were *DCPSE* and the *SB* as stated in the Introduction. The former contains around 885,000 words of spoken British English from the late 1960s to the early 1990s. The *SB* corpus contains around 250,000 words recorded in different everyday conversational contexts all around the United States in the late 1990s. After reading both corpora, I extracted all imperative clauses and also all those clauses introduced by *if* which could be interpreted as examples of directive isolated *if*-clauses. Given the high number of examples of *Let*-Imperatives found, these have provisionally been left out of this preliminary analysis. The overall results are summarized in Table 1:

	Imperative clauses	Isolated <i>if</i> -clauses
DCPSE	55	52
SB	74	14

Table 1. Number of imperatives and isolated *if*-clauses in the *DCPSE* and *SB* corpora

After analyzing their conversational context, all examples of imperative and isolated *if*-clauses were classified according to their illocutionary force, following the typologies of speech acts in Quirk et al. (1985, 831-32), Huddleston and Pullum et al. (2002, 929-30), Downing and Locke (2006, 211) and Davies (1986). Of the various types of illocutionary acts identified by these scholars, imperatives and isolated *if*-clauses occurred in the corpus in four: orders, requests, offers and constructions. The results are shown in Table 2, as also are the normalized frequencies for these results.

CORPUS ILLOC ACT	DCPSE						SB					
	Imperative		Isolated <i>if</i> -clauses				Imperative		Isolated <i>if</i> -clauses			
Order	15	53.6%	1.7	13	46.4%	1.5	27	100%	10.8	-	-	-
Request	12	34.3%	1.4	23	56.7%	2.6	21	70%	8.4	9	30%	3.6
Offer	6	35.3%	0.7	11	64.7%	1.2	1	16.7%	0.4	5	83.3%	2
Instruction	22	81.5%	2.5	5	18.5%	0.6	25	100%	10	-	-	-
TOTAL	55	51.4%	6.2	52	48.6%	5.8	74	84.1%	29.7	14	15.9%	5.6

Table 2. Distribution and normalized frequencies per 100,000 words of imperative and isolated *if* clauses according to illocutionary act in the DCPSE and SB corpora [according to the typologies of speech acts in Quirk et al. (1985, 831-832), Huddleston and Pullum et al. (2002, 929-930), Downing and Locke (2006, 211) and Davies (1986)]

The data considered in this paper are too limited to draw definitive conclusions, although, as can be seen, there are noticeable differences between the two corpora. First of all, while in British English the figures for the two construction types are balanced, the American English data show a preference for imperative clauses rather than isolated *if*-clauses. This is most probably due to the type of interactions recorded in the *SB* corpus, mostly instructions from judo lessons, recipes and lectures, where a high number of orders and instructions are issued, than to a difference across varieties. Further evidence from the *Corpus of Spoken Professional American English*, containing roughly two million words and seventy-eight isolated *if*-clauses, which is a normalized frequency of 3.9 per one thousand words, confirms that the use of the structure is in fact as frequent in American English as in British English.

Table 3 shows the overall distribution of imperative clauses and isolated *if*-clauses in both corpora according to the type of illocutionary act they code.

Type of illocutionary act	Imperatives		Isolated <i>if</i> -clauses		Total	
	Number of tokens	%	Number of tokens	%	Number of tokens	%
Orders	42	76.4%	13	26.6%	55	100%
Requests	33	50.8%	32	49.2%	65	100%
Offers	7	30.4%	16	69.6%	23	100%
Instructions	47	90.4%	5	9.6%	52	100%

Table 3. Overall distribution of imperatives and isolated *if*-clauses according to type of illocutionary act

As shown in Table 2, orders and requests constitute, taken together, the majority of the directives in the corpus. These two categories of illocutionary acts are the most problematic to distinguish by far. For their correct identification I have

relied, ultimately, on Lakoff's Idealized Cognitive Model (1987, Chapter 4), as revised by Pérez Hernández and Ruiz de Mendoza (2002, see also Takahashi 2012). Idealized Cognitive Models (ICMs) are complex structured systems of knowledge that help structure mental spaces. As Lakoff puts it, "a mental space is a medium for conceptualization and thought. Thus any fixed or ongoing state of affairs as we conceptualize it is represented by a mental space" (1987, 281). The role of ICMs is to provide the background knowledge that we need to recruit in order to structure mental spaces. Pérez Hernández and Ruiz de Mendoza (2002, 264) have formulated the particular ICMs for requests and orders, taking into consideration the assessment of the cost and/or benefit the action involves to the speaker and the hearer, the assessment of the degree of optionality conveyed by a speech act, i.e., the degree to which the speech act restricts the addressee's freedom to decide whether or not to carry out the action and the assessment of the power relationship that holds between the speakers and can be summed up as follows:

ICM of orders	ICM of requests
- In orders, the action represents a cost to the hearer and a benefit to the speaker	- In requests, the action represents a cost to the hearer and a benefit to the speaker
- They show low optionality, that is, politeness is usually lacking	- The level of optionality is high, since they show politeness
- The speaker is usually more <i>powerful</i> than the hearer	

Beginning with the analysis of orders, a sense of obligation, no matter its degree of strength, to carry out the action proposed is said to be involved on the part of the hearer. Examples (9), (10) and (11) illustrate the use of imperative clauses and an isolated *If*-Clause issuing orders. In (9) and (11) the power relationship between the speaker and the hearer is clear, in both cases the speaker being superior to the addressee:

(9) B: Supply us some more drinks while we are about it.

(10) PAMELA: ((SLAP)) S- [*sic*] get your hands off me.

(11) A: If you put your new uhm address there no there and the old address and your name.

As regards requests, in the corpus as a whole isolated *if*-clauses and imperative clauses are almost evenly distributed. However, if we consider the data for British English in isolation, as shown in Table 2, the proportion of isolated *if*-clauses issuing requests (56.7%) is considerably higher than that of imperatives (34.3%). This may have to do with issues of politeness, since an isolated *if*-clause seems to imply an option with alternatives; the hearer is given the option of not complying with the action proposed, although it is assumed that the addressee will grant the speaker's request

(cf. Huddleston and Pullum et al. 2006, 930). I show here a couple of examples of both types of clauses issuing a request.

- (12) A: Remind me to tell her that actually
- (13) Stay to your right folks, please, tour group coming out
- (14) A: uhm uhm if you can make it about three
- (15) BEN: Ok folks if you will please follow me now

Offers are also open to rejection; the addressee can choose whether or not to accept what is being proposed, as shown in (16) to (19). This may explain the higher proportion of isolated *if*-clauses issuing offers, as they leave the hearer more freedom of choice.

- (16) B: Darling have some cherries  
D: have a handful
- (17) Carolyn: Have an apple
- (18) C: uhm <,> if you come Over to TUEsday (*sic*) if you want to come up to my house and have a cOffee [*sic*]
- (19) Matthew: If you'd like to see that.

The last directive category is that of instructions. As shown in Table 3 above, for the issuing of instructions imperative clauses clearly predominate over isolated *if*-clauses (90.4% vs. 9.6%). Interestingly, all 27 examples in this category from the British English corpus are issued in the same single conversational exchange, where isolated *if*-clauses and imperatives co-occur. As expected, given the more polite nature of isolated *if*-clauses, the conversational exchange starts with an isolated *if*-clause and then the speaker switches to imperative clauses. This is shown in (20).

- (20) A: Now before we start the engines up I would like you all to go to your machines <,> and we will wheel them around the course so that you get the feel of them <,,>  
A: Right  
A: We 're going to do this one at a time <,>  
A: If you 'd like to go to your machines  
A: and Gareth if you 'd like to lead <,,>  
A: Right now take the bike off its side stand and hold its weight on the handlebars <,>  
A: Keep the bike leaning towards you slightly not on your hip but towards you  
A: If you'd like to take a right-hand circle <,> quite tight <,> quite gently

A: Now use the brake if necessary to stop it <,>

A: Apply it very slowly <,>

A: No not not (*sic*) too jerkily

A: That was too hard a snatch

A: Treat it very gently

A: That's much better <,>

Later in the conversation, the speaker changes the topic and again makes use of an isolated *if*-clause to express the first directive in the set, switching then to imperative clauses, as shown in (21).

(21) A: And if you go straight into a left hand circle keeping the bike leaning towards you all the time <,>

A: That's it

A: Put it on full lock <,>

A: You'll clear the bikes

A: That's lovely

A: And back to its starting position <,>

A: Apply the brake very smoothly and put it back on its side stand

A: That's the way

A: Lovely

The corpus also yields an example in which an isolated *if*-clause is issued first to formulate an instruction, which is later reinforced by an imperative clause. This is (22).

(22) A: It's on the next one as well <,,>

A: That makes you <,,>

A: if you could keep it in

B: Yes

A: Yeah

B: Keep in that <,> place

B: Yeah

C: Sort of?

B: Plane <,,>

A: Flat

Regarding the data for American English, all instructions are issued by means of imperative clauses. As mentioned before, this may have to do with the nature of the conversations included in the *SB* corpus, mostly academic lessons or lectures. For example, in (23) to (25) a coach is telling his/her students how to perform martial

arts movements. Unlike in examples (20) and (21) in which the instructor did not know his/her pupils, as is clear from the familiarity with which they interact during the lesson recorded, in this case the people involved in the conversation are familiar with each other from previous lessons so the indirectness and politeness isolated *if*-clauses offer seems to be of no use here.

- (23) Bend over
- (24) Put your hand against my hip
- (25) Hold me out

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH

The data examined here testify to the fact that in contemporary spoken English isolated *if*-clauses and imperative clauses serve the same range of pragmatic purposes. That said, there seems to be a clear tendency for isolated *if*-clauses to code requests more frequently than other categories of directive speech acts, probably because their historical origin in conditional clauses renders them especially suitable as a more polite option. Issues of politeness also seem to account for the fact that isolated *if*-clauses, when used in conversational exchanges where they co-occur with imperatives, usually come first, so as to prevent a potential face-threatening act.

Although the results of this study point to the specialization of isolated *if*-clauses for certain directive categories, further research is needed in order to confirm these provisional results. First, the sample analyzed needs to be considerably expanded and diversified, so as to include, for instance additional data from British and American English, this in order to check whether similarities and differences in usage across varieties can be discerned. Secondly, since polite requests and commands can also be coded as interrogative clauses (e.g., *Could you open the door?*), the sample should also be expanded to include clauses of this type, as well as *let*-imperatives. This would help to obtain an overall picture of directive forms in English and of their use in terms of politeness and indirection.

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