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BOOK REVIEW

THE INDUSTRY OF TESTING AND MUTUAL RECOGNITION IN SOUTHERN EUROPE

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Abstract

Following the publication of the *Common European Framework of Reference*, Spain's central government has been unable to unify common policies for foreign language requirements in Spanish Higher Education. Language requirements are in Spain both partially unregulated and deemed compulsory to finish Higher education degrees. In the absence of national policies, different areas of the country have implemented different policies in this respect and, inevitably, Spanish universities have developed their own internal legislation, high-quality suites of language tests and mutual recognition systems. Spanish university language tests vary greatly from one to another, and are now competing in the industry of testing at both a national and a global level. This variegation has hampered mutual recognition and, consequently, academic and professional progress of stakeholders. The present paper focuses on the work developed by public universities in Andalusia, where we carry out our professional activity, to overcome the aforementioned problems. The universities in Andalusia, one of the 17 autonomous communities of Spain, have been able to agree on a set of unified criteria which favors mutual recognition of language certifications for +13K candidates on a yearly basis and have driven policy makers' attention to their network, which is now considered as a benchmark.

Keywords: Industry of testing, mutual recognition, Spain, Andalusia, CEFR, reliability, validity, fairness.

Resumen

Tras la publicación del Marco Común Europeo de Referencia para las Lenguas, el gobierno central español no fue capaz de homogeneizar sus políticas en materia de requisitos lingüísticos para la Enseñanza Superior. Estos requisitos, que no están regulados en muchos casos, son al mismo tiempo obligatorios para concluir estudios superiores en la mayoría de las universidades de España. Ante la ausencia de políticas nacionales unificadas, diferentes comunidades autónomas han desarrollado distintas políticas en materia de acreditación lingüística y reconocimiento de títulos. Muchas instituciones han desarrollado, en paralelo o de forma conjunta, exámenes de acreditación lingüística de calidad que son reconocidos en diferentes ámbitos. Los exámenes de acreditación lingüística de las diferentes universidades españolas compiten ahora con otras pruebas tanto en el mercado nacional como en el internacional. Este artículo se centra en el trabajo desarrollado por las universidades públicas andaluzas en

materia de acreditación y reconocimiento lingüístico. Las universidades de Andalucía, una de las 17 comunidades autónomas de España, han sido capaces de acordar criterios comunes de confección y corrección de pruebas que favorecen el reconocimiento mutuo de los certificados expedidos por cada una de ellas. A su vez, dichos criterios favorecen a los más de 13.000 candidatos que anualmente realizan alguna prueba de acreditación lingüística en una universidad andaluza. El trabajo de las universidades andaluzas hacia la excelencia en las pruebas de idiomas y el reconocimiento mutuo no solo ha llamado la atención de los agentes políticos sino que, además, se ha convertido en un referente en España.

Palabras clave: industria de la evaluación, reconocimiento mutuo, España, Andalucía, MCER, fiabilidad, validez, equidad.

1. Testing

Modern language testing is measured along two axes, psychometrics and social impact. These give raise to four main areas of interest, namely reliability, validity, fairness and results linkage. Reliability is concerned with the absence of measurement errors once repeated measurements have been carried out with the same instrument, validity focuses on the extent to which our tests actually measure what they are supposed to measure, while fairness guarantees equal conditions to all stakeholders regardless of their sex, age or cultural background. The last of the four big aspects, results linkage, is area-dependent, and is germane to the most widely used scales in each country or group of them, the CEFR being the main referent in Europe and, increasingly, in South America and Asia.

Bachman points out that "testing almost never takes place in isolation. It is done for a particular purpose and in a specific context" (2). Paraphrasing Skinner's opening lines to *Verbal Behavior* (1), we might say that tests act upon the world, and change it, and are changed in turn by the consequences of their impact. Like verbal behavior itself, tests are operants that modify the environment, the context in which they occur.

Departing from an analysis of the current state of the art in the industry of testing, the present paper analyses the main drawbacks which nine universities from southern Europe (the context) have faced over the course of their ongoing race towards a common standard for foreign language tests and mutual recognition, together with the solutions that they have been able to find for their stakeholders (the consequences).

1.1. The industry of testing

Some tests are certainly high-stake. They may be a requirement for obtaining employment, or provide the key for immigrants wishing to gain entry to a country. Besides those who simply seek to measure their linguistic abilities

for personal achievement, tests are likely to interest millions of people hoping for a place at college, for a better job or for a better future. In the USA, for example, TOEFL tests are a must-have for foreign students who seek to access universities. In 2014, according to internal documentation of their Spanish branch, ETS implemented 50M tests in more than 180 countries. Cambridge tests, which celebrated their first hundred years in 2013, are taken by 4M candidates in more than 130 countries. Out of these candidates, 250K are Spanish. Such figures are a remarkable success in marketing and adaptation for Cambridge, when we consider that the first modern Cambridge test, held in 1913, lasted 12 hours and was taken by only three candidates, all of whom failed (Hawkey and Milanovic 22). Cambridge and TOEFL are just two examples out of the many existing test boards (ACTFL, TOEIC, EIKEN, IELTS, Aptis, Trinity, DELE, eLade, etc.) that can give an idea of the impact that tests have for candidates after policy makers, at all sorts of institutions, decide to turn them into a requirement, into keys that open doors to immigration or to academic and professional progress.

Political moves towards a particular test may define, in a way that no other theoretical approach can, test takers' preferences for one particular brand. The *industry of testing* moves millions of euros worldwide and has even borrowed many practices typical of pharmaceutical marketing. The expectation generated amongst platinum centers, distribution centers that conform to Cambridge's most ambitious business development programs, is just one measurement of the current industry of testing. Trinity tests, for example, have gathered momentum in the Spanish market following their recognition by a number of important institutions. In Spain, Trinity tests have surpassed in popularity ETS and even the most popular suite of exams in the past twenty years in Spain, Cambridge. Leaving aside reliability and construct validity concerns, Trinity has been quick at meeting the requirements of a region, Andalusia, with a poor tradition in foreign language recognition, and has been able to build very powerful face validity through aggressive marketing campaigns. Once again, Trinity and its market penetration in Andalusia are just one example of the many tests which are nowadays ubiquitous around the world. With different degrees of penetration, we are now living the heyday of language testing.

In this context, test developers have to balance two unrelated and inharmonious fields, linguistics and psychometrics, at the same time as coping with institutional, economic, social and political demands (Spolsky 4) and, of course without losing sight of the competitive market of which they are a part. The different big test brands which operate worldwide are constantly competing for the market while they struggle to maintain reliability, validity, fairness and linkage standards. This fight is shaping the market and the industry of testing. In this context, smaller initiatives, less ambitious but equally necessary tests, also struggle to operate, as in the case of Andalusia.

2. The context of Europe

The idea of Europe has not always been the same. The modern process of European construction was launched back in 1949 when the Council of Europe was founded. After two world wars, the Council of Europe aimed at protecting democracy and human rights and at promoting European unity by fostering cooperation on different matters. The European Cultural Convention of the Council of Europe of 1953 was the first of a series of acts and treaties oriented to set forth the fundamental rights and freedoms which were the core concern of post-war Europe. Culture and eventually language were among these concerns as well.

After some initial attempts, it took European higher education almost 40 years to unify cultural goals. It was not until 1988 when the rectors of 388 universities signed the *Magna Charta Universitatum* (1988) (*MCU* henceforward) on the 900th anniversary of the University of Bologna. The *MCU* was a two-page document designed to lead Europe into a culture-based new millennium which contained principles of academic freedom and autonomy as a guideline for good governance and mutual recognition of universities. Nine years later, in 1997, the Council of Europe and the UNESCO drafted the *Lisbon Convention* (1999), which was designed to streamline the legal framework at a European level and to replace six previous conventions in matters of higher education. In 1998, four education ministers (from France, Germany, the United Kingdom and Italy) participating in the celebration of the 800th anniversary of the University of Paris shared the view that the segmentation of the European higher education sector was outdated and harmful. As a consequence, they agreed to sign the *Sorbonne Declaration* (1998). The document put forward a number of ideas about the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) as well as the two main cycles of the system, undergraduate and graduate, and, for the first time, officially called for a recognition system able "to remove barriers and to develop a framework for teaching and learning, which would enhance mobility and an ever closer cooperation" (1998:1). One year later, in 1999, the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) was finally shaped, through the signing of the *Bologna Declaration* (1999). Thus the idea of mutual recognition was officially born in Europe in 1999 with the *Bologna Declaration*, three-quarters of a millennium after the first universities came into being in the Old Continent. In retrospect, the *Bologna Declaration* has become one of the most influential documents in the modern history of European higher education. After 1999, other communiqués have been issued (Prague, 2001; Berlin, 2003; Bergen, 2005; London, 2007; Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve, 2009; Bucharest, 2012 and Yerevan, 2015), articulating the previous agreements, including some partners from beyond Europe, and weaving a brand new European network. European EHEA policies have also been updated at the Budapest-Vienna Ministerial Conference (2010) and the Bucharest Ministerial Conference (2012) as well as through further Declarations (Salamanca, 2001; Graz, 2003; Glasgow, 2005; Lisbon, 2007 and Budapest-Vienna, 2010) and through three Bologna

Policy Forums (2009, 2010 and 2012). All these are ordered chronologically in the following timeline:

- 1949: The Council of Europe is founded.
- 1953: European Cultural Convention of the Council of Europe
- 1988: *Magna Charta Universitatum*
- 1997: *Lisbon Convention*
- 1998: *Sorbonne Declaration*
- 1999: *Bologna Declaration*
- 2001: *Prague Communiqué*
- 2001: *Salamanca Convention*
- 2003: *Berlin Communiqué*
- 2003: *Graz Declaration*
- 2005: *Bergen Communiqué*
- 2005: *Glasgow Declaration*
- 2007: *London Communiqué*
- 2007: *Lisbon Declaration*
- 2009: *Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve Communiqué*
- 2009: First Bologna Policy Forum (Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve)
- 2010: *Budapest-Vienna Declaration*
- 2010: Second Bologna Policy Forum (Vienna)
- 2012: *Bucharest Communiqué*
- 2013: Third Bologna Policy Forum (Bucharest)
- 2015: *Yerevan Communiqué*

The Council of Europe "provides a pan-European forum for sharing expertise and experience based on common values and respect for the diversity of contexts" (Extra and Yağmur 7). It acknowledges the particularities of the state members and lessens privileges among them. All in all, the most influential of the achievements of the Council of Europe has been, perhaps, the confection of the CEFR.

3. The context of Spain

In Spain, where the boom in language testing is unprecedented, marketing arguments seem to be leading the choices of test takers in the first part of the 21st century. Some tests are held in massive venues such as hotels or trade fair parks which host thousands of candidates. Sometimes, as massive numbers of test takers make their way towards test venues, it is hard to tell whether they are actually going to sit a test or to watch the local football team in the final match of a major competition. Such is the amount of people that language tests are able to bring together.

The washback from these tests has also been important in a country that relied heavily on traditional methods of language teaching, certification and accreditation. The language teaching methods used in Spain until very recently

were inherited from the *Grammar-Translation* principles which were used extensively in the teaching of dead languages, but are decidedly unsuited to teaching modern, living ones. Communicative approaches were only introduced in Spain in the last decade of the 20th century. Foreign languages were taught at schools with little or no emphasis on communication and this produced several generations of Spanish students who were able to read or write, but unable to speak in the foreign language they had been studying for years. Catching up with the rest of Europe has necessitated profound changes in the mindsets of professionals and, even nowadays, at times, Spain seems to be stuck in second gear while the rest of Europe is working at full speed.

Spanish policy makers have passed seven different major educational laws over the past 33 years, each of them intended to substitute the previous one: LGE (1970), LOECE (1980), LODE (1985), LOGSE (1990), LOCE (2002), LOE (2006) and LOMCE (2013). To complicate matters further, there are 17 autonomous communities in Spain, all of which have their own laws on education (see section 4). The resulting variegation has hampered mutual recognition of foreign language levels. As a result, depending on the community chosen, the linguistic proficiency of two different students may vary by up to two CEFR levels in the same academic year. It is because of this lack of intra-regional standardization that it has become necessary to establish external language tests whose results can clearly be linked to the CEFR.

The recent history of this situation dates back to the year 2007, when the Spanish Ministry of Education and Science passed a Royal Decree (Real Decreto 1393/2007) which regulated official higher education in Spain. This decree set the future for a series of new university degrees by recognizing the importance of the European educational policies generated following the *Bologna Declaration*, referred to in the first paragraph of the decree. In this decree, the references to foreign languages are vague and yet, through the acceptance of the European policies derived from the *Bologna Declaration*, it implicitly agrees upon the importance of foreign languages in higher education for transnational mobility of students and for their employability. In terms of mutual recognition, the decree proposes using ECTS credits.

At a different level, on November 18th 2010, following European regulations and recommendations, the CRUE (*Conferencia de Rectores de las Universidades Españolas*, Spanish University Rectors' Conference) commissioned a report on language teaching and accreditation which was drafted in February 23rd 2010 and finally passed at the General Meeting held by the CRUE on September 8th, 2011 in Santander, Spain. This report, a type of unintended follow-up of Real Decreto 1393/2007, pointed out that there existed considerable diversity in procedures and requirements, and that this lack of homogeneity was leading to confusion. The report, entitled *Propuesta sobre la acreditación de idiomas* (*PAI* henceforward), also highlighted the fact that training and certification were not always differentiated in Spain, and wished that all universities integrated in the CRUE should issue language certificates which would be mutually recognized at both a national and an international level. To

reach these conclusions, the CRUE took into account the experience of 50 Spanish universities and other educational institutions. At the same time, they agreed to work towards mutual recognition of language levels to access higher studies and to converge on accreditation mechanisms. For this purpose they established ACLES (*Asociación de Centros de Lenguas en la Enseñanza Superior*, Association of Language Centers in Higher Education) as the standard of quality for language tests, and agreed to recognize other certifying institutions such as Cambridge, the Alliance Française and the Goethe Institut.

From this moment on, many regions in Spain have passed laws to meet the standards previously mentioned. The report *La Acreditación del Nivel de Lengua Inglesa en las Universidades Españolas* (Accreditation of English Language Level at Spanish Universities) (Halback and Lázaro) first published by the British Council in Spain in 2010 and updated in 2015 is, perhaps, the most up-to-date and comprehensive analysis of the impact of Spanish regional policies on higher education. This report gathers data from 50 Spanish universities and confirms that the coordination and homogenization of certification processes and mutual recognition has improved between 2010 and 2015. Likewise, the report looks forward to further clarification of standardization processes, clear national linguistic policies, the implementation of quality standards and a more pro-active role by the Spanish central government, among other possible improvements. All these are laws and reports are ordered chronologically in the following timeline:

- 1970: LGE (*Ley General de Educación*, General Education Law)
- 1980: LOECE (*Ley Orgánica por la que se regula el Estatuto de Centros Escolares*, Organic Law for the Regulation of the Statutes of Schools)
- 1985: LODE (*Ley Orgánica del Derecho a la Educación*, Organic Law for the Right to Education)
- 1990: LOGSE (*Ley de Ordenación General del Sistema Educativo*, Law on the General Organization of the Education System)
- 2002: LOCE (*Ley Orgánica de Calidad de la Educación*, Organic Law on the Quality of Education)
- 2006: LOE (*Ley Orgánica de Educación*, Organic Law on Education)
- 2007: Real Decreto 1393/2007
- 2011: CRUE Report on Language Teaching and Accreditation
- 2013: LOMCE (*Ley Orgánica para la Mejora de la Calidad Educativa*, Organic Law for the Improvement of Educational Quality)

4. The context of Andalusia

Andalusia is one of the 17 autonomous communities that exist in Spain. Similar to the German federal *Länder* system, Andalusian autonomous communities hold devolved powers over education. In practical terms this means that each community has exclusive competences in educational affairs, which leaves room for a great deal of heterogeneity in accreditation and certification.

In the face of such heterogeneity, in 2011, nine Andalusian universities signed an agreement, the *Convenio de Colaboración* (2011) (*CC* henceforward) to define the standards which would regulate the recognition of foreign language levels in their autonomous community. The minimum level of competence had already been set at B1 in 2010 by the General Direction of Universities of Andalusia (*Dirección General de Universidades Andaluzas*). The *CC* was drafted by the AGAE (*Agencia Andaluza para la Acreditación*, Andalusian Agency for Accreditation), nowadays DEVA (*Dirección de Evaluación y Acreditación*, Board of Evaluation and Accreditation). The nine signing universities are now represented in a working group with the most widespread representation in Andalusia in terms of recognition.

The *CC* was particularly important because, for the first time ever, the same regional model of test was defined in Andalusia, with the idea of mutual recognition in mind. The *CC* also included a list of other international certifications which would be recognized by the signing institutions. Although the *CC* left many areas open to interpretation, thanks to the debate on how these aspects should be interpreted, it was possible to start implementing and fine-tuning the original model of test. In 2013, two years after the *CC* was signed, a follow-up meeting was organized in Málaga, in which, for the first time, test developers were allowed to participate. The meeting proved to be a great opportunity to identify the vulnerabilities of the common specifications after two years of implementation. From the beginning, it was clear that the nine signing universities shared certain problems, the foremost being the lack of homogeneity in the design of the tests. Since each university had been designing their own tests, work was repeated in some areas and languages (English), while others (German, Russian, French, etc.) were almost unattended since the demand for tests in such languages was much more reduced. There was no centralized source of information and test developers received different messages in different ways, and this made it very difficult to identify the appropriate path to follow. The autonomy of each university, which was recognized in the *CC*, originated differences in the frequency with which tests had to be designed, as well as in policies regarding the temporal validity of external certificates, exemption criteria for the handicapped, and differences in the criteria regarding the great variety of requests to recognize certificates which were not originally included in the agreement.

This meeting of representatives and test developers in Málaga triggered the constitution of a board of experts, a working group, with one representative per university, who would ensure compliance with the agreement signed in 2011 through yearly follow-up meetings. The first of such meetings was held in Cádiz (October, 2013); others have followed in Jaén (July, 2014), Málaga (January, 2015) and Sevilla (May, 2015). The frequency of these meetings is a clear example of the commitment of all the members of the working group. Each one of the meetings has enabled a follow-up of the implementation of the agreement and has also updated important questions such as the recognition and

certification of Andalusian processes by ACLES and other independent quality-control bodies.

The consensus of the nine signing institutions has facilitated the certification and mutual recognition of language certificates for the +25K students which these universities host in their language programs, as well as for the countless other stakeholders who have had their external certifications validated by any one of the universities involved. In practical terms this means that a certificate issued by any Andalusian university is automatically recognized by the other universities. Table 1 exemplifies the impact and the scope of Andalusian recognition for the academic year 2013/14, the first one for which records were compiled.

Table 1. Candidates in Andalusian tests for the academic year 2013/14

University	Languages	CEFR Levels	Candidates
Universidad de Almeria	EN, FR, IT	B1	475
Universidad de Cádiz	**EN**, **FR**, **GER**, **IT**	B1-B2	1128
Universidad de Córdoba	**EN**, FR, GER, IT	A1-B2	561
Universidad de Granada	**EN**, **FR**, **GER**, **IT**	B1-B2	1334
Universidad de Huelva	EN	B1-B2	195
Universidad de Jaén	**EN**, **FR**	B1-B2	707
Universidad de Málaga	EN, FR, GER, IT	B1-B2	1,584
Universidad Pablo Olavide	**EN**, **FR**, GER	A1-C1	1,679
Universidad de Sevilla	**EN**, FR, GER, IT, POR	B1-B2	5,810
Total			**13,473**

Six of the above universities had their language tests certified by ACLES in the academic year 2013/14 (the languages in bold in Cádiz, Córdoba, Granada, Jaén, Pablo Olavide and Sevilla). The University of Málaga joined this list in year 2014/15, as did the German, French, Italian and Portuguese tests of the University of Sevilla.[1] The candidates at the University of Huelva did not sit tests designed by their university, but by external institutions. Four of these

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[1]For a full and up-to-date list of the tests included, check ACLES's official list at www.acles.es.

universities also host tests of international brands (Córdoba, Granada, Huelva and Jaén), which are not included in the table.

Convergence has recently been enhanced through the design of a course on language testing for test developers of the different universities. The bi-monthly course, designed by international experts, brought together 30 of the test designers of the nine universities to be trained in good practices for test development. The contents of the course ranged from specifications design to validation through Classical and Modern Test Theory. This leap forward in training provides ample opportunities to re-evaluate the weaknesses and strengths of all the tests designed in Andalusia. As a consequence, mutual recognition of test results and certifications is being reinforced and constantly re-assessed at two different levels: at an institutional level (Board of Directors) and at a practical level (test developers). Thus, the board acts as a link between the linguistic demands of the stakeholders at universities and the different rectorates, balancing the impact of language testing policies in the Autonomous Community, while test developers ensure the practicality of initiatives and maintain a high quality standard in the tests which each Andalusian university designs. The most important milestones in Andalusia are ordered chronologically in the following timeline:

- 2011: *Convenio de Colaboración*
- 2013: Meeting of Directors and test designers in Málaga
- 2013: Meeting of CACLU's Board of Directors in Cádiz
- 2014: Meeting of CACLU's Board of Directors in Jaén
- 2015: Meeting of CACLU's Board of Directors in Málaga
- 2015: Meeting of CACLU's Board of Directors in Sevilla
- 2015: Course on Language Testing

5. Conclusions

Up until recently there has been heterogeneity in the way in which accreditation and recognition are being tackled in Spain. Due to the lack of clearly defined national policies, the different Spanish autonomous communities have passed laws which, when implemented at universities across Spain, have led to significant disparity in the requirements for students at different universities. To avoid such differences and to enhance mutual recognition, institutions should foster common criteria and perform an active role in unifying them. Andalusia is a clear example of how such goals are attainable on a large scale.

Acknowledgements

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LOOKING INTO THE PATRIARCHAL WORLD OF ROALD DAHL'S SHORT STORY "TASTE" THROUGH AND BEYOND ITS NARRATOR

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Abstract

This article reflects on the presence of narrators in Roald Dahl's short stories for adults, especially those in which the account is carried out by one of the characters. After underlining a number of features common to these narratives, it's my aim to analyse the presence of the narrator in one of his most well-known short stories, "Taste", and my main contention is that a careful consideration of this presence enriches the reading of the story. Even though the narration is carried out by a secondary character, whose role in the development of events might be minimum, his participation as narrator/commentator of the events allows to address both gender and class issues; furthermore, John Berger's concept of gaze becomes a very useful element with which to uncover the narrator's sympathies with a society ruled by patriarchal and classist parameters.

Keywords: Roald Dahl, adult short stories, narrators and focalizors, gender, class.

Resumen

Este artículo reflexiona sobre la presencia de los narradores en las historias cortas para adultos de Roald Dahl, de manera especial sobre aquellas en las que la narración está en boca de alguno de los propios personajes. Tras subrayar la presencia de elementos comunes a estas narraciones, mi propósito es analizar la presencia del narrador en uno de sus relatos más conocidos, "Taste", y mi principal hipótesis es que un análisis cuidadoso de su presencia enriquece en gran medida la lectura. Si bien la narración corre a cargo de un personaje secundario, cuyo papel en el desarrollo de la acción podría considerarse mínimo, su participación como narrador/comentador del relato permite abordar cuestiones de identidad, ya sea de género o clase; es más, el concepto de mirada de John Berger se muestra como un elemento muy útil para develar las simpatías del narrador con una sociedad regida por parámetros patriarcales y clasistas.

Palabras clave: Roald Dahl, relatos para adultos, narradores y focalizadores, género, clase.

Laura Viñas's departing thesis in "The narrative voice in Roald Dahl's children's and adult books" is that Roald Dahl does not write very differently when he writes for children than when he writes for adults; Viñas proves her thesis by focusing on the role of the narrator, and after showing that in his

children's books the narrators could be defined as "intrusive, all-knowing and overtly in control of the narrative" (2008, 293), she then considers the presence of these same features in his stories for adults, contending that if there are any differences, these are to be seen in terms of gradation; thus, she also claims to provide evidence that Dahl is not an author with two heads. Given his zest for the macabre, I don't dislike this image of Dahl; my aim, however, is not to discuss this but to analyse one of his most well-known adult short stories, "Taste", and to do so by bringing attention to the role played by the narrator, whose attitude and comments on the events taking place allow a reading that raises class and gender issues, and thereby goes beyond a merely neutral account of the events surrounding a most unorthodox bet.

"Taste", which was first published individually in the March 1945 issue of *Ladies Home Journal* and a few years later in the *New Yorker*, on December 8 1951, was to become the opening story of his 1953 collection *Someone Like You*, which together with *Kiss, Kiss*, published six years later, are generally considered his best short-story volumes.[1] Although most of the twenty-six short stories included in these two collections are heterodiegetic narratives, that is, told by narrators not present in the story as characters, there is still a small group of ten stories that feature a narrator who is also a character in the story, what is popularly known as first-person narratives.[2] Leaving aside his two countryside short stories,[3] the other eight stories could be seen as made up of two different groups. The first group consists of three stories ("Galloping Foxley", "Nunc Dimittis" and "George Porgy") which seem to answer to a similar narrative approach: the three autodiegetic narrators —that is, narrators who are also the central characters, the heroes, of their accounts (Genette, 1980, 245)— are William Perkins, a Repton former student, whose daily routine is suddenly disturbed when he believes to have recognised in the commuting train one of his bullying classmates; Lionel, a "wealthy, leisurely, middle-aged man of culture" (1970, 117) who lives on the fortune inherited from his father; and George, a vicar who defines himself as "in most respects a moderately well-matured and rounded individual" (165), three well positioned figures in society whose narrations aim to explain a series of extraordinary events in which they have been involved recently. These narratives go well beyond their authors'

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[1] *Over to You. Ten Stories of Flyers and Flying*, a worthy collection consisting mainly of fictional recreations of his experiences during World War II, had been published before, and two further collections, *Switch Bitch* and *The Wonderful Story of Henry Sugar and Six More*, would come later.

[2] Despite the wide acceptance of terms such as first- and third-person narrators, I am here following Genette's contention that "[i]nsofar as the narrator can at any instant intervene as such in the narrative, every narrating is, by definition, to all intents and purposes presented in the first person […] The real question is whether or not the narrator can use the first person to designate *one of his characters*" (1980, 244).

[3] These are "Claud's Dog" and "The Champion of the World": the latter, published in *Kiss, Kiss*, is an entirely different story that returns to Claud, the gas-attendant who is at the centre of the four loosely related stories known collectively as "Claud's Dog" and more concerned with portraying the habits and behaviours of rural lower middle-class Englanders. They were appropriately collected in *Ah, Sweet Mystery of Life*.

intentions, some kind of explanation or justification, and end up offering a rather accurate picture of their personalities: by the end of the story the reader comes to terms both with their instability as characters as well as their unreliability as narrators.

The second group would be made up of the remaining five, "Taste", "Man from the South", "My Lady Love, My Dove", "Neck" and "Poison", stories where the events are recounted by homodiegetic narrators, narrators who only play a secondary role (Genette, 1980, 245) and which are therefore, in principle, at a certain distance from the main events. In "My Lady Love, My Dove", a story about a couple who bug their guest's bedroom during a weekend visit and listen to their conversations, this is not completely so, as the plot revolves around a couple, one of them being the narrator; however, each member of the couple has a different role: the wife is the domineering character, the one who seems to drag her husband to do things he is not very sure/proud about, whereas the husband, pushed by his wife, is also the teller of the tale. With this exception, the other four stories would seem to conform with Viñas's contention that "some first-person narrators are merely eyewitnesses to the story; they keep to the background reporting what is happening without taking part in the action (2008, 302). Indeed, in "Poison", Timber is the character-narrator who tells the story of his housemate in India, Harry Pope, who believes to have a poisonous serpent in his bed and lies there terrified, unable to move but deeply transformed inside; "Neck" features as narrator a column writer telling about his visit to Sir and Lady Turton, a visit that ends in a symbolic beheading of Lady Turton by her husband, an apparently mild man who spends his time peacefully collecting art; and both "Taste" and "Man from the South" feature a nameless narrator who becomes witness to a bet, though no ordinary bet. "Taste" is the story of a dinner party where a traditional and innocent bet has skilfully been turned into a diabolical wager: the host has agreed to give his daughter's hand if the guest identifies the wine's breed and vintage, but if the guest fails, he agrees to sign over both of his houses. In "Man from the South", a pleasant afternoon by the pool quickly turns into a macabre scene: here the terms of the stake are set unmistakably from the start, when the old man proposes that if the young American's lighter works ten times in a row he will give him his Cadillac, but if it fails just once, he will chop off one of the sailor's little fingers.

Makman has underlined Dahl's proneness to include in his narratives elements such as gambling, wagers, and other games involving risk (1997, 217); indeed, the bet should be considered a recurrent element in Dahl's short fiction, both thematically and structurally. It may be a central element, as is the case of stories such as "Deep in the Pool", "My Lady, My Love" or "Mr Feasey", the last of the Claud series, or it may be of a lesser importance, subsidiary to the main action, as happens in "Neck" or the other Claud stories. When of primary importance, it also becomes an ideal ingredient around which to articulate stories with a discernible pattern, stories whose initial pleasant and civilised atmosphere suddenly dissolves as some of the central characters reveal a rather uncivilised behaviour, a process which usually brings with it a degree of implied violence

and surprise endings (West, 1992, 36). In "Taste" and "Man from the South" the likeness in the plot comes together with a similar narrative structure, as in both stories the narrators are secondary figures, first-hand witnesses to the events, and therefore with apparently little participation in them. This initial impression is what probably has led Viñas to state that

> These first person eyewitnesses would be omniscient narrators were it not because the observations they make are introduced by an 'I' which reminds the reader that they are actually a character in the story. The role as mere spectators and onlookers of the unravelling events can be appreciated in the static actions they are associated with. Hence, "Taste" and "Man from the South" are full of 'I saw', 'I noticed', 'I could see', 'I felt sure', 'I was conscious of', 'I thought', 'I stood watching them', 'I had a feeling'. (2008, 302-3)

But it is my contention that this equation between first-person eyewitnesses and omniscience is very questionable. To begin with, the very expression omniscient first-person narrators seems a little contradictory, an oxymoron, since the very presence of these narrators within the story would question their theoretical omniscience, the capacity of having complete or unlimited knowledge, awareness or understanding. In fact, this contradiction is not only theoretical but takes place on a practical level, as both nameless characters have acknowledged their fallible nature as narrators: in "Taste", it does not take long for the narrator to state, when referring to one of the guests, that "there was something strange about his drawling and his boredom" (13), a feeling he underlines a little later when he affirms that "again I saw, or thought I saw, something distinctively disturbing about the man's face (13); this situation is very similar to that which occurs in "Man from the South", when the narrator openly confesses that he "didn't know what to make of it all" (42), fully accepting that he has no complete knowledge or understanding of the events he faces. It would therefore seem that lack of omniscience is —and it could not be otherwise, independently of whether the narrator confesses or not— consubstantial with narrators inside the story.

More significant for my analysis is Viñas's statement that these narrators could be thought of as mere spectators of the stories they tell. It is true that both stories begin with a narrator underlining his second-rate position in the events he is going to recount, of which he seems to have been a mere onlooker or spectator, a first-hand or privileged witness, a fact pinpointed by the use of the verb to see ("I could see that the table was laid for a feast" [9], in "Taste", and "I could see the clusters of big brown nuts hanging down underneath he leaves" [35] in "Man from the South"). In "Taste", to which I would like to narrow my analysis from now onwards, the presence of this "I could see", shortly after the narrative begins, is entirely coherent with the opening scene, where the narrator wishes to introduce readers into his setting, and he does so in a rather conventional way, by offering himself as the eyes through which we are going to see the story. As a character, as a guest to this dinner, he might be thought of in terms of just a mere spectator or onlooker, but as a narrator this is not possible:

seeing and telling are two very different activities, as John Berger has made clear. John Berger begins *Ways of Seeing* by underlining the difference, the distance, between seeing and understanding, and explains that seeing is previous to understanding, and that the latter takes place when we try to put words to what we have seen (1977, 7).[4] Should this guest not be the narrator, his point of view would probably remain hidden for us, but being the narrator of the story, matters are different, since his words openly reveal his point of view, and thereby much of his own ideology; indeed, together with what we may imply from his comments on the evening events, his role is central as character focalizor,[5] since "to tell a story from a character's point of view means to present the events as they are perceived, felt, interpreted and evaluated by her at a particular moment" (Niederhoff 2013). Even though a minor or secondary character, his are the words and eyes through which we perceive this dinner reunion, a gathering which offers a satire of the upper classes, of their behaviour, attitudes and values; and most importantly, by offering a portrait of this specific world, he inevitably reveals his own position in/towards this society, his social identity, very much defined in terms of gender and class.

"Taste" is certainly not one of Dahl's paradigmatic stories if we think of his fiction in terms of grotesqueness and grimness, but it is faithful to Dahl's intention of showing "a world not nearly as civilized as it makes out to be" (West, 1992, 43); in this case, this civilized world is that of the upper classes, of which the narrator does not feel too distant: "There were six of us to dinner that night at Mike Schofield's house in London: Mike and his wife and daughter, my wife and I, and a man called Richard Pratt" (9). Despite underlining his presence in the story the truth is that his participation is very small. His real function as a guest is to look, to observe, to witness the events which he will later make into a story, and it is therefore not surprising that during the dinner he only intervenes once (in what is a completely irrelevant sentence, were it not because it hints at the surprise ending that closes the story), as if purposely having limited himself to the role of mere observer of an ordinary evening. It is Berger's contention that the act of looking cannot be considered as a single event isolated in time, since the way we see things is affected by what we know or believe (1977, 8): when we look at something, and naturally try to understand it, our previous experience determines the way we construct meaning. In "Taste" the narrator opens his account with a presentation of the six diners, but very soon remembers that he "had been to dinner at Mike's twice before when Richard Pratt was there, and on each occasion Mike and his wife had gone out of their way to produce a special meal for the famous gourmet [and] remembered that on both Richard Pratt's previous visits Mike had played a little betting game with him over the claret"

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[4] Although John Berger's unconventional book (a collection of seven essays based on the BBC television series) addresses questions about art and how we look at works of art, I believe that his reflections are still useful when applied to other spheres of our lives.
[5] The term was first coined by Genette (1980) thinking about amount of information or knowledge, but my use of it is more in line with Bal's reinterpretation in terms of point of view (1988:100).

(9). It turns out that the narrator's guess is right, and shortly after these memories cross his mind the terms of the bet are established; in fact, although "Taste" seems to be the account of an upper-class dinner reunion, it almost centres exclusively around a bet: the cosy and agreeable atmosphere surrounding the dinner has been replaced by the tension and stress of this unorthodox game. The bet works as a kind of play inside the story: not only are the terms set, but also established the leading roles, given to Mike and Richard, as well as the supporting roles, one of them given to the narrator. The supporting roles basically amount to looking: "There was a pause while Pratt looked slowly around the table, first at me, then at the three women, each in turn. He appeared to be reminding us that we were witness to the offer" (14). This peripheral position is in fact a position of privilege from which he may observe and recount this very peculiar scene, and which allows him not to interfere in a situation which has its ethical implications; indeed, it would seem that Pratt's look has put the narrator in a position of safety, as he may just observe events and await an outcome: his role is just to look at the contest that host and guest wage. Nevertheless, it is my contention that this is not quite so: the bet is no irrelevant and innocent pastime, but it addresses issues of both gender and class identity, and it is my belief that the narrator's comfortable acceptance of the role given to him should be understood as a sign that underlines his own endorsement of, if not complicity with, the mechanisms that uphold society.

The bet certainly becomes a critical moment in the story, of a rather epiphanic nature; it is one of those typical moments in Dahl's stories when "very often seemingly respectable characters confronted with peculiar problems or opportunities and respond by committing, or at least contemplating, cruel or self-destructive acts" (West, 1992, 36). The quote applies fully here, since this idea of respectable characters committing cruel or self-destructive acts is especially true of both host and main guest, the two most prominent members of this upper-class microcosm, whose dark side seems to have surfaced here: their rivalry, their greed and cruel competitiveness; but it is also true in the sense that there are other people contemplating these cruel events, as is the case of the narrator and the three women sitting at the table, whose behaviour seems to have been characterised by a policy of non-interference. My interest lies here with the narrator, one of the silent contemplators, since it is his point of view that we get and therefore know. To the claim that he does not participate, I would like to bring forward Berger's statement (1977, 8) that the act of seeing is active, it is an act of choice, and more importantly for our purposes, that the act of seeing things is affected by what we believe; that is, we see and subsequently understand things by what we are, by our beliefs and opinions, by our own ideology and position in the world. It is my viewpoint that the narrator's position as witness reveals precisely his affinities, his comfort, with the circumstances in which he is involved, or rather, not involved. It is his lack of action as a character, his unproblematic presence as narrator, which gives him away.

In the first place, the bet clearly brings to the surface the power structures upon which Western society is founded. It initially does so by underlining that

one's place in society becomes essentially defined by one's wealth; indeed, when host and guest begin their game everyone at the table is very much aware that they are being automatically excluded from it, as they cannot afford to take part in such a competition. Although economic aspects are also addressed here, money, making a profit, is clearly not an issue here. Both host and guest are members of a similar social status, and when Pratt challenges him, 'So you don't want to increase the bet?', the host retorts, 'As far as I'm concerned, old man, I don't give a damn,' […] 'I'll bet you anything you like (14). Host and guest might be rivals, but at the beginning of the bet they both share a common purpose, that of stressing their economic potential and therefore their superior social status. Naturally, their common interests do not hide the fact that they are also rivals, enemies; for Mr Schofield and Richard Pratt, this private contest has become a clash of greed and desire to humiliate one another, a fight of egos, of masculine egos, of machos. Once again, despite appearances, the bet brings both characters together, as it reveals that they share more similarities than differences; both are representatives of a patriarchal society and their battle for superiority is in fact a way of perpetuating the structures of this society.

West was one of the first critics to point out that Dahl's short stories were more and more concerned with portraying the relationship between men and women, especially within marriage, in terms of conflict a control; this is particularly true in his collection *Kiss, Kiss*, where most of the stories focus on the tense and unhappy relationships between men and women (44). Makman goes a little further and underlines Dahl's interest in turning his perverse gaze on domestic partnership in which power relations are imbalanced; however, she seems to argue that these violent behaviours, whereby "men and women play the roles of both victimizer and victim" (1997:218) are individual, and therefore not ascribed to an specific environment, to the social structures they inhabit. I belief that the analysis of this unorthodox wager is most fruitful if seen from a gender perspective: what is relevant is that both host and guest are men, and what is at stake is the host's daughter, in what is an explicit reminder that men and women do not relate to one another in terms of equality, but in terms of male superiority and female subordination, and it would seem that marriage has become one of the most effective tools with which society allots different roles to both men and women (Millet 1977).

Unexpectedly, the bet pivots around the daughter's future. The father, unable to refuse Richard Pratt's challenge, soon agrees on his daughter's price: conceived of as yet another commodity, he worth turns out to be two houses. The father, falsely claims that his real concern is his daughter's independence, and to the objections that she doesn't want two houses, he answers "Then sell them. Sell them back to him on the spot. I'll arrange all that for you. And then, just think of it, my dear, you'll be rich! You will be independent for the rest of our life!' (16). His words seem more like an afterthought, a way of justifying his despicable behaviour: his sudden concern for his daughter's independence is just a way of hiding his real intentions, which are to win the bet, to beat and humiliate his guest, whom he considers a *nouveau riche*. However unlikely the

marriage is to come through, it does reveal a number of questions: in the first place, that the daughter has undergone a process of cossification, proven by both the value given to her as well as by the way she is being passed down from father to potential husband, from former owner to present owner. Matters are made worse by the nature of this marriage, hinted at by the scene in which her attempt to light a cigarette receives Pratt's harsh, almost violent, reaction:

> 'Please!' he said. 'Please don't do that! It's a disgusting habit, to smoke at table!'

> She looked up at him, still holding the burning match in one hand, the big slow eyes settling on his face, resting there a moment, moving away again, slow and contemptuous. She bent her head and blew out the match, but continued to hold the enlightened cigarette in her fingers.

> 'I'm sorry, my dear,' Pratt said, 'but I simply cannot have smoking at the table'. (19)

Logically, the marriage, after being transformed into a mere economic transaction, pure business, can only be just another element which brings to the light the different roles of men and women in a patriarchal society: men doing business, and women silently accepting. The whole evening not only shows how women are given the role of passive accepters, but it also reveals how this behaviour is learnt, transmitted from mothers to daughters. The mother's lack of objection to the bet is, to say the least, surprising: it is only when Louise says that she thinks this is silly, that the mother states "'[y]ou ought to be ashamed of yourself, Michael, ever suggesting such a thing! Your own daughter, too!'" (16). One may assume that the mother was conveniently silenced/married some time ago, and now she is witness to her daughter's similar process. After such a mild complaint, the reader more easily understands the daughter's similar acceptance of the whole affair: from her mother she has learnt that this is no big issue and from her father she has learnt her real worth: she agrees to the price put on her (her worth is two houses) and therefore accepts herself as just another commodity.

If we accept that the bet represents the unequal relationship between men and women, as well as the different roles assigned to each —men are active and decision makers, and women are passive and decision accepters— I would like to bring attention to what would seem a discordant element: the narrator, this nameless male whose eyes guide us throughout the whole evening. It is through his eyes that we, readers, have come to realise how both one's socio-economic status as well as one's gender define one's identity (and possibilities of action) in our Western society; furthermore, this story reveals that both concepts are interrelated, and that the lack of one of those elements affects the other. In the case of Mrs Schofield and Louise —upper-class citizens— it is their gender that conditions their (marginal) place in society whereas in the case of the narrator — a man— it is his inferior socio-economic status that conditions his gender. The narrator is part of the group of diners seated around the table, and, being a man,

one is forced to question his involvement, or rather, lack of involvement, in such an unethical bet. There is little doubt that his silence is explained on account of his socio-economic status: an acquaintance of the host, he is clearly no match, a fact perhaps underlined by his lack of name. But what I find most revealing is how the narrator refers to his passivity, his silence, not in terms of his (lack of) wealth, but by stating his proximity to the female world, and thereby unconsciously putting his own masculinity at stake: 'the three women and I sat quietly, watching the two men' (14). This comment, which might initially passed unnoticed, is a most accurate description of his position in society: he might be a man, but he has been forced to align himself with the women and therefore his role is accordingly more that of a woman: sitting down, passively and silently, and watching the two men. In this hierarchical organization of society one would well understand that the wife of such a man should deserve few comments; indeed, of the diners around the table she is certainly the most marginal member: she does not belong to the upper classes and is a woman. It is therefore not surprising that she remains utterly silent and invisible throughout the dinner, a lack of presence which is further underlined by not even having been given a name (by her own husband, the narrator himself!).

The bet, especially all the evening in which it occurs, also offers a picture of a society rigidly structured by social classes: the six diners, on the one hand, and the maid, on the other. Class tension is present in the story from the very beginning, initially through this private game —staged by the two most prominent members of society and witnessed by the others— but more importantly through the presence of the maid. Not only is she the person who has full responsibility for a perfect development of the evening, in the end she also proves to be crucial for uncovering Richard Pratt's scheme, thus further "serving" her own masters. But again, I would like to support this reading by paying attention to the way in which this character has remained invisible throughout the story; that is, how the narrator has "chosen not to see" this character, thus revealing his own class consciousness and thereby his own special participation in the story, or rather, when seeing/understanding the story. There is little doubt that she has been there all the time, physically present, within the visual frame of each and every diner but she is hardly referred to or acknowledged by anyone: her presence, defined exclusively by her social function, is taken for granted. There are only two occasions in which the narrator feels it is necessary to refer to her: the first time when he explains that once they had finished their fish, "the maid came round removing the plates. When she came to Pratt, she saw that he had not yet touched his food, so she hesitated, and Pratt *noticed her*. He waved her away, broke off his conversation, and quickly began to eat" (my italics, 11). This quote is significant because it underlines the air of superiority felt by Pratt, and probably shared by the other diners, revealed both by the way he dismisses her and also by the word noticed, which implies that the maid does not deserve to be looked at, does not deserve to be seen, considered or understood, she is just 'noticed', passingly, as a nuisance in this case. It is not only Pratt who notices her, but also the narrator, who at one moment states that "I *noticed* the maid standing in the background holding a dish

of vegetable, wondering whether to come forward with them or not" (my italics, 14). The maid's hesitant attitude, on both occasions, underlines her weak social status, which is further emphasized by the way she is perceived by the others. But the evening progresses and the bet takes an unexpected turn, which brings events to a moment of extreme tension, and it is at this precise instant that the maid claims to be seen, not only noticed, but fully perceived and, what is more, listened to:

> Then this happened: the maid, the tiny, erect figure of the maid in her white-and-black uniform, was standing beside Richard Pratt, holding something out in her hand. 'I believe these are yours, sir,' she said.
>
> […]
>
> 'Yes, sir, they're yours.' The maid was an elderly woman – nearer seventy than sixty – a faithful family retainer of many years' standing. She put the spectacles down on the table beside him.
>
> […]
>
> But the maid didn't go away. She remained standing beside and slightly behind Richard Pratt, and there was something so unusual in her manner and in the way she stood there, small, motionless and erect, that I for one found myself watching her with a sudden apprehension. (22)

The maid has finally forced herself into the foreground, and once there, when she has everybody's full attention, she utters the words that bring about the unexpected ending: "'You left them in Mr Schofield's study,' she said. Her voice was unnaturally, deliberately polite. 'On top of the green filing cabinet in his study, sir, when you happened to go in there by yourself before dinner'" (23). The maid's words reveal Pratt's scheme (that he had previously been to Mr Schofield's study, and had thereby acquired the information with which to set the bet to his advantage), but specially they shed light on his true nature, his most despicable nature. The maid's presence also reveals that, despite its title, this story is not so much about taste and tasting, but about a very different sense, sight and seeing. That the unexpected ending comes about as a result of a pair of horn-rimmed spectacles —forgotten by the main guest, Richard Pratt, in the study— is a clear reminder that seeing is one of the central concepts of this short story. Indeed, "Taste" addresses the issue of seeing in a number of ways: ironically, it is the maid, the socially inferior, (defined as a "faithful family retainer of many year's standing"), who manages to see better than the other diners (the host, his wife and their daughter) her socially superiors. Further irony stems from the fact that she acquires this vital piece of information from her invisibility, that is, from her inferiority.

A first approach to Dahl's stories usually privileges those elements that help entertain or shock readers, whether it is in term of content, by using macabre situations and black humour, or form, by using unexpected twists of the plot and anticlimactic endings. This, together with the absence of any actual bloodshed

might prevent readers from realising the conservatism that abounds in his stories.[6] It is my contention that in the case of Dahl's homodiegetic short stories — "Taste", as well as the other stories in which Dahl uses this same formula, "My Lady Love, My Dove", "Neck", "Poison" and "Man from the South"— the reader is further manipulated by the presence of a narrator who also works as a character focalizer (Bal, 1988, 102): indeed, the narrators uncritical comments towards the events taking place in each of these short stories only further stress their own traditional point of view: the passivity that characterises their reaction is an explicit signal that their gaze feels at ease and even endorses the prevalent social structures and behaviours. Therefore, one of the most effective ways of showing the deep-rooted conservatism of these short stories is to scrutinise the figure of the narrator, especially in his role of peripheral character focalizor, which turns out to be one of the most effective ways of counteracting his manipulative capacity.

In "Taste", the evening offers a mild satire of the upper classes' behaviour, shown to be ruled mainly by sexist and classist principles, and although the narrator seems only the camera through which we have access to this peculiar world, the truth is that his passivity, his inaction, his lack of reactions to the events taking place only reveal his conformity and comfort with the general status quo; my point is that his narration is no neutral account of events but a tool which further reveals gender distinctions and reinforces class distinctions. The nameless narrator can in no way be considered a mere witness, an onlooker: as to gender relationships, through his narration he has unconsciously questioned his male identity, having been forced to side with the female characters; as to class issues, he has also been forced to redefine his position as narrator, opening the visual frame he was using at the beginning of the story, and allowing some space to see the maid, thereby considering her relevance and understanding her presence.

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[6] Inevitably, the recurrent use of this narrative strategy seems to open up the path to question Dahl's own conservative ideology; conservatism which has already been pointed out when analysing specific issues such as his use of satire (Holindalle 1999) and fantasy (Hunt 2012).

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PERFORMING (IN)SANITY: UN-DOING GENDER IN JANET FRAME'S *AN ANGEL AT MY TABLE*

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> *Like tuberculosis, insanity is a kind of exile.*
> SUSAN SONTAG

Abstract

This essay explores madness as a performative practice in Janet Frame's *An Angel At My Table* (1981) as a way to escape from gender conventions. Following Shoshana Felman and Suzette Henke, I will look at how Frame deconstructs and reconstructs a new identity by giving up female gender conventions—especially sexuality and the normative female body. In the second part of this article I analyse how, by omitting an actual account of her stay in numerous mental institutions in her autobiography, she reshapes and "re-members" the image that she wants to portray of herself.

Keywords: Gender studies, Janet Frame, life writing, performativity, madness.

Resumen

Este ensayo explora la locura como práctica preformativa en *An Angel At My Table* de Janet Frame (1981) como forma de escapar de las convenciones de género. Siguiendo a Shoshana Felman y a Suzette Henke, observaremos cómo Frame reconstruye una nueva identidad al renunciar a las convenciones del género femenino—en especial, la sexualidad y el cuerpo femenino normativo. En la segunda parte de este artículo se analiza cómo al omitir en su autobiografía el relato de su estancia en diversas instituciones mentales, restaura y se hace cargo de la imagen que quiere proyectar de sí misma.

Palabras clave: estudios de género, Janet Frame, escritura autobiográfica, performatividad, locura.

The philosopher Ian Hacking claims that "[i]n every generation there are quite firm rules on how to behave when you are crazy" (quoted in Appignanesi 4). Although I do agree with this quote, I would say that this is a consequence of the established ways to perceive madness and to deal with it. In her famous study on female madness *The Female Malady* (1987), Elaine Showalter defines madness as "offenses against implicit understandings of particular cultures/residual rule-breaker / labelled as mad – stabilized and fixed, launching the offender on a career as a mental patient" (222). That is, madness is perceived,

in Phyllis Chesler's words, as a "wish to 'step outside' culture" (87), to transgress social norms. And what can be more cultural than gender, one of the first—if not the first, according to Butler (1993)—markings in socialization? There have been many studies since the 1970s on how madness has been "feminized" since the end of the 19th century (Showalter 1987; Chesler 2005; Appignanesi 2008; Ussher 2011), and most twentieth-century definitions of madness are closely linked to the correct performance of gender, whether it be male or female (Appignanesi 7). However, the treatment of madness has been feminized (e.g.: infantilization, shock treatment, lobotomy), as stated by Showalter (210).

In her article "Women and Madness: The Critical Phallacy" (1975), Shoshana Felman concludes that "[m]adness, in other words, is precisely what makes a woman *not a woman*" ("Women and Madness" 8; her emphasis). She explains that traditional images of madness in Western culture, i.e., emotionality and irrationality, have been linked to "womanhood" since the 18th century, precisely in opposition to "manhood" understood as rationality—thus constructing "woman" as "Other". However, what we understand as "madness" in psychiatric terms, which is a lack of cultural referents when reading someone else's behaviour, is the absence of that "womanhood". In short, madness is the impossibility of reading a woman *as* a woman, what Felman terms "the lack of resemblance" ("Women and Madness" 8). This "acting" as a woman or not is directly linked to Judith Butler's theory of performativity. According to Butler, "'performativity' must be understood not as a singular or deliberate 'act', but, rather, as the reiterative and citational practice by which discourse produces the effect that it names" (Butler 2). Therefore, gender is not "performed" in one single act, but in a repetition of norms and practices since birth, equating sex with gender and gender with the subject, whereby the subject comes into being— that is, render it "culturally intelligible", liveable (Butler 2-3)—, and which, in performing it, is reaffirming the discourse of gender. The fact that gender is cultural, and "womanhood" and "manhood" mean different things for different cultures can be seen in parallel to the cultural definition of madness. Thus, my claim is that madness can also be performative and much linked to gender.

This article intends to explore the performativity of madness viewed as an escape from gender in Janet Frame's second autobiographical volume, *An Angel at my Table* (1981). This thesis has been explored before by authors such as Mercer[1] (1993) in relation to societal expectations in general, but I intend to do so through a gender lens, following the work of Suzette Henke and Shoshana Felman.[2] Another element that I will take into account for this analysis is the fact that *An Angel at my Table* belongs to the autobiographical genre, or, at least, it is presented as such. Therefore, in the second part of this article, I also intend to

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[1] Gambaudo also discusses the performative aspect of madness in her analysis of Janet Frame's *Faces in the Water* (2012).
[2] A similar contention about Charlotte Perkins Gilman's "The Yellow Wallpaper"'s reappropriation of the medical language of madness as a weapon against patriarchal oppression has been made by Gerardo Rodríguez Salas (2012).

explore a question that has already been asked many times: why the mismatch between Janet Frame's fiction and her life writing? Specifically, I am referring to the gap in *An Angel at my Table* (1981) about the account of the many times she was committed to mental asylums for nearly ten years during the late 1940s and early 1950s. This gap has been noticed by many academics (Mercer 1993; Ash 1993; Lecercle, 2000; Boileau 2007) and Boileau has attempted to explain it following Lejeune's autobiographical pact. However, other critics such as Mercer have pointed out this gap as a flaw, deeming Frame's autobiographical work conservative and unsatisfactory, and have searched for a more faithful account of her stay in mental asylums in her novel *Faces in the Water* (1961) (Mercer 43-44). *Faces in the Water* is indeed described as a "documentary" (Frame, *Faces*[3] vi) and was actually a mandatory read for nurses in New Zealand mental asylums for many years after it was published (Evans quoted in Gilbert *et al.* 20), although Frame cautions against reading the main character, Istina Mavet, as a fictionalized version of herself (Frame, *Faces* vi; Frame, *Angel* 228). However, Frame admits in *An Angel at my Table*: "were I to rewrite *Faces in the Water*, I would include much that I omitted because I did not want a record by a former patient to appear to be over-dramatic" (*Angel* 256), thus inextricably linking the two texts. In this paper, I argue that Janet Frame uses the autobiographical genre as a site to reconstruct her identity, after having had to give up her self—her bodily—since she did not fit the gender conventions of her society. Thus, remembering becomes a "re-membering" of the self (Henke 2000).

At the beginning of *An Angel at my Table*, there is a foreshadow of what is to happen to Janet[4] when, on the train from her hometown to Dunedin, she passes by the psychiatric hospital where she will be committed, Seacliff: "there was a movement in the carriage as the passengers became aware of *Seacliff*, the station, and *Seacliff* the hospital, the asylum" (Frame, *Angel* 175; her emphasis). There is already a sense that only a thin line separates the right Seacliff from the wrong one, as if suggesting that it might be easy to end up in the latter by mistake. Indeed, in her hometown (north of Dunedin) becoming mad is known as being sent "down the line" and in Dunedin as being sent "up the line": the trip that Janet is undertaking is actually in between, right on that line, in a place that is neither her town nor the city, where borders are blurred and it is dangerous to linger:

> Yes, the loonies were there; everyone looked out at the loonies . . .
> *Often it was hard to tell who were the loonies* . . . We had no loonies in
> our family, although we knew of people who had been sent 'down the
> line', but we did not know what they looked like, only that there was a

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[3] For the sake of convenience and space, in in-text citations I will use the cues "Faces" and "Angel" to refer to *Faces in the Water* and *An Angel at my Table*, respectively.
[4] I will use "Janet" to refer to Janet Frame as a character in her own autobiography and Frame to refer to the author/narrator, following Lejeune's distinction in "The Autobiographical Pact" (1975).

funny look in their eye and they'd attack you with a bread knife or an axe. (*Angel* 174; my emphasis)

Although Janet's idea about madness responds to societal standards, such as identifying madness with danger ("they'd attack you with a bread knife or an axe") or an abnormal physical trait ("a funny look"), she is not sure about how to distinguish the loonies when the people in the train are looking at them. Ironically enough, she will feel this very lack of safety when she is committed to a mental institution: those who will seem dangerous and threatening will be the sane ones—the doctors that will give her ECT and will prescribe a leucotomy to cure her, her family and acquaintances forcing her to be "normal". Like in her fiction, Frame plays out the slight, artificial difference between the world of the sane and that of the insane, which are not so far away.

In the city, feeling utterly lonely and always afraid of rejection, Janet is "conscious always of boundaries of behaviour and feeling in [her] new role as an adult" (Frame, *Angel* 194). These boundaries mainly refer to the limits of her behaviour as an adult woman, which are, as some critics note, above all bodily boundaries (Oikkonen 2004, Merli and Torney, 1997). Janet, who more than anything aspires to be a "lovely girl, no trouble at all" (Frame, *Angel* 206), soon realizes that performing gender correctly is about the proper management of the female body and its sexuality. As Oikkonen claims, "society considers madness not as an illness but as bad behaviour, as women's refusal to hide their sexuality and to tame their threatening femaleness by subjecting their bodies to male control. In other words, madness is seen by society *as* the 'untamed' female body" (emphasis hers). In the portrayal of Janet's fear of the body, specifically the female body, Frame makes explicit the correlation between female sexuality and death.

Janet is ashamed of how she looks, embarrassed of her decaying teeth[5] and her unruly hair, which make her undesirable as a woman. She eats very little, only when she is alone; hides away the chocolate wrappers she eats in secret; and eats leftover food without having her host aunt notice: "I was unable to revise my impression as the girl with the tiny appetite, and so I was often hungry" (Frame, *Angel* 182). The correct management of her appetite is part of the correct management of her body. She walks to the cemetery in the outskirts of the city to bury her sanitary towels instead of burning them at home or school, which seems to me not a "decision to control the borders of the body in her own way, not to hand them over to social surveillance" as Merli and Torney argue (70), but rather a more extreme way to cover up any symptom of womanhood in her body, to bury it to death in the same way that she hides and "kills" her appetite. While denying her body, she does not want to follow any of the examples of female sexuality around her.

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[5] Teeth appear as a cause for Janet's shame at her unfeminine appearance and as a marker of her poverty, since she could not afford to go to the dentist to have them replaced for a set of fake teeth, something common in New Zealand at the time: "the general opinion in New Zealand was that natural teeth were best removed anyway." (Frame, *Angel* 238)

On the one hand, her sister Isabel is an example of a full-blown female sexuality, which is frowned upon in the conformist New Zealand of the 1940s. She always has a boyfriend, swims, is loud and complains about the conditions in which the two sisters live at their aunt's home. She is told off at the teaching college because she wears a skirt printed with a giraffe. In fact, the principal tells Janet to influence her younger sister because "Isabel . . . was making a guy of herself both by her behaviour and by the clothes she wore" (Frame, *Angel* 202). Janet feels ashamed for her loud behaviour—for Isabel has no intention of being "a lovely girl, no trouble at all"—, but does follow her when she suggests they steal their aunt's chocolates, since the two girls are starving. However, Isabel's incorrect performance of her gender and her untamed sexuality are punished indirectly: she drowns in her twenty-first year, becoming what she did not bother to hide during her lifetime: literally, a body. The alternatives, though, do not seem promising for Janet: her mother is remembered as "an everlasting servant" (Frame, *Angel* 212), and, although she writes poetry, like Janet, it is always for her family, like everything else she does. Something similar happens with her schoolteacher, Miss Macaulay, whom she visits while at university. Janet realises that her former teacher has no further intellectual aspirations of any kind, and feels disappointed: "I was saddened by the knowledge that Miss Macaulay had been extracted from her place by the same domesticity that had denied my mother a sight of hers" (Frame, *Angel* 186). Both women have given up their sexuality and taken up female roles that please society, but these do not fulfil Janet either.

As Suzette Henke claims, "[g]ender is a cultural performance that [Janet] is unable to master and, indeed, refuses to practice in reiterative gestures of normative behaviour" (Henke 95). Thus, Janet attempts suicide in order to escape from her job as a teacher and from the expectations of society that her self and her body do not meet. The first time that she is committed to a mental institution, she feels "sheltered and warm" (Frame, *Angel* 223), away from teaching and her family and money problems and her "increasing sense of isolation in a brave bright world of brave bright people; away from the war and being twenty-one and responsible; only not away from [her] decaying teeth" (Frame, *Angel* 223). That is, the asylum becomes an actual physical shelter from the performance of sanity. As Gambaudo argues in relation to *Faces in the Water*, but which can as well be applied to *An Angel at my Table*, "[i]n emphasising the performative aspects of mental health, Frame gives representation to the constraints that underlie performances of sanity and to those other (mad) performances constraint denies." (46) Just as madness is a performance, so is sanity, and each put constraints that take a toll on the individual's identity and body.

Faced with the paradox of wanting to write and not conforming to the expectations for a woman of her time, but in constant need of validation from those around her, when Janet is diagnosed with schizophrenia she decides that she has finally found the status where being different is justified: "I was taking my new status seriously. If the world of the mad were the world where I now

officially belonged (lifelong disease, no cure, no hope), then I would use it to survive, I would excel in it. I sensed that it did not exclude my being a poet" (Frame, *Angel* 234). In choosing to remain a poet, conscious of the well-known relationship between madness and creativity, she is not only choosing madness over sanity, but she is choosing madness *over* being a woman, understanding madness as Felman's "lack of resemblance" ("Women and Madness" 8). As Appignanesi notes, when "schizophrenia" became a very common diagnosis,

> those labelled schizophrenic could easily enough develop a career path of craziness. Learning the illness behaviours that got attention from doctors and formed a bond with other patients was . . . an inevitable part of life in a 'total institution'. . . . [T]he compliance it generates in patients . . . can lead to entrapment in a schizophrenic role and a pattern of recurrent institutionalization.

> Being schizzy could all too easily become a way of life. (251)

When Frame describes how she felt about her new condition, she talks about "a feeling of loneliness but with a new self-possession" (*Angel* 234). And in fact, when she finishes her first "probation" period and she is declared sane for the first time, she acknowledges a "twinge of loss" (Frame, *Angel* 240), as if she had lost something in her identity that could help her survive her not following the norms: "I still had my writing, didn't I, and if necessary I could use my schizophrenia to survive" (Frame, *Angel* 251). Thus, schizophrenia becomes her "way of life". She plays out her character so well that she is soon admitted as a chronic patient, and realises that "[she] had woven [herself] into a trap, remembering that a trap is also a refuge" (Frame, *Angel* 253). Madness becomes the realization of her "wish to step outside of culture" (Chesler 87), the kind of exile that Sontag talks about in *Illness as Metaphor* (36). In this case, it is an exile from expected gender roles. As Suzette Henke argues, for Janet, madness becomes a "cloak of schizophrenic that functioned as a sheltering cocoon – a medically constructed identity bordering on the poetic, valorizing her difference and confirming her indifference to social conformity" (94-95): it protects her from other people's criticism, and allows her to be different—a writer, as she desires.

However, she will soon discover that the performance of madness renders her "an instant third person, or even personless" (Frame, *Angel* 225), and that she is trapped in that role. As a patient in a mental institution, she is denied an identity and reduced to be nothing more than what she had tried to avoid being: a body, not a person. According to Suzette Henke, following Foucault, "it is the 'very materiality' of the institution of incarceration that functions 'as an instrument and vector of power' to objectivize the body of a patient or prisoner" (94). We can note how the objectification of the patient shares some similarities with the social objectification of the female body in order to keep it within the boundaries. Being cured is thus linked to "taming" the body, to having it behave

in the "proper", social way, a notion that stems from the "moral management" psychiatric tradition in the 19th century.

"Moral management" in the asylum can be traced back to the 18th century and was implemented after the Madhouse Act in Britain (1828), when mental illness began to be seen as a moral illness that needed treatment, rather than brutalizing and isolating patients like in Medieval times. "Moral insanity" was a term coined by James Cowles Prichard in 1835, and according to him, madness was: "a morbid perversion of the natural feelings, affection, inclination, temper, habits, moral dispositions, and natural impulses, without any remarkable disorder or defect of the intellect, or knowing and reasoning faculties, and particularly without any insane illusion or hallucination" (quoted in Showalter 29). That is, madness was seen as any kind of behaviour deemed abnormal or disruptive by community standards, and curing a patient meant making them fit for society again.

In the narrative, patients are reduced to mere objects, mistreated and humiliated, as Frame recalls her fellow companions in the asylum who had "no legal or personal identity—no clothes of their own to wear, no handbags, purses, no possessions but a temporary bed to sleep in with a locker beside it, and a room to sit in and stare . . . Many patients confined in other wards of Seacliff had no name, only a nickname, no past, no future" (*Angel* 228). In treating them as objects (bodies), they are completely denied of an identity so that this can be remade anew, tailored to society. At the asylum, Janet is often compared to her "more normal" (tamed) fellow inpatients: "Nola's having her hair straightened, Nola's having a party dress, Nola's having a party—why not you too?" (Frame, *Angel* 264); and asked, after being offered a leucotomy, whether she would not just like to be normal and sell hats in a shop (Frame, *Angel* 264). These questions ring strikingly similar to the questions she is asked when she is temporarily discharged and lives her real life: "I had no answers to the simplest questions: where had I been working before I came to the laundry? Was I 'going out' with anyone? Why didn't I get my hair straightened?" (Frame, *Angel* 260) That is, questions regarding the management of her body and her sexuality. Frame makes explicit this correlation between life in the asylum and life outside of it in *Faces in the Water*: "if you can't adapt yourself to living in a mental hospital how do you expect to be able to live 'out in the world'? How indeed?" (Frame, *Faces* 42) Taming the body and making it *fit* for the "outside world" is the key task of the asylum. In fact, the second time that she is admitted to the mental hospital is when she has her teeth extracted. After this, she signs up for voluntary ECT treatment. Not only is she helpless regarding her life decisions, but she is toothless, with no power over her own body either outside or inside the asylum, and the extreme end of that "body management" arrives when she is prescribed a leucotomy: an operation that will change her brain forever—as it turns out, moral management is a rather bodily method.

Miraculously, right before she undergoes the operation, the doctor speaks to her, "to the amazement of everyone" (Frame, *Angel* 264), as she recalls. In addressing her, he is acknowledging her as a subject again. He informs her that

she has won a literature prize for her first book of stories, *The Lagoon*, and that she will not undergo the leucotomy after all. Thus, her salvation is due to external prestige. However, the asylum system has completely eroded her sense of self: "after having been subjected to proposals to have myself changed, by a physical operation, into a more acceptable, amenable, normal person, I arrived home . . . with the conviction at last that I was officially a non-person" (Frame, *Angel* 266). Indeed, after the reiteration of the performance of madness, its discourse has finally asserted itself: "[f]or I was now officially suffering from schizophrenia, although I had had no conversation with the doctors, or tests" (Frame, *Angel* 253). She has woven herself into her own trap, and she will not get out of it until a writer offers her a place to live and write: a room of her own, in Virginia Woolf's terms. The solution, therefore, is linked to material conditions, and so is her self-assertion: the moment that she accepts her own body as it is, without the pressures of gender and society, she feels alive again. She takes a picture of herself —"a proof that [she] did exist" (Frame, *Angel* 286)—without straightening her hair, although the hairdresser tells her that "her hair would never be attractive unless it was professionally straightened" (Frame, *Angel* 287). This picture is a testimony to her survival, and to what she has lost and gained in order to survive: "The finished portrait showed a healthy young woman with obvious false teeth, a smirking smile and a Godfrey chin. It was a fresh photo, of substance. Well, *I was alive again*" (Frame, *Angel* 287; my emphasis). According to Shoshana Felman, "survival is, profoundly, a form of autobiography" (*What Does a Woman Want*, 13). In telling how she has survived, what has been lost comes in the way. In fact, what Frame loses in order to become a writer is her sexuality, for the moment that she chooses to live with the homosexual writer Frank Sargeson, she has to give up her life as a woman of the time:

> The price I paid for my stay in the army hut was the realisation of the nothingness of my body. Frank talked kindly of men and of lesbian women, and I was neither male nor lesbian . . . I, who now looked on Frank Sargeson as a saviour, was forced to recognise through the yearning sense of gloom, of fateful completeness, that the Gods had spoken, there was nothing to be done.
>
> *In exchange for this lack of self-esteem as a woman, I gained my life as I wanted it to be*. (Frame, *Angel* 299; my emphasis)

Following Shoshana Felman on autobiographical writing, Frame's *An Angel At My Table* "can only be a testimony: to survival. And like other testimonies to survival, its struggle is to testify at once to life and to the death—the dying—the survival has entailed" (*What Does A Woman Want* 16). This dying is what Frame has left behind: her female sexuality. This results, however, in acknowledging her body as it is and taking care of herself: just before Janet sets off for England to start her writing career, she knits herself a cardigan her family deems ugly and shapeless, but she wears it on her journey anyway. Just as she chooses her fate, she chooses her appearance, and dresses in something that will keep her body warm and comfortable, something that she has made for herself. The sweater

may be seen as a metaphor for her writing, which has saved her from the operation and will become her means of life and protection. This sweater/writing is not tailored to the likings of everybody, but to hers only; it is protecting and life-affirming, and this is enough.

As Felman affirms, "the 'writing of a woman's death' is precisely the 'writing of a woman's life'" (*What Does A Woman Want* 16). I will now look at how Frame "redefine[s] and resubjectivize[s] the shattered self damaged by institutional abuse" (Henke 96) through life writing and particularly by the thoroughly noted elision of her experiences in mental asylums in *An Angel at my Table*. Frame did write fictionally about these experiences in novels such as *Faces in the Water* and *Owls Do Cry*, and critics wonder why she decided to go on and write an autobiography where she omits the actual experience in the asylums. Frame herself acknowledges this gap too: "[a]nd when I had been in hospital several months beyond the voluntary period and was declared a committed patient, that was the beginning of the years in hospital *which I have already described, setting out only,* as I have said, *the actual events and people and places, but not myself, except for my feeling of panic* simply at being locked up by those who reminded me constantly that I was 'there for life'" (Frame, *Angel* 253; my emphasis). She is referring to the fictional protagonist of *Faces in the Water*, Istina Mavet. Indeed, as Boileau notes,

> confusion is fostered by the immediate correction 'except for,' which qualifies her presentation and places back in the foreground the representation of the self that had been denied, and the consequent interpretation of the text as partly autobiographical . . . *Therefore the fictional account becomes one among other accounts of a reality that a single text could not entirely contain.* (224; his emphasis)

Faces in the Water is autobiographical only in so far as the events are true, but lacks Frame as a subject—*except* her pain, which she places, in fact, elsewhere, for she did not feel as a subject. However, *An Angel At My Table* omits these events from the subject that the text aims to reconstruct. It is in fact only when she is not writing about herself (a fictionalized account like *Faces in the Water*) that she can describe the events at the asylum, but in her autobiographical writing it becomes impossible to contain that reality in order to establish (at least temporary, on the text) the subject as a whole, to restore the subject who has survived and now has the power to tell it: "[t]he act of life-writing serves as its own testimony and, in so doing, carries through the work of reinventing the shattered self as a coherent subject capable of meaningful resistance to received ideologies and of effective agency in the world" (Henke xix). In not telling, she is reestablishing her subjectivity and gaining the agency that had been denied to her to decide who she wants to be, reshaping her identity and deciding what to tell and what to leave out. According to Frame, "[w]riting an autobiography, usually thought of as a looking back, can just as well be a looking across or through, with the passing of time giving an X-ray quality to the eye" (Frame, *Angel* 225). This goes hand in hand with Linda Anderson's affirmation that "the recognition of that memory could also provide a space in

which the subject can create herself, or that it contains a future we have yet to gain access to, could also change the knowledge we already have" (12). Thus, life writing allows for a space for that which memory cannot contain and, at the same time, Frame avoids narrating the parts of her life where she felt dead, therefore choosing actively the knowledge about herself that she wants to share. Suzette Henke argues that "[t]hrough the artistic replication of a coherent subject-position, the life-writing project generates a healing narrative that temporarily restores the fragmented self to an empowered position of psychological agency" (xvi). After feeling repeatedly that she did not "have a 'place' in the world" (Frame, *Angel* 275) and been told that she had "what was known as a 'history'" (Frame, *Angel* 262), Frame has knitted herself another kind of sweater: a new history of herself, through writing.

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THE DOMESTIC SPHERE IN ATTIA HOSAIN'S *SUNLIGHT ON A BROKEN COLUMN* (1961): THE HOME MIRRORS THE WORLD

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Abstract

By analysing Attia Hosain's *Sunlight on a Broken Column* (1961), the article attempts to foreground the significance of *home* in Indian partition literature. As its theoretical framework, the article refers to postcolonial scholar Partha Chatterjee who claims that the Indian nationalist agenda during freedom movement turned home into a sacred site that was meant to safeguard the native values from the 'corrupting' Western ideology, which led to the segregation of the public and private sphere. In this context, the article examines how by focussing on the domestic sphere of home as a microcosmic reflexion of the socio-political changes happening in the country, Hosain reveals that both the private and the public are closely interlinked, thereby debunking the notion that private space is outside of history. Furthermore, the article explores the novel's depiction of the *purdah/zenana* culture in order to highlight that though considered a place of refuge, home becomes a regulatory site of assertion of patriarchy-instigated familial, societal and religious codes, which makes it a claustrophobic place for its female inhabitants. In essence, the article argues that Hosain partakes in an alternate, gynocentric narrative of the partition of India.

Keywords: Attia Hosain, Indian partition, domestic fiction, *purdah/zenana* culture, Muslim women, South Asian feminism, Muslim aristocratic home, *Sunlight on a Broken Column*.

Resumen

El presente estudio analiza el significado del concepto *hogar* en la literatura de la Partición india a través del análisis de la novela *Sunlight on a Broken Column* (1961), de Attia Hosain. El enfoque teórico de este artículo se basa en el estudio del autor postcolonial Partha Chatterjee en el que se establece que el hogar se convierte en espacio sagrado a través del cual el nacionalismo indio es capaz de salvaguardar los valores intrínsecos indios frente a la amenaza de occidente en concordancia con la diferencia de las esferas individuales/familiares y las sociales. Hosain demuestra que el ámbito público y el privado están totalmente relacionados, desmitificando la presuposición de que el ámbito privado está fuera de la historia. La autora lo demuestra en esta novela describiendo el espacio doméstico como un microcosmos a través del cual reflexiona sobre los cambios socio-políticos que tienen lugar en el país en la cronología de la novela. De este modo, la descripción que se ofrece en la novela sobre el velo y el área de reclusión que las mujeres musulmanas tienen reservada

en sus viviendas pretende mostrar el ámbito doméstico como lugar que refleja y regula los valores patriarcales que definen familia, sociedad y religión y que, al mismo tiempo, convierten el ámbito del hogar en un espacio claustrofóbico para las mujeres que lo habitan. Por tanto, este artículo ilustra cómo Hosain refleja la Partición desde una narrativa subversiva y ginocéntrica.

Palabras clave: Attia Hosain, partición de India, ficción doméstica, la cultura de *purdah/zenana*, mujeres musulmanas, feminismo del Sur de Asia, aristocracia del hogar musulmán, *Sunlight on a Broken Column*.

        Sunlight on a Broken Column (1961) by Attia Hosain[1] (1913-1998) is the first novel by a Muslim woman author on the partition of India.[2] Fictional narratives on the Indian partition, specifically by male authors, normally focus on the political aspect of the event. Though partition literature generally tends to foreground the plight of the common man during the ethnic genocide that followed the splitting of the Indian Subcontinent into India and East and West Pakistan on the fateful day of 15 August 1947, most events that are narrated in male-authored novels occur within the public sphere.[3] As opposed to this, by analysing Hosain's novel, I will focus on the concept of the domestic sphere as a crucial place of history, which is usually neglected and left out because of the prioritisation of public masculine space over private feminine space within the hierarchy of historical recollections. Women, who are predominantly ascribed the private realm of home by virtue of them being mothers and housewives within the patriarchal scheme of things, find themselves absent from partition history because home was assumed to be lacking of any historical significance, since all partition and independence related incidents were believed to have taken place in the public sphere. Hence, by focussing on Hosain's *Sunlight on a Broken Column*, I will argue that Hosain uses the motif of home to give voice to

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[1] Attia Hosain belonged to the landed aristocracy in undivided colonial India, who subsequently moved to the United Kingdom in 1947 (the same year of India's partition). She is the first Muslim Indian woman from a landowning family to graduate from university (University of Lucknow, 1933).

[2] The partition of India accompanied the independence of the country after nearly two hundred years of British colonisation. The partition occurred based on growing religious tensions between Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims. The north-western state of Punjab and the eastern state of Bengal were divided to create West and East Pakistan respectively for the Muslim community, while Hindus and Sikhs were allocated India. Once the national borders were declared, many found themselves on the wrong side of the border and were forced to leave their homes behind for an unknown land, which claimed to be their new country based on the sole factor of their religious identity. As the Hindus in now Islamic Pakistan and Muslims in majoritarian Hindu India attempted to cross borders to reach their newly assigned country, many lost their lives in violent religious massacres that spread like wildfire across the states that were divided. It is believed that over ten million people migrated across borders and around two million lost their lives. The riots also bore witness to abduction and rape of women, genital mutilation and castration among other inhumane acts of horror.

[3] This aspect is evident in popular male-authored partition novels such as *Train to Pakistan* (1956) by Khushwant Singh, *Azadi* (Freedom, 1975) by Chaman Nahal and *A Bend in the Ganges* (1965) by Manohar Malgonkar.

personal, alternative histories of partition, thereby highlighting the significance of personal space where one can locate the effects of national history specifically on the lives of women.

Before proceeding to the analysis of the novel, a brief critical evaluation of the historical situation (in which Hosain's novel is located) with respect to the nation's perception of home during the partition period is crucial. For this purpose, I must refer to Partha Chatterjee's insightful essay "Colonialism, Nationalism, and Colonialized Women: The Contest in India" (1989). Chatterjee begins the essay by asserting that the purpose of the British colonising mission to India was to make the 'barbaric' natives believe in "the unworthiness of their traditional customs and embrace the new forms of a civilized and rational social order" (Chatterjee 623). When the nationalist struggle for independence started to gain momentum in the first half of the twentieth century, the colonised Indians were acutely aware of their inferiority in terms of economic and technological development as compared to the British. Having admitted the fact that they must follow Western models of statecraft and science to advance their material lifestyle, the nationalists simply could not let Western ideologies to seep into their cultural matrix because they strongly believed that "the spiritual domain of the East was superior to the West," thereby underscoring the importance of protecting their tradition from the corrupting influences of the West (Chatterjee 623). Furthermore, nationalism strongly functioned on the ideology that the spiritual was more important than the material, and this encouraged the notion that as long as India safeguarded its tradition, "it could make all the compromises and adjustments necessary to adapt itself to the requirements of a modern material world without losing its true identity" (Chatterjee 624). This ideology operated by segregating the material and the spiritual into two separate categories, which resulted in an "analogous, but ideologically far more powerful, dichotomy: that between the outer and the inner" (Chatterjee 623). This inner sphere that captured the true essence of India was unsurprisingly found in the physical embodiment of home. Hence, within the nationalist discourse, home gained tremendous significance in terms of nation-building ideology where it became the site that protected, nurtured and upheld the real values of India. Lastly, the nationalist rhetoric of protecting the purity of home from Western depravity ultimately led to the segregation of home from the public realm.

Now, keeping Chatterjee's arguments in mind, I return to Hosain's novel. A specific focus on partition fiction by women authors allows for unravelling of varied experiences of women during this tumultuous time in South Asian history. For this purpose, women novelists use certain tropes to exclusively focus on women's issues and their lives during the partition period. One of these is the exploration of the ideological standpoints attached to the private sphere, which is traditionally the space allocated to women. The significance of home lies not just in its physical embodiment, but also in its ideological underpinnings that stem from various cultural understandings of the word.

As home is the central location where gendered identities are moulded in terms of one's culture and religion, the same place becomes the site where

challenging of such identities takes place. Furthermore, as the chief occupants of the domestic sphere, the responsibility of preserving one's cultural values fall on the shoulders of women. In other words, women are victims of a "double colonisation" where "women are twice colonised – by *colonialist* realities and representations, and by *patriarchal* ones too" (McLeod 175). Therefore, in a conscious effort to debunk this double colonisation, women must redefine the private sphere that has so far been conventionally segregated from the masculine outside world in order to create a notion of self that is moulded by both the private and the political. For this purpose, Hosain's novel reveals

> women's lives in the domestic sphere . . . to make visible the relational construction of false binaries such as the public and private, Western and Eastern, and tradition and modernity that continue to inform nationalist discourse in South Asia today. (Didur 124)

Hosain deploys the motif of home to argue that the personal is indeed connected to the political. Hosain's novel becomes a microcosm for the nation where the changes in the country regarding its freedom struggle followed by partition are mirrored in the changing familial structure and relationships at home. As the story progresses, home becomes a politically charged space as characters voice and act out their political affiliations, thereby asserting that the private and the public are no longer separate.

Sunlight can be seen as "the literary equivalent of a photograph album made up of snapshots" that attempts to write "women's experience back into history" by creating a unique kind of partition narrative, which "contest[s] exclusionary, national and imperial histories" (Joannou155). Antoinette Burton in her book *Dwelling in the Archive* (2003) rightly claims that

> [a]s an alternative archive of partition, *Sunlight* reshapes the landscape of the historical imagination, offering a modest corrective to local and in turn to national history. That it does so by obscuring the actual violence of partition and focusing instead on its architectural ravages speaks so much to the unnarratability of 1947 as it does to Hosain's determination to bring the pressure of family history to bear on the stories the nation tells itself about its origins. (134)

Hosain creates this "alternative archive of partition" by using the first person narrative technique. The narrator is unsurprisingly female; she is the orphaned protagonist Laila, who belongs to a feudal Muslim family. The novel is a bildungsroman and opens when Laila is fifteen. Hence, by choosing a young female narrator belonging to an orthodox Muslim household, Hosain makes a deliberate choice of giving the interior domestic realm the importance it deserves. Moreover, it can be said that

> [t]he domestic arrangements recounted in [Hosain's novel] articulate specific social and cultural milieux, the changing structure of domesticity, and the boundaries – spatial, cultural and psychological –

that define an individual's sense of self and her relationship to family, community, and society. (Khan 118)

By focussing on female characters situated in the domestic sphere, Hosain's novel reveals the partition "experience behind the curtains" and makes one privy to "the closed women's quarters to expose the joy, sorrows, and experiences of the unsung Muslim woman" (Begum 206). Moreover, *Sunlight* must not be mistaken for an "oppositional" narrative "that completely dismantles the preferred narrative of the Indian nation. Rather, what [Hosain] offers is a (potentially) alternative account of this nation in the act of making itself" (Needham 99). In fact, Hosain challenges the concept that one dominant (male) voice can speak on behalf of the entire nation and how the country was affected by partition. To borrow literary theorist Mikhail Bakhtin's term,[4] Hosain's novel ascribes to 'heteroglossia' by presenting the reader with multiple voices and various points of view through a plethora of characters, including unmarried Aunt Abida, who is responsible for Laila's upbringing, widowed Aunt Majida and her daughter Zahra, Hindu maidservant Nandi, the staunch patriarch grandfather Baba Jan, his Westernised son Uncle Hamid and his wife Aunt Saira.

The structure of the novel is such that the first two sections elaborate on the lifestyle of Muslim aristocratic women, while from the third section, the consequences of the growing Hindu-Muslim divide as the struggle for independence gains impetus in colonial India are shown to infiltrate the house and affect its inhabitants. The novel, therefore, can be seen as "a historical argument" that reveals "the impossibility of dwelling comfortably at home in the wake of the unspeakable violence" of partition (Burton 106). To stress this point, the final section is set fourteen years later in the aftermath of partition that narrates Laila's visit to her childhood home. In this section, Hosain foregrounds through Laila's perspective, the effects of partition on the house and its family members. As Sarla Palkar in her essay "Beyond Purdah" (1995) notes:

> One cannot neatly compartmentalize the personal history of Laila from the social or national history – what makes *Sunlight on a Broken Column* a three dimensional novel is the manner in which the personal, social and national issues keep interacting and reflecting on one another. (115)

This interaction of various issues is made possible by locating Laila's home at the centre where through the means of its inhabitants, the personal, social and national dynamics play out within its walls. For women, home becomes a crucial aspect with respect to self-definition because through "the memories of home," women can "claim a place in history at the intersection of the public and private, the personal and political, the national and the postcolonial" (Burton 4). This informs Laila's return to *Ashiana*[5] in the end of the novel. Furthermore, Laila's

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[4] Bakhtin introduced the concept of 'heteroglossia' in his essay "Discourse in the Novel," which was originally in Russian and was published in 1934.
[5] *Ashiana* is Urdu for nest or shelter. The name is taken from Hosain's actual ancestral home in Lucknow (a city in the United Provinces (now Uttar Pradesh) especially known for its

physical presence/absence at home is instigated by the event of partition: Laila's romance and her subsequent departure from home with Ameer happen when the freedom struggle is marked by growing political upheaval. In this manner, Hosain succeeds in debunking the myth that nationalism/partition is essentially a public phenomenon.

Sunlight can be read as "domestic fiction," which becomes "the vehicle for tales of life" for women (Gopal 140). Furthermore, in the novel, home emerges as "the space where modernity and tradition seek power over women's lives" (Nayar 130). To explicate, Hosain's novel covers a time span of twenty years starting from the early 1930s till the early 1950s. Unsurprisingly, the novel begins at Laila's home and the reader is told that the elderly patriarch grandfather Baba Jan is on his deathbed. In the character of Baba Jan, Hosain "gives a symbolic representation of the unquestioned authority of patriarchal domestic norms" (Hasan 71). The household under Baba Jan is characterised by a "tightly controlled balance between a life within the household, ordained, enclosed, warm and secure but restricted by demands of modesty, and a life outside, free but insecure and confusing" (Amin 119). Under Baba Jan's command, Ashiana is represented as a stern feudal household where women of the house observe strict purdah to protect aristocratic demands of honour and etiquette and are surrounded by "a thousand taboos fiercer than the most fiery dragons" (Hosain 191). The atmosphere in the house is claustrophobic. As Laila claims, "Zahra and I felt our girlhood a heavy burden" (Hosain 14). However, the first line of the novel itself is indicative of the impending changes to come within the family, and as an extension, in the country:

> The day my aunt Abida moved from the *zenana* into the guest room off the corridor that led to the men's wing of the house, within call of her father's room, we knew Baba Jan had not much longer to live. (Hosain14)

Instigated by Baba Jan's illness, Aunt Abida's moving out of the women's quarters marks a huge change within the familial structure of the house, and this foretells not just the changes about to occur in the family but also in the nation. Furthermore, Baba Jan's dictatorial regime over Ashiana, though creates a highly oppressive space for its female inhabitants, can be read as a nostalgic reminiscence of the *taluqdari* [6] world in colonial India (to which Hosain belonged) where Hindus and Muslims were still united against a common colonial oppressor. However, one cannot neglect the fact that though Baba Jan's household represents "family as a source of strength," it also orchestrates "the near-total loss of individual freedom" for its female members who observe purdah and seldom are allowed to give their opinions (Nabar 128). After Baba Jan's death, the reigns of the household shift to his England-returned son Uncle

highbrow Muslim aristocratic culture). The name has an ironic significance because even though the name implies a safe haven, it fails to be so during the turmoil of partition.
[6] This is an Urdu term for aristocratic landowners.

Hamid, who is said to be "more a Sahib[7] than the English," and is "culturally identified with the Raj"[8] (Hosain 22, Jaonnou 156). With his return, one witnesses the "march of Anglicization" of the household (Shamsie 144). Uncle Hamid's return affects the lives of the inhabitants of Ashiana, especially the women of the household. For instance, Aunt Abida is quickly married off to an old man, widowed Aunt Majida and distant poor cousins, who were previously under the tutelage of Baba Jan, are sent away from the city of Lucknow to the ancestral home in the village of Hasanpur.

Eventually, the close-knit family starts to break down as various family members begin to support conflicting political ideologies, which creates ruptures and destabilises the family and subsequently results in its disintegration. Laila notes: "No one seemed to talk anymore; everyone argued," and "[e]very meal at home had become an ordeal as peaceful as a volcanic eruption" (Hosain 230). As Muneeza Shamsie in her essay "Sunlight and Salt" (2009) claims: "[P]olitical opinions do not sit too heavily on the text, but are nevertheless expressed" (146). For example, while cousin Saleem believes in partition as a viable solution to the Hindu/Muslim issue, his brother Kemal and cousin Asad stand for an undivided India. Divided opinions among the members of this feudal Muslim family about the future of landowners, whether or not to stay back in India, and which political party to support become the reasons for many heated arguments at home. This situation at Laila's home becomes reflexive of the political unrest brewing in the wake of rising Hindu/Muslim tensions in the so far united colonial India. The end of the third part of the novel shows Laila leaving Ashiana due to her choice to marry Ameer. Her marriage to Ameer leads to her ostracism by her family because her marriage is socially unacceptable due to Ameer's lower class status. To elaborate, Ameer is a junior lecturer at Aligarh Muslim University, which means that he belongs to the working class as opposed to Laila's aristocratic heritage. Hence, Laila's estrangement from her family based on her marriage to Ameer not only reveals class prejudices prevalent in pre and post partition (and also current) India, but also shows how a woman cannot make autonomous decisions without antagonising her family.

Post partition, Laila returns to Ashiana as a widow.[9] Laila's return becomes indicative of how "history is individually experienced through the form of personal life story" (Joannou 157). Ashiana, in the final section, emerges as "a stranded object on the landscape of domestic memory" (Burton 131). Laila observes the derelict condition of her childhood home and remembers a past that can never be redeemed. Laila experiences "a rush of emotions that leaves her

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[7] Sahib can be translated to Sir or Master. It was a term usually used by Indians for the British rulers in colonial India; a telling example of the colonised native's acceptance of the coloniser's superiority.
[8] Raj is an adopted English word from Hindi that specifically refers to the British rule over India.
[9] During partition riots, Laila is rescued by her Hindu friends. Hosain deliberately does not give a firsthand account of partition violence and sets the final section a few years after the event to focus exclusively on home and the concept of individual history.

nauseated. The sheer evocative power of spaces, the memory of them, transforms the house into an animistic landscape, a stage just abandoned" (Khan 123). Laila observes about the silent house: "It was not the peaceful silence of emptiness, but as if sounds lurked everywhere, waiting for the physical presence of those who had made them audible" (Hosain 275). This can be interpreted as the house echoing the remains of the lives of people who were so suddenly and violently uprooted and dislocated by partition. The disintegration of Laila's family occurs due to several reasons that are all instigated in some way or another by partition. For instance, several family members, by virtue of their religion, leave for the newly created Islamic Pakistan (Zahra, Saleem and his wife Nadira), some characters die; Uncle Hamid due to illness prompted by depression as he gradually fails in his political endeavours, and cousin Zahid becomes a victim of mass murder on a train to Pakistan, while Laila is estranged from her family due to ideological differences. To elaborate, the assertion of her choice of husband as opposed to agreeing to a traditional arranged marriage is incited by her exposure to changing social/cultural values that informed the partition period.

In effect, all these familial events mirror "the complex events that shaped the nationalist struggle" (Nabar 131). Post partition, Ashiana is entirely destroyed, which becomes symbolic of the now divided country ravaged by ethnic genocide. The house comes to represent a lost world that can never be recovered. For instance, the current occupants of Ashiana are now labelled "refugees," while its rightful owner, late Uncle Hamid's son Saleem, who had left for Pakistan, is termed as an "evacuee," and the house itself becomes a mere real estate fact (Hosain 272). Through Laila's sorrow when she hears such terms used to refer to people on her visit to Ashiana, Hosain deploys not just the physical disarray of home to show the broken country, but also highlights how people were reduced to basic facts and numbers, thereby erasing the pain of uprootedness suffered by many caused by partition. In the final section, one notices that "the house that formed [Laila], where her subjectivity had come into own cognizance" is now bereft of her family and is instead filled with "the weight of memory and the weathering of history" (Khan 123).

It must be noted that Ashiana as a microcosmic symbol of the country remains constant throughout the novel. For instance, it begins with a close-knit family that resembles the undivided colonial India, where the family patriarch (Baba Jan followed by Uncle Hamid) and his dominance over the household can be equated to the control of British colonisers over India. Next, the growing tensions between family members reflect the growing disparity between Hindus and Muslims. The raising political tensions go hand in hand with the disintegration of the family. This is followed by Laila's freedom from the repressive patriarchal regime of Ashiana that reflects the freedom of the country from colonial powers. Finally, it can be claimed that through the trope of home, Hosain narrates the story of what Laila calls "the home of my childhood and adolescence" (Hosain 272). Laila's narrative is one among many stories about people who stayed behind, representing those who did not face the brutality that followed the division of the Indian Subcontinent in the form of migration and

violence, but were nonetheless left to witness the gradual crumbling of the country as a consequence of partition.

Next, I proceed to discuss the physical structure of the house and its ideological implications. In the novel, the house is divided into *zenana* and *mardana* (men's area). To elaborate, architecturally, *zenana* literally means "'the interior of the house' – the rooms are in the inner courtyard, away from the public and the male domain of the house," and the term comes from the Persian word *zan,* which means woman and "refers to the apartments of the house in which women of the family are secluded" in order to maintain the family's *izzat* (honour) and *sharam* (shame) (Khan 122). The *zenana/purdah* culture is deliberately made all pervasive in Hosain's novel to highlight the segregation caused by this tradition that imposes not just limited mobility in terms of physical space assigned to women but also restricts women's intellectual growth, since they are essentially barred from the world outside.[10]

In *Sunlight*, which depicts the world of Muslim aristocracy during 1930s colonial India, the concept of purdah is deeply engrained in the lives of Muslim women. Here, it is important to clarify that the word 'purdah' literally means a curtain or a veil, but in the cultural context, "purdah indexes a gendered sociospatial formation, a code of conduct, and a specific spatial regime for women (Khan 127). This leads to the creation of "many homes within the home, separated by ideological boundaries" (Hasan 70). Moreover, purdah culture can be seen as a consequence of the patriarchal insistence on viewing female bodies as sexed objects that need to be covered and controlled. At home, purdah becomes a tool for organised isolation and repression of women by ensuring their confinement not just within the house but in a separate section of the house altogether. In fact, purdah may be interpreted as the "shorthand for Indian women's imprisonment" (Burton qtd. in Bahuguna 54). Moreover, the purdah culture in Hosain's novel "emphasizes the unequal status of women with regard to men and denies them the freedom of shaping their lives according to their own wishes" (Palkar 108). Furthermore, it must be noted that unlike the zenana, which is a physical space, the concept of purdah is mobile. This aspect is noted in the scene where Laila and Zahra are walking down the alleyway to visit a relative and are preceded by a servant shouting "Purdah! Purdah!" in order to warn the passersby to look away (Hosain 98). With respect to this episode, an alternate and somewhat tolerant reading of purdah can be that "[t]he concept of seclusion . . . can be and is purposefully mobilized . . . to afford women control over their movements and the terms of their sociability" (Burton 119). Similarly, zenana may be interpreted as a separate world in itself: "[A] mini-culture (and not necessarily a counter-culture)" (Bahuguna 64). Zenana strives on the bonds of female companionship, and this exclusively feminine space, though "an autonomous unit in itself, the life within zenana is based upon a great level of

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[10] While women are confined at home, men are allowed to visit courtesans and engage in amorous activities regardless of their marital status. This is exemplified in the character of Uncle Mohsin who despite having a wife and teenage children is said to have several mistresses around the city.

social interaction" (Bahuguna 56). However, such readings are based on the acceptance of the concept of seclusion, which may be seen as problematic because they do not challenge the isolation of women based on their gender.

Locating the issue of nationalism within the purdah context, Jasbir Jain in her essay "Purdah, Patriarchy and the Tropical Sun" (2008) comments on the domestic space and claims that

> nationalists' defence of women as custodians of culture . . . led to a division into public and private space, the former being the outside world of political life and the latter of domesticity and women. Purdah as segregation began to appear as the last bastion of culture against both modernization and Westernization. (237)

This demand to uphold one's culture is reflected in the severity with which the importance of tradition is stressed by older female characters on the younger ones. For instance, one can easily identify loving bonds between Laila and Aunt Abida and her nurse Hakiman Bua. However, these bonds are quick to snap as soon as Laila steps out of the traditional folds that define the ideological framework of these older women. Moreover, as opposed to Laila's Western education, her cousin Zahra[11] is a product of traditional education taught within zenana. Laila is shown to be critical of Zahra's behaviour (such as her unchallenging acceptance of the groom decided for her by male family members, her absolute lack of interest regarding the freedom movement and so on), but one may claim that "Zahra's limited outlook" is a product of "the damaging effects of purdah culture on a woman's psyche and personality" (Palkar 113). Here, it is important to note that in the novel, zenana is also portrayed as a protective space for women, which shields them from unwanted male attention. This view of zenana as a secure space not only reveals the awareness of predatory tendencies associated with male sexuality, but also reflects a class privilege because it is only aristocratic women who get the security of zenana. For instance, maidservant Nandi is quick to point out: "We poor people get bad name because we cannot stay locked up" (Hosain 97). Nonetheless, Hosain's focus on the daily activities in zenana in the first half of the novel shows the domestic sphere in vibrant colours where she describes the preparation and serving of elaborate meals, celebration of festivals (Hindu and Muslim alike), sights and sounds of street vendors, dyeing of *dupattas*[12] and so on in intricate detail. This can be read as a conscious effort on Hosain's part to not just highlight the seclusion of women from the outside political world, but also to bring out the beauty of (albeit a small section of) everyday Indian quotidian life. The novel is unapologetic about its primary interest in women, and therefore, paints a realistic picture of women's lives in 1930s India.[13]

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[11] Zahra is two years older than Laila.

[12] *Dupatta* is Hindi for a long scarf worn across the shoulders by women.

[13] Specifically, Hosain depicts the lives of feudal Muslim women; a minority in itself that seldom got any attention in mainstream Indian history.

Lastly, it is crucial to discuss Laila's marital home in contrast to Ashiana. Laila views Ashiana as a place where she has "never been allowed to make decisions" (Hosain 265). Hence, she makes a "utopian home" with Ameer where she claims to have "realised her personal fulfilment" (Hasan 75). In effect, for Laila, her childhood home is "not necessarily where one belongs but the place where one starts from" (Nasta qtd. in Joannou 160). Taking the motif of home further, after Ameer's death, Laila then creates an all-female space where she lives with her daughter and her childhood playmate and maidservant Nandi. This home becomes an antithesis to the patriarchal controlling codes that operated in Ashiana. Furthermore, Laila's marital home also becomes a unique space within the partition context. To explicate, during the ethnic genocide that followed partition, many women who were abducted and later 'rescued' by the governments of India and Pakistan were not given a choice to choose where they wanted to live. The opposite is true for Laila because she makes the choice of her residence. Laila selects Ameer's home over Ashiana on a personal level and India over Pakistan after partition on a national level. Laila not only refuses to leave for Pakistan as a Muslim, but with respect to her marital home, she succeeds in creating a space untouched by religion's, family's and the nation state's rampant male-dominated ideals. In this manner, yet again, the novel challenges the dichotomy between the private and the public, where the private is seen as devoid of history.

To conclude on the relevance of centrality of home in *Sunlight*, one may turn to Anuradha Dingwaney Needham's essay "Multiple Forms Of (National) Belonging" (1993) who claims that "[i]n the interests of creating and preserving homogeneous values and experience, nations include as much as they exclude – certain ideas, certain experiences, certain identities, even certain peoples," and these "inclusions and exclusions [that the nations] enact are not simply or naturally given; rather, they are products of deliberate selection designed to preserve certain interests or agendas and not others" (96). In the case of postcolonial India, the ones who found themselves excluded from nation-building terminology were women and minority religions. Hence, by locating the domestic sphere "as the site of a specific, cataclysmic history," Hosain challenges the nationalist hegemonic discourse founded on patriarchal ideology (Burton 117). In other words, a narration of the personal life of a Muslim woman who remains back in India after partition can be read as bringing forth the excluded voices from the margins by the process of retelling the event of partition of India through the private sphere of home; a space that much like women, is usually neglected in narratives of nation-building allegory.

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THE WEIRD SISTERS AND THE CIRCEAN MYTH OF FEMININITY IN GEOFFREY WRIGHT'S *MACBETH*

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Abstract

One of the typical figures used to construct monstrosity in terms of gender is that of the witch and, probably, one of the best well-known portrayals of these women appears in Shakespeare's *Macbeth*. Written at the beginning of the seventeenth-century, soon after James I became king of England, this theatre play echoes contemporary beliefs on witchcraft and portrays the weird sisters as the characters that set in motion all the events in the play. The witch is understood as an abject figure and gender becomes a key element in this construction of monstrosity. Accordingly, Geoffrey Wright's adaptation to the screen, uses the mythological figure of Circe as a basis for this contemporary representation of femininity, stressing not only witches' threatening potential but also the danger their highly erotized nature poses.

Keywords: witchcraft, *Macbeth*, Shakespeare, monstrosity, femininity, myth, Jacobean theatre, Circe.

Resumen

Tradicionalmente se ha utilizado la figura de la bruja para construir el concepto de monstruosidad en términos de género y probablemente una de las más conocidas representaciones de estas mujeres aparece en la obra de Shakespeare, *Macbeth*. Escrita a principios del siglo XVII poco después de que Jacobo I se convirtiera en rey de Inglaterra esta obra de teatro refleja las creencias de la época sobre brujería y presenta a las tres brujas como los personajes que desencadenan todos los acontecimientos de la obra. La bruja se entiende como una figura abyecta y su género se convierte en un elemento fundamental en la construcción de esta monstruosidad. La adaptación cinematográfica de Geoffrey Wright utiliza la figura mitológica de Circe como base para esta representación contemporánea de feminidad que pone énfasis no sólo en la amenaza que suponen las brujas sino también en el peligro que su naturaleza erótica representa.

Palabras clave: brujería, *Macbeth*, Shakespeare, monstruosidad, feminidad, mito, teatro jacobino, Circe.

The witch is a figure that has become a myth in itself, "feared as a principle of disorder is also a woman who goes about and disturbs the established order" (Gaborit 1168). Portrayed in a dual representation, either the temptress or the old hag, the witch was articulated as part of a discourse in the Middle Ages that led to the witchcraze in Early Modern Europe. But the decline in the belief on witchcraft from the late 17th century did not mean that the figure of the witch disappeared from Western culture; on the contrary, it became a recurrent myth that is still present and, as many other archetypal figures, its appeal is undeniable since it draws upon "our deepest desires and fears" (Yarnall 6). This article aims at analysing how the presentation of the witch has evolved and adapted to the twenty-first-century audience while, at the same time, they still retain some of their archetypal elements, turning them into a powerful myth in western societies. Geoffrey Wright's adaptation of Shakespeare's *Macbeth* in 2008 presents the witches as the enigmatic figures that set in motion the events in the story but also, echoing the Graeco-Roman mythological figure of Circe, witches are portrayed as beautiful temptresses, as figures that disrupt the gender-based order through their display of powers that go beyond men's control.

The myth of Circe first appears in Homer's *Odyssey* and it has persisted in Western culture until our times. As Marta Paz Fernández (2009) explains, in its origins, this Greek myth stressed the duality between domesticity and sensuality, between human and beast, between life and death. Circe is a nymph, daughter of the god Helios, and as such, she is a magical creature but also a desirable one. Greek iconography presented her dual nature as both a positive and a negative force –she uses her powers to transform Odysseus' travel companions into beasts but she also becomes the hero's lover and helps him enter Hades. However, later reinterpretations of this mythological figure would completely transform her. When Christianity became the dominant religion of the empire, there started a process led by both ecclesiastical and secular authorities to reinforce their power identifying previous pagan religions with evil practices. From the 4th century onwards, scholars such as St Augustine or St Thomas Aquinas began to give more relevance to the figure of the Devil and started to identify practitioners of magic with Devil's agents. The ideas presented in intellectual writings joined many of the popular beliefs regarding magic that had originated in folklore and old pagan traditions and contributed to create what Brian Levack calls "a cumulative concept of witchcraft" (Levack 29). This discourse, which was already formed by mid-fifteenth century, incorporated many shared elements about witches such as the pact with the devil or their gathering in sabbaths but it also focused on witches as typically female figures that stand for the subversive elements that destroy order in society. The witch was opposed to the idea of the Virgin Mary, "the sexless woman-mother was contrasted with the body and pleasure of the sexed woman who both attracts and repels men" (Gaborit 1166). They became the threatening other as opposed to the traditional role attributed to the Christian woman: docile, obedient and dependent of men. Circe, as well as other mythological figures, were appropriated by authorities as exemplary of unacceptable behaviours and articulated in negative terms within this discourse of witchcraft. All types of writings, from learned literature to pamphlets or

ballads, as well as illustrations and visual images were crucial for spreading this discourse and transform the figure of the witch into something "universal and also stereotypical" (Zika 2). And it was the *Malleus Maleficarum*, written by two Dominican inquisitors, Jacob Sprenger and Heinrigch Kramer in 1487, that probably became the most famous and influential witchcraft treatise. It not only helped spread the already existing ideas on witchcraft, becoming "a common reference in the subsequent demonological literature and a common source for judges at witchcraft trials" (Kors and Peters 15) throughout Europe but it also highlighted the link between witches and femininity; an idea that would prevail in the following centuries, contributing to reinforce the patriarchal discourse within western societies.

By the early modern period, the presentation of the witch had evolved around two main discourses: the witch as a threatening other, as a deviant outside the community –the image of the old hag– but also the witch as a deviant that meets in sabbats to perform their spells and incantations and practice cannibalism and orgies. The witch is, therefore, represented either as an old woman outside the community or a temptress, an Eve-like figure; and it is precisely this latter depiction, taken from the Graeco-Roman tradition, that transformed the mythological figure of Circe to adapt it to the official discourse and, as a consequence, it became one of the stereotypical representations of the dangerous potential of women's sexuality. Therefore, from the Middle Ages until the early modern period, Circe and other mythological figures linked to magic underwent a transformation and "the positive figure with a balanced, sexual body gradually cracked and shattered, changing into negative values under the pressure of men and religion" (Gaborit 1164). Circe was gradually identified with a witch and the link between women and demonic power was reinforced. As Marta Paz Fernández (2009) explains, she became the passionate and the deceiver, the lover and the dangerous witch. Visual representations in the art of the 15th and 16th centuries were not based on Homer's narrative but they owe much to "the writings of Boccaccio, Boethius, Virgil and Augustine" (Zika 133). As a consequence, her beauty is emphasized and presented as a negative feature since it is said that "she could beguile men and make them lose their human reason" (133). Ovid also emphasized Circe's "cruelty rooted in lust" (138) and her unnatural sexual drives are frequently represented following "Boccaccio's allegorical interpretation of the transformation of Ulysses' companions as the consequences of uncontrolled lust" (139). Therefore, by Jacobean times, when *Macbeth* was written, Circe had already a well-established symbolic meaning, emphasizing "the problematic relationship between pleasure and virtue, and the male fear of loss of authority and reason" (Hults 190).

Macbeth should be understood in its historical context as an attempt to please the new sovereign James I (VI of Scotland) not only in terms of his lineage to Banquo but also in relation to the king's interest on witchcraft. By the time James became king of England he had already written a demonological tract –*Daemonology*, 1597– and had been personally involved in a witchcraft case when some women were accused of using magic against the monarch and his

wife. The Berwich trials that followed this failed attempt on the king's life became a perfect means to reinforce James' position as Divine right ruler and his function as restorer of "the hierarchy and order threatened by the witches" (Purkiss 200). As a consequence, in the first years of his reign, there appeared many works in England where witches had a prominent role, including Ben Jonson's *The Masque of Queens* (1609), Thomas Middleton's *The Witch* (1613-1616) or Dekker, Rowley and Ford's *The Witch of Edmonton* (1621). When Shakespeare wrote his *Macbeth*, he knew about the king's interest on the topic and the effect it would have on its audience. Therefore, he included the three witches following contemporary ideas on witchcraft and mixing both continental and English traditions.

But what happens with the three witches in the 21st century? Is the same image that was valid in the beginning of the 17th century still valid nowadays? Is there still a space for this depiction of femininity? I will argue that it is precisely because witches "epitomized that liminal space […] between the realm of human and the beastly" (Zika 137) that their status as a myth has survived until our days, still interpreted and reinterpreted after Shakespeare's times. The weird sisters were originally performed "as nymphs and fairies" (Shama 2) but "the tremendous variance in the trio's dramatic representations began around Shakespeare's death in 1616" (2). These variations are the perfect starting point for analysing how the myth of the witch has been presented and represented in different periods and the extent to which it is still valid in the 21st century. I will argue that the myth of the witch and, particularly, the witch as temptress in a Circean sense, is still universal and has prevailed in the 21st century when it is still used as a powerful image to reinforce particular values. This myth has not disintegrated but adapted to contemporary times, maintaining traditional views and perpetuating the myth of femininity

Geoffrey Wright's *Macbeth* was released in 2006 and offers an adaptation of Shakespeare's play. It changes the original Scottish location to contemporary Australia and sets the action in the context of a gangsters' fight for power. The portrayal of the three witches on screen has generally been in line with the traditional depiction of the witch as the old hag. Orson Welles (1948) presented them as "three crouching figures [who] lure an audience into a disturbing world where supernatural powers seem to be controlling events" (Mason 2000, 184) focusing on their ugliness and inscrutability. Roman Polanski (1971) also used this traditional representation. The weird sisters appear as three poor and filthy women whose otherness is stressed not only by their appearance but also by the space they occupy, separate from the rest of the world in isolate beaches or hidden caves. However, Geoffrey Wright draws on the stereotype of the Circean witch, focusing on woman's sexed bodies and the idea of "the vulnerability of men to female power" (Newman 1991, 62). From the opening of the film, the archetypal image of the witch as a Circean figure linked to bestiality and chaos that was established in the Middle Ages is present in Wright's approach. The first scenes show three young girls dressed in their school uniforms in the middle of the graveyard while Lady Macbeth mourns for her dead son. This apparently

innocent image of three beautiful girls is suddenly put to and end when they start to laugh and violently vandalise some graves. Their bestiality is emphasised by their animal-like movements and hissing sounds and this image helps reinforce their "metaphoric status as figures of and for confusion" (Purkiss 211). Only when they finally stop and gather together do we realize they are not common girls but three witches casting a spell. This particular depiction of femininity can be read in line with Julia Kristeva's abjection theory or Barbara Creed' *The Monstrous- Feminine* (1993) where the witch is defined as an abject figure and "represented within patriarchal discourses as an implacable enemy of the symbolic order" (Creed 76). Also, their vandalising of this holy place reflects a fear that frequently appears in societies: the witch's ability to draw "on her evil powers to wreak destruction on the community" (76). Therefore, this 2006 adaptation of *Macbeth* presents the witches as "a monstrous figure with supernatural powers and a desire for evil" (76) but it also draws on the stereotype of the Circean witch with its focus on beauty and temptation impersonated in three beautiful young girls as well as their link to beasts and bestiality because of their hissing sounds and animal-like movements.

The witches in *Macbeth* are referred to as the weird sisters and this particular use of the adjective weird, which in Shakespeare's times had the meaning of having the power to control destiny, echoes the mythological figures of the Fates but also Circe, who helped Odysseus enter Hades and meet his destiny. However, although the classical myth presented a balanced representation of positive and negative characteristics, Shakespeare's play in general and this adaptation in particular focuses on the witches' negative aspects. They have the power to control men's destinies and their mythical status is emphasized by contrasting them to the contemporary setting they are presented in, always appearing in dream-like scenes, separated from the rest of the characters, from the rest of the world. As Barbara Creed explains, the witch "sets out to unsettle boundaries between the rational and irrational, symbolic and imaginary" (76). This separation between the human and the supernatural is also pointed out by Diane Purkiss, who highlights how the witches' speech "is marked off from that of the other characters in a manner which insists on their iconic status and also on their difference from the human. They are not ordinary women who have sinned, but a special class of being, like monsters or mermaids" (210). This particular aspect in the witches' presentation can be seen in the following scene they appear in, when Macbeth is at the Cawdor Club. He has been drinking and taking drugs with Banquo and it is during this drug trip that he sees them again. The dream-like atmosphere is highlighted through the use of smoke and flashing lights on the dance floor where Macbeth meets them. However, the initial confusion soon turns into desire when he starts to flirt with them. The focus lies on this idea of the sensual and dangerous feminine. As in the mythological story where Circe turns Odysseus' men into beasts, Macbeth is seduced not only by their beauty but also by their words and promises of glory and he ends up crawling on the dance floor following them. As Judith Yarnall explains, in Western literature Circe is an archetypal character "associated with our bodily vulnerability and has power over that –a power that is often presented

as sexual allure" (2). Though not physically, as in the classical myth, Macbeth is lured by the witches' powers and gives in to his inner desires for power and lust. He has been symbolically transformed into a beast; even his movements at the end of the scene suggest this transformation and reinforce the idea that uncontrolled desires turn men into beasts.

As the story unfolds, Wright focuses more on the witches' sensuality and sexuality –from beautiful schoolgirls to alluring young women in a disco and, finally, the famous cauldron scene present them naked, preparing a potion. This scene is one of the most famous ones in the play and was originally written echoing contemporary beliefs on the witches' sabbat and as "a reminder of women's control over food production" (Purkiss 212). Once again, the witches' appearance in this particular scene is linked to the transition between life and death and the idea of them playing with men's destinies. It portrays Macbeth's transformation and his giving into lust and desire with clear references to Circe's story. The witches are presented as scheming, controlling Macbeth and subordinating him to their will and their potion echoes the one Circe gave to Odysseus' men, which turned them into beasts. Wright's presentation of the weird sisters establishes a clear link between women's sexuality and the threat it poses to men. The obvious appeal of their beauty is presented through their naked bodies and the audience can perceive their lustful relation to Macbeth. Although it does not move too far away from the perversions that appear in early modern texts describing sabbats –which included orgies and even cannibalism– this adaptation seems to take all the stereotypical elements when representing women as witches. It follows the line of some similar contemporary productions that objectify women, trying to catch the attention of those who would not typically go the the cinema to watch a Shakespearean play by focusing on violence and sex. In fact, Wright's adaptation adds a sex scene after they give the potion where the witches whisper their prophecies on Macbeth's ear while they are having sexual intercourse with him. This change in the cauldron scene makes an explicit reference to female sexuality and their power over men and clearly shows what it had already been suggested in many writings and visual images in Shakespeare's own time, the link between women and evil, how they can lead men to their doom using their sexual allure. Although never on stage, this very same idea was present in the Early Modern period when Circe and, by extension, the witch, was regarded as "driven by lust" (Zika 140) but also "subordinating male victims to her will, unmanning them and overturning the proper moral and gender order" (2009, 140). In Wright's adaptation this image of dominance over men continues to be perceived: the lascivious woman who represents temptation, "the beautiful witch [who] tempts the hero, emasculating him by immersing him in sensual delights" (Hults 190). In a figurative sense, Circe's transformation of men into beasts is reflected here as Macbeth's fall into his base instincts, not only because he kills the king but also because he succumbs to temptation and lust. Also, it can be argued that this presentation adopts a moralising tone, warning men against the danger of temptress women that deceive men and drive them insane.

From Wells' portrayal of the three old women to Goold's nurses during wartime, the weird sisters have always portrayed different aspects of the myth but, as it can be gathered from the continuous representations of this story, the power of the myth is still valid. However, one might have thought that a contemporary representation of Shakespeare's work set in 21st-century Australia would offer a more up to date view on women. However, Wright falls into the stereotyping of witches following not the classical myth but the patriarchal discourse promoted by the Church and the state that emphasised a negative view on women; a discourse that has survived in Western societies for centuries. The myth of Circe is merely used as a cliché version of the witch/ temptress and his one-dimensional characters lack the symbolic nuances present in Shakespeare's works. The weird sisters' function in the play is still a question of harsh debate but Wright's adaptation presents them as one of the elements contributing to Macbeth's turning into a beast. This negative construction of the witch contributes to "perpetuate the belief that woman's monstrous nature is inextricably bound up with her difference as man's sexual other" (Creed 83). The witches are represented as a fearful form of sexuality, as monstrous figures whose actions lead to chaos and death and reinforce the traditional patriarchal order that links sexual appetites to evil. In fact, the three witches become a highly eroticised version of the dangerous and evil women whose only function is not, as it happened in the Early modern period, to symbolically represent the "threats to divinely ordained royal power" (Hults 190) but here, they are marketed for commercial purposes into a stereotypical portrayal of womanhood. By focusing on their status as temptress, as Circean figures, Wright represents the monstrous potential of femininity and gives relevance once again to traditional depictions of women, who are here objectified through their bodies but also characterized by their wickedness. The role of popular culture and the media is, therefore, understood as a key element in the transmission of this particular construction of femininity through visual images and the witch, which has become a prevailing myth in contemporary society, is used to construct a power discourse of containment within patriarchal structures precisely because she is depicted as the monstrous feminine and "constructed as an abject figure [who] threatens the symbolic order" (Creed 83).

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WORKING-CLASS VISIBILITY IN RACHEL SEIFFERT'S *THE WALK HOME*

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Abstract

Lawrence Driscoll argues that contemporary fiction and current criticism are no longer concerned with social class in general and the working class in particular. Identity now uses more flexible parameters, such as sexual orientation, a term that defines the individual as agent. He analyses a wide range of literary fiction and film in order to highlight that 'class' often means middle class. When authors do focus on the working class, it is usually in a negative fashion, infused by bourgeois prejudice.

The second half of this article strives to see to what extent the Driscoll hypothesis is valid through applying his findings to Seiffert's very recent novel. It refutes the argument that postmodern techniques necessarily produce apolitical texts, and puts into question other assumptions.

Keywords: Rachel Seiffert, *The Walk Home*, Lawrence Driscoll, *Evading Class in Contemporary British Literature*, identity, fiction.

Resumen

Driscoll propone que la novela y discurso crítico contemporáneos dan poca importancia a las clases sociales en general y la clase obrera en especial. Hoy día, La identidad humana se construye con parámetros más flexibles, como, por ejemplo, la orientación sexual, un término que define la persona como agente. Driscoll analiza una amplia gama de ficción literaria y películas con el fin de subrayar que la palabra 'clase' a menudo se asocia con "la clase media." Cuando los autores dirigen su interés hacia la clase trabajadora, normalmente la retratan de una manera negativa,

La segunda mitad del artículo intenta averiguar hasta qué punto la hipótesis de Driscoll es válida, mediante la estrategia de aplicar sus conclusiones a la recién publicada novela de Seiffert. El artículo arrebata la teoría que la escritura posmoderna necesariamente produce textos apolíticos, y cuestiona otros presupuestos cercanos.

Palabras clave: Rachel Seiffert, Lawrence Driscoll, la novela contemporánea, identidad, clase social.

1. Is there a class in this text?

Driscoll's *Evading Class in Contemporary British Literature* (2009) has a self-explanatory title. His analysis, which extends into film, is informed by and acknowledges the work of two prominent Marxist critics, Terry Eagleton and Fredric Jameson. All three scholars are highly critical of postmodernism for having jettisoned history, a situation epitomised by the impact of Francis Fukuyama's *The End of History and the Last Man* (1992) which, they believe, misrepresents the contemporary world. Driscoll attacks on two fronts. His sights are set on the humanities as a whole, in fact, on all those disciplines where society is visible. The adjective is chosen with care, as he proposes there are not simply "clear evasions" but also "erasures of class" (Driscoll 1). If Driscoll's views are tenable, they will undoubtedly reflect on the teaching praxis of many readers of this article, as he stresses that erasure is embedded in current academic discourse. His second object of analysis comprises a cross-section of contemporary fiction which, in similar terms, shows little sympathy for the working-class. Its centre of attention, its authors and their viewpoints are, for Driscoll, unremittingly bourgeois, in the most negative sense possible of the word.

Virginia Woolf's remark that the human character changed around December 1910 is an oft-cited adage that conflates history and literary history: the approaching catastrophe of total war with modernism. Similarly, the Fukuyama premise of a major ideological swing in the 1980s is paralleled by a corresponding shift in British literary history: the demise of the old guard, rapidly replaced by a bevy of new, energetic writers ready to incorporate postmodernity-as-freedom into their texts, Salman Rushdie's Booker Prize for *Midnight's Children* (1981) being the watershed event. This celebration of hybridity paints a striking contrast with the more traditional prose of the four previous winners: William Golding, Penelope Fitzgerald, Iris Murdoch and Paul Scott. *Midnight's Children*, from this perspective, induced a sea-change. For Driscoll, the downside of this radical transformation has been that literature and criticism are now "overwhelmingly focused on identity politics" (Driscoll 2), on race, gender and sexual orientation. He does not rate cultural studies highly either. Despite its early Marxist orientation it has moved on, though he would argue that the discipline has moved backward, because of its heavy reliance on reading "the world through the rather limited lenses of the postmodern" (Driscoll 3). Why the postmodern produces a blinkered vision might initially seem peculiar, as hybridity would initially offer countless opportunities, or, at least, much more than the work of Golding and his contemporaries. Driscoll's reasons will soon become clear.

His monograph builds on several key concepts most notably articulated several years earlier in Eagleton's *The Illusions of Postmodernism* (1996). Due to the text's all-pervading sense of irony, he can be a difficult critic to judge.

> Social class tends to crop up in postmodern theory as one item in the
> triptych of class, race and gender, a formula which has rapidly assumed

for the left the kind of authority which the Holy Trinity occasionally exerts for the right. The logic of this triple linkage is surely obvious: racism is a bad thing, and so is sexism, and so therefore is something called "classism". "Classism", on this analogy, would seem to be the sin of stereotyping people in terms of social class, which taken literally would mean that it was politically incorrect to describe Donald Trump as a capitalist. (Eagleton 56-7)

Leaving aside the debatable veracity of the analogy –it is nonsensical not to call Donald Trump a capitalist– Eagleton is himself indulging in that kind of textual game he often dismisses, nonetheless two points are clear. Relativism has installed itself as the left's bogey man. Second, just as race and gender, as strict categories, are restrictive, by some historical accident the roots of which are not identified other than as postmodern in a general sense, class has become part of a demonic troika. Class allegiance as the primary identity marker or, more precisely, working-class allegiance, has become something to be frowned on, a relic of the old order, whether this be a historical reflection (pre-Fukuyama), or a literary one (pre-Rushdie). Driscoll extends this finding to underpin his disquiet with contemporary understanding of both history and culture.

He acknowledges that modern pedagogy has opened up our understanding of society by focussing on the margins and marginalized, but laments that this has been at the cost of obscuring "the working-class subject…in the hope of producing a supposedly 'classless' norm" (Driscoll 3). At the risk of redundancy, the norm is classless because it refutes class as the overriding allegiance, instead, promoting the citizen as agent. For a critic of the left (and perhaps others), since the working-class make up the bulk of the population, this looks rather spurious, as the 1980s witnessed not only a rise in poverty but an ever widening gap between rich and poor. As Driscoll states, "Britain has become more divided by class and inequality, not less" (Driscoll 8). John Hutchinson, in *Reaganism, Thatcherism and the Social Novel* (2008), delves farther. Erasure not only occurred in the world of culture, but, most exasperatingly, in politics. The Labour Party in the 1980s and 1990s sidelined social class: "Instead, they relied upon avowedly instinctive and pragmatic appeals to morality and fairness that seemed to have more in common with religious nonconformism than with dialectal materialism" (Hutchinson 55-6).

This is simply a further illuminating example of how far the classless norm had penetrated political life. The election of Jeremy Corbyn as Labour Party leader in 2015 illustrates a very different ideological stance that aims to redress this change of policy, or, within the language of this debate, to put an end to the erasure of the working-class.

Eagleton and Driscoll believe that an essential epistemological flaw lies at the centre of contemporary identity politics: it ignores or is ignorant of history. Eagleton, for example, goes to some length to point out Marx's sometimes favourable opinion of the bourgeoisie in order to confound expectations that he only expressed hostility (Eagleton 61). However, for Eagleton, the bourgeoisie is

"on the whole a bad thing today" (Eagleton 57). It is therefore essential to historicize, not only when discussing the Labour Party or Marx. The anti-postmoderns take exception to the pronouncements of Jean-François Lyotard on the death of grand narratives; unsurprisingly, history, the grandest of narratives, became the major victim. Eagleton sarcastically affirms that "[p]erhaps postmodernists are afraid that an attention to grand narratives will collapse all little narratives into mere effects of them" (Eagleton 57). It is worth recalling that the relationship between the individual and history lies at the centre of much of the writing of the greatest Marxist critic of all, György Lukács, who, when analysing Scott and the historical novel states that "Scott endeavours to portray the struggles and antagonisms of history by means of characters who, in their psychology and destiny, always represent social trends and historical forces" (Lukács 33).

If history is amputated from literary criticism, we are left with ahistorical characters and texts, a scenario in which literature no longer has a social function. Instead, it will revert to solipsism. Driscoll proposes that that is exactly what has occurred to contemporary fiction.

The implication for the present day runs along lines like this. Paradoxically the modern subject lives in a historical moment that lacks all sense of history. Eagleton ironizes on postmodern objections to universalism (Eagleton 49); Driscoll emphasises the classlessness of identity politics. Both critics propose that it is absurd to assert that that people can be "'free' from history" (Driscoll 4). They seem to imply that history is repeating itself: postmodernism almost returns to the allegedly ideal Leavisite world, where works of art float in an eternal, universal space.

Driscoll analyses a considerable cross-section of contemporary literary fiction: Pat Barker, Ian McEwan, Kazuo Ishiguro, Zadie Smith, Will Self, Martin Amis, Peter Ackroyd, Alan Hollinghurst, Jonathan Coe, Hanif Kureishi, among others. All of these authors write in the Fukuyama world, one marked by globalisation, otherwise known as late capitalism, or, in Driscoll's laconically coined term, the "supposedly 'new' economic environment" (Driscoll 135). To illustrate his approach, I have chosen Hollinghurst and Martin Amis as representative examples.

Hollinghurst is certainly a figure at the centre of the literary world: what could be a better illustration of establishmentarianism than the job of deputy editor of the *Times Literary Supplement*? His first three novels, and in particular the 2004 Booker Prize winner, *The Line of Beauty*, served to make gay literature academically respectable, and forward the cause of gay rights. Driscoll approaches the novel through the lens of the critic Kaye Mitchell. For those unfamiliar with the text, suffice it to say that Driscoll rests his findings on the way we read the fate of two gay men. The first is Leo, who is black and working-class. Driscoll asks rhetorically how a critic like Mitchell, and by extension the academy as a whole, circumvents class issues (Driscoll 138). A short answer would be, based also on the work of Eve Sedgwick, that gay sex is disruptive,

exposes boundaries, queers the status quo, threatens hegemony, without confronting social class. Living gay sexuality is an emancipating act for individuals, yet remains, in Driscoll's scheme of things, ultimately a classless norm.

Driscoll, aware of the predictable criticism that the working class is definitely not Hollinghurst's major concern, cites an interview in which the novelist states that he has little knowledge of working-class life (Driscoll 142). This therefore leads us to a conundrum. Leo contracts AIDS, he "dies 'off stage': the novel avoids confronting his illness directly, and he only returns to the novel once he is dead…In contrast, the illness of the upper-class Wani spans all of part three of the novel" (Driscoll 142). In short, erasure of one character contrasts strongly with the developing tragedy of another. As can be appreciated here, Driscoll combines interpretation with quantitative analysis, as the absence of one gay man is underscored by the extensive depiction of another. Driscoll argues the imbalance is the logical consequence of class prejudice. The novel shows "that not only are the three classes of British society clearly mapped out, but that they are also shown to be unable to mix, blend or unravel in any substantial way "(Driscoll 143). Identity politics liberates the individual, legitimises certain practises, but draws very clearly defined borders between those whose identity we are witnessing and those we are not.

Martin Amis's *Money* (1984) is certainly one of, if not the most controversial of the 1980s texts. The novel recounts the life story of a character called John Self, who draws checks on his account without realising the consequences. No one could really contest the proposition that the novel subsequently draws a huge parable on consumption. Driscoll's analysis of this picaresque novel, in which Self rises and falls, seems to indicate that the lesson to be learnt is that absolute consumerism consumes absolutely. However, Driscoll refines his analysis, pointing out that John Self –despite the universal tendencies inherent in his name– is not the everyman of the Thatcher-Reagan era, but a working-class citizen. Hence, "the real target of Amis's satire is his working-class characters" (Driscoll 102). In other words, "Amis's satire functions through re-establishing and reinforcing a class system that is felt to be under threat from below" (Driscoll 108). In a gloss on Winston Smith's belief – expressed in *1984*– that there was some hope in the proles, according to this critic, in the new economic order, that remote eventuality has been deleted from the political panorama.

Driscoll's most incisive strategy is, arguably, his analysis of domestic space. It is there that Driscoll's selected authors reveal deep-seated class prejudice. Of many examples he analyses, I will mention just a couple: Hollinghurst's description of a council house; Zadie Smith's description of the two houses in *On Beauty* (2005). In both cases, the lower the economic status, the more uncomfortable the major characters feel. To use an obvious pun, they do not feel at home in a poor person's home. In film, the situation is no different. In his analysis of Mike Leigh's *Abigail's Party* (1977), Driscoll asserts that the joke about Beverly putting a bottle of Beaujolais in the fridge turns out to be, in

the end, a joke about gaucheness. Leigh, it is worth recalling, is frequently praised precisely for something rather different: his meticulous accounts of working-class life that otherwise find no place in commercial cinema.[1] Although one might argue that there is a fine line between laughing with or at someone's behaviour, Driscoll would say that lately mainstream culture favours the latter.

Driscoll's most telling example of spatial politics derives from the Harry Potter saga.

> The household [Harry's] is entirely claustrophobic and it is also narrative-phobic insofar as the film's real story cannot get underway while the camera (and Harry) remains in the house. The working-class environment cannot be a magical space, and Harry must escape from it. (Driscoll 185)

Again, as is the case with Hollinghurst, the "narrative-phobic" provides vital evidence. Driscoll develops such an argument for two good reasons. First, he is anticipating the reproach that his field of vision is restricted to literary fiction, and therefore of limited significance. Hence, he pinpoints class intolerance as a cornerstone of one of the most successful media enterprises of recent times. Second, he is presumably aware that the slippage from identifying a character's opinion to linking it to the overall ideology of a text is open to criticism from all shades of opinion.

Harry Potter takes the train to freedom: but to what kind of freedom? Does it have anything to do with a classless norm? On the contrary, what Harry escapes to is a fantasy version of that most elitist institution of all, the Public School, particularly in its boarding version. The working-class home, as metonym for class, is what aspiring children must leave in order to fulfil their – often artistic– destiny. *Evading Class in Contemporary English Literature* therefore shares many of the findings of Owen Jones's *Chavs: The Demonization of the Working Class* (2011), especially as regards the origins of this demonization and additionally its omnipresence in mainstream culture from the 1980s to the noughties. This brings us to the final point of the first section of this article, which is one which Driscoll could perhaps have insisted upon more emphatically.

All the texts mentioned show awareness of working-class life, though often, as mentioned, this is restricted to origins and/or confinement. Driscoll's insistence on academic collusion in the erasure of class difference might strike readers of critical volumes on contemporary literature as somewhat odd if not completely mistaken. For example, Philip Tew's influential *The Contemporary British Novel* (2004) begins in a similar way to Driscoll, with references to Thatcherism, reiterates Britain's rigid class structure (Tew 8), avowing that "in Britain class is an elusive or protean concept" (Tew 65). Tew therefore recognises, uncontroversially, that class maintains its hold in Britain. Yet, for

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[1] Driscoll admires Ken Loach. Whereas Leigh veers towards the condescending, he judges Loach's films to be genuine.

Driscoll, that is just part of the story, as can be seen in this remark on Tew's volume: "Once the 'class' chapter is over, he returns to talking about the contemporary novel as it were once again politically and ideologically transparent" (Driscoll 22). Tew, and, by extension, most of the academy, restrict the question of class to its middle class parameters. In a similar fashion, Dominic Head has a very short section on "The Waning of Class-Consciousness", dedicating a lot more time and space to the identity markers that Driscoll critiques.

Driscoll and his opponents hold fundamentally different views about the representation of the working-class in the 1980s and beyond. To say that class is protean, or to gently discard its significance and regard it as –metaphorically– a chapter on its own rather than as a major influence, results not simply in evasion, as Driscoll argues, but in a fundamental disagreement over identity. As we saw earlier, his quarrel with identity politics is twofold: it sidesteps history; it provides the citizen with agency that Driscoll and others believe might exist in a postmodern set-up but not in the real (material) world.

This discrepancy is evident in Tew's remark about the protean nature of class. Similarly, Hutchinson argues that "[b]oth *Money* and [Alan Warner's] *Morvern Callar* [1995] are instances of contemporary British novels that indicate both erosion of the self and the decline of class-based political antagonism, as both are dissolved in a culture of media-driven consumption" (Hutchinson 170). The metaphorical use of dissolving or protean underscores the central epistemological debate: is class, like other identity markers, malleable, or is it simply disappearing in our contemporary world? Clearly, in the industrialized world, the poor are ever more numerous than before, but poverty does not constitute a working class or the accompanying consciousness that Marxist criticism continually emphasises. Perhaps Slavoj Zizek's thoughts cast light on the subject when he says that "*working class* designates a pre-existing social group, characterized by its substantial content while *people* emerges as a unified agent through the very act of nomination" (Zizek 574). We can therefore determine that traditional working-class allegiances have been seriously eroded, even leading to certain nostalgia about the past (Eagleton 55). Perhaps, in the teens, critics are as saddened by the loss of traditional *Gesellschaft* as nineteenth-century authors were of *Gemeinschaft*. If that, and nothing else mattered, then the Driscoll hypothesis would collapse, having no foundation in either history or literature. However, Driscoll, knowingly or unknowingly, does not overtly distinguish between the working class of industrial societies and the poor of the post-industrial era. That may or may not represent an unpardonable error of judgement, but in contemporary literature it makes slight or no difference at all, as fiction also avoid confronting the repercussions of this difference. If Driscoll is right, the hostility shown to the traditional working class prior to Fukuyama is now simply directed to the poor en masse irrespective of their pertaining to older blue-collar sectors or newer service industries or families who depend entirely on benefits. Within Driscoll's parameters, old hostility has ceded to new hostility. As he points out, Will Self's *How the Dead Live* (2000) spookily reveals that

class antipathy is so deeply engrained in British culture that it is still alive and flourishing in the afterlife.

2. Is class evaded in this text?

In the second part of this article, I will analyse Rachel Seiffert's *The Walk Home* (2014) through the theoretical framework provided by Driscoll. I have chosen this novel because it provides a good match through its focus on working-class life. It is structured on identity politics, as understood by Driscoll and Eagleton, though it integrates something which they omit: religious affiliation. As its recent publication-date might suggest, it incorporates another factor of growing importance in the new world order: economic migration. I stated earlier that Driscoll is keenly aware of the importance of space, particularly antipathy towards working-class housing, something which acts throughout this particular novel as a motif if not almost a character in its own right. I will try to assess how Seiffert's novel addresses Driscoll's concerns and whether it provides answers or alternatives.

I will now provide a brief summary of *The Walk Home* that readers familiar with the text are invited to skip. From multiple viewpoints, through standard chronology and numerous flashbacks, the text narrates a Glaswegian family history through four generations, focussing mostly on Stevie, the youngest character, whose life and opinions have been formed by its turbulent past. The first generation, Papa Robert's family, were forced to leave Louth (Leinster) during the Irish Civil War and settle in Glasgow. The second generation comprises his son Eric and his daughter Brenda, who marries Malcolm. The couple have three children. The youngest, the adolescent Graham, buys a drum and gets involved in marching bands, without sharing the more extreme views of his Orange grandfather. During a trip to Ulster, he meets Lindsey. On getting pregnant, she moves to Glasgow where their only child Stevie is born. The novel narrates how all those elements that make up identity disturb and break up the family. The main victim is Stevie, who drops out of school and disappears. *The Walk Home* of the title initially refers to his return to Glasgow in the latter part of the novel. He comes back to help complete the building of a house, working for a group of Poles. Novel summaries usually sound confusing, so it might be helpful to say that the novel explores how a loner, who lives on the outskirts of society, comes into being.

Seiffert's choice of Glasgow as a location responds in part to her years of residence there. Of greater significance is the fact that Scottish urban fiction is the one glaring exception to Driscoll's ruling that contemporary literature evades class.[2] Using a more traditional style, we find the work of William McIlvanney.

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[2] My term "Scottish urban fiction" hopefully ensures that the focus is on urban communities in Scotland. As Drew Milne states throughout his chapter on Welsh and Kelman, both writers include highly critical remarks on Scottish nationalism and Scottish politicians in their fiction. They are primarily concerned with the fate of the poor and the underprivileged.

Two exponents of a grittier, more oral urban prose are James Kelman and Irvine Welsh. Driscoll's title refers to British rather than English literature, so the scarce visibility of these important practitioners of class awareness is surprising, to say the least. In contrast, Tew, who Driscoll lambasted for his scanty attention to class matters, certainly deals with Kelman and Welsh, and in addition, Alison Kennedy. Although he spends most of a rather limited time on Kelman, Tew proposes that all three novelists "typify a more mundane and sceptical approach to the urban" (Tew 111). Driscoll would counter and ask us to inquire into what exactly Tew means by "urban": prosperous Bearsden or the poverty-stricken Gorbals? Hampstead or Tower Hamlets?

Reflecting on Kelman's *The Busconductor Hines* (1984), oddly enough misspelt, Tew argues that

> The dialect of the narrator that is close to Rab's [Hines] own speech emphasizes a male perspective of working-class marginality, detailing a world of drinking, boring work, marital worries and relative poverty…Nevertheless, the influence of modernist narratives of fragmentation and chains of diverse causalities remain strong. The city is not simply actions, but encompasses conscious resistance to past and present…His very incoherence and confusion reveals [sic] the inability of the social narrative to reflect the dispossession of such lives as his own. (Tew 112)

First of all, the proposal that Rab is incoherent cannot be left unanswered. As Tew himself explains on the next page, he is keenly aware of modern economics. The comment about fragmentation makes greater sense with Kelman's later works, most notoriously in *How Late it Was, How Late* (1994), than with this earlier text. For similar reasons, the idea that the city encompasses "conscious resistance" is far too abstract a term for Kelman. His social narratives describe the miseries of dispossession in material terms: low pay, the threat of unemployment, and so on. Similarly, when dealing with Welsh's *Trainspotting* (1993), oddly enough moved from Edinburgh to Glasgow, Tew emphasises both the self-destructive life of drug addiction and the text's innovative language that attacks, challenges and subverts conventional English. So we are left in a situation, which Driscoll continually identifies as critical ambivalence, where we are not sure whether such texts are lauded for their treatment of the working-class or for their postmodern style.

In this particular case, Driscoll might reply, the latter: Tew's abstraction of city life, turning it into nebulous sites or spaces avoids confronting the question of social reality other than as a subject for an exciting new literary medium. Furthermore, it is Driscoll who points to the well-known fact that Kelman has repeatedly rejected the standard third-person narrative. For him, it is permeated by many ideological assumptions: "[g]etting rid of that standard third party narrative voice is getting rid of a whole value system….is trying to get down to that level of pure objectivity" (McNeill 4, 5). Put another way, "pure objectivity", as an ideal or aspiration, will not be common in traditional

narratives that make up Driscoll's corpus. If Kelman's belief is correct, it is not surprising that Driscoll's search for no-nonsense accounts of working-class life was unfruitful. He was looking in the wrong place.

From the above analysis, it must surely be evident that one of the major consequences of postmodern literary freedom, exemplified by the Derridean-inspired figure of the endless chain of signifiers, is that postmodernism has become equated by critics on the left with excessive literary virtuosity. Seiffert's strives for "that level of pure objectivity" through removing any excess narrative baggage that would conceivably be misconstrued. Nevertheless, this practise is not limited to, for example, standard asyndeton, the removal of conjunctions, but extends to considerable doses of intense ellipsis, reminiscent of Hemingway and the iceberg theory. An example of the former would be, "His red head was cut close, and the back of his skinny neck too pale, blue-pale above his T-shirt" (Seiffert 2). A testing example of the latter is: "Jozef looked at him, doubtful, on the doorstep; at his red hair and freckles, and the way he squinted in the summer light, the June sun already up above the rooftops" (Seiffert 1). It certainly requires some effort to appreciate that "the way he squinted" is possibly the third object of the verb "looked at", though perhaps it is not that at all but the beginning of a new idea. Likewise, in the space after the final comma, attention has turned to the sun, which almost becomes the subject of a new utterance. This particular narrative strategy is used extensively, as shown by another instance a few pages on: "It was a treat to come home to that: a first chink in the girl's armour plating, plus a good meal into the bargain" (Seiffert 23). Again, the final comma requires the reader to fill in a considerable gap. Likewise, the reader is not informed that these are Brenda's thoughts, we simply know or deduce from earlier references to specific characters. In addition, Seiffert, whenever possible, avoids direct identification of her characters' speech, unless it is necessary in order to avoid confusion. She also uses a considerable amount of post-modification, as illustrated here: "The girl gave a small smile, wry, when she saw Brenda" (Seiffert 23). To cite another example at random, we find, "The boy gave that same nod-shrug again, his eyes not on Jozef but the Glasgow morning, blue beyond the garden door "(Seiffert 3). Although changed word order can affect assonance, alliteration or sibilance, as in the last-but-one example, or lead to estrangement, as in the final example, "blue beyond the door", I believe there is a lot more at play than literary refinement. If Seiffert's dialogues are analysed, similar patterns, on a less complex level, emerge. Right at the beginning, Jozef laments the poor quality of the plasterwork, telling Stevie, "I know. I know. Not good enough. But the one who did these walls, he's gone now" (Seiffert 2). What is "[n]ot good enough" is the workmanship, but such a depth of implied meaning could tax the reader. In other words, it is certainly the case that Seiffert uses techniques that are identified as postmodern, or, when used so intensely are considered as such. Among these are the multiple viewpoints, the constant switching of time and place, the lack of authorial voice as authority, but her major contribution is, as these examples show, to consciously write narrative as speech, thus blurring the distinction between the two. In itself, this does not constitute innovation, but rarely is its use so persistent in its endeavour, in line

with Kelman's pronouncement to erase all superfluity from the narrative. Is this simply free indirect discourse by another name? I believe not, as it would be safe to say that the narrative talks and thinks like any of the text's characters without aligning itself with anyone in particular. If free indirect discourse highlights convergence and conflation, Seiffert's style heightens diversity and divergence.

What is all this virtuosity for? From the Eagleton-Driscoll angle, the answer would run along the lines of 'not much', highlighting its detachment from reality and entry into abstract textuality. As we saw, for them, postmodernism is defined by its disconnection from history. In pinpointing Seiffert's sophisticated narrative techniques, I am suggesting that she hones language to its minimum expression, revealing a wish to present things as they are, as free from authorial intervention on the one hand, as from the presumed ideological baggage of the third person narrator, on the other. The Eagleton-Driscoll dichotomy, I would conclude, is a false one. Seiffert, along with Kelman, Welsh, and McIlvanney, focuses on the presence and role of violence in contemporary Scottish working-class life, but her narrative does not follow the more traditional style of McIlvanney, uses a more approachable language than Kelman or Welsh, and is light on expletives. Her narrative is postmodern; her approach, social, but whereas Driscoll might join the two phrases together with the conjunction 'but', I would argue that is not the case: 'and' makes perfect sense.

How does gender interact with class politics in *The Walk Home*? Two women influence Stevie's character and behaviour: his mother, Lindsey, and his paternal grandmother, Brenda. That Stevie is essentially their child rather than being a product of male culture is evident on several occasions. Aged four, he "knew he was like his mother: they had the same hair, and the same bird bones, everybody said so" (Seiffert 33). What could be a throwaway, gratuitous set of childish impressions, turns out to be more profound than that, as we shall soon see. The only person he maintains contact with when he runs away from home is his grandmother; that is the essential bond.

Brenda is very much the centre of family life, both economically and socially. Not only does she keep up with Stevie during his absence, but also with the errant, eccentric Uncle Eric. In other words, all communication passes through her, so she becomes the natural mediator when, for example, Lindsey and Graham's marriage hits the rocks. She is also the only person who contacts Lindsey's family in County Tyrone. If we look at the situation from a different perspective, it would be fair to say that no narrated communication occurs without her presence or knowledge. Her company and advice are much sought after, but there is little or no exchange.

We have scanty knowledge of her experience of motherhood. The information we receive suffices to define it as a youthful, taxing experience. Maternal anxiety is understated but intense: she has "two sons in the army, and endured their Ulster tours of duty" (Seiffert 17). She is sandwiched between one generation that was forced to leave Ireland and another that returns to a place where both factions share a common belief: "No thought of surrender allowed

there" (Seiffert 17). There is simply no let-up. Her son Malcolm drifts back to the bands and certainly looks towards a future as an Orangeman. Lindsey disappears, Malcolm more or less gives up on his son, so the person who has to deal with Stevie's truancy is his grandmother. Her life is determined primarily by economic factors, both those present in traditional working class life, as set out by Richard Hoggart in his classic *The Uses of Literacy* (1957), for example, and those belonging to the new economic order–Lindsey and Malcolm meet in the early 1990s (Seiffert 7). Brenda's low pay and full responsibility clearly reflect her gender, but it is a gendered situation in a specifically identified social stratum: it is a class-defined norm.

I praised Driscoll's analysis of spaces; Seiffert focuses on two separate levels. As I previously noted, the context within which her novel is inscribed is very much that of postwar Scotland, hence the affinity with Kelman and others. In addition, it is difficult to find a more iconic representation of that era than the Glasgow tenement building, both in its construction and demolition. This is the site and timeline of *The Walk Home*. Indeed, it might be considered complementary to Andrew O'Hagan's *Our Fathers* (1999), a fictional recreation of the utopian ideals and subsequent failure of the tenement project.

Brenda's family live in Drumchapel, an enormous housing estate built in the 1950s to ease Glasgow's chronic housing shortage. Like many such schemes, it suffered from poor infrastructure, infrequent public transport, and a lack of shops. It would be predictable enough to construct a novel that puts down Stevie's waywardness to a Drumchapel childhood, but Seiffert does not take that path. Occasionally, there are remarks which have an ironic tinge, for example: "You could see down as far as Glasgow"(Seiffert 49). Drumchapel is, of course, part of Glasgow, so the distance has presumably more to do with enforced isolation than geography.

On the contrary, the scheme[3] provides its characters with a sense of identity. In the light of Eagleton's remarks on nostalgia and the fact that the novel is located "now or thereabouts" (Seiffert 1), we should be aware that that community described is inevitably a mixture of the real and the perceived. Certainly, all the family live there (Seiffert 36), but Lindsey is primary aware of practical issues:

> Lindsey had given up on the buggy…because the new flat was on the highest part of Drumchapel, and there were flights of steps all over…They had to go down them to get anywhere, and then it was a steep haul to get up again... (Seiffert 36)

By the 1990s, it has become rundown; however, Brenda and

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[3] BBC Scotland's television documentary *The Scheme* (2010-11) gives an idea of what these projects have become in our century. *The Scheme* should not be confused with Channel 5's *Benefits Britain* that concentrates more on how benefit money is spent, therefore promoting the belief that many beneficiaries are scroungers.

> …her family got moved out here when she was six. They'd come from the tenements in the middle of Glasgow, with hundreds of other folk besides, mums and dads and kids, and Stevie had heard all about those uprooted families making a new go of it; how the closes were smart then, the steps kept scrubbed, half the place was still empty and high flats not yet built. (Seiffert 37)

This description moves from the factual, the large scale uprooting, a period of low rise housing before the construction of tower blocks, to the mediated, when Brenda remembers those times as the good old days: "How the closes were smart then". Seiffert therefore seems conscious of the Eagleton argument about nostalgia, and provides a satisfactory answer to the overlap between reality and memory. It is true that Brenda's three sons all live in Drumchapel, but more important than location is the fact that they all have homes of their own. Brenda's emphatic remark to Lindsey when they move to a flat, "It's your ain place" (Seiffert 34), would similarly indicate that for her at least a home is of greater importance than the community. She prioritizes the familial over the social.

Lindsey and Graham's marriage breaks down precisely because he refuses to move to a better home. The narrative, in an ironic litotes, tells us that Whiteinch "wasn't a scheme, it was proper streets" (Seiffert 137). A housing scheme is metonymically depicted by its poor or inexistent streets and infrastructure. The apposition, the colloquial "was proper streets", also emphasises improvements. That is the material truth, but Graham refuses to move because, in his own words, "I dinnae know emdy that lives round there" (Seiffert 138). He prioritizes community; she, mod cons. However, the argument goes much deeper than this. I have mentioned Brenda's pivotal role as family peacekeeper. The novel insists that the sense of community, working-class community let us not forget, is strong, while at the same time heightening its dependence on gender to maintain itself. If Brenda was not there, the family would implode. Lindsey has no desire to fulfil this traditional female role, and takes the only way out, flight. Her son will later follow in her footsteps.

In the most lyrical section of the book, described in most detail in chapters twenty-two, when he is supposedly at school, and twenty-six, when he has returned to Glasgow, Stevie spends hours in deserted tower blocks. At the risk of repetition, the tenement block is an icon of postwar Glasgow and is there infused with symbolic meaning. The boarded-up buildings become his refuge. Entering them is a minor challenge, but climbing up to the heights represents the real test, especially when competing with two other like-minded boys. Some of the flats still contain personal objects, "sofas and cookers and broken kids' toys" (Seiffert 224). The scheme has become obsolete, "falling off down the hill beyond the gutter rim, all grey and brown, walls and roads, rust-red pipes and railings" (Seiffert 232); that much is clear. But the more difficult question to answer is why have things fallen apart? It is certain that the blocks were put up in a hurry and not built with the best of materials, as Hagan's novel sets out in great detail. It is also true that the corresponding undertaking of providing the working-class

with a modern community has failed, too. So, using Seiffert's suggestive phrasing, what exactly has fallen down off the hill: the housing scheme itself or the working class as a social category? The first is materially visible, and second becomes more so when we integrate Seiffert's migration sub-plot.

Stevie's epiphany when looking down from the ruins of the modern Glasgow project is immediately followed by a description of one of the boys' adolescent games: changing the taps around in twelve newly-built houses in a modern cul-de-sac. What is juxtaposed, then, is the buildings of the past and those of the present, Stevie himself fulfilling the role of nexus. A few years later, on his return to Glasgow, he will work on building homes of the latter type. Not only, then, do we witness one form of living being replaced by another, but also the replacement of the Glasgow working-class by migrant workers, Poles in this case. What I think is outstanding here is that Seiffert's awareness is not constricted to workers as individuals, but extends to the organisation of labour. That is to say, what is most salient is that the person in charge of the building is himself a Pole, Jozef, who employs other Poles. Stevie has become an outsider in his own city. This then, represents a sample of the new economic order: different homes built by different workers that have no allegiance or connection to the history of the British working-class or its culture or consciousness. My earlier remarks on Seiffert's style should prepare us for the non-judgmental depiction of this reality. Stevie is unfairly dismissed, accused of stealing, even though Jozef tells Stevie that he knows he is innocent; the other Poles do not want him around. They have their sense of identity while Stevie apparently has none. Much to his chagrin, he will find out he retains one that is unfortunately indelible.

A few pages before the novel's end, Stevie runs into three men, one of whom wears a Celtic football shirt. Stevie falls to the ground, but rather than help him up, one cries out, "He's a dirty Orange cunt, Frankie. Leavum" (Seiffert 280). They remove his new trainers, throw them up into the air so they caught on the telephone wires, and force his head down on to the pavement, "mashing the side of his face against the tarmac". The chapter concludes with "Why the bloody hell did it have to be like this?" (Seiffert 281). From my previous remarks on Seiffert's prose, we should note that the final rhetorical question is not placed inside inverted commas, so although the thoughts are Stevie's, there are not exclusively Stevie's, and serve to influence the way identity operates in the novel.

The men have identified Stevie as Orange from a patch on his jeans, which has appeared at several junctures. Right at the beginning, we are told that the "boy had a patch on his knee, sewn on badly, with a hand pictured on it: a red one, held up, palm forward, *No Surrender* stitched underneath. Jozef hadn't been there long, but he suspected that was from a football club" (Seiffert 3). The hand in question is the red hand of Ulster. Although the origins of the symbol and its history do not conform to one version, it is most notorious for being displayed by loyalist paramilitaries, and above all, by the UDF (Ulster Defence Force), consequently it is most prominent during the summer marching season. The patch was sewn on by his father (Seiffert 238), much to Brenda's disgust. To

recap, it is precisely Malcolm (Stevie's father) who gradually drifts back to playing the drum, replacing his family life with Protestant politics, sympathising with extreme Orange positions outside the law. This indicates why 'the walk' of the book's title refers not to Stevie's return alone but also to Protestant marching. Jozef's estranging remark about a football team highlights two facts. First, that sectarianism is still a potent force in Glasgow politics. Second, that is precisely in the Rangers-Celtic rivalry that this hatred is most raucous, leading to Rangers supporters' bigotry, as identified in their songs and chants, being commonly labelled "Scotland's shame".[4] At the same time, Celtic supporters are well known for their singing of inflammatory IRA songs. Commentators differ as to how extensive this polarised intolerance is in Scottish society.[5]

Stevie painfully realises that the strongest component of Glasgow identity politics is the Orange divide. He is unable to shed this tie. How much of the hate and intolerance that poisoned Papa Robert's life still lives on across the water remains an open question, but essentially one of degree, as the truth is that it has a very long shelf life. The following generation try to be more tolerant, but the third, Malcolm, returns to the past, and the fourth, Stevie, is beaten up. The question of bigotry permeates the text from the beginning, but if there is a surprise in store for the reader, it must surely be that at the end of the day, it is the most powerful signifier of all, arguably more so nowadays as working-class consciousness has fallen off down the hill. Sectarianism, however, thrives whatever the economic and social climate.

To conclude, therefore, we have to return to Driscoll's hypothesis on evasion. Does Seiffert's text, as a representative example of modern fiction, evade class in its fixation on identity politics? I hope to have proved that is not the case. First, as I have previously stated, there is no evidence that evasion and postmodernism inevitably go hand in hand. Second, where that argument also falls down is in its lack of historicity. This might seem an odd thing to say about a Marxist-based critic of the Eagleton school, but nevertheless, that is the case. The absence of working-class consciousness and the prevalence of snobbery surely exist, but this cannot function as a definite sentence without considering, as Seiffert certainly does, how deeply social and economic models have undergone modification in the last twenty years ago, due to the end of older economic models and mass migration. The parameters of class have to be adjusted, otherwise critics will interpret the present with outmoded concepts. Seiffert's text would suggest that if that change is required for class, other identity markers have their own timeline and agenda. In the case of Glasgow, sectarianism has survived those alterations and still marches on to the sound of the drum.

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[4] Tom Devine edited *Scotland's Shame: Bigotry and Sectarianism in Modern Scotland* (2000), which allowed both Catholics and Protestants to expose their views on the subject.

[5] In contrast to sectarianism at club level, followers of the national team, the tartan army, have a reputation for being peaceful and non-violent. The whys and wherefores are concisely set out by Hugh O'Donnell (2010).

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LOS REFERENTES CULTURALES EN LA SUBTITULACIÓN AL INGLÉS DE LA PELÍCULA CUBANA *FRESA Y CHOCOLATE*

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Abstract

The translation process of cultural references in audiovisual texts poses one of the greatest challenges that translators must face. In this regard, the purpose of this article is to analyze the main types or solutions employed to translate cultural references in the English subtitling of the Cuban film *Strawberry and Chocolate* (1993). A brief overview concerning the definition and classification of cultural references will be presented. Afterwards, the possible translation solutions employed to deal successfully with these cultural elements in our corpus will be analyzed. With regard to the results, the most frequent solution was communicative translation, followed by foreignizing solutions, such as calque or exoticism. Moreover, as could be proved, the type of cultural reference has influenced on the selection of translation solution.

Keywords: translation, translation strategies, cultural references, subtitling, domestication, foreignization.

Resumen

El transvase lingüístico de referentes culturales en los textos audiovisuales supone uno de los retos más difíciles a los que se ha de enfrentar un traductor. En este sentido, la presente investigación tiene como objetivo analizar las principales soluciones de traducción que se han empleado para subtitular al inglés los referentes culturales que identifican a la cultura cubana en la película *Fresa y Chocolate* (1993). Primeramente se mostrará la definición y clasificación de los referentes culturales. Posteriormente, se analizarán las distintas estrategias de traducción que para este fin se han empleado, así como la variable del tipo de referencia cultural. Por lo que respecta a los resultados, la solución más frecuente ha sido la traducción comunicativa, seguida de soluciones extranjerizantes, como el calco o el exoticismo. Por otra parte, según se ha podido comprobar, el tipo de referencia cultural ha influido en la elección de la solución.

Palabras clave: traducción, estrategias de traducción, referencias culturales, subtitulación, domesticación, extranjerización.

1. Introducción

No son pocas las ocasiones en las que ciertos espectadores manifiestan su desagrado e insatisfacción al percibir curiosas traducciones en textos audiovisuales. Algunas de estas traducciones -a veces catalogadas de ridículas, incoherentes, absurdas- en la opinión de algunos, son trasvasadas libremente, alterando y/o perdiendo el sentido y concepción original. O, por el contrario, para otros, son traducciones demasiado literales que, lejos de adaptarse a la versión original, crean confusiones y malentendidos entre los receptores del texto meta.

Cabe recordar que la traducción es un proceso bien complejo, que va más allá de la simple reproducción automática de palabras de una lengua a otra. Aunque el dominio de al menos dos idiomas constituye un requisito necesario e indispensable para llevar a cabo esta actividad, no garantiza la calidad de ningún encargo de traducción. Interviene además, un conjunto de factores y conocimientos que, al combinarse simultánea y armónicamente, van a condicionar y fundamentar la decisión final del traductor.

El trabajo que nos ocupa forma parte de una investigación mucho más amplia, que pretende examinar las principales variables que intervienen durante el proceso traductológico de referentes culturales, en un corpus de películas cubanas. De las veinte películas que conforman el corpus original, este artículo ha seleccionado como objeto de estudio la cinta *Fresa y chocolate*, por considerarse el largometraje de más impacto nacional e internacional dentro de la historia del cine cubano.

No cabe duda de que, a pesar de los crecientes encuentros e intercambios culturales que tienen lugar en nuestra sociedad y el auge de las nuevas tecnologías de la información y la comunicación, actualmente siguen existiendo términos que pertenecen a determinadas culturas y que no son compartidos por otras realidades culturales. Como se explica a continuación, la presencia de estos términos -también conocidos como referentes culturales,[1] realia, culturemas o, en inglés, c*ulture-specific items*, *culture-bound elements*, *extralinguistic culture-bound references*-, pueden llegar a representar un problema de traducción, ya que muy frecuentemente carecen de una equivalencia translémica en otras lenguas.

2. Definición y clasificación de los referentes culturales

En palabras de Franco Aixelá, los *culture-specific items*, como él los denomina, son aquellos elementos restringidos, distintivos o singulares pertenecientes a una cultura particular, que pueden provocar un problema de traducción al ser transferidos a otra cultura diferente (58). Asimismo, agrega el autor, estos problemas pueden surgir cuando determinada frase, palabra o expresión de la lengua origen, carece de un traducción directa o literal en la

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[1] Este artículo va a utilizar el término referente cultural y su acrónimo RC.

cultura meta, ya sea porque no existe un equivalente apropiado, o, en caso de existir, porque no posee el mismo valor cultural, significado o connotación lingüística que el término original. (Franco Aixelá 58).

Otra definición de referencia cultural es la que proponen González Davies y Scott-Tennent. Desde un punto de vista pedagógico, los autores definen los referentes culturales como se muestra a continuación:

> Any kind of expression (textual, verbal, non-verbal or audiovisual) denoting any material, ecological, social, religious, linguistic or emotional manifestation that can be attributed to a particular community (geographic, socio-economic, professional, linguistic, religious, bilingual, etc.) and would be admitted as a trait of that community by those who consider themselves to be member of it. Such an expression may, on occasions, create a comprehension or a translation problem. (González Davies y Scott-Tennent 166)

Los referentes culturales se pueden clasificar por áreas. Esta investigación se va a ceñir a la taxonomía propuesta por Nedergaard-Larsen,[2] en un trabajo enfocado a la modalidad de subtitulación (211). Su clasificación se centra en los referentes culturales extralingüísticos y se divide en cuatro grupos principales que incluyen a su vez distintas submodalidades.

1.Geografía: Incluye todo lo relacionado con los accidentes geográficos, la meteorología, la biología (flora, fauna), la geografía cultural (regiones, ciudades).

2. Historia: Este grupo abarca los edificios (monumentos, castillos), los eventos (guerras, días memorables) y los personajes históricos.

3. Sociedad: Esta clasificación abarca cinco subcategorías: condiciones industriales y económicas (comercios, industrias), organización social (servicio militar, sistema judicial, autoridades locales y centrales), condiciones políticas (administración del estado, ministerios, partidos políticos, sistema electoral), condiciones sociales (grupos sociales, condiciones de vida, subculturas), vida social y costumbres (alimentos, ropa, tipos de viviendas).

4.Cultura: Esta categoría se subdivide en cuatro grupos: religión (iglesias, rituales, santos), educación (escuelas, universidades, academias), medios de comunicación (televisión, periódicos, radio, revistas); arte, cultura y ocio (teatros; cines; restaurantes; museos, literatura, hoteles, obras literarias).

Aunque en este estudio se ha tomado esta clasificación como base, teniendo en cuenta el corpus de estudio, se han incluido algunos cambios durante el proceso de clasificación de los referentes culturales. De este modo, resultó necesario agregar una nueva categoría, así como varias subcategorías a la etiqueta "cultural" mencionada anteriormente. Todos estos ajustes se explicarán

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[2] El modelo ha sido traducido al español por la autora, en la información original aparece en idioma inglés.

detalladamente en la sección de resultados (4.1).

3.   Aspectos metodológicos

Lamentablemente, después de varios esfuerzos, no se ha podido acceder al guión original de la cinta debido a ciertos problemas de protocolo en el ICAIC[3] y a la distancia geográfica existente en el momento de realización de este trabajo. Sin embargo, este hecho no constituyó un impedimento para llevar a cabo la investigación. En este sentido, para la investigación se utilizaron los subtítulos disponibles en la versión en DVD de la película.

3.1.   Objetivos

El objetivo general que persigue esta investigación consiste en analizar las soluciones de traducción empleadas para trasladar las referencias culturales en la película *Fresa y chocolate*. Para conseguir este objetivo general, se han establecido los siguientes objetivos específicos:

- Identificar y clasificar las referencias culturales que se plasman en la película.

- Examinar si la variable "tipo de referencia cultural" determina la solución de traducción seleccionada por el traductor.

3.2.   Descripción del corpus

Cuba es un país con una gran riqueza cultural en el sentido más amplio de la palabra. Durante siglos el país transitó por un proceso continuo de choques culturales, en el que confluyeron razas y culturas diversas, procedentes principalmente de Europa, África y América. Se puede afirmar que los valores culturales, espirituales y artísticos que definen a la sociedad cubana son el fruto de todo este mestizaje que ha marcado la historia de la nación. El antropólogo cubano Fernando Ortiz -conocido como el tercer descubridor de Cuba- introdujo el término transculturación para explicar los variadísimos fenómenos culturales que se originan en Cuba, necesarios para comprender la evolución cultural de la sociedad cubana (86).

El séptimo arte, como medio de expresión y comunicación, ha jugado un papel fundamental a la hora de divulgar los rasgos sociales y culturales que definen al país. Y es que "la mayor de las Antillas" es un país lleno de contrastes que lo hacen único. Por solo mencionar algunas de sus peculiaridades, cabe resaltar su riqueza natural, su variada gastronomía, su idiosincrasia, costumbres, su patrimonio histórico-cultural, su gente, su inconfundible vocabulario, su inalterable estilo de vida e inclusive su enigmático -y hasta cierto punto

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[3] El Instituto Cubano del Arte e Industria Cinematográficos

desconocido- sistema político que por más de medio siglo ha reinado en la isla.

Como se ha mencionado previamente, este trabajo se va a centrar en la película *Fresa y Chocolate*. Desde su proyección inicial en los cines cubanos en el año 1993, su éxito, alabado tanto por la crítica como por el público, no se hizo esperar. Una lluvia de reconocimientos[4] entre los que destacan un Goya (1995) a la "Mejor película extranjera de habla hispana" y la nominación al Oscar en la categoría de "Mejor película de habla no inglesa" (1994), hacen de esta cinta una de las más populares y taquilleras de todos los tiempos dentro de la historia del cine en Cuba.

Esta producción cinematográfica de 110 minutos narra la historia de dos jóvenes cubanos, con diferencias no solo ideológicas y de concepción política, sino también de orientación sexual. Diego, un intelectual homosexual amante de la cultura, intenta seducir a David, un estudiante de Ciencias Sociales en la Universidad de la Habana y férreo militante comunista. Finalmente, ni los conflictos en los que sus protagonistas se ven envueltos ni los estigmas sociales de la época impedirán que entre ambos florezca una atípica y conmovedora amistad. Ambientada en la Cuba de los años setenta, la película muestra una sociedad llena de prejuicios sexuales, estereotipos, tabúes y homofobia.

La repercusión de este filme fue tal que muchos consideran que marcó un antes y un después dentro de la cinematografía cubana, ya que nunca antes un personaje homosexual había sido protagonista o incluso sujeto dramático y narrativo (Padrón 154) en un filme cubano. Hasta entonces los personajes de lesbianas, gais o bisexuales eran escasos o eran papeles secundarios estereotipados. En palabras de su codirector Juan Carlos Tabío, el largometraje conquistó al mundo por su llamamiento a la tolerancia, la aceptación y el respeto a la diversidad.[5]

3.3.   Etapas de la investigación

Durante el análisis del corpus se siguieron varios pasos metodológicos. En un primer paso se procedió al visionado atento de la película en versión original con los subtítulos en inglés. Posteriormente, se identificaron todas las referencias culturales relacionadas con la cultura cubana. La tarea siguiente consistió en la transcripción de los subtítulos de la pantalla que se correspondían con los referentes culturales anteriormente identificados, tarea que, según señala Díaz Cintas, resulta "bien tediosa, y que consume gran cantidad de tiempo" (291).

Finalmente, toda la información seleccionada en español e inglés se registró en una hoja de cálculo en formato Excel, donde posteriormente se procedió a la clasificación de las referencias culturales y al análisis de las

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[4] Véase http://www.filmaffinity.com/es/film289912.html
[5] Véase
http://www.bbc.com/mundo/cultura_sociedad/2009/07/090708_cultura_entrevista_tabio_lh.sht
ml

estrategias de traducción empleadas. La hoja de cálculo utilizada se compone de siete columnas como se muestra a continuación con el siguiente ejemplo extraído del corpus:

Tabla 1: Hoja de cálculo empleada en el análisis del corpus

RC versión original	Subtitulación del RC	Clasificación de la RC	Categoría	Estrategia traducción	Minutos	Canal del RC (Visual/Auditivo)
Primero los **"Orishas"**	*First the* **"Orishas"**	Cultura	Religión	Exoticismo	00:35:48	Auditivo

4. Resultados

4.1. Estrategias de traducción de los referentes culturales

Existe un amplio abanico de opciones y mecanismos traductológicos que son aplicables a los referentes culturales. Esta investigación ha seguido la propuesta realizada por Díaz Cintas sobre la traducción de referentes culturales en la subtitulación. El autor divide las estrategias en dos grupos. El primer grupo, que abarca los "procedimientos de traducción directa", incluye préstamo y calco. Mientras que el segundo agrupa los "procedimientos de traducción oblicua" y se compone de siete estrategias: explicitación, transposición, sustitución, recreación léxica, compensación, omisión y adición. (Díaz Cintas 247).

Generalmente, los autores suelen clasificar las estrategias de traducción de referentes culturales en función de su proximidad a uno de dos polos opuestos, que se orientan a la cultura de partida y a la cultura de llegada, respectivamente. Cabe pues, siguiendo a Venuti, clasificar las soluciones de traducción como familiarizantes (*domesticating*) o extranjerizantes (*foreigninzing*). En palabras de Venuti:

> A **domesticating** method, and ethnocentric reduction of the foreign text to target-language cultural values, bringing the author back home, and a **foreignizing** method, an ethnodeviant pressure on those values to register the linguistic and cultural difference of the foreign text, sending the reader abroad. (Venuti 20)

Como se puede apreciar, el traductor puede decidir qué método utilizar, teniendo en cuenta la conservación de los elementos culturales de la lengua de salida (extranjerización) o, por el contrario, la sustitución por otros en la lengua de llegada (domesticación o familiarización). Personalmente, considero que no importa la inclinación que finalmente elija el traductor, la prioridad principal en este proceso sigue siendo la de ofrecer un producto final exitoso, lo más fiel

posible a la versión original y que respete, sobre todo, la intención y el significado que se desea proyectar.

En total, en el corpus de esta investigación se utilizaron nueve estrategias de traducción durante el trasvase lingüístico de los referentes culturales. De la taxonomía de Díaz Cintas anteriormente citada no se encontraron ejemplos que se correspondieran con las siguientes soluciones traductológicas: "transposición cultural", "sustitución" y "compensación". Por las características del corpus que nos incumbe, resultó necesario incluir otras tres estrategias propuestas por otros autores, tales como "adaptación ortográfica" y "sinonimia" de Franco Aixelá (61), y "traducción comunicativa" de Haywood, Thompson y Hervey (76-81). En el siguiente gráfico se muestran en orden descendente las estrategias identificadas en la investigación. A continuación se explica y ejemplifica cada una de ellas.

Gráfico 1: Estrategias de traducción identificadas en el corpus de estudio
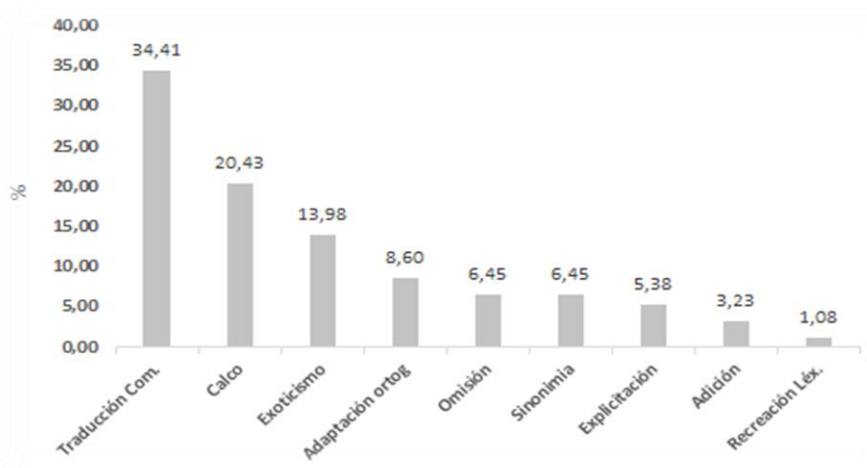
4.1.1. Traducción comunicativa

No es de extrañar que esta estrategia haya sido la más empleada para trasvasar los referentes culturales identificados en el corpus. Generalmente el traductor recurre a esta estrategia cuando una traducción literal no es lo más idóneo, ya que podría resultar incomprensible o incluso absurda para el receptor del texto meta (Haywood, Thompson y Hervey 78). En este sentido, añaden los autores, mediante este procedimiento lo que se prioriza es el efecto del mensaje en sí, antes que el contenido.

En el corpus de estudio, se identificaron un total de cuarenta y nueve referencias culturales relacionadas con expresiones idiomáticas del español de Cuba. De ellas, el 65% se tradujo mediante este procedimiento. Se puede afirmar que la variedad del español que se habla en Cuba tiene un toque singular que la diferencia del resto de los hispano-parlantes. Esta versión cubana del idioma español no solo es el resultado de los diferentes procesos culturales, sociales y gubernamentales que ha experimentado el país, sino también de los factores relacionados con la realidad y los problemas económicos existentes en la Cuba actual. De ahí que para cada situación o contexto existen variadísimas expresiones populares. Como se muestra en los siguientes ejemplos, esta técnica suele emplearse ante la presencia de refranes, frases idiomáticas y expresiones coloquiales.

Contexto/comentario	Ejemplo	Tiempo
Esta escena tiene lugar en un "almendrón", como se llama a los coches americanos fabricados antes de 1960 que aún circulan en las calles de La Habana. La mayoría son taxis privados y en muy malas condiciones. En el filme, Diego y David están en un almendrón, pero cuando llegan a su destino, este último se demora en bajar del coche. Los otros pasajeros a bordo, le piden que se baje pronto, pues el coche además de ser bien incómodo desprende muchísimo calor.	Transcripción RC versión original: ¡Anda papito, bájate!, que **esta cafetera me tiene obstinada** Subtitulación de la RC: Get out, sweetie! **We are packed like sardines back here**	00:12:52
Se puede afirmar que esta es una de las expresiones más utilizadas en el argot popular cubano. "Asere/Acere" es sinónimo de amigo, socio, hermano, y la frase "¿qué bolá?" significa: ¿en qué andas?, ¿qué tal?, ¿qué novedades tienes? Generalmente se suele emplear con personas con las que media una estrecha relación de amistad y no se recomienda su uso en un registro formal y culto. En la película Diego le explica a David todo el rechazo que sufre por parte de la sociedad al no tener un comportamiento ni expresarse "normal" como los demás.	Transcripción RC versión original: Ven un tipo en una esquina "**Acere, monina, ¿qué bolá?**" Subtitulación de la RC: Because a guy on a street corner saying **"hey, man, what's up?"**	00:57:37

4.1.2. Calco

Esta estrategia también se conoce como "traducción literal" y consiste en reproducir literalmente (palabra por palabra) los elementos que componen el concepto y sintagma de la lengua de salida. En el corpus se identificaron 19 referentes culturales que se tradujeron mediante esta estrategia. A continuación se muestran ejemplos.

Contexto/comentario	Ejemplo	Tiempo
Se refiere a los agentes encubiertos de la seguridad del estado cubano. Su función es conocer la posición política y visión sobre la revolución de cualquier ciudadano cubano que se considere una "preocupación" para el país. En la película Diego le dice a David que va a poner música para que los vecinos no escuchen lo que hablan, y que este consejo se lo había dado precisamente un agente de la seguridad del Estado.	Transcripción RC versión original: A ella se lo enseñó uno de **la Seguridad** Subtitulación de la RC: Who got it **from Security**	00:17:54
Hace referencia al Socialismo, que es el sistema político, económico implantado en Cuba desde 1959 y que aún está vigente en la actualidad. En la película, Diego y David tienen una franca e íntima conversación en la que el primero confiesa ser homosexual, religioso, y cómo esta orientación sexual le ha acarreado problemas políticos y sociales en el país.	Transcripción RC versión original: He tenido problemas con **el sistema** Subtitulación de la RC: I've had problems with **the system**	00:38:25

4.1.3. Exoticismo

Este procedimiento tiene lugar cuando la lengua meta adopta las palabras o locuciones con la misma forma y significación de la lengua origen (Díaz Cintas 247). Chaves lo define como el caso de la "no traducción" (57), ya que en ambas lenguas el término que se emplea es el mismo. Díaz Cintas en su taxonomía no establece diferencias entre las estrategias "préstamo" (*borrowing*) y "préstamo cultural" (*cultural borrowing*), es por ello que esta investigación ha decidido utilizar el término "exoticismo" (*exoticism*) de la taxonomía propuesta por Haywood, Thompson y Hervey (76).

Cabe resaltar que la sutil diferencia entre ambos procedimientos suele estar

vinculada al grado de familiarización que posean los espectadores de la cultura de llegada con el término lingüístico trasvasado. A este respecto, Haywood, Thompson y Hervey (76) aclaran que a través del exoticismo el traductor corre un riesgo mayor, ya que es muy posible que al público meta no le resulte familiar el término empleado. Sin embargo, agregan, mediante el préstamo cultural, el traductor recurre a términos en la lengua origen (o *loan-words* en inglés) que ya están establecidos en la lengua meta, *"[w]ithout any risk of leaving English-speaking readers in the dark"*. Así pues, con el empleo de estos préstamos, los espectadores no se exponen a nuevos referentes culturales, sino que por el contrario, son capaces de reconocer y comprender el término con más facilidad.

En el corpus se han transvasado trece referentes culturales mediante esta solución traductológica. El 92,3% de ellos se corresponde con la traducción de los nombres propios identificados en la cinta (personalidades históricas, culturales, personajes del filme).

Contexto/comentario	Ejemplo	Minuto
José María Andrés Fernando Lezama Lima, es considerado uno de los poetas y novelistas más importantes de Cuba y de la literatura hispanoamericana. Su obra cumbre fue la novela *Paradiso,* publicada en 1966. En la cinta, David demuestra su incultura al preguntarle a Diego si la persona que aparecía en un retrato colgado en la pared de su casa era su padre. Diego ante tal pregunta, sonríe, y le explica de quién se trata.	Transcripción RC versión original: Ese es **Lezama**, el maestro. Uno de los grandes escritores de este siglo. Subtitulación de la RC: That's **Lezama**, the maestro. One of the great writers of this century.	00:37:06
Coppelia es una emblemática heladería ubicada en el corazón de La Habana. También conocida como la Catedral del Helado, se considera uno de los iconos de la arquitectura moderna en Cuba. Los cubanos la identifican como un punto de encuentro, esparcimiento y disfrute. En el filme, la relación de Diego y David comienza en una de las mesas de este famoso establecimiento.	Transcripción RC versión original: Te acuerdas cuando nos conocimos en **Coppelia**, yo andaba con Germán Subtitulación de la RC: When we met in	00:40:12

	Coppelia, I was with German	

4.1.4.   Adaptación Ortográfica

Según Franco Aixelá, esta técnica incluye los procedimientos de transcripción y transliteración, y añade que se pone de manifiesto cuando la lengua origen utiliza un alfabeto diferente al de la lengua meta (61). Igualmente, añade el autor, esta estrategia tiene lugar cuando se realizan pequeños cambios en la grafía original, siempre y cuando no afecten a la consideración cultural del original (Franco Aixelá 61). En total, en el corpus se identificaron ocho ejemplos de este procedimiento. Siete de ellos son nombres propios, que sufrieron la pérdida del acento gráfico durante el trasvase lingüístico al inglés. Además, en un ejemplo se ha sustituido la letra "ñ" por la "n" y también un vocablo perteneciente al idioma ruso.

Contexto/comentario	**Ejemplo**	**Minuto**
Se refiere a las personas que viven y trabajan en el campo o que procede de una zona rural (campesinos). En la cinta, Diego revisa los escritos personales de David y los critica utilizando ciertos términos en idioma ruso. Debemos recordar que en aquel entonces, Rusia y Cuba mantenían una estrecha relación política y económica, que duró unos 30 años.	Transcripción RC versión original: Lo único que te faltó fue poner **"mujik"** en lugar de "guajiros". Subtitulación de la RC: You only forgot the proper term for "farmer" is "**Muzhik**"	01:05:09
En la película Nancy -mujer madura, soltera, vecina y amiga de Diego, que se dedica a comercializar productos en el mercado negro- regresa de un paseo con David, y una vez en su casa, ella no deja que él entre. Inmediatamente, cuando cierra la puerta, le enciende una vela a Santa Bárbara.	Transcripción RC versión original: **Santa Bárbara,** ¡no me dejes meter la pata! Subtitulación de la RC: **Santa**	01:24:35

	Barbara, don't let me screw up!	

4.1.5. Omisión

Como su propio nombre indica, a través de este procedimiento, la información se elimina totalmente del texto meta. Pedersen, al describir esta técnica, deja bien claro que el referente cultural que aparece reflejado en el texto de partida, no se reproduce ni se sustituye -de ninguna manera- en el texto de llegada (96).

En el corpus objeto de estudio solamente se encontraron seis ejemplos. Considero que, entre las múltiples funciones que se le atribuyen a esta técnica, las que se corresponden con este estudio, son aquellas relacionados con las restricciones espacio-temporales del medio que supone la subtitulación y la posible inexistencia de términos apropiados en la cultura meta (Díaz Cintas y Remael 206).

Contexto/comentario	**Ejemplo**	**Minuto**
En Cuba a las bolsas se les llaman "nailon" o "jabas". En el primer caso, su nombre proviene del material de fabricación de las bolsas y de la marca comercial registrada internacionalmente "*Nylon*".	Transcripción RC versión original: Con lo que no puedas te lo voy a echar en un **nailito**. Subtitulación de la RC: I'll wrap it up for you**.**	00:44:02
En Cuba, esta expresión suele utilizarse para referirse a personas con astucia, inteligencia, que suelen ser reservados pero con facilidades para sacar ventajas a una situación. Recordemos que durante la cinta, a David se le asigna la misión de informar cuáles son las convicciones políticas de Diego y si representa un problema para el país. En esta escena, David le comenta a Miguel que no tiene mucha información sobre la exposición "misteriosa" que Diego planea hacer, que ha intentado averiguar pero que ha sido en vano,	Transcripción RC versión original: **El tipo es un bicho.** Subtitulación de la RC: Ø	00:41:17

pues Diego no le comenta nada.		

4.1.6. Sinonimia

En palabras de Franco Aixelá, a través de esta estrategia, el traductor suele recurrir a algún tipo de sinónimo o referencia paralela para evitar repetir la referencia cultural de la versión original (63). Solamente se identificaron seis ejemplos en el corpus.

Contexto/comentario	Ejemplo	Minuto
En Cuba se le llamaba "posada" a aquellos establecimientos destinados a parejas que buscaban un espacio para estar a gusto unas horas. Debido al mal estado, las filtraciones y la humedad en las paredes de estos alojamientos, a principios de la década de 1990 desaparecieron. La película comienza con David y su novia en uno de estos lugares, donde la chica manifiesta su insatisfacción con el local.	Transcripción RC versión original: Si, pero… ¡Traerme a una **posada** con hueco en las paredes! Subtitulación de la RC: Yes, but...Bringing me to a **cheap motel** with holes in the walls!	00:02:05
En la cinta, Diego utiliza este término para referirse a su casa, que se encuentra enclavada en uno de los antiguos edificios de La Habana. El *Diccionario de la Real Academia de la Lengua Española* (DRAE) define este término como un sinónimo de lugar oculto o refugio al que se acude para librarse de un daño o un peligro. En Cuba este vocablo se emplea desde los años '80 para referirse a alojamiento en muy malas condiciones, ocultos y con cierto matiz sexual (en esa época los homosexuales eran rechazados y	Transcripción RC versión original: Bienvenido a **la guarida**, este es un lugar donde no se recibe a todo el mundo. Subtitulación de la RC: Welcome to my **hideaway.**	00:14:02

excluidos).

4.1.7.   Explicitación

Básicamente, esta solución traductológica consiste en sacar a la luz la información que aparece implícita en el referente cultural del texto origen. En palabras de Díaz Cintas, a través de este procedimiento, el traductor suele recurrir a la "especificación", mediante el uso de hipónimos, o por el contrario, a la "generalización", mediante los hiperónimos (249). Como señala Pedersen (2011:84), en el caso de la explicitación el traductor considera necesario aclarar determinada información que está oculta –específicamente– en el nombre de la referencia original, ya que se percata de que el público meta puede que carezca del significado necesario acerca de la cultura origen para inferirla.

Esta estrategia suele emplearse fundamentalmente con los acrónimos y abreviaturas. En este sentido, en el corpus se identificaron solamente cinco referentes culturales. Como se puede apreciar en uno de los ejemplos, se ha añadido información en el texto meta para que el público comprenda sin dificultad el término cultural. Por otra parte, en el segundo ejemplo se ha optado por un hipónimo.

Contexto/comentario	Ejemplo	Tiempo
Las Unidades Militares de Ayuda a la Producción (UMAP) fueron unos campamentos creados en Cuba en 1965, donde se confinaba a los gais, religiosos y personas de otros colectivos que se consideraban desafectos al proceso revolucionario. En la cinta, David intenta moldear el pensamiento político de Diego. Ambos tienen una conversación donde no solo mencionan los logros alcanzados por la revolución cubana, sino también los errores cometidos.	Transcripción RC versión original: Es lamentable, pero comprensible que se cometan errores, como el de mandar a Pablito para la **UMAP.** Subtitulación de la RC: It's sad, mistakes happen like sending Pablo Milanés to the **UMAP camps.**	01:09:53
Los Estados Unidos de América se considera el enemigo histórico de Cuba. Durante más de cincuenta años ambos países rompieron las relaciones diplomáticas y comerciales. En	Transcripción RC versión original: Le estamos dando una lección a la humanidad con l**a**	00:39:55

| Cuba cuando se dice "enemigo" se hace referencia a ese país. En la película, los protagonistas están aclarando los términos de esta nueva amistad que comienza a forjarse entre ellos y una vez aclarados, hacen un brindis. | **bebida del enemigo**.

 Subtitulación de la RC: We're giving humanity a lesson with **the whisky of the enemy.** | |

4.1.8. Adición

Según Díaz Cintas, mediante esta solución traductológica el traductor añade material lingüístico a la referencia original, ya que considera que puede resultar oscura o confusa para el público meta (252). Para Díaz Cintas y Remael (207) la *addition* está estrechamente vinculada a la explicitación, previamente abordada. De hecho, consideran que la adición es una forma de explicitación. A este respecto, considero oportuno resaltar que aunque en ambos procedimientos se añade información en el texto meta, específicamente en la adición, el traductor además de reproducir literalmente el referente cultural del texto origen, considera oportuno incluir información nueva del contenido semántico del referente.

En el trabajo se encontraron tres referentes culturales que se trasvasaron mediante la estrategia de adición y todas pertenecen a la etiqueta "sociedad".

Contexto/comentario	Ejemplo	Tiempo
La Unión de Jóvenes Comunistas (UJC) es la organización política de la juventud cubana desde 1962. Su objetivo principal está en la continua preparación cultural, política e ideológica de los jóvenes cubanos. En esta escena de la película, Diego y David se acaban de conocer. De repente, Diego comienza a sacar unos libros, entre los que resalta uno del escritor peruano Mario Vargas Llosa, detractor de la Revolución Cubana. Ante la mirada furtiva de David hacia los libros, Diego le comenta que tiene otros ejemplares en su casa, y que estaba dispuesto a prestárselos. En ese instante, se aprecia como David se traslada de un bolsillo a otro su carné de la Unión de	Transcripción RC versión original: Solo puedes leer los libros que te autorizan en la **Juventud** Subtitulación de la RC: You only read books authorized by the **Youth League.**	00:11:07

Jóvenes Comunistas intentando evidenciar su pertenencia a esta organización política.		
Hace referencia a los Comités de Defensa de la Revolución (CDR), que es una organización de masas, cuya función principal es realizar tareas de vigilancia colectiva en cada calle del país y enfrentar cualquier anomalía. Para ello, se designa a una persona responsable en cada calle de velar por la tranquilidad del lugar y de los ciudadanos y de informar a sus superiores, en caso que sea necesario, de cualquier situación que se presente. En la película, Diego evita encontrarse con su vecina, que supuestamente es la persona encargada de vigilar ese lugar.	Transcripción RC versión original: ¿Y esa quién es? **La de vigilancia** Subtitulación de la RC: Who is she? **The Neighborhood Vigilance.**	00:13:51

4.1.9.   Recreación léxica

Este procedimiento tiene lugar cuando el referente cultural tanto en la lengua de salida como en la lengua de llegada resulta ser una palabra o enunciado nuevo y desconocido, que pudiera ser percibido con cierto grado de extrañeza en las culturas involucradas, como es el caso de los neologismos. Díaz Cintas al definir esta estrategia plantea lo siguiente: "Cuando en el original se hace gala de términos o expresiones inventados, es a todas luces legítimo que el traductor también recurra a la recreación léxica en su propia lengua"(251). En el corpus que nos ocupa se identificó solamente un referente cultural con esta estrategia y pertenece a la categoría "Cultura".

Contexto/comentario	Ejemplo	Minuto
Diego invita a David a un almuerzo en su casa inspirado en la novela *Paradiso* del escritor Lezama Lima. Durante este almuerzo, se percibe cierto grado de formalidad en el diseño y decoración de la casa y la cena (mantel, vajillas, velas, copas,	Transcripción RC versión original: un almuerzo **lezamiano** Subtitulación de la RC: The lunch **a la Lezama**	00:44:07

etc.). Igualmente toda la conversación girará en torno a la novela, se menciona a algunos de los personajes e incluso se citan ciertos fragmentos de esta obra.

4.2. Variable del tipo de referencia cultural

Como se ha mencionado previamente, a la tipología inicial propuesta por Nedergaard para la clasificación de los referentes culturales se le incorporó una quinta categoría relacionada con las referencias lingüísticas.[6] En esta nueva etiqueta denominada "lingüística" se agruparon todas las expresiones idiomáticas y refranes populares identificados. Se añadieron también otras dos subcategorías a la etiqueta "cultural", tales como nombres propios y/o apodos y personajes ilustres. La tabla siguiente muestra la clasificación final empleada en la investigación. Se eliminaron aquellas subcategorías[7] que no ofrecieron ejemplos en el corpus.

Tabla 2: Clasificación empleada para el análisis de los referentes culturales

CLASIFICACIÓN EMPLEADA PARA EL ANÁLISIS DE LOS REFERENTES CULTURALES			
Clasificación	Submodalidad	Ejemplo	Secuencia
GEOGRAFÍA	geografía cultural	Viven en **Cabaiguán**	01:22:17
HISTORIA	eventos	El tipo empieza a decir ironías sobre **la Revolución**	00:26:37
	personajes históricos	Que pertenecieron a la familia **Loynaz del Castillos**	00:23:30
SOCIEDAD	organización social	Pero comprensible que se cometan errores, como el de mandar a Pablito para la **UMAP**	01:09:53
	condiciones políticas	Solo puedes leer los libros que te autorizan en la **Juventud**	00:11:07
	vida social y costumbres	Con lo que no puedas te lo voy a echar en un **nailito.**	00:44:02
	religión	**Santa Bárbara**, ¡no me dejes meter la pata!	01:24:35

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[6] Nida (1969, 1999) incluye también en su taxonomía una clasificación lingüística.
[7] Accidentes geográficos, meteorología, biología, edificios, condiciones industriales y económicas, condiciones sociales, educación, medios de comunicación.

CULTURA	arte, cultura y ocio	Estaba en **Coppelia** tomándome un helado	00:26:18
	nombres propios y/o apodos	¡Tía **Chucha**!	00:14:43
	personajes ilustres	Ese es **Lezama**, el maestro	00:37:06
LINGÜÍSTICA	expresiones idiomáticas	¿Me aceptas un brindis con **la bebida del enemigo?**	00:34:58

En total en la película objeto de estudio se identificaron 93 referentes culturales relacionadas con la cultura cubana. Sería oportuno señalar que del total de referencias culturales identificadas en la investigación, el 52,7% pertenece a la categoría "lingüística". Le sigue la categoría "cultural" con el 22,6 %. El resto se divide entre las categorías "sociedad", "historia" y "geografía" con un 15,1%, 6,5% y 3,2% respectivamente. En el gráfico siguiente se puede apreciar cómo el tipo de referencia cultural influye en la elección de la estrategia de traducción. Aunque no se aplica a todas las categorías, sí se observaron varios comportamientos.

De esta manera, se puede afirmar que el 87% de las referencias culturales identificadas en la categoría "lingüística" se tradujeron mediante los procedimientos de traducción comunicativa con un 65,3 % y calco con 22,4%, respectivamente. Igualmente, en la categoría "sociedad" predominaron las estrategias de sinonimia (29%) y el calco (29%), lo cual no sorprende ya que estamos hablando de los términos relacionados con la organización político-administrativa del Estado, los cuales generalmente cuentan con un término establecido en la cultura meta.

En la categoría cultural las estrategias de exoticismo y adaptación ortográfica fueron las más empleadas alcanzando un 66%. En relación a la categoría "historia" solamente se identificaron 5 ejemplos, siendo el exoticismo también la estrategia dominante (60%). Finalmente, en la categoría "geografía" no se mostró un patrón común a la hora trasvasar las referencias culturales, ya que los tres ejemplos identificados fueron reproducidos mediante diferentes procedimientos.

Gráfico 2: Estrategias de traducción empleadas en cada categoría
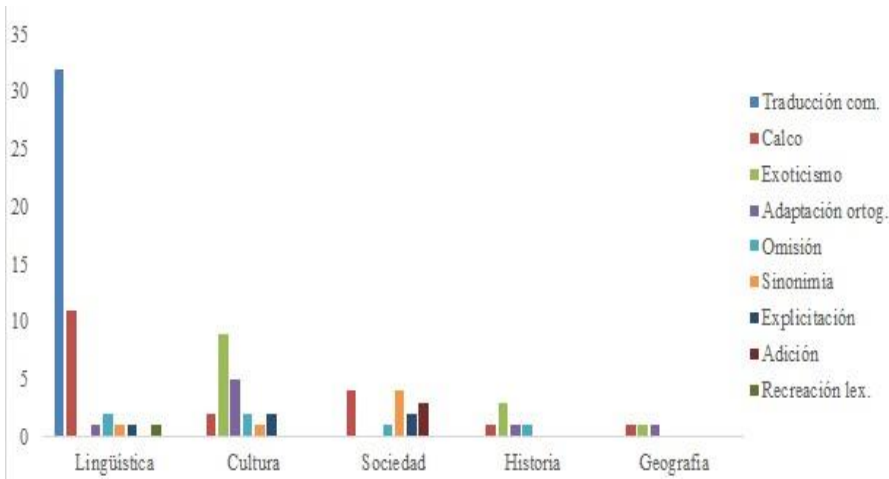
5.   Conclusiones

Teniendo en cuenta el análisis cuantitativo y cualitativo del corpus de estudio de este trabajo, se han podido extraer las siguientes conclusiones.

- Se puede afirmar que más de la mitad (54.84%) de las referencias culturales identificadas en la cinta se trasvasaron mediante las estrategias "traducción comunicativa" -34,41%- y "calco" -20,43%-.

El 87,8% de las expresiones coloquiales e idiomáticas identificadas en la cinta se tradujeron mediante los procedimientos de "traducción comunicativa" y "calco". Como se mencionó previamente, en el trasvase lingüístico de estas expresiones, se emplearon elementos lingüísticos igual de coloquiales en la cultura meta, aunque en algunos casos se recurrió también a la traducción literal.

- Con respecto a los nombres propios, en la película solamente se identificaron 24 ejemplos. Los procedimientos extranjerizantes de "exoticismo" y "adaptación ortográfica" fueron los más empleados para el trasvase de los mismos, representando un 79,1%. Obviamente, la intención del traductor ha sido conservar los nombres propios originales que forman parte de la cultura e historia cubana. La misma tendencia se observa en los nombres de los personajes del filme.

- En relación a la categoría "geografía" solamente se encontraron tres ejemplos de topónimos, y cada uno de ellos fue reproducido mediante una solución traductora diferente.

- En la versión original del filme se mostraron muchos elementos de analogía icónica (imágenes, letreros) que representan a la cultura cubana. Tal es

el caso de figuras históricas, como: José Martí, Fidel Castro, Ernesto Guevara (Che) y algunos mensajes narrativos (lemas y eslóganes revolucionarios en murales y en las calles). Ninguno de ellos se ha traducido en los subtítulos en inglés. Si se asume el hecho de que el espectador no este familiarizado con la historia y cultura cubana, la reproducción de esta información sería bastante útil ya que permitiría entender aún más las convicciones políticas y sociales de la Cuba de ese entonces.

- En general, en la cinta se observan muchos casos de omisión de la información en la lengua meta, sin embargo esto no constituye un problema para la comprensión de la historia. Obviamente, la subtitulación requiere de ciertos ajustes y normas establecidas, que se deben respetar y tener en cuenta en el momento de la traducción, tales como las restricciones del medio, los caracteres permitidos y el tiempo y espacios disponibles.

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ANEXO: Ficha técnica de la película *Fresa y Chocolate*

Título original	Fresa y chocolate
Título en inglés	Strawberry and chocolate
Año	1993
Duración	110 minutos
País	Cuba
Guión	Senel Paz con la colaboración de Tomás Gutiérrez Alea
Dirección	Tomás Gutiérrez Alea y Juan Carlos Tabío
Producción General	Miguel Mendoza, Camilo Vives
Dirección de fotografía	Mario García Joya
Montaje o edición	Miriam Talavera, Osvaldo Donatién
Género	Drama
Música original	José María Vitier
Dirección artística	Fernando O´Relly
Vestuario	Miriam Dueñas
Sonido	Germinal Hernández
Escenografía	Fernando O´rrelly
Productora	Coproducción Cuba-España-México
Reparto	Jorge Perugorría (Diego), Vladimir Cruz (David), Mirtha Ibarra (Nancy), Francisco Gattorno (Miguel), Marilyn Solaya (Vivian), Joel Angelino (Germán)

Premios
1992: Premio al mejor guión inédito. XIV Festival Internacional del Nuevo Cine Latinoamericano, La Habana, Cuba.
1993: Filme significativo del año. Selección Anual de la Crítica, La Habana, Cuba.
1993: Premio de Radio Habana Cuba. XV Festival Internacional del Nuevo Cine Latinoamericano, La Habana, Cuba.
1993: Premio de El Caimán Barbudo. XV Festival Internacional del Nuevo Cine Latinoamericano, La Habana, Cuba.
1993: Premio de la Popularidad. XV Festival Internacional del Nuevo Cine Latinoamericano, La Habana, Cuba.
1993: Premio de la Unión de Círculos de Cine Arci Nova (UCCA). XV Festival Internacional del Nuevo Cine Latinoamericano, La Habana, Cuba.
1993: Premio de la OCIC. XV Festival Internacional del Nuevo Cine Latinoamericano, La Habana, Cuba.
1993: Premio FIPRESCI. XV Festival Internacional del Nuevo Cine Latinoamericano, La Habana, Cuba.
1993: Premio Coral de dirección. XV Festival Internacional del Nuevo Cine Latinoamericano, La Habana, Cuba.
1993: Premio Coral de actuación femenina secundaria (Mirta Ibarra). XV Festival Internacional del Nuevo Cine Latinoamericano, La Habana, Cuba.

1993: Premio Coral de actuación masculina (Jorge Perugorría). XV Festival Internacional del Nuevo Cine Latinoamericano, La Habana, Cuba.

1993: Primer Premio Coral. XV Festival Internacional del Nuevo Cine Latinoamericano, La Habana, Cuba.

1994: Premios Panambi a la mejor película latinoamericana, al mejor guión, al mejor trabajo actoral (Jorge Perugorría y Vladimir Cruz), a la mejor banda sonora y premio del público. 5to. Festival de Asunción, Paraguay.

1994: Gran Premio del público. II Festival Paso del Norte, México.

1994: Oso de Plata a la mejor película, Primer Premio del Público, Primera Mención Especial del Jurado Ecuménico. Festival de Cine de Berlín.

1994: Premio a la mejor película exhibida en Brasil. Encuesta Periódico O´Globo, Río de Janeiro, Brasil.

1994: Premio Caracol al mejor guión (Senel Paz). Festival de Cine, Radio y TV de la UNEAC, La Habana.

1994: Filme significativo del año. Selección Anual de la Crítica, La Habana, Cuba.

1994: Premio Caracol de Artes Escénicas a Mirta Ibarra, Jorge Perugorría y Vladimir Cruz. Festival de Cine, Radio y TV de la UNEAC, La Habana.

1994: Premio ONDAS. Radio Barcelona, España.

1994: Primer Premio Kikito de actuación compartido (Jorge Perugorría y Vladimir Cruz). Premio del Público. Premio de la Crítica. Premio Kikito a la mejor película. Premio de actuación femenina (Mirta Ibarra). Festival de Gramado, Brasil.

1994: Premio del Público y Premio de la Crítica. Festival de Cine Latinoamericano de Paso Norte, Ciudad Juárez, México.

Premio a la mejor película extranjera por la Asociación de Cronistas de Cine de Nueva York.

1995: Premio Goya a la mejor película extranjera de habla hispana otorgado por la Academia de Artes Y Ciencias Cinematográficas de España.

1995: Nominada al Premio Oscar a la mejor película extranjera por la Academia de Artes y Ciencias Cinematográficas de Hollywood, Estados Unidos.

1995: Premio a la mejor película, a la mejor actuación protagónica (Jorge Perugorría), a la mejor actuación secundaria (Vladimir Cruz) y a la mejor dirección otorgado por la Asociación de Críticos Cinematográficos de Los Ángeles, California, EEUU.

EFL STUDENTS' PREFERENCES TOWARDS WRITTEN CORRECTIVE FEEDBACK: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY ON AGE AND LEVEL OF PROFICIENCY[1]

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Abstract

Corrective feedback (CF, henceforth) has been an issue of investigation in second language acquisition for a number of years now. In the English-as-a-foreign-language classroom, students may have different preferences towards how to have their errors corrected. Research has shown that differences in the learning styles of the students will affect the learning environment by either supporting or inhibiting their intentional cognition and active engagement. In the classroom, teachers can use this information as a tool to motivate students and help them improve their learning process. This exploratory study was carried out to analyse students' preferences towards written correction in two different groups at a high school in Spain. Students filled out a questionnaire and results were analysed in order to determine whether age and level of English may be factors affecting their preferences for error correction.

Keywords: corrective feedback, age, proficiency, preferences, error.

Resumen

La retroalimentación correctiva lleva años siendo un tema de investigación en el campo de la adquisición de segundas lenguas. En el aula de inglés como lengua extranjera, los estudiantes pueden mostrar preferencias distintas en lo que respecta a la corrección de sus errores. Investigaciones anteriores revelan que las diferencias en los estilos de aprendizaje de los estudiantes pueden afectar el clima de aprendizaje, bien reforzando o inhibiendo su participación. De esta forma, en el aula, los profesores pueden utilizar esta información como herramienta para motivar a los estudiantes y ayudarles a mejorar en el proceso de aprendizaje. El presente estudio exploratorio tiene como objetivo analizar las preferencias de dos grupos de estudiantes españoles hacia la corrección escrita. Los participantes rellenaron un cuestionario para determinar si la edad y nivel de competencia en inglés pueden ser factores que afecten sus preferencias hacia la corrección de errores.

Palabras clave: retroalimentación correctiva, edad, nivel de competencia, preferencias, error.

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1. Introduction

About thirty years ago, Touchie stated that "language learning, like any kind of human learning, involves committing errors" (1986, 75). The treatment of these errors in the English-as-a-foreign language (EFL, henceforth) classroom has been a matter of concern for some years. Its importance emerged with the rise of learner-centred approaches to writing instruction in L1 composition classes in the 1970s (Hyland and Hyland 2006). Ferris admits that "it is unrealistic to expect that L2 writers' production will be error free" (2002, 5) and she claims that errors in the second language classroom should be treated. In the late 70s, Hendrickson (1978) set forth that learners were not always able to identify their own mistakes and thus they needed a more expert source to help them find those mistakes. About thirty years later, Zacharias (2007) explained that most students firmly took for granted that teacher feedback was a keystone to improve their writings as they assumed teachers were more competent in terms of linguistic knowledge.[2]

Authors like Dulay and Burt (1974) regarded error making as inevitable and necessary to language learning. It is even considered a symptom to show that the learner is in the developmental process of learning and internalising the rules of the target language. As Alavi and Kaivanpanah put it "providing language learners with clear feedback plays a crucial role in developing learners' language abilities and helping them direct their learning" (2007, 181). Similarly, Zacharias (2007) enhances the importance of written feedback by suggesting that providing feedback can be a way to help students improve the quality of their writing and increase their motivation in such practice. However, Touchie (1986) considers that teachers should not correct all students' errors since it could be disruptive in their learning process and discourage them from communicating. He agrees on correcting errors which interfere with the understanding of the message and affect communication. Additionally, this author maintained that errors occurring frequently and affecting a large number of students must be corrected over less frequent errors and those affecting few students in the classroom.

Contrary to many researchers on SLA, Truscott (1996) defined corrective feedback as ineffective and harmful for learners. This author pointed out students' unwillingness to change their intuitions and adopt their teacher's correction. He claimed that they either continued writing as they had done before or avoided the conflictive word or structure in following writings, adopting a negative or passive attitude towards teachers' corrections. By the same token, Lee claimed that "to date there is no research evidence to show that more error feedback would lead to better or faster development of grammatical accuracy in writing" (2003, 156). Nevertheless, the great majority of research on error

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[2] Corder (1973) was the first author to distinguish between error and mistake in interlanguage, and classified errors in terms of the difference between the learners' utterance and the reconstructed version. He proposed a non-exhaustive classification of errors: *omission* of some required element, *addition* of some unnecessary or incorrect element, *selection* of an incorrect element, and *misordering* of the elements. In the present paper, we will be using the term 'error' and 'mistake' interchangeably.

correction suggests that it should take place in SLA classrooms. Moreover, studies measuring students' improvement from a longitudinal approach prove that students receiving feedback on errors over a period of time can improve their language accuracy (Fathman and Whalley 1990; Ferris and Helt 2000; Ferris and Roberts 2001; Ferris 2002).

2. Theoretical background

2. 1. Students' preferences towards corrective feedback

According to Hyland and Hyland, "ESL students, particularly those from cultures where teachers are highly directive, generally welcome and expect teachers to notice and comment on their errors and may feel resentful if their teacher does not do so" (2006, 3). Preferences may be affected by students' context, which they define as a frame which encloses feedback and offers resources for its proper interpretation. The institution itself, the classroom's principles, students' goals in learning to write, their abilities, and the genres studied are frequently important but ignored variables in studies on feedback.

Research on EFL students' preferences to teacher feedback demonstrate that learners keep in mind and appreciate encouraging comments and expect constructive criticism instead of clichéd remarks (Ferris 1995a; Hyland 1998). Some authors maintain that corrections are not as discouraging to ESL and EFL students as for native speakers of the language, since they do not invest so much self-esteem in their writings as native speakers do (Leki 1991; Schachter 1991).

A number of studies investigating students' preferences to teacher feedback (Cohen and Cavalcanti 1990; Leki 1991; Hedgcock and Lefkowitz 1994, 1996; Ferris 1995b) showed that learners consider teacher feedback valuable and helpful in order to improve their writing. As Ferris (2003) claims, if students do not get what they believe they need, they may lose motivation. Furthermore, results point to a students' preference for specific comments and suggestions for revising, together with the fact that learners tend to prefer direct feedback rather than indirect correction (Ferris and Roberts 2001; Chandler 2003). For example, Lim (1990) investigated the attitudes, opinions and expectations of Singapore secondary school students to error and feedback and found out a positive attitude toward peer correction in the classroom. Students preferred their grammar errors to be corrected first, followed by vocabulary, spelling, organization of ideas, and punctuation errors. Her findings showed that students wanted to take an active part in correcting the error, but they stated that the primary responsibility for correcting errors lay on the teacher.

Leki's (1991) findings showed that ESL students valued grammar as the most important aspect in writing, followed by spelling, vocabulary and punctuation. However, she reported that not all of them always looked carefully at the corrections in those areas. Moreover, none of the students in the study wanted to receive indirect correction, indeed, the students wanted direct correction along with metalinguistic clues to assist them in correcting the error.

In turn, Oladejo (1993) analysed whether students' preferences differed according to their level of proficiency in the target language. His findings revealed that learners did not favour peer correction and it was not successful for advanced learners, although this correction technique may be successful for intermediate ones. The majority of students in the study showed a preference for organization of ideas to be corrected, followed by grammar errors, vocabulary errors and finally spelling and punctuation errors.

Hedgcock and Lefkowitz (1994) conducted a survey study of 110 ESL and 137 EFL (French, German and Spanish) students and found that both groups had a positive attitude toward written corrective feedback. However, they reported that EFL students had a preference for correction on grammar, vocabulary, content and style, while ESL students preferred feedback on content and organization. In this line of research, Sheen (2011) pointed out that this EFL students' preference for feedback on linguistic features matches the students' priorities and goals in learning, as EFL learners are more interested in developing their L2 knowledge, while ESL learners focus on developing their writing skill. Sheen concludes that "the learning context may determine how learners respond to the corrective feedback they receive" (2011, 44). Besides, individual factors such as proficiency level, learning style, personality of the subject and motivation may have an impact in the way learners respond to corrective feedback.

In the study conducted by Storch and Wigglesworth (2010), findings showed that the effectiveness of written corrective feedback depended on the type of errors made and the learners' level of proficiency. They suggested that particular elements like learners' attitudes, beliefs and objectives are essential factors, though usually neglected in written corrective feedback research, in determining if learners were able to benefit from feedback.

Although similar opinions on the topic would be desirable, teachers and students often have different attitudes on error correction. As Oladejo puts it "teachers' opinion and classroom practice regarding corrective feedback do not always match the perceived needs and expectations of learners; such as correcting all errors as they appear, while others believe that constant correction can boost students' level of anxiety and thus hinder learning" (1993, 84). Similarly to teachers, some students prefer being corrected more than others but there is a tendency for all students wishing to be corrected, as Leki's (1991) study mentioned above corroborated. Apart from this study, many others have shown that L2 learners want teacher correction in the classroom (Ferris, 1995b; Hedgcock & Lefkowitz, 1994, 1996). However, some students find constant correction deterring and irritating. They can even become frustrated and refuse to participate in order to prevent committing errors (Zhu, 2010). Due to these different attitudes, Zhu maintains that "both teachers and students should adopt a reasonable approach to handle the error-correction problem effectively and appropriately in order to adapt to their preferences in learning and teaching" (2010, 128). Schulz (1996) also states that by knowing students' attitudes

towards error correction teachers can adapt to the learner's needs and preferences, a fact which may influence the effectiveness of teachers' feedback.

According to Sheen (2011), one of the reasons why corrective feedback has shown manifold results in research regarding the efficacy of teachers' correction is learner variables. Sheen explains that "individual difference (ID) variables-such as language aptitude, anxiety, and attitudes towards corrective feedback-influence learners' receptivity to error correction and thus the effectiveness of the feedback" (2011, 129). She adds that learners differ according to both cognitive factors, such as language proficiency, intelligence and learning strategies, and affective factors (for example, level of anxiety, attitudes and degree of motivation). These variables may affect the process of language learning and its subsequent outcomes. For example, a study conducted by Havranek and Cesnik (2001) showed that corrective feedback benefited learners with a positive attitude towards error correction and with a high language level. Schulz's (1996) findings indicated that the participants in her study (ESL learners) had positive attitudes towards error correction. Schulz (2001) conducted a follow-up study with FL students and reported that those learners also considered explicit grammar instruction and corrective feedback essential in language learning. We can conclude from this study that learners with a preference for grammatical accuracy have a positive attitude towards error correction. This fact may also impact on corrective feedback and grammatical accuracy, as those learners with positive attitudes may benefit more from corrective feedback than those with negative ones (Sheen, 2011).

2.2. Students' preferences and level of proficiency

Learners' variables, as mentioned above, seem to influence the effectiveness of corrective feedback. Some early research on oral correction (Ammar and Spada, 2006; Havranek and Cesnik, 2001) has shown that higher proficient students benefited more from CF -that is, they obtained higher scores in the post-test- than students with lower proficiency levels. This is particularly relevant in the case of recasts (Lyster and Ranta, 1997), since they may foster language development for high-proficiency learners. In their study, Ammar and Spada (2006) found that only students with a high proficiency level were helped by recasts, whereas both low- and high-proficiency students benefited from prompts.

In a very recent study on students' perceptions and preferences of corrective feedback, Chen et al. (2016) claim that, irrespective of level (intermediate, advanced-intermediate, and advanced), their EFL participants reported a preference towards error correction, especially on content and organization, and were more favourable to direct rather than indirect feedback, in line with Amrhein and Nassaji's (2010) results from ESL learners. Chen et al. (2016) also state that students at all levels expect teacher's comments on grammar, whereas advanced learners would like more feedback on content and structure of their writings.

2.3. Students' preferences and age

Age is the second factor we are taking into account to examine its likely impact on students' preferences towards CF. As Zarei (2011) points out, CF has to be compatible with students' needs and preferences in order for correction to be effective. These needs may differ from one age group to another. In her study, Zarei (2011) used a questionnaire on treatment of errors and error correction with two age groups (15-20 and 20-35 year-old Iranian students). Overall findings show that older students want to have all their errors corrected, irrespective of their frequency. Moreover, the percentages for explicit correction and metalinguistic feedback were statistically significant for the older group. According to the author, these results may be attributed to the fact that adult learners benefit more from explicit instruction due to their cognitive development. Moreover, in the specific case of the Iranian context, older students are accustomed to a teacher-centred approach.

Taking into account the literature discussed above, the aim of this exploratory study is to contribute to the body of research examining what factors may influence EFL students' preferences for error correction and feedback. Specifically, we seek to analyse whether the variables of age and level of proficiency have an impact on students' preferences and opinions about CF. In order to do so, the following research question has been formulated:

RQ: What are students' preferences for error correction and feedback taking into account the variables of age and level?

3. The study

3.1. Participants

Two groups of students (n = 53) belonging to two different intact classes participated in the study. The first group was composed of 29 students in 4th year of Spanish Compulsory Education (*ESO*), 18 male and 11 female students. The students' ages ranged from 15 to 16 years old. The second group was composed of 24 students in the 2nd year of *Bachillerato*. There were 17 female and 7 male students between 17 and 18 years old.

The *Quick Placement Test* (Oxford, 2001) was administered to students in order to determine their level of proficiency. Table 1 illustrates the level of proficiency of participants in both groups according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).

Table 1. Level of proficiency of subjects in the study

GROUP 1 (n=29)			GROUP 2 (n=24)		
Level of proficiency	A2	B1	B2	A2	B1	B2
Number of students	13	12	4	6	12	6

The vast majority of participants (92%) were Spanish, but two other nationalities (Romanian, 6% and Ecuadorian, 2%) were also present in the study. As for the mother tongue of participants, 61% of Spanish students stated it was Catalan, 26% Spanish and 13% could speak both. These percentages are due to the existence of two co-official languages in the context of the present study. Romanian students claimed Romanian was their mother tongue.

3.2. Data collection procedure

Data were collected by means of a 12-item questionnaire which was filled out by the two EFL groups. This questionnaire, adapted from Hamouda (2011, see appendix 1) asked about students' preferences towards written corrective feedback. The questionnaire was translated into Catalan so that participants could fully understand the different questions.

3.3. Results and discussion

As can be seen in Table 2 below, which examines the first variable (that is, students' age), the majority of students prefer being corrected with a red pen (92% in Group 1 and 88% in Group 2, respectively). Also, both groups want the teacher to be the one who corrects (89% and 92%), keeping self-correction with percentages below 10%. In turn, responses for item 3 show that all students in Group 2 prefer to have all their errors corrected and 4% of students in the youngest group (Group 1) would rather be corrected only some of the errors they had made. This result concurs with Zarei's (2011) findings which reveal that the older group of students want to have their errors corrected at all times.

Results for item 4 show a higher preference for getting the right answer instead of letting the students themselves correct their errors, although the percentages are quite balanced in both groups irrespective of age. Unlike previous studies which show a preference for explicit feedback for older learners (Zarei, 2011), our participants prefer the teacher to cross out the errors and to give the appropriate word (65% in Group 1 and 50% of the answers in Group 2). Still, a high percentage of students prefer the teacher to underline the errors and to write comments at the end of the essay, as attested in item 6. Only a low percentage (4% in Group 1 and 8% in Group 2) chose a correction code as a technique to have their errors corrected.

Most students from both groups like receiving specific and detailed comments from the teacher when given an essay back. Students in Group 1 considered grammar, content, organization and vocabulary as equally important factors in an essay. Students in Group 2 favoured grammar and content (50% each), but none of them chose either organization or vocabulary, in line with previous research (Lim 1990; Leki 1991). As for item 8, both groups claimed the teacher should point out grammar errors (73% in Group 1 and 75% in Group 2) over vocabulary and other types of errors. The answers for item 9 reveal that the vast majority of students in both groups want correction even if understanding of the message is not hindered (93% in Group 1 and 96% in Group 2), in line with previous research on the topic (Lyster et al., 2013).

Similar percentages are obtained for item 10: irrespective of age, both groups report the desire to have all their errors corrected, a finding which differs from Zarei's (2011) study as she found that younger students had lower scores for frequent errors when compared to older students (40.3% vs. 68.4%, respectively).

Seventy-three per cent of students in Group 1 considered they would not repeat a corrected error in the future (item 11); however, answers are equally balanced in Group 2, as 50% reported they would make the same mistake in subsequent writings. Finally, item 12 shows that age does not seem to be a discriminating factor, since participants stated that both the teacher and the students should get involved in the task of spotting and correcting mistakes. Only a higher percentage is found in Group 2 which claimed that this task should be the teacher's (58 % vs. 42 %), as Ferris (1995b) had also reported.

Table 2. **Students' preferences per age**

		Group 1 / Group 2			
1.	I prefer my teacher to correct my essays in...	Red pen 92% / 88%	Green pen 4% / 12%	Pencil 4% / 0%	-
2.	Who do you prefer to correct your essays?	The teacher 89% / 92%	My classmates 4% / 0%	Self-correction 7% / 8%	-
3.	In my essays, I prefer the teacher to	All the errors 96% / 100%	Some errors 4% / 0%	-	-

	highlight...			
4.	I prefer the teacher...	Tells me the right answer **55% / 63%**	Marks the errors and I correct them **45% / 37%**	-	-
5.	What do you prefer the teacher does to correct your essays?	Cross the errors out and give the appropriate words **65% / 50%**	Underline the errors and write comments at the end of the essay **31% / 42%**	Use a correction code **4% / 8%**	Write questions **0% / 0%**
6.	What kind of comments would you like your teacher to make when giving an essay back?	General comments **24% / 17%**	Specific and detailed comments **68% / 71%**	Positive comments **4% / 8%**	Negative comments **4% / 4%**
7.	The most important in an essay is...	Grammar **31% / 50%**	Content **24% / 50%**	Organization **24% / 0%**	Vocabulary **21% / 0%**
8.	In your essays, the teacher should point out...	Grammar errors **73% / 75%**	Vocabulary errors **10% / 4%**	Other **17% / 21%**	-
9.	If an error does not affect the understanding of the	Yes **93% / 96%**	No **7% / 4%**	-	-

message, should it be corrected?				
10. If there were many errors in your essay, what would you like your teacher to do?	Correct all errors **73% / 67%**	Correct only serious errors **7% / 21%**	Correct errors affecting understanding **10% / 8%**	Correct all repeated errors **10% / 4%**
11. Once your errors are corrected, do you think you will repeat them?	Yes **27% / 50%**	No **73% / 50%**	-	-
12. Which statement do you agree on?	The main task of the teacher is to locate and correct students' errors **48% / 58%**	The main task of students is to locate and correct their own errors **52% / 42%**	-	-

Statistical analysis was carried out by means of a Chi-square test to the 12 items in the questionnaire using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SSPS) version 20. Only item 7 *The most important in an essay is...* obtained a statistically significant difference, as Table 3 shows:

Table 3. Significant difference between groups depending on age (p<0.05)

	Value χ^2	d.f.	Significance
7. The most important in an essay is... (grammar/content/organization/vocabulary)	14.401	3	.002

In light of the results, the variable of age does not seem to be a factor as far as students' preferences for correction and feedback are concerned. Only a significant difference was found as for the importance attached to grammar and content in an essay: older students considered them as equally important, without paying attention to organization or vocabulary. The picture is rather different for students in Group 1, since they show similar percentages in all four areas. This was not an expected finding for Group 2, because this group of students are about to take the Spanish university entrance exam (*Selectividad*) in which they are required to write an essay which is graded taking into account not only grammar and content, but also vocabulary and organization of ideas.

The findings for the second variable in our research question (level of proficiency in English) are displayed in Table 4. Our results are going to be compared to Chen et al.'s (2016) paper for three reasons: first, to our knowledge, it is one of the most recent studies on students' preferences towards CF taking level of proficiency as a variable, second, it also had EFL participants belonging to a context in which form-focused instruction is the main mode of teaching and students have very few opportunities to interact in English outside the classroom. Thirdly, the questionnaire they employed to gather data had many similar items to the one used in the present study so that the responses can be compared.

For item 1, the three groups showed a clear preference for correction in red pen, although more advanced students (B2 level) also chose correction in green pen (20%) or pencil (10%). Most students in the three groups preferred being corrected by the teacher and having all errors corrected, as results for items 2 and 3 show, in line with Ferris' (1995b) findings. Yet, in Chen et al.'s (2016) study, the Chi-square test showed no statistically significant difference among learners at different levels of proficiency when asked 'it is instructors' responsibility to provide feedback'.

Students with the lowest level of proficiency would rather have the teacher tell them the right answer; in turn, B1 students favoured being given the right answer and correcting the errors themselves equally and 60% of higher level students preferred to correct the errors themselves. Most A2 and B1 students reported in item 5 that they preferred the teacher to cross out errors and provide the right version, although B2 students would like to have their deviant production underlined and get teacher's comments (60%). When giving an essay back, most students in the three groups wanted the teacher to give them specific and detailed comments, especially B2 students (90%). This latter result corroborates Chen et al.'s (2016) findings, as their advanced students preferred comprehensive feedback to simple error correction.

Item 7 reveals that grammar is considered the most important area in an essay by most students, especially by B2 students (70%). Consequently, the results for item 8 show that grammar errors are labelled as the most important ones the teacher should point out, reaching a 90% for B2 students. Our percentages do not confirm Chen et al.'s study, as they report consistent

responses across the three proficiency levels: organizational errors were rated first, followed by grammar and vocabulary errors.

All students with a B1 or B2 level of proficiency reported that errors which do not affect understanding of the message should be corrected as well. In turn, only 16% of A2 students consider that this kind of error should not be corrected. Chen et al.'s findings for this item are mixed: same priority is given to errors affecting message comprehensibility and having all errors corrected. As for item 10, the three groups expressed their preference to have all errors corrected in an essay in which many errors had been made, especially in the case of B2 students (90%).

Table 4. **Students' preferences per level of proficiency**

Level of proficiency	A2 / B1/ B2			
1. I prefer my teacher to correct my essays in...	Red pen 95%/96%/70%	Green pen 5%/4%/20%	Pencil 0%/0%/10%	-
2. Who do you prefer to correct your essays?	The teacher 95%/88%/90%	My classmates 0%/4%/0%	Self-correction 5%/8%/10%	-
3. In my essays, I prefer the teacher to highlight...	All the errors 100%/96%/100%	Some errors 0%/4%/0%	-	-
4. I prefer the teacher...	Tells me the right answer 79%/50%/40%	Marks the errors and I correct them 21%/50%/60%	-	-
5. What do you prefer the teacher does to correct your essays?	Cross the errors out and give the appropriate words 68%/58%/40	Underline the errors and write comments at the end of the essay 32%/29%/6	Use a correction code 0%/13%/0%	-

		%	0%		
6.	What kind of comments would you like your teacher to make when giving an essay back?	General comments **16%/29%/10%**	Specific and detailed comments **79%/54%/90%**	Positive comments **0%/13%/0%**	Negative comments **5%/4%/0%**
7.	The most important in an essay is...	Grammar **36%/29%/70%**	Content **32%/50%/10%**	Organization **16%/17%/0%**	Vocabulary **16%/4%/20%**
8.	In your essays, the teacher should point out...	Grammar errors **74%/63%/90%**	Vocabulary errors **16%/4%/0%**	Other **10%/33%/10%**	-
9.	If an error does not affect the understanding of the message, should it be corrected?	Yes **84%/100%/100%**	No **16%/0%/0%**	-	-
10.	If there were many errors in your essay, what would you like your teacher to do?	Correct all errors **64%/67%/90%**	Correct only serious errors **10%/21%/0%**	Correct errors affecting understanding **10%/8%/10%**	Correct all repeated errors **16%/4%/0%**

11. Once your errors are corrected, do you think you will repeat them?	Yes **48%/42%/10%**	No **52%/58%/90%**	-	-
12. Which statement do you agree on?	The main task of the teacher is to locate and correct students' errors **63%/54%/30%**	The main task of students is to locate and correct their own errors **37%/46%/70%**	-	-

The perceived impact of feedback in subsequent essays is dramatically different depending on students' proficiency: A2 and B1 students showed balanced results, whereas 90% of B2 students claimed that their corrected mistakes would not be made again in the future. This result may be linked with responses from items 4 and 5, in which B2 students showed a preference for having their errors self-corrected and the teacher's task was to underline and provide comments. Therefore, these techniques for error correction may help learners become aware of their wrong written output and internalize the right version. These findings are also in line with the responses for the last item, in which B2 students reported that the main task of a student was to locate and correct their own errors (70%). Lower-level students favoured the view that it was the teacher who should carry out the correcting task. Our findings support Chen et al.'s (2016) results in that their advanced level learners required less explicit teacher's feedback and lower levels preferred the teacher to locate and indicate the type of error.

A Chi-square test (see Table 5) was applied to the above responses, and according to the English level of the participants, this test showed significant differences in the students' preferences in correction for either obtaining the right answer straightaway or having the errors located but to correct the errors themselves (item 4). A2 students significantly preferred their teacher to give them the correct answer. Therefore, the higher the English level of the students, the greater their preference for correcting the errors on their own. The second statistically significant difference refers to item 9, since A2 students claimed that errors which did not affect the understanding of the message should not be corrected.

Table 5. **Significant differences between groups depending on level of proficiency (p<0.05)**

	Value χ^2	d.f.	Significance
4. I prefer the teacher... (tells me the right answer/ marks the errors and I correct them)	5.396	2	.048
9. If an error does not affect the understanding of the message, should it be corrected?	5.691	2	.047

4. Conclusion and pedagogical implications

Broadly speaking, the analysis of our data demonstrates that age and level of proficiency are not significant variables in the attitudes and preference towards feedback in the EFL students of the present study, as only one statistically significant difference was found for the first variable (i.e., age): older students seem to be more concerned for grammar and content than for organization or vocabulary.

The second variable under revision (i.e., proficiency level) reveals that low-level students prefer to be given the right answer directly. This preference may be due to the fact that, in this way, they can check the difference between the L2 and their L1. Earlier research on writing (for example, Manchón et al., 2000) has claimed that writers with a low level of proficiency in their L2 will often rely on their first-language resources, which may result in transfer errors. A second finding from the present study reveals that B2 students wish to self-correct their mistakes, corroborating recent research (Chen et al., 2016). Moreover, A2 learners do not believe that errors which do not hinder comprehension should be corrected.

In light of the results of the study, some pedagogical implications can be drawn in order to improve the provision of feedback in the L2 classroom. It may be suggested that teachers include short discussions on error correction in everyday lessons so that students clearly understand the aim of feedback and the different types and methodologies available for such practice. As suggested by Lyster et al. (2013), it is a current matter of concern to ascertain how teachers can best tailor their CF to match students' age and preferences.

Teachers should consider additional editing strategies for correcting errors in the L2 classroom. One way is to encourage students to correct their own errors. In order to do so, it would be advisable to devote some time in class to learn new editing strategies. Students would thus be able to learn how to self-correct under the teacher's supervision, which is indispensable to guide learners in the process. As the findings for level of proficiency of the present study show, B2 students show favourable attitudes towards locating and self-correcting their errors. In Sheen's (2011, 48) words, "pushing learners to stretch their

interlanguage engages them in noticing the gap and in hypothesis testing." Not only does self-correction reinforce students' motivation and empathy towards the teaching and learning process, it can also be highly productive if students are taught how to do it. Although it may be argued that elementary learners may need guidance and explicit or direct correction, self-correction may be a useful strategy for intermediate and advanced learners. We agree with Sheen and Ellis' (2011) claims which suggest that teachers should take learners' learning goals and attitudes towards correction into account. Additionally, teachers should bear in mind the variety of correction strategies available and adjust them to the needs of individual learners.[3]

In summary, Sheen (2011, 174) concludes that "the success of feedback depends on a myriad of cognitive, sociocultural, discoursal and internal and external learner factors that mediate the effectiveness of any particular feedback type." Accordingly, if teachers take learners' factors into account- including their attitudes and preferences- correction may be more favourable; therefore, ignoring these variables while providing feedback might turn into a futile effort.

This study presents some limitations due to its exploratory nature. Firstly, the analysis of 53 EFL students' preferences about error correction and feedback cannot be generalised and may not apply to other EFL learners from different learning backgrounds. Secondly, the participants' answers are self-measured and consist of preferences, so they cannot be rated as positive or negative. Moreover, the capacity and eagerness of the participants to answer accurately and faithfully to the questions in the questionnaire may not be taken for granted. Also, the difference in age of participants was not too wide to generalize findings, although some differences have been found regarding this variable and students' preferences towards written corrective feedback.

As aforementioned, the data from this study are limited and cannot be applied to a broader spectrum. Therefore, further research is required in order to examine whether age and level of proficiency are well-grounded variables affecting the attitudes and preferences of EFL students towards written error correction. There may be many other variables which affect students' preferences for written correction, such as how long the participants have been studying English or gender. Therefore, further research could be undertaken to analyse their impact on correction and feedback, which are areas of special concern in the acquisition of a foreign language.

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[3] As suggested by one anonymous reviewer, teachers should also try to discuss in class their learners' ideas about how languages are learnt under the scope of teachers' expertise and knowledge about this issue.

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ANNEX: Questionnaire 1 (adapted from Hamouda, 2011)

NAME:_____ **AGE:** _____

1. I prefer my teacher to correct my essays in...

Red pen__   Green pen__   Pencil__

2. Who do you prefer to correct your essays?

The teacher__   My classmates__   Self-correction__

3. In my essays, I prefer the teacher to highlight…

All the errors__   Some errors__

4. I prefer the teacher...

Tells me the right answer__   Marks the errors and I correct them__

5. What do you prefer the teacher does to correct your essays?

Cross out the errors and give the appropriate words __

Underline the errors and write comments at the end of the essay__

Use a correction code__

Write questions__

6. What kind of comments would you like your teacher to make when giving an essay back?

General comments__

Specific and detailed comments__

Positive comments__

Negative comments__

7. The most important in an essay is...

Grammar__   Content__   Organization__   Vocabulary__

8. In your essays, the teacher should point out...

Grammar errors__

Vocabulary errors__

Spelling errors__

Vocabulary errors__

Errors on organization of ideas__

9. If an error does not affect the understanding of the message, should it be corrected?

Yes__   No__

10. If there were many errors in your essay, what would you like your teacher to do?

Correct all errors__

Correct only serious errors__

Correct errors affecting understanding__

Correct all repeated errors__

11. Once your errors are corrected, do you think you will repeat them?

Yes__   No__

12. Which statement do you agree on?

The main task of the teacher is to locate and correct students' errors__

The main task of students is to locate and correct their errors__

NO COMPLETE UNKNOWN – THE SAGA OF BOB DYLAN'S LITERATURE NOBEL

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Abstract

This essay examines the phenomenon of the award of the Nobel Prize for Literature for 2016 to the US singer-songwriter Bob Dylan (born in 1941) and the worldwide controversy it has given rise to. After consideration of the history of the campaign and the various classes of objection (categorial, aesthetic, individual-centred, hardline left and identitarian), it is concluded that, given also the quality of Dylan's work, it is legitimate to award a Literature Nobel to a composer of songs.

Keywords: Bob Dylan, Nobel, literature, singer-songwriter, musician.

Resumen

Este texto analiza el fenómeno de la concesión del Premio Nobel de Literatura de 2016 al cantautor estadounidense Bob Dylan (nacido en 1941) y la polémica planetaria que ha suscitado. Después de considerarse la historia de la campaña y las varias clases de objeciones (relativas a categoría textual, estética, situación del individuo, ultraizquierdismo y discurso identitario), se llega a la conclusión de que, también a la luz de la calidad de la obra de Dylan, es lícito otorgar un Nobel de Literatura a un compositor de canciones.

Palabras clave: Bob Dylan, Nobel, literatura, cantautor, músico.

> *"But it's all been done before*
> *It's been written in a book"*
>
> Bob Dylan[1]

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[1] Bob Dylan, "Too Much of Nothing" (1967). All quotations in this article from Dylan's song texts are taken from the volume *Lyrics 1962-2001* (see below).

I

The award of the Nobel Prize for Literature for 2016 to the singer-songwriter Bob Dylan has generated an enormous planetary controversy. Before embarking on any assessment, it is therefore worth pausing to recall the basic facts. The Nobel Prize for Literature is awarded every year by the Swedish Academy pursuant to the will of the Swedish millionaire and philanthropist Alfred Nobel (1833-1896 - best-known as the inventor of dynamite), in parallel to the Nobel Prizes in five other fields, namely Medicine, Physics, Chemistry, Economics and Peace. The US citizen Bob Dylan, born in Duluth, Minnesota in 1941 of Jewish-Ukrainian origin as Robert Allen Zimmerman (he changed his name legally in 1962), thus becomes the 113th winner of the prize since it was established in 1901. Winning the Literature Nobel entails not only worldwide recognition of the laureate's name and work, but also a medal and a sizeable material reward, amounting today to 8 million Swedish crowns (approximately a million dollars). The official citation for Dylan's award is, as it usually is, brief, and simply reads: "The Nobel Prize in Literature for 2016 is awarded to Bob Dylan for having created new poetic expressions within the great American song tradition".[2] The citation is now accompanied on the official Nobel site by a biographical note, a discography and an extensive primary and secondary bibliography.

Controversy was compounded by Dylan's initial non-recognition of the prize. The award day was 13 October 2016, and a brief mention appeared the same day on Dylan's Facebook page,[3] but his official website, www.bobdylan.com, acknowledged the prize only a week later and in the most fleeting fashion. A mention of the Nobel appeared on the site[4] on 20 October in the official description of a new print edition of Dylan's collected lyrics,[5] only to be removed six hours after it had materialised (albeit a link from the site to the online retailer Amazon still led to a page carrying the mention). The Swedish Academy, after repeated efforts to locate the new laureate on the phone, had to wait until he called them on 28 October and formally accepted the award[6] (the site mention, however, was not restored). For a time, Dylan had seemed to be acting like his own character the Jokerman – a clear case of: "Oh Jokerman, you don't show any response"![7]

That much-awaited phonecall put paid to any notion that Dylan might follow Russia's Boris Pasternak in 1958 or France's Jean-Paul Sartre in 1964 in refusing the prize. In an interview granted to Britain's *The Telegraph* the following day, Dylan greeted the award as "amazing" and "hard to believe", and

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[2] Nobel Prize, official website. Web. 5 November 2016.
<www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/literature/>.
[3] Bob Dylan, official Facebook page. Web. 13 October 2016.
<https://www.facebook.com/bobdylan/>. That reference was not removed.
[4] Bob Dylan, official website. Web. 20 October 2016. <www.bobdylan.com>.
[5] The edition concerned is *Lyrics 1961-2012* (cf. below).
[6] For the phonecall, see the Nobel site. Web. 5 November 2016. <www.nobelprize.org/press/>.
[7] Dylan, "Jokerman" (1983).

said he would show up at the Nobel ceremony on 10 December "if it's at all possible".[8] The award is received by the laureate from the hands of Sweden's monarch, currently King Carl XVI Gustaf; the awardee is also invited to give a commemoration lecture. The Academy has said the lecture could for Dylan be replaced by a concert, but it is not yet known if he will proffer either.

The two weeks between award and recognition seemed a whole odyssey, but Dylan's Nobel in itself was in reality not a total surprise. It did not come out of the blue: both Dylan fans and Nobel buffs knew that the man from Minnesota had been a Nobel nominee every year for close on two decades. His name was first put forward by two hopeful devotees from Norway, and his candidacy was formally taken up in a letter to the Swedish Academy nominating Dylan for 1997, signed by US academic Gordon Ball, then a professor at the Virginia Military Institute.[9] In the first year of Dylan's nomination, the prize went to the Italian playwright Dario Fo, and from then on it was a long and patient wait for Dylan acolytes.

It is by no means always the case that the Swedish Academy awards the Nobel to someone internationally famous, and Dylan has most certainly not been given the prize 'because he is there'. A brief look at some of the names of the Nobel literature laureates since Dylan was first nominated is illuminative. Among the names on the roster are: Imre Kertesz (Hungary, 2002); Elfriede Jelinek (Austria, 2004); Herta Müller (Germany, 2009); Tomas Tranströmer (Sweden, 2011); Mo Yan (China, 2012); and Patrick Modiano (France, 2014). With all respect to these writers, how many even of those who consider themselves keen readers can place hand on heart and swear that they have read them? Last year's laureate, Svetlana Alexievich, a woman journalist from Belarus, is not exactly a household name. Nor, indeed, is the first-ever awardee, the French writer Sully Prudhomme (1901), who today is scarcely remembered for anything other than inaugurating the Literature Nobel. Indeed, when in 2010 an internationally known author, Peru's Mario Vargas Llosa, did win the prize, an Italian newspaper ironically headlined that 'at last someone we've heard of gets the Nobel'.

II

Bob Dylan is certainly – to quote his own "Like a Rolling Stone"[10] – not a "complete unknown". However, his Nobel is being received in some quarters as a perilous innovation, on the grounds that he is a songwriter and the literature Nobel should be a closed garden reserved for 'real' writers, where people who write songs are trespassers. Dylan's prose writings – i.e. his non-songwriting

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[8] Edna Gundersen. "World exclusive - Bob Dylan: 'I'll be at the Nobel Prize ceremony – if I can'". *The Telegraph*, 29 October 1916. Web. <www.telegraph.co.uk/men/the-filter/world-exclusive-bob-dylan---ill-be-at-the-nobel-prize-ceremony-i/>.

[9] Ball (2007).

[10] Dylan, "Like a Rolling Stone" (1965).

literary production – amount to two books, the stream-of-consciousness novel *Tarantula*[11] from 1966 and *Chronicles Volume One*[12] from 2004, the first (and so far only) instalment of his promised three-volume autobiography. *Tarantula* does not in general have a good press (though some readers might disagree), but conversely *Chronicles* does. At all events, it is clear from the citation that Dylan has been awarded the Nobel not for his prose writings (though they may have been taken into account), but for his songs.

The Dylan song canon has been estimated as comprising some 500 to 600 originals. Bob Dylan has to date released 37 studio albums dated between 1962 and 2016, plus live albums, compilations and large amounts of archive material. The original songs which have won him the Nobel constitute the harvest of (most of) the studio albums (some consist entirely or mostly of cover versions), a cull further enriched by the 'non-album' originals added to the canon over the years via compilations or archive releases. These sung texts correspond (at times approximately, as textual variants are not lacking) to the words-on-the-page texts to be found in the various print editions of Dylan's lyrics. The most recent widely available edition is the third, from 2004 (*The Lyrics 1962-2001*),[13] though that is in process of being superseded by a fourth edition, *The Lyrics 1961-2012*,[14] coincidentally slated for release in November 2016 and now available (it was over that book's online ad that the famous ephemeral Nobel acknowledgment flitted). There is also a scholarly variorum volume, *The Lyrics: Since 1962*,[15] published in 2014 as a limited edition edited and introduced by Christopher Ricks, professor of English at Boston University and one of Dylan's most vocal academic champions. From these print volumes - or else from the collection of lyrics on the official website - may be read the words of Bob Dylan's songs in their manifestation as literary text. It may be added that over the years Dylan's lyrics have been very widely translated into languages other than English – and as standalone text, a circumstance which should bolster his credibility as poet.[16] Equally, the substantive academic and literary-critical analysis of Dylan's lyrics is hardly new, dating back to 1972, when the first critical study of his work, Michael Gray's *Song and Dance Man: The Art of Bob Dylan*, appeared.[17]

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[11] Dylan. *Tarantula*. 1966. New York: St Martin's Press, 1994.
[12] Dylan. *Chronicles Volume One*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2004.
[13] Dylan. *The Lyrics 1962-2001*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2004.
[14] Dylan. *The Lyrics 1961-2012*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2016.
[15] Dylan. *The Lyrics: Since 1962*. Ed. and intr. Christopher Ricks. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2014.
[16] All of Dylan's works – *Tarantula*, *Chronicles* and various permutations of lyrics – have been translated into Spanish. A Spanish-language bibliography may be found on the Nobel site. For Dylan and the Spanish-speaking world, see Rollason (2007 and 2011).
[17] Gray (1972). His study has since gone through two more editions – see Gray (1981 and 2000).

The Nobel is the result of an assessment of a writer's entire oeuvre (unlike accolades such as the Man Booker Prize which go to an author for a single work – and often in a single genre, such as the novel). It is awarded for a writer's literary quality and for the presence in the awardee's work of an 'ideal' tendency, whatever that may be. To quote Alfred Nobel's will, it rewards, "in the field of literature", "the most outstanding work in an ideal direction".[18] The worldwide debate since the award of the prize has been over whether the best-selling, hyperinfluential, 75-year-old US singer-songwriter called Bob Dylan deserves it.

The award was hailed by leading politicians (Barack Obama and Al Gore) and, among Dylan's musical peers, by Bruce Springsteen, Tom Waits and Leonard Cohen. More nuanced was the reaction from the literary community. If writers such as Salman Rushdie, Joyce Carol Oates and Stephen King (the first two themselves long-standing Nobel nominees) lauded the accolade, the likes of Hari Kunzru, Margaret Atwood and – above all – fellow Nobel Mario Vargas Llosa were not amused,[19] while to judge from the reactions on its website the US branch of the writers' organisation PEN was split down the middle.[20] In the academic and journalistic sphere, the decision was praised by all of Dylan's major long-term critics. The authors of the most important studies on Dylan's work duly bore witness: Christopher Ricks (*Dylan's Visions of Sin*),[21] Michael Gray (*Song and Dance Man*),[22] Greil Marcus (*Invisible Republic*),[23] Stephen Scobie (*Alias Bob Dylan Revisited*);[24] so too did original proposer Gordon Ball.[25]

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[18] "Alfred Nobel's Will". 1895. Translated extract. Web. 30 October 2016. <www.nobelprize.org/alfred_nobel/will>.

[19] For Obama, Gore, Rushdie, Oates, King and Kunzru, see: Devon Ivie. "Celebrities and Authors from Salman Rushdie to Joyce Carol Oates React to Bob Dylan's Nobel Prize in Literature". *Vulture*, 13 October 2016. Web. <www.vulture.com/2016/10/celebrities-authors-react-to-bob-dylans-nobel.html>. For Springsteen and Waits, see: Ben Kaye. "Bruce Springsteen, Tom Waits congratulate Dylan on Nobel Prize". *Consequence of Sound*, 14 October 2016. Web. <http://consequenceofsound.net/2016/10/bruce-springsteen-tom-waits-congratulate-bob-dylan-on-nobel-prize-win/>. For Atwood, see: Constance Grady. "Margaret Atwood does not care for Dylan's Nobel win". *Vox*, 22 October 2016. Web. <http://www.vox.com/culture/2016/10/22/13357806/margaret-atwood-bob-dylan-book-link-roundup>. For Cohen and Vargas Llosa, see below.

[20] PEN America [multi-author post]. "Should Bob Dylan Have Won the Nobel Prize for Literature?", 14 October 2016. Web. < https://pen.org/dylan-nobel>.

[21] Ricks (2003).

[22] See above for the different editions of Gray's book.

[23] Marcus (1997).

[24] Scobie (2003).

[25] For Ricks, see: Christopher Ricks. "Bob Dylan is a genius - but reducing his songs to 'literature' is dangerous". *The Telegraph*, 14 October 2016. Web. <www.telegraph.co.uk/music/what-to-listen-to/bob-dylan-is-a-genius--but-reducing-his-songs-to-literature-is-d/> (despite the title, Ricks hailed the award); for Gray, see: "Bob Dylan Wins Nobel Prize in Literature". Radio New Zealand Morning Report, 14 October 2016. Web. <www.radionz.co.nz/national/programmes/morningreport/audio/201819928/bob-dylan-wins-nobel-prize-in-literature>; for Marcus, see: Jon Wiener (interview), "Greil Marcus on Bob Dylan's Nobel Prize", *LA Review of Books*, 14 October 2016. Web. <https://lareviewofbooks.org/article/bob-dylans-nobel-prize>; for Scobie, see: Douglas Quan. "'It's a wonder that you still know how to breathe': Canadian academics on their favourite Bob

Obama responded: "Congratulations to one of my favourite poets, Bob Dylan, on a well-deserved Nobel".[26] Rushdie, a long-time fan of what might be called the Dylanic verses, affirmed that "Dylan towers over everyone" and that with this award "the frontiers of literature keep widening".[27] Cohen, who was soon to depart this life,[28] declared magnanimously of his rival that the award was like "pinning a medal on Mount Everest".[29] Praise rained down thick and fast. However, from the other side objections also poured in, and if we are properly to understand the significance of Dylan's award it is important to consider those demurrals and where they are coming from.

III

The objections may be broadly classified into five types, namely: generic/categorial ('I have nothing against Dylan's songwriting, but songwriting just isn't literature'); generic/qualitative ('rock lyrics can't be poetry and this award dumbs down the Nobel'); individual-centred ('Dylan doesn't need the Nobel or the money'); politically correct/'lefter-than-thou' ('Dylan wrote against war, so should refuse the prize'); and feminist/identitarian ('Dylan is just another white male').

Regarding the first objection, Dylan's Nobel citation refers to both "poetic expressions" and the "song tradition", thus implying that the Swedish Academy believes that song can be poetry and poetry can be song. It is stated, then, that Bob Dylan is part of the American popular song tradition, yes, but - also - of the American poetic tradition, there in the pantheon alongside Walt Whitman, Emily Dickinson, Hart Crane and Robert Frost. It is here that voices are raised affirming that 'songwriting is a perfectly valid activity but it isn't literature'. Thus, US author Peter Godwin argued on the PEN site that "read baldly on the page, alone, not much of Dylan's verse is great literature", declaring: "I'm a huge fan of Dylan. But Nobel literature laureate? I'm not so sure". Another writer reacting on that site, Natalie Diaz, went further, claiming that "the element

Dylan verses". *National Post*, 13 October 2016. Web. <www.nationalpost.com/m/wp/news/canada/blog.html?b=news.nationalpost.com/news/canada/its-a-wonder-that-you-still-know-how-to-breathe-canadian-academics-share-their-favourite-bob-dylan-verses>; for Ball, see: Gordon Ball. "I nominated Bob Dylan for the Nobel Prize more than a dozen times". *Washington Post*, 14 October 2016. Web. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/posteverything/wp/2016/10/14/i-nominated-bob-dylan-for-the-nobel-prize-youre-welcome/?utm_term=.532117ac470b>.

[26] For Obama, see *Vulture* site above.

[27] For Rushdie, this reaction is from: [unsigned] – "'Dylan towers over everyone': Salman Rushdie, Kate Tempest and more pay tribute to Bob Dylan". *Guardian*, 13 October 2016. Web. <https://www.theguardian.com/music/2016/oct/13/dylan-towers-over-everyone-salman-rushdie-kate-tempest-and-more-pay-tribute-to-bob-dylan>.

[28] Leonard Cohen died on 7 November 2016.

[29] For Cohen, see: [unsigned] – "Leonard Cohen: Giving Nobel to Bob Dylan like pinning a medal on Everest". *Guardian*, 14 October 2016. Web. <https://www.theguardian.com/music/2016/oct/14/leonard-cohen-giving-nobel-to-bob-dylan-like-pinning-medal-on-everest>.

of reading was taken out of the prize category this year", asking rhetorically: "When was the last time you read song lyrics"?[30]

Over this argument, I beg leave to differ. The Nobel has been awarded often enough to dramatists, from Ireland's George Bernard Shaw (1925) through the American Eugene O'Neill (1936) to the UK's Harold Pinter (2005) and, indeed, the recently deceased Dario Fo (1997). Writing for the theatre is perfectly comparable to songwriting since it combines verbal text with expression through a different medium, namely the stage. As I see it, the analogy is perfectly legitimate and I therefore do not consider the categorial objection to be valid. If theatre is words-plus-another-medium, so too is songwriting.

A precedent for Dylan's award has been claimed insofar as India's Rabindranath Tagore, the 1913 laureate and first non-Western author to win the Nobel, was among many other things a prolific songwriter. Indeed, Tagore composed no less than 2230 songs – far more than Dylan has authored! - in his native Bengali, which remain part of the local repertoire to this day. Several commentators, notably in India, have invoked Tagore as a predecessor.[31] However, the analogy is not complete, as Tagore, poet, novelist, short-story writer, essayist and songwriter, was awarded the prize primarily for the work of his best known outside India, in other words his poetry. The precedent does, though, partially stand.

Like the categorial objection, the qualitative objection relates to genre, but evaluatively rather than descriptively. The argument here is that popular song is an inherently substandard or inferior genre which cannot be put on the same footing as literature. That argument today may look old-fashioned, but still has its advocates. A journalist by the name of Tim Stanley, writing in *The Telegraph*, went so far as to call the award a "dumbing down of culture", and was approvingly quoted in India.[32] The French writer Pierre Assouline, a member of the prestigious Académie Goncourt, declared: "Je trouve que l'Académie suédoise se ridiculise. C'est méprisant pour les écrivains" ("I think the Swedish Academy has brought discredit on itself. This is an act of contempt towards writers"[33]). Even harsher was the critique emitted by no less a figure than Mario Vargas Llosa, who dismissed Dylan's Nobel as a concession to "la civilización del espectáculo" ("showbiz culture") and asked indignantly: "si el próximo año

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[30] For Godwin and Diaz, see the PEN site as cited above.

[31] See, for example: Sanchari Pal. "Bob Dylan Isn't the First Lyricist to Win the Nobel. Rabindranath Tagore is". *The Better India*, 20 October 2016. Web. <www.thebetterindia.com/72438/bob-dylan-rabindranath-tagore-nobel-prize-literature>.

[32] Quoted in: Babatdor Dkhar. "Why Bob Dylan didn't deserve Nobel Prize for Literature". *Hindustan Times*, 14 October 2016. Web. <www.hindustantimes.com/music/why-bob-dylan-didn-t-deserve-nobel-prize-for-literature/story-3dHU8ESqoaYRSefZQoVw5M.html>.

[33] [unsigned], "'Affligeant': des écrivains protestent contre le Nobel de Bob Dylan". *Le Nouvel Observateur*, 13 October 2016. Web. <http://tempsreel.nouvelobs.com/en-direct/a-chaud/28809-dylan-nobel-affligeant-ecrivains-protestent-contre-nobel.html#>.

no le van a dar el premio a un futbolista" ("if next year they won't give it to a footballer").[34]

Nonetheless, the most superficial glance at Dylan's work makes it clear that while his songs refer back to other popular songs from various genres, they are also replete with literary references. Quotations from the King James Bible are all over his work. His epic song from 1965, "Desolation Row", alludes to the Old and New Testaments, Shakespeare, Victor Hugo, Franz Kafka, Ezra Pound and T.S. Eliot. Songs on Dylan's more recent albums have taken inspiration from classical Roman writers (Ovid and Virgil), from Edgar Allan Poe, and from writers as obscure as Japan's Junichi Saga or forgotten American Civil War poet Henry Timrod. However, the best refutation of the 'dumbing-down/lowbrow/playing to the gallery' argument is the simple fact that it is precisely the work of Bob Dylan and its critical reception that has made the study of popular music lyrics an acceptable academic pursuit. Dylan's writing has shifted the cultural goalposts, and if the Nobel was to go to a songwriter, it makes entire sense that it should be to Dylan.

The argument that Dylan 'doesn't need the Nobel' was voiced at the annual Miguel de Cervantes festival in Guanajuato, Mexico, by the Spanish writer and academician Antonio Muñoz Molina. The speaker argued that the Nobel should go not to the already rich and famous but to the deserving poor – that being indigent and little-known (plus, admittedly, also being a good writer) should qualify someone for the Nobel: "Cuando el Nobel se le da a alguien que ya tiene todo, a quien no le hace ninguna falta, me parece superfluo" ("When the Nobel is given to someone who already has everything, who doesn't need anything, I find it redundant").[35] The objections here are, first, that the Nobel does in fact often go to obscure writers (as in the list I cited above), and second, that – to refer only to Latin American laureates - such a criterion would count out the likes of Colombia's best-selling Gabriel García Márquez (the 1982 winner), or, indeed, Bob Dylan's nemesis Mario Vargas Llosa. It is surely not a crime to sell large amounts of one's work and be able to live from one's creative activity: in Dylan's case no-one can deny that the man is rich, but that does not invalidate his songwriting - and in any case any laureate has the option of refusing the prize money or donating it to a good cause!

The 'lefter-than-thou' argument was spearheaded by British writer Will Self, who argued in *The Guardian* that Dylan should "follow Sartre and refuse the award". Self claimed that "it cheapens Dylan to be associated at all with a prize founded on an explosives and armaments fortune".[36] He is presumably

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[34] Quoted in: Mar González. "Vargas Llosa, crítico del Nobel a Dylan: 'El próximo año lo darán a un futbolista'". *ABC*, 20 October 2016. Web. <www.abc.es/espana/castilla-leon/abci-vargas-llosa-critico-nobel-dylan-proximo-daran-futbolista-201610201414_noticia.html>.

[35] Quoted in: Verónica Espinosa. "El Nobel no le hace falta a Dylan, critican en la FIC". *Proceso*, 19 November 2016. Web. <www.proceso.com.mx/459404/nobel-le-falta-a-dylan-critican-en-fic>.

[36] In: [unsigned] – "'Dylan towers over everyone': Salman Rushdie, Kate Tempest and more pay tribute to Bob Dylan", *Guardian*, 13 October 2016. Web.

implying that because back in 1963 Dylan wrote the song "Masters of War" against arms manufacturers he should refuse Nobel's money today. "Masters of War", though, however influential, is one song out of hundreds, and Self's argument if taken to its logical conclusion would mean that every living laureate (and especially all Peace Prize winners) should hand back their Nobel, all executors of dead laureates should return theirs too, and all six Nobel prizes should be abolished forthwith. Such an 'everything-must-fall' option might today gratify certain interest groups or campus iconoclasts, but it has very little to do with Bob Dylan as individual laureate and may therefore be dismissed.

The feminist/identitarian objection is that Bob Dylan is a white male, is therefore privileged by definition, and accordingly neither needs nor deserves an award like the Nobel. It may be represented by Australian writer and academic Natalie Kon-yu, who claimed, again in *The Guardian*, that "honouring Dylan is simply a return to the status quo" and said she found it "galling" that "people are calling this radical, a breath of fresh air from an otherwise stuffy institution". In her view, "Bob Dylan's Nobel prize isn't radical. He's just another white male writer". For Kon-yu, the prize should have gone to a woman, preferably a woman of colour.[37] Taking that line of thought further, on the PEN America site the poet Amy King called on Dylan to reject the prize and to "publicly admit that we don't need another white guy status quo affirmation in a world full of writers of colour penning their lives and ideals".[38]

It remains the case, however, that the purveyors of this line cannot quite reduce Bob Dylan to the negative stereotype of 'white Caucasian male', as he happens to be Jewish. They also conveniently forget the solidarity with beleaguered or victimised black individuals expressed by Dylan in songs like "The Lonesome Death of Hattie Carroll", "George Jackson" or "Hurricane" (or would they dismiss those songs as appropriative tokenism?) The argument of Dylan's identitarian critics boils down to the fact that there have to date only been 14 women Nobel literature winners as opposed to 99 men, from which it may be deduced that they would prefer to see the prize either abolished or awarded in future only to women. In fact, the Nobels for 2015 and 2013 both went to women - Svetlana Alexievich, as seen above, and Canada's Alice Munro - which suggests the Swedish Academy is in fact redressing the balance. Meanwhile, women writers are not lacking who have praised Dylan's award – among them Joyce Carol Oates, as we saw, and Mexico's feminist veteran Elena

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<https://www.theguardian.com/music/2016/oct/13/dylan-towers-over-everyone-salman-rushdie-kate-tempest-and-more-pay-tribute-to-bob-dylan>.

[37] Natalie Kon-yu. "Bob Dylan's Nobel prize isn't radical. He's just another white male writer". *Guardian*, 14 October 2016. Web. <https://www.theguardian.com/music/2016/oct/14/bob-dylans-nobel-prize-isnt-radical-hes-just-another-white-male-writer>.

[38] For King, see the PEN site as cited above.

Poniatowska, who welcomed the award as "una ampliación de los criterios" ("an enlargement of horizons").[39]

There is also the argument that if the prize went to a songwriter, it should have been a woman songwriter, and here Kon-yu asks rhetorically whether "a female songwriter would ever be elevated to Dylan's height". Those taking this line might name, perhaps, Canada's Joni Mitchell (feminist), or the US's Tracy Chapman (black), or the British-Caribbean Joan Armatrading (black and lesbian). However, it would be hard to find a living woman songwriter who has had anything like Dylan's influence, and the feminist/identitarian objection to the award, like the lefter-than-thou objection, may be considered to have little to do with Dylan as individual writer or with the actual merits of his songs. Indeed and curiously, in their articles neither Kon-yu nor King, though they might have been expected to, actually scours the lyrics for lines that they as feminists might disapprove of.

Objections on grounds of cultural hegemony do, however, touch on a valid point if one takes account of the linguistic geopolitics of both literature and popular music. Dylan is the 27th English-speaking Nobel literature laureate and the eleventh American to be awarded the Nobel (the US has now scored more laureates than any country but France), though he is the first US awardee since the (be it noted) black and female novelist Toni Morrison in 1993. Beyond that, it was predictable that if the Nobel was ever to go to a songwriter, it would be to a songwriter in English. Dylan's international prestige as singer-songwriter reflects not only his (remarkable) merits, but also the dominant position of Anglophone popular music worldwide. The extent of that phenomenon is sometimes exaggerated, but however large the domestic audience of, say, Indian or Chinese popular music, they are not genres with a global projection. The only living singer-songwriter from anywhere in the world other than Dylan who might conceivably have received the Nobel was (though history has now decreed otherwise) the late Leonard Cohen, who was Canadian. Going into the past, there could have been a case for Belgium's Jacques Brel, Portugal's José Afonso, or Chile's Violeta Parra, singer-songwriters known beyond their own language communities. However, none of those three is with us today, and at this moment it would be hard to find a living non-Anglophone songwriter having anything like the global projection accruing to Bob Dylan. In that respect it may be legitimate to see this Nobel as transmitting unequal power-relations, but Bob Dylan did not create that and the circumstance should not detract from the deservedness of his award.

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[39] [unsigned] - "Elena Poniatowska opinó sobre Premio Nobel a Bob Dylan",.*El Comercio*, 24 October 2016. Web. <http://elcomercio.pe/luces/libros/elena-poniatowska-dijo-esto-sobre-premio-nobel-bob-dylan-noticia-1941335>.

IV

There is a vital aspect of Dylan's career that transcends ideology. It may reasonably be claimed that if there is a key value that Bob Dylan represents, it is artistic freedom – and it may be here, rather than in any individual song, that he has best fulfilled Alfred Nobel's requirement of an "ideal direction". Time and again across his career Dylan has confounded his followers – abandoning protest song and going electric in the mid-60s, turning to country music in the late 60s and to religion in the late 70s, returning to acoustic folk in the mid-80s and, most recently, covering standards made famous by Frank Sinatra. The range of his songs' subject-matter and of their language registers is remarkable, and Dylan may be seen as an artist who has explored American popular music from multiple directions, as well as enriching it by dialogue with the literary tradition. Artistic freedom as manifested by Dylan may be seen as emblematic of human freedom as such.

There is no Nobel award for music (perhaps there should be), and Bob Dylan has been awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature. Any judgment as to the deserving or otherwise nature of his award must, then, be based on the examination of Dylan's written output (essentially, therefore, the song texts). It cannot be forgotten that Dylan's innumerable concerts form a huge part of his total artistic creation. However, from the point of view of the Nobel the concerts should probably be seen as back-up material, and qualitative analysis will best be concentrated on, first, reading the lyrics and, second, listening to the songs in their original studio versions.

For those who feel they may have to justify the Swedish Academy's choice to the sceptical, the best strategy may be what Dylan himself has called "bringing it all back home"[40] - to take it all down to the words on the page (or screen). A list of Bob Dylan's best or most important song texts – to read first, and then listen to on record - might include, from the world-famous to the obscure but meritorious, the following 40: "Blowin' in the Wind" (1963), "Masters of War" (1963), "A Hard Rain's A-Gonna Fall" (1963), "Bob Dylan's Dream" (1963), "The Times They Are A-Changin'" (1964), "Ballad of Hollis Brown" (1964), "The Lonesome Death of Hattie Carroll" (1964), "With God on Our Side" (1964), "Lay Down Your Weary Tune" (1964), "Chimes of Freedom" (1964), "Gates of Eden" (1965), "It's All Over Now, Baby Blue" (1965), "Farewell, Angelina" (1965), "Like a Rolling Stone" (1965), "Desolation Row" (1965), "Visions of Johanna" (1966), "Too Much of Nothing" (1967), "This Wheel's On Fire" (1967), "All Along the Watchtower" (1968), "George Jackson" (1971), "Tangled Up in Blue" (1975), "Simple Twist of Fate" (1975), "Hurricane" (1976), "Isis" (1976), "Señor (Tales of Yankee Power)" (1978), "Every Grain of Sand" (1981), "Caribbean Wind" (1981), "Jokerman" (1983), "I and I" (1983), "Blind Willie McTell" (1983), "Brownsville Girl" (1986), "Man in the Long Black Coat" (1989), "Shooting Star" (1989), "Dignity" (1989), "Not Dark Yet" (1997), "Things Have Changed" (2000), "High Water (For Charley Patton)"

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[40] See the title of Dylan's album *Bringing It All Back Home* (1965).

(2001), "Workingman's Blues No 2" (2006), "Forgetful Heart" (2009), "Tempest" (2012) - and there are many, many more.

V

The exceptionally high quality of Bob Dylan's songwriting is beyond all doubt. He has coined phrases that have enriched the language and has redefined the boundaries between high and low culture. It is striking that, post-Nobel, the anti-Dylan camp do not seem in general, as might have been expected, to be resorting to doing the actual lyrics over to find fault with them: Dylan's merits as songwriter seem to be a given even for opponents of his award. By looking in this article at the objections to his Nobel I hope to have helped better to establish the case in favour. However, in the end that case can only rest on Bob Dylan's song texts, and in the wake of the Nobel, I invite those who do not know his songs to discover them, and those who know them to return to them – to read the words first, and then listen to the texts as sung. For as Dylan wrote in 1964, "I can't think for you – you'll have to decide"![41]

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[41] Dylan, "With God on Our Side" (1964).

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JEALOUSY AND MALE ANXIETY: ARTICULATIONS OF GENDER IN "THE CURIOUS IMPERTINENT" AND *THE AMOROUS PRINCE*

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Abstract

The subplot of Aphra Behn's play *The Amorous Prince* is a rewriting of "The Impertinent Curious," an interpolated tale in *Don Quixote* that depicts a pathologically jealous husband. All-pervasive in both Golden Age Spain and Restoration England, the discourse of jealousy was deployed to explore cultural issues involving identity and power. While contributing to validate the established relations of power, the hegemonic notions of manhood prevailing in each context were contradictory, and hence were subject to subversion and resistance. Sexual jealousy is analysed as a consequence of the paradoxes underlying the culturally specific dominant constructions of gender, which was at the same time an enabling condition of hegemony and a source of male anxiety. My analysis is aimed at determining how this ideological contradiction is managed in each text.

Keywords: early modern, masculinity, sexual jealousy, Cervantes, Aphra Behn, "The Curious Impertinent".

Resumen

La trama secundaria de *The Amorous Prince*, una obra teatral de Aphra Behn, es una reescritura de "El Curioso Impertinente", un relato intercalado del *Quijote* que describe a un marido patológicamente celoso. Ubicuo en la España del Siglo de Oro y la Inglaterra de la Restauración, el discurso de los celos se empleaba para explorar cuestiones relacionadas con la identidad y el poder. Además de contribuir a validar las relaciones de poder establecidas, las nociones hegemónicas de masculinidad vigentes en cada contexto resultaban contradictorias, y por tanto estaban expuestas a la subversión y la resistencia. Los celos sexuales se analizan como consecuencia de las paradojas subyacentes a las construcciones dominantes de género culturalmente específicas, que eran a la vez una condición que hacía posible la hegemonía y una fuente de ansiedad masculina. Mi análisis pretende determinar cómo se maneja esta contradicción ideológica en cada texto.

Palabras clave: premoderno, masculinidad, celos sexuales, Cervantes, Aphra Behn. "El Curioso Impertinente".

Barely two years after its publication, *Don Quixote* began to exert a profound influence on the English literary panorama, becoming the source of a wide range of rewritings and emulations. The emblematic knight-errant and his squire became vividly ingrained in the collective imagination, together with other characters whose popularity was already noteworthy. Among the latter are the protagonists of "The Curious Impertinent," who inspired no less thansix surviving adaptations to the seventeenth-century stage.[1] A narrative interlude interpolated in *Don Quixote*, "The Curious Impertinent" is the story of a husband's obsession to test his wife's virtue and of the tragic consequences derived from his insane desire. Increasingly anxious about Camila's chastity, Anselmo persuades his closest friend to attempt the seduction of his own wife. Lotario's feigned advances turn into an actual liaison which culminates in the death of the three main characters.

In 1671, Aphra Behn adapted Cervantes's tale for the subplot of a play entitled *The Amorous Prince*. Although the plots of both works bear great resemblance, the English dramatist rewrote the original tragedy into a tragicomedy with a happy ending. The emphasis on female agency accounts for this all-important change: in Behn's version, the two male friends, Antonio and Alberto, are deceived by two witty women who become active agents in the intrigue. Clarina, Antonio's wife, avoids succumbing to temptation because she is replaced by her sister-in-law, Ismena, throughout the courtship.

In order to understand the centrality of sexual jealousy to early modern representations of masculinity, it is important to analyse the culturally specific operations of patriarchy. It is only in the light of the normative articulations of gender that each text's approach to the hegemonic sexual hierarchy can be revealed.

In early modern Europe, an intense preoccupation with female chastity and sexuality was widely spread among the guardians of social orthodoxy. One of the most recurrent manifestations of this all-pervading obsession was male heterosexual jealousy, which, labelled by Mark Breitenberg as the "most dreadful exhibition of anxious masculinity" (*Anxious Masculinity* 175), became unprecedentedly common in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.The period's operations of patriarchy, built upon essentialised constructions of gender, explain the all-pervasiveness of male sexual jealousy. Whereas the one-sex model of the body and the theory of humours constructed females as physically weaker and less perfect than their male counterparts, the Bible portrayed Eve as naturally evil and morally fallible. Physical weakness was effectively linked to moral frailty in the overall representation of the females as naturally imperfect and subservient.

Manhood was not an innate and stable condition of the human being, but a culturally specific asset constantly in circulation that needed be earned. Hence,

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[1] Beaumont and Fletcher's *The Coxcomb*, an anonymous play entitled *The Second Maiden's Tragedy*, Nathan Field's *Ammends for Ladies*, Aphra Behn's *The Amorous Prince*, Thomas Southerne's *The Disappointment* and John Crowne's *The Married Beau*.

attention should be paid to the particular circumstances that called for the –anxious– prescription of a distinct code of manhood in each context. When Cervantes published his masterpiece, Spain had begun its decline from prominence as a world's leading power, due to a series of military, political and financial crises. This fall from hegemony was discursively articulated as the result of the perceived effeminacy of many males who had been lulled into a reproachable life of excess and idleness. In this context, a discourse of masculinity emerged that attempted to provide a "self-conscious … dynamic response to Spain's experience of decline" (Lehfeldt 466). In this discourse, noble manhood was defined as encompassing valued characteristics such as military deftness, virtue, strength and control. These gendered qualities were intended as a solution to the decay of a country weakened by war defeats, unproductive leisure and frivolous indulgence.

In early modern Spain, honourable manhood was an asset men could obtain by performing the socially condoned construction of maleness in the public world. They were required to exhibit 'manly' strength and prowess by displaying certain valuable virtues, among them the ability to control the sexual behaviour of their wives. In this context, female adultery was regarded as an abominable act of insubordination that irrevocably shamed a husband who had utterly failed to control his spouse. In turn, a man's failure to rule the microcosm of the household signalled his inability to exert power in the public domain. To make matters more complicated, female chastity could on no grounds be guaranteed. Paradoxically, men constructed their own masculinity as dependent on the chastity of the "weaker vessel," whom they fashioned as naturally inclined to lust and infidelity.[2]

Manhood in Restoration England was shaped by the ideology of libertinism, which defined sexual prowess as a signal of normative masculinity and heterosexuality. At the core of this ideology lied a double sexual standard: the patrilineal system of inheritance that aristocrats were eager to preserve was contingent upon women's chastity, while men's indulgence in sexual activity was imagined as inherent to the male experience. Consequently, the sociopolitical order that was implemented after Charles II's accession was categorically dependent on and especially anxious about the regulation of female sexuality.

Both Cervantes's and Behn's works reflect and manage the audience/reader's anxiety about female sexuality. The discussion that follows provides an analysis of the specific operations deployed by the hegemonic discourse in order to construct and naturalise normative gender subjectivities in each text. These identities uphold culturally specific conceptions of patriarchy,

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[2] Honourable manhood went beyond the control of women's sexuality to include other cherished skills, mainly "competence in one's trade or office, the management of one's credit and debt relationships and one's performance in the aggressive, competitive play that composed much of male sociability" (Taylor 9). This paper pays attention to female chastity in order to analyse how the paradox underlying hegemonic gender is managed in each work.

which are instilled with discursively naturalised ideologiesabout gender, power and sexual desire and at whose core lies male heterosexual jealousy. The exceptionally strong hold that this phenomenon had on the contexts analysed derives from contradictions and inconsistencies inherent toeach culture's dominant constructions of gender.My analysis of these literary works is aimed at determining how these ideological paradoxesare managed in each case.

"The Curious Impertinent" opens withthestory of Anselmo and Lotario, "dos caballeros …tan amigos, que, por excelencia y antonomasia, … 'los dos amigos' eran llamados" (327). Male bonding is introduced as the exclusive defining feature of the masculine protagonists and their social relations. During the Renaissance, a large number of texts circulated that eulogised male friendship. Montaigne extols this bond above any other and defines true friendship as a state where "souls are mingled and confounded in so universal a blending that they efface the seam which joins them together" (7).

In early modern Europe, male friends played a pivotal role in a single man's social life. Significantly, it is Lotario who arranges the marriage between Anselmo and Camila, an arrangement to which the narrator conveniently refers as "negocio" (328). Lotario's active role in the affair comes as no surprise in a context where the personal value of a woman – an asset always in circulation – was negotiated in the 'male' public world, and had a determining influence on men's reputation. This public dimension of personal worth is reflected and produced in Lotario's claim that "Camila es finísimo diamante, así en tu estimación como en la ajena" (336).

As shown in the above quotation, the heroine's value is articulated in economic, even alchemical, metaphors. In fact, the rhetoric of the marketplace pervades the men's verbal exchanges. Anselmo admits that he has contrived the test to reveal "los quilates de su bondad, así como el fuego muestra los del oro" (331) and wishes that his wife "se acrisole y quilate en el fuego de verse requerida y solicitada" (331). Only if she overcomes the fire of temptation will the gold of Camila's fidelity be valuable in her husband's eyes.

Lotario casts his arguments against the fidelity test in the same –economic– terms. First, he states that his friend is "señor y legítimo posesor de un finísimo diamante" (336) and defines Camila's 'market value' as residing in the jewel of her chastity: "no hay joya en el mundo que tanto valga como la mujer casta y honrada" (336). Even the "emphatically male" (Pérez 95) voice of the narrator inscribes Camila within this marketplace rhetoric, reinforcing Lotario's belief that it is both purposeless and risky to test the fidelity of a woman: "Si la mina de su honor, hermosura, honestidad y recogimiento te da sin ningún trabajo toda la riqueza que tiene y tú puedes desear, ¿para qué quieres ahondar la tierra y buscar nuevas vetas de nuevo y nunca visto tesoro?"(344)

The hegemonic discourse constructs women's personal value as dependent on their sexuality. Beauty, virtue, wealth and social status were among the assets which, together with chastity, enhanced females' value in the marriage marketplace. Camila's initial high 'market' value turns Lotario's arrangement

into a worthy "negocio" and Anselmo's matrimony into a profitable economic and sexual exchange. Nevertheless, she comes to be regarded by her husband as an intruder in his friendship with Lotario, to whom Anselmo complains that "si él supiera que el casarse había de ser parte para no comunicalle como solía, que jamás lo hubiera hecho" (328).

Marriage gave entry to a world of sexual politics where men became rivals in a power struggle for maleness, honour and reputation. The widely-spread discourse that exalted "philia" over "eros" clashed with a conflicting ideology based upon the concepts of honour, rivalry and even violence. In this context, male friendships became codified sets of rules and regulations governing behaviour. These rules account for Lotario's decision – which is judged sensible by the narrator – to "descuidarse con cuidado de las idas en casa de Anselmo, por parecerle a él (como es razón que parezca a todos los que fueren discretos) que no se han de visitar ni continuar las casas de los amigos casados"(328).

As Foyster points out, "marriage provided the setting in which male friendships could be construed as 'unnatural' and even branded as 'sodomitical'" (127). Alan Bray challenges the apparently clear-cut difference between the sodomite and the male friend in early seventeenth-century England, arguing that the distinction between these categories "was neither as sharp nor as clearly marked as the Elizabethans would have us believe" (8). Even though homoeroticism was more effaced in Golden Age Spain, critics have also highlighted Spanish representations of male friendships 'trespassing' into the 'perverse' territory of the sodomitical. For instance, in their reading of Lope de Vega's *La boda entre dos maridos*, "Bradbury, Vélez-Quiñones and Heiple … point towards the existence of a homoerotic discourse codified in the (relatively safe due to the cultural prestige of its rich classical tradition) subject of the ideal masculine friendship" (González-Ruiz 59-60).[3] In this context, the institution of matrimony required that a new system of male bonding be negotiated. As shown in Diana de Armas's analysis of the 'dos amigos' literary tradition, males were often "rebonded" together "through the conduit of a woman's body that they must shame ..., or test ..., or erase ..." (18-19). In the case of Cervantes's tale, Anselmo's attempt to renegotiate his bond with Lotario is carried out through the conduit of Camila's body.

In *The Amorous Prince*, the male characters also treat women as currency to be exchanged in the marriage marketplace and define the assets that enhance their personal value. When, at the end of the play, Antonio learns that Alberto covets his wife, he turns Ismena into a fungible good to be traded with his friend for mutual gain: "I have a Sister, Friend, a handsom Virgin, / Rich, witty, and I think she's vertuous too; Return'd last week from St. *Teretias* Monastery" (V.ii.394). The qualities that raise Clarina's value as a marriageable commodity are very similar to those that were thought to increase Camila's worth – mainly

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[3] "Bradbury, Vélez Quiñones y Heiple… apuntan la existencia de un discurso homoerótico codificado en el tema (relativamente seguro por el prestigio cultural de su rica tradición clásica) de la perfecta amistad masculina". Author's translation.

beauty, chastity, virtue and wealth. Through this transaction, Alberto is expected to benefit from Ismena's value and Antonio intends to keep his honour untainted. Nevertheless, Behn's male characters are unaware of the fact that it is actually the females who are taking advantage of the situation.

As opposed to Camila, Clarina knows of her husband's intention to test her fidelity from the beginning of the play. Such knowledge prevents her from succumbing to temptation and empowers her to take revenge on her jealous spouse, an act that Antonio himself cannot but describe as fair: "I must confess it is but just in her / To punish thus the errors of my fear" (V.ii.393). As regards Ismena, she obtains the highest personal profit from the courtship test, since she manages to gain the husband of her choice. In impersonating Clarina, Antonio's sister manipulates Alberto into loving her. Significantly, Isabella – Clarina's maid – subversively appropriates the marketplace rhetoric through which Cervantes's male characters articulate the value of women in order to define the worth of men: "Yes wondrous well, since I am sure he Loves you, / And that indeed raises a mans value" (II.ii.353).

In using their knowledge of the fidelity test for their own advantage, Behn's heroines resist being used as objects of exchange,something which Cervantes places out of Camila's reach making her blind to her husband's designs. Therefore, the men's attempt to renegotiate their initial bond through the conduit of the female body is effectively frustrated.

The representation of women and their bodies as fungible commodities – and the inevitable connotations of prostitution– is, in fact, at the core of *The Amorous Prince*. In the last scene of the play, the leading female characters perform a masque disguised as silent prostitutes and approach some of the men, who take them for strangers. Snider considers that the purpose of such masquerade is that of exposing "the economic logic that effectively makes all women –sisters and wives included – whores" (324). Interestingly, it is precisely the role of the whore that Camila will be forced to play." As Yvonne Jehenson observes, "if Camila relents and is seduced by Lotario, she is a whore, the very position the scenario is testing. …If she resists and is chaste, she becomes an irresistible sexual object whose resistance the men must overcome" (40). In her rewriting, Aphra Behn identifies the patriarchal logic that confines women into this role and, in having Clarina successfully overcome the fidelity test, subverts it.

The constructions of gender articulated by the male characters are very similar in both texts, since they serve the same ideological purpose: to validate and naturalise their position of dominance within the established power hierarchy. In Cervantes's tale, the masculine characters stress women's natural weakness. Lotario's discourse, grounded in the 'male' authority of science and logic, gives an emphatically essentialist view of women. In stating that "la mujeres animal imperfecto … que no tiene tanta virtud y fuerza natural" (336-337), he reinforces the gender hierarchy prescribed by the dominant medical

doctrine, which considered women to be "but variations of the male form, the same but lower on the scale of being and perfection" (Laqueur 4).

Anselmo's intense jealousy and urge to test Camila's fidelity proves that he has equally internalised the dominant gender ideology. In fact, he also reinforces the hegemonic, essentialising gender discourse, arguing that "si ella sale, como creo que saldrá, con la palma de esta batalla … diré que me cupo en suerte la mujer fuerte, de quien el Sabio dice que '¿quién la hallará?'" (331). Lotario appeals to the authority of Solomon to define any strong woman as an exception from the female norm and hence reinforces the patriarchal understanding of women as the weaker vessels. In *The Amorous Prince*, Antonio makes a similar declaration:

> Oh were *Clarina* chaste, as on my Soul
> I cannot doubt, more than I believe
> All woman kind may be sedu'd from Vertue;
> I were the man of all the world most blest,
> In such a Wife, and such a Friend as thou. (I.iv.346)

While legitimating female subordination to male authority, women's alleged natural inclination to lust and infidelity engendered intense anxiety in the early modern imagination. This anxiety has been described by Mark Breitenberg as "both constitutive and symptomatic" of "a patriarchal economy that constructs masculine identity as dependent on the coercive and symbolic regulation of women's sexuality" (*Sexual Jealousy* 377).

As it has already been mentioned, Spain's experience of decline called for a distinct code of manhood to combat the perceived weakness and effeminacy that threatened the nation's hegemony in the world. In this model of ideal masculinity, chastity acquired a prominent position, as it evinced strength, self-control and judicious behaviour. 'Manly' reason and strength had to be publicly demonstrated by exhibiting, among other skills, the ability to control women's sexuality. The construction of females as essentially frailer and inferior was a source of anxiety for those willing to enact manhood as prescribed by the dominant discourse. Other sociocultural specificities of Golden age Spain made this feeling especially intense. As argued by Christina Lee, the dominant Spaniards of Cervantes's age –those of highborn or Old blood exhibited an acute anxiety about the lower classes and the religious or ethnic outsiders –particularly the Moriscos and the Conversos–, as they could impersonate their identity and challenge the fixity of subjectivity, and hence their innate superiority. "It is an anxiety that takes the form of an obsession with identity fraud and, more specifically, genealogical fraud" (Lee 4).Given the construction of women as the weaker vessels, the perpetuation of the dominant lineages that caused such intense anxiety could never be ascertained.

Attention has also been paid to the definition of masculinity that was gaining prominence in Restoration England, which was not based on self-control or restraint, but on sexual assertiveness and prowess. In this context, the weaker vessel became the only and sole responsible for the preservation of the legitimate

bloodlines. It could be argued, therefore, that the anxiety manifested by both Lotario and Alberto is symptomatic of the specific operations of patriarchy within their respective societies.

Men's reputationwas contingent on the opinion of the other males. If women failed to preserve their virtue, their husbands were publicly exposed and turned into objects of derision. The term "cuckold", both in England and in Spain, emphasised a man's inability to uphold the dominant gender hierarchy by controlling their wives sexually. Cervantes'stextreflectsthehumiliationthat a cuckoldhadtoface in EarlyModern Spain: "el marido de la mujer adúltera… le llaman y le nombran con nombre de vituperio y bajo, y en cierta manera le miran los que la maldad de su mujer saben con ojos de menosprecio" (338).

In this masculine world of honour and shame, Anselmo and Antonio attempt to ease their anxiety be resorting to their best friends. They regard their loyalty as a guarantee that their friends will never succumb to temptation or disclose their wives' disgrace, and so their manhood will not be publicly scrutinised. Anselmo confesses to Lotario that "muéveme, entre otras cosas, a fiar de ti esta tan ardua empresa el ver que si de ti es vencida Camila, no ha de llegar el vencimiento a todo trance y rigor, … y, así, no quedaré yo ofendido más de con el deseo, y mi injuria quedará escondida en la virtud de tu silencio" (332). Similarly, Antonio admits to his best friend that "With thee my Wife and Honour too are safe; / For should she yield, and I by that were lost, / 'Twere yet some ease, That none but thou wer't a witness to't" (I. Iv.346).

So far, attention has been paid to how the hegemonic gender ideology is represented in these works. In both texts, the dominant discourse defines females as fundamentally weak and prone to infidelity. Paradoxically, these essentialised constructions of femininity were at once empowering and constraining to men. While legitimating the dominant power hierarchy, female moral frailty posed a huge threat to honourable maleness, an asset largely predicated upon the chastity of the weaker vessels. Such paradox explains Anselmo's and Antonio's apparently groundless anxiety.

Even though the jealous husbands' anxiety is symptomatic of the culturally specific operations of patriarchy, there is a difference in each text's approach to the identity categories that sustain the dominant social order. In " The Curious Impertinent," the masculine characters force Camila to enact the construction of femininity articulated in their –and the narrator's– speeches. Camila's initial resistance only increases her value in Lotario's eyes, leaving her with no choice but to play the prostitute in the end.

Aphra Behn subverts the ideology of gender that substantiated the patriarchal system. First, she undermines the double sexual standard that ensured the continuity of patrilineage by condoning the rake's sexual profligacy while requiring chastity from women. Significantly, it is Lorenzo – "the most notorious Pimp, and Rascal in Italy" (I.iii.343) – that utters the following subversive words:

> And why the Devil should I expect my Sister should
> Have more vertue than my self?
> She's the same flesh and blood; or why, because
> She's the weaker Vessel,
> Should all the unreasonable burthen of the honour
> Of our House, as they call it,
> Be laid on her shoulders, whilst we may commit
> A thousand villanies. (V.i.391)

Given the crucial role that female sexuality played in the reputation of the household, orthodoxy dictated that women should be constantly controlled and kept within the boundaries of propriety: "the surveillance of women concentrated upon these specific areas: the mouth, chastity, and the threshold of the house" (Stallybrass 126). Stallybrass keeps on arguing that the legal discourse and the prescriptive literature of the period established a connection between speaking and wantonness, being the admonition to silence a commonplace in the period's conduct manuals for women. In this context, "silence, the close mouth, is made a sign of chastity. And silence and chastity are, in turn, homologous to woman's enclosure within the house" (126-127).

The narrator of "The Curious Impertinent" reinforces the relation between silence, chastity and enclosure and validates the injunction that women should be kept at home and forbidden to engage in social relations with other females: "Decía él, y decía bien, que el casado a quien el cielo había concedido mujer hermosa tanto cuidado había de tener qué amigos llevaba a su casa como en mirar con qué amigas la mujer conversaba"(329).

Aphra Behn subverts the patriarchal logic that dictates that women should be silenced and confined within the home. As Clarina explains to Ismena, such was the prevailing custom of the day: "Had you been bred any where but in a Monastery, you would have known'tis not the custom here for Men to expose their Wives to the view of any" (I.iii.344).In fact, the play is fraught with female characters who, like Ismena, are confined by their male guardians.[4] Nevertheless, all attempts to contain female agency through enclosure and surveillance are effectively frustrated.

Behn's heroines are able to make up for the restrictions that the hegemonic structures of power impose upon them. As Ismena's words testify, wit and intelligence are among women's best allies in this challenging endeavour: "And yet I have a thousand little stratagems / In my head, which give me as many hopes: / This unlucky restraint upon our Sex, / Makes us all cunning" (II.ii.356).

As mentioned above, among the reasons that the narrator of "The Curious Impertinent" gives for female enclosure is that of controlling women's talk,

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[4] Cloris must be raised "in obscurity" (I.ii: 339) and Laura is literally "kept a Prisoner by her Father" (IV.ii: 378).

which was often degraded to the status of gossip. Foyster (15-16) points out that gossip was persistently depicted as female and considered to hold huge destructive potential. This kind of verbal exchange empowered women to reveal the intimacy of their husbands, evaluate and compare their personal value and decide on whether they upheld the established standards of honourable conduct.

The gendering of gossip as feminine reveals male anxiety about female bonding. Significantly, women had been represented as incapable of true friendship for centuries. This view survived into the seventeenth century, where the hegemonic discourse tended "to stress malice and hypocrisy in women's relations with each other" (Pearson 82) and to portray female friendships as easily "disrupted by pride or jealousy, especially over men" (Pearson 81). *The Amorous Prince* subverts this gender ideology. Significantly, AphraBehn chose a story on male bonding as the object of her rewriting and made the happy ending dependent on the alliance between Clarina, Ismena and Isabella. What is more, the playwright went a step further and proved the disastrous consequences that male friendships could have when negotiated through the conduit of the female body. Even though Antonio's anxiety and Alberto's moral struggle are imaginary, Behn decides to keep the original tale's "dark undertow" (Hughes and Todd 87-88), emphasising the pernicious potential of their bond.

The solution that both Camila and Behn's heroines contrive to avoid a fatal ending comes in the form of an elaborate dramatic performance. Camila and Ismena –the latter veiled to impersonate Clarina– stage a theatrical reenactment of the myth of Lucretia where they feign to kill themselves to save their husbands' wounded honour. The characters they create and play embody the traditional ideal of femininity: chaste, virtuous and extremely unselfish, they are willing to make the ultimate sacrifice to keep their spouses' honour unblemished. Both Anselmo and Antonio identify the ideological construct convincingly incarnated by their wives and are persuaded of their innocence. Anselmo's conviction that he is married to a paragon of chastity and virtue enables Camila to prolong her affair with Lotario for a while. Nevertheless, the newly regained state of apparent stability does not last long in Cervantes's tale.

When Camila's husband discovers Leonela's affair, he becomes infuriated and threatens to kill the maid. Leonela's desperate promise that she has wedded the man in secret does nothing to appease her master's anger, so she persuades Anselmo to spare her life in exchange for valuable information. When Camila learns of such promise, she wrongly assumes that her maid intends to betray her andrushes into the arms of her lover. There, she narrates the story of her misfortune to a confused Lotario, to whom she requests to elope together. Nevertheless, he resolves to immure Camila in a monastery and vanishes from Florence never to come back. "Lotario's reaction belies his professions of love – or at least nullifies their currency beyond the triangle that also includes Anselmo" (Pérez 104). The once so much coveted and fetishised prize seems worthless if it cannot be used as a conduit in Anselmo's and Lotario's homosocial relationship.

The ending of the tale emphasises the idea that Camila's subjectivity is but a product of a male-created discourse. She dies of a broken heart in a monastery after learning that Lotario was killed in the battlefield. Her "sudden accession to subjectivity" (De Armas27) during the dagger scene is "the one action that the narrator cannot contain, but it also points to the agonizing limitation Camila experiences in a world that will never admit or recognize her as more than a performer in a male-directed drama" (Pérez105). In fact, no matter how hard she tries to resist the patriarchal social and literary conventions, Camila cannot escape the drastic punishment normally inflicted upon deviant women in the period's honour-adultery plays: death.

The episode of Leonela's affair is conveniently altered in *The Amorous Prince*. Isabella devises a plan to manipulate Lorenzo into marrying her, despite her poverty and low social status. She manages to lead him into her chamber under the belief that he will meet Clarina, making sure that Antonio is informed of the event. When her master arrives, Isabella soothes his anger by promising that Lorenzo is her husband-to-be, a promise that he is finally forced to fulfil. Camila's maid shows awareness of the importance of female virtue in the hegemonic ideal of femininity and exploits this knowledge for her own profit. She turns Lorenzo into a mere object of exchange and deprives him of any agency. In this exchange, Isabella gains the husband of her choice and Antonio manages to safeguard the cherished honour of his household. Not only do Behn's heroines avoid being (ab)used as mere currency, but they use their wit to manipulate the men for their own profit. They effectively subvert a patriarchal economy where "power relations are between men, and women serve as conduits of power but not as themselves wielders of power" (Chance 144).

As argued throughout this paper, sexual jealousy was a fundamental component of the dominant economy of love, marriage and desire prevailing in each of the contexts analysed. Nevertheless, manifestations of extreme, pathological jealousy were thought to render men effeminate, depriving them of the qualities that lay at the core of the culturally specific hegemonic constructions of masculinity.

The connection between sexual jealousy and effeminacy is both reflected and produced in*The Anatomy of Melancholy*. From a humoural perspective, in the normative masculine body, the four fluids that make up the human psyche are perfectly balanced and regulated. Any deviation from this male standard of perfection, brought about by an anomaly in the flow of humours, causes madness. The discourse of melancholy plays a key role in fashioning the deviant 'other' in opposition to whom the normative self is fashioned. The melancholic is consequently, by definition, feminine. Significantly, Burton portrays sexual jealousy as the most destructive of all the melancholic afflictions and defines it as "being of so great an eminent note, so furious a passion, and almost of as great extent as love itself" (213).In Spanish lands, Francisco Villalobos also stresses the agony of those enduring disease, whose soul "debe estar figurada y plasmada la imágen y hechura del infiernoespantoso y terrible" (490).

In constructing this "unspeakable torment" (217) as a type of love melancholy, Burton begins to associate sexual jealousy with femininity. This association is overtly reinforced in his claim that jealousy "is more outrageous in women, as all other melancholy is, by reason of the weakness of their sex" (219). Similarly, Villalobos addresses the 'vicious' lover , among whose defining characteristics is jealousy, in the following terms: "dejaste de ser hombre, y tórnastemujer" (488). Men's anxiety to remain within the boundaries of honourable manhood, to avoid succumbing to a feminine pathology which was endemic to their own constructions of gender, must have been overwhelming.

In "The Curious Impertinent," Anselmo's incapacity to wholeheartedly believe in Camila's virtue and his consequent anxiety is a logical response to the hegemonic construction of femaleness. Nevertheless, if he allows this violent passion to overwhelm his manly reason and self-control, he will find himself enacting a subordinate kind of masculinity.

The effeminising effect of Anselmo's pathology is clearly conveyed by the text. First, the character confesses to being afflicted by "un deseo tan extraño y tan fuera de usocomún de otros" (330), which he significantly proceeds to label as "locura" (330). Through this utterance, Anselmo fashions himself as deviant from normative manhood. Such is precisely the function of the discourse of madness: to create a category wherein to confine the threatening 'other' and thus to reinforce dominant perception of normality.

Lotario also makes a key contribution in the fashioning of Anselmo as effeminate, since he compares his friend to the cultural 'others' against whom a Spanish identity was being constructed: the Moors. Significantly, one of the pivots upon which nationalism rested was, precisely, masculinity. Hence, the connectionbetweentheMoors and effeminacy, made extensive to Anselmo in Lotario's speech, is straightforward: "Paréceme, ¡oh Anselmo!, que tienes tú ahora el ingenio como el que siempre tienen los moros…, porque el deseo que en ti ha nacido va tan descaminado y tan fuera de todo aquello que tenga sombra de razonable, que me parece que ha de ser tiempo gastado el que ocupare en darte a entender tu simplicidad"(333-334). According to the hierarchical understanding of gender difference that prevailed at the time, reason was a fundamentally masculine trait, which stood in opposition to the essentially feminine inclination to excess, emotion and irrationality.

As described by Lotario, Anselmo's manly reason and intelligence have been lost to his impertinent desire, his "manifiesta locura" (334). Anselmo acknowledges that in not following Lotario's wise and well-intentioned advice, "voy huyendo del bien y corriendo tras el mal" (340). Nevertheless, he attributes this impertinent behaviour to his suffering from "la enfermedad que suelen tener algunas mujeres que se les antoja comer tierra, yeso, carbón y otras cosas peores, aun asquerosas para mirarse, cuánto más para comerse" (340). Through these words, Anselmo resorts, once again, to the discourse of madness in order to fashion himself as deviant from 'masculine' sanity, overtly gendering his

pathology as feminine. Anselmo's self-diagnosis underscores his effeminacy, in an attempt to validate the normative construction of manhood.

In *The Amorous Prince*, Aphra Behn also reflects the masculine anxiety that was pandemic to her society. Antonio's self-consuming fear of adultery is clearly grounded in the period's contradictory constructions of gender. Fashioned by a culture that defined femininity in terms of weakness and inferiority, he cannot ascertain the chastity of the woman on whom his maleness depends. Behn shows awareness of this contradiction when she has Antonio say that "All woman kind may be sedu'd from Vertue" (I.iv.346).

Unlike Cervantes, Behn prevents the consummation of any sexual relation between Clarina and Alberto, portraying Antonio's anxiety as completely groundless, even ridiculous. In keeping the internal conflicts undergone by Cervantes's original characters, the British playwright reflects the all-pervasiveness that jealousy anxiety had acquired in her society. Nevertheless, she subverts the constructions of femininity of which this anxiety was both indicative and constitutive, undermining the whole dominant ideology of love, marriage and desire.

Departing from the understanding of human identities as cultural constructs fashioned by a period's dominant institutions, discourses and social practices, this paper provided an analysis of how gender and patriarchy were constructed in thecontexts analysed. Despite any apparent commonality or logic, any institutionalised social order is fraught with internal contradictions and dissent. Thearticle has focused on an ideological paradox that lies at the heart of the early modern constructions of gender. The fashioning of women as essentially weaker and inferior to men provided an effective tool to validate the rigid power hierarchy that governed the relations between the sexes in the seventeenth century. Nevertheless, at the same time, it engendered intense anxiety, since, ironically, male honour was constructed as dependant on the chastity of the weaker vessels. In this context, jealousy anxiety is an unavoidable consequence of men having internalised their own identity as fashioned by the period's dominant discourse and social institutions.

Both Cervantes and Behn reflect in their works their culture's dominant notions of gender and the kind of social order that they contributed to sustaining. Groundlessly anxious about his wife's fidelity, Anselmo is led by "a circularity of patriarchal logic in which women necessarily enact and thus substantiate the way they have already been constructed" (Breitenberg *Anxious Masculinity* 182). Camila's subversive attempts are fruitless: she is denied any agency and forced, by Anselmo's perversely-contrived scenario,to succumb to temptation. This logic proves that "even alternative forms are tied to the hegemonic" (Jehenson 48), that subversion can be contained and co-opted by the established power. By having Camila yield to her carnal cravings and labelling his own impertinent desire as effeminate, it could be argued that Anselmo reinforces hegemonic gender. Nevertheless, in his deathbed, he exonerates his wife: "un necio e impertinente deseo me quitó la vida. Si las nuevas de mi muerte llegaren a los

oídos de Camila, sepa que yo la perdono, porque no estaba ella obligada hacer milagros, ni yo tenía necesidad de querer que ella los hiciese; y pues yo fui el fabricador de mi deshonra" (377). Anselmo's assumption of the guilt for her wife's human actions, prompted by a plot concocted out of an insane desire to prove her frailty and inferiority, problematises the reading of the story as a straightforward reinforcement of women's innate weakness and inferiority. Cervantes discloses the cultural and ideological fictions that make Anselmo (ab)use his wife and bring about his downfall.

In *The Amorous Prince*, Behn subverts the hegemonic constructions of gender and the social order erected upon them. The British playwright allows her heroines to exert agency and liberates them from the constraints of patriarchal oppression. She undermines a social order predicated upon the assumption of female weakness and inferiority, exposing the contradictions of an ideology that constructs masculinity as dependent upon an imagined weak an inferior feminine essence.

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"IF DOUBT IT YE CANNOT, THEN PLAY UNTO ITS RIDDLE THE OEDIPUS": PHILLHELENIC PATTERNS IN EDGAR ALLAN POE'S TALES[1]

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Abstract

Edgar Allan Poe's bicentenary revived the interest of renowned literary critics in his works and several new studies that analyse the author's impact outside the United States have been undertaken. Quite astonishingly, even in Lois Vines' *Poe Abroad* (1999), a meticulous investigation on Poe's presence in Asia and Europe, Greece is nowhere to be mentioned. Apart from scarce mention of a Hellenic influence in his storytelling, the presence of Hellenic motifs in Poe's works has not been extensively explored so far. This paper aims to delve into this particular topic through Poe's "Eleonora" and "Ligeia" in an attempt to demonstrate philhellenic patterns as well as to indicate the need for future systematic studies.

Keywords: Hellenic motifs, Poe, Eleonora, Ligeia, Homer, Plutarch.

Resumen

El bicenterario del nacimiento de Edgar Allan Poe avivó el interés de numerosos investigadores y académicos y gran número de investigaciones se basaron en la obra de Poe y su impacto fuera de los Estados Unidos. Sorprendentemente, incluso en la edición de Lois Vine *Poe Abroad* (1999), una meticulosa investigación sobre la presencia de Poe en Asia y en Europa, Grecia no se encuentra entre los países mencionados. Excepto por escasas menciones en la influencia que Grecia ejerció sobre Poe, la presencia del elemento griego en la obra del autor americano no ha sido ahondada hasta la fecha. Este artículo tiene como objetivo analizar dicho tema a través de las obras "Eleonora" y "Ligeia" e intentará demostrar los patrones filohelénicos existentes así como indicará la necesidad de estudios sistemáticos en el futuro.

Palabras clave: elemento griego, Poe, Eleonora, Ligeia, Homero, Plutarco.

1. Introduction

The bicentenary of Poe's birth in 2009 was celebrated with a number of conferences on a global scale—Philadelphia, Boston, Baltimore, in the U.S.; Alcalá de Henares, Caceres, and Valencia, in Spain; and Farmington in the United Kingdom. In fact, the beginning of the 21st century has been considered a crucial stage with respect to research on Edgar Allan Poe's works. The aforementioned literary events triggered a variety of new studies dealing with Edgar Allan Poe's life—see, for instance, Ackroyd (2008); Hayes (2009); González Moreno and Rigal Aragón (2014), and, more recently, Cantalupo (2014). However, the concern regarding Edgar Allan Poe's works has diachronically been incessant. Older meticulous studies of noteworthy Poe scholars on the author's life must not go unnoticed—see Daniel Hoffmann (1972); Kenneth Silverman (1991), Scott Peeples (1998, 2004), to name a few.

A renewed enthusiasm in Edgar Allan Poe's narratives has generated studies analyzing the author's impact outside the United States. This particular topic was explored by Lois D. Vines (1999). Her study, *Poe Abroad*, scrutinized Poe's impact at an international level unlike any other similar investigation. Quite astonishingly, neither Poe's presence in Greece nor clues that illustrate Hellenic motifs in his works have even been slightly mentioned. As far as I am aware, Maria Filippakopoulou's study (2014) is perhaps a unique exception in this regard. In her contribution, though, she barely examines the proposed topic for this essay, confining herself to an examination of how Poe's works have been translated in Greece up until very recently.

Upon reading "Eleonora" and "Ligeia," I was able to identify a number of references that transport readers to the Hellenic past. This paper aims to delve into the aforementioned narratives while focusing on the Hellenic allusions that appear to have been employed by the author. I will also attempt to offer some additional links between Poe and Greece that have not been discussed in relevant literature.

My focus on this Hellenic aspect of Poe's works is not accidental. In the past, many literary critics, such as Silverman (1992) and Peeples (1998), have noted that Poe might have been particularly fond of Greece and Hellenic literature in general. In a recent compilation of the American author's works, Daniel Stashower (2014) claimed that he had studied Greek from an early age. Stashower also claimed that he had even read the *Odyssey* and the *Iliad*. Richard Benton not only confirms the above but he also adds that Poe had expanded his Hellenic studies by reading Plato's masterpieces (293). Thus, it seems striking that there have been no studies devoted to Poe's engagement with the Hellenes, especially when I consider that one of Poe's literary idols was Lord Byron, a renowned philhellene. Given the fact that there is no solid evidence regarding this topic, my research will have to be based on interpretations and studies of other Poe scholars and literary critics.

2. "Eleonora": Hellenic myths revisited

According to Richard Benton, Poe's "Eleonora" is an allegory closely connected to the importance of love. He explains that this particular narrative has been constructed based on the Platonic model (293). The story's nameless narrator lives in "The Valley of the Many-Colored Grass;" he does so along with his cousin and aunt. Poe makes clear that his male protagonist and his cousin, Eleonora, fall in love after fifteen years of living together. Eleonora perishes soon after, succumbing to an unexpected and severe illness, plunging the narrator into the depths of melancholy. Despite his oath not to espouse another woman, he later moves away from the principal setting and marries once again; this time to Ermengarde. This action would only aggravate his misery, ultimately urging him to seek for divine absolution. He is finally absolved of his sin after a supernatural visit by Eleonora.

Initially, I argue that this tale might be autobiographical. My conclusion is drawn due to the fact that the author at that point in his life was actually living with his aunt, Maria Clemm, and his young cousin Virginia, whom he would later marry. "Eleonora" has sparked the blossoming of many analyses and examinations, especially during the twentieth century—Hoffman delved into the spiritual side of the tale, demonstrating its Arabesques (210) whereas Peeples focused on the Edenic existence in the narrative (Edgar89). Despite the endless reassessments of the present tale, though, Silverman was the first scholar to expose a direct link between Edgar Allan Poe and Greece. In his research he claimed that the unnamed narrator is in fact named "Pyrros"[2] (170). Nonetheless, the above literary critic only made mention of the narrator's name and did not proceed onto an analysis of its origin or the reason why it was chosen by Poe.

A closer examination of the tale reveals references to two ancient Greek gods, Eros and Aeolus. Whilst describing his affection for Eleonora, the narrator portrays it as a result of the interference of the god Eros. According to the Hellenic mythology, this god was the son of Aphrodite and, as Catherine Osborne has rightly observed in her study, "he was the love found in Greek thought" (1). In fact, he has been presented in several Greek myths disguised in various forms, always trying to create love affairs between the protagonists. Poe places Aeolus in his story as well; he refers to his harp and he compares its music to "a lulling melody" the narrator had heard. "The Aeolian harp song has been recognized as one of the most significant metaphors of the Romantic Movement," explains Robin Dix, and it would be opportune to remark that Samuel Taylor Coleridge himself also devoted a poem to Aeolus: "The Eolian Harp." As reported by Lucia Impelluso, Aeolus was the god of winds which were responsible for playing his song. In order to do that he used his harp and, "depending on the need," he "opened a passage so that they could blow over the Earth" (234).

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[2] *Intriguingly, Silverman did not opt for the English word 'Pyrrhus'; instead, he preferred the exact phonetic representation of the Hellenic word Πύρρος.*

While further considering Silverman's comment on the protagonist's name, I notice that the name Pyrros is first encountered in Plutarch's *Parallel Lives*. I am specifically referring to Plutarch's narration of the life of the king of Epirus, Pyrrhus. As Plutarch describes, *Πύρρος* was a charismatic general who seems to have made a number of unwise decisions which he would later regret. He is even nowadays remembered through the phrase "Pyrrhic victory," an idiom created after his grand yet costly victory against the Romans at Heraclea, 279 BC. The similarities between Pyrros and Poe's protagonist cannot be overlooked: they both share the same type of emotions, concerns and regrets. Pyrrhus of Epirus shattered his own army with his decision to fight against the Romans and, despite his victory, emotions of regret later dominated his thoughts. Similarly, Poe's hero appears to regret his marriage to Ermengarde which was empty and cheerless, even though it was originally supposed to bring him happiness. Bearing this idea in mind, it follows that Poe might have adopted the Macedon king's name as the name of his main protagonist, probably inspired by the sentimental analogies.

Nonetheless, I wish to stress that allusions to Plutarch's works have not been an exclusive deed performed by Edgar Allan Poe alone. Upon taking a closer look at H. H. Yeames's study, I observed that despite Plutarch's and Plato's diminishing influence right after the French revolution—Romantics probably rejected Plutarch's ideas due to the fact that Romanticism and other movements introduced new values, emphasizing on the freedom of strong emotions rather than their control—their impact on writers, essayists and poets is evident. As Yeames adds, "even French Prose at its best falls far short of Plato's prose" (18).

With respect to the incestuous affair at the heart of the tale, readers witness Poe's allusion to the story of Oedipus right after it is brought to light. The mention of this name has led literary critics to the belief that Poe is referring to the riddle proposed to king Oedipus by the Sphinx, as Benton asserts (295). The protagonist of *Oedipus Rex* is perhaps the most tragic hero in Hellenic mythology. As Sophocles reminds us, Oedipus, having been raised by foster parents, killed his father in a futile quarrel being unaware of his identity. He then married his own mother and had children with her. When Oedipus became aware of his actions Jocasta killed herself and he tore his own eyes out.

Poe's mention of Oedipus in the text is not incidental. Both Sophocles and Poe's protagonists are involved in incestuous affairs which ultimately lead them to feelings of remorse: Oedipus marries his mother whereas Pyrros marries his own cousin. In the same vein, Poe himself was actually married to his cousin, Virginia. Despite the fact that such liaisons were not rare in antebellum United States, particularly in the South where Poe was raised, the American author was at first embarrassed by his own, as Stashower discloses (xvi). In both stories readers encounter the protagonists' attempts to punish themselves for their actions. Their misdeeds are grave and they both involve the supernatural element—either as a means of exoneration or as a means of actualization. Hence,

readers could infer that Poe had actually read Sophocles' tragedy and that he was perhaps influenced by it.

3. Homer's influence on Poe's "Ligeia"

"Ligeia" is one of Poe's most celebrated narratives, first published in 1838. Poe depicts its homonymous female protagonist as a woman of a "placid cast of beauty," of "exquisite loveliness" and of an unusual strangeness. The story's male protagonist devotes a big part of his narration to her description, betraying his strong feelings of affection for her. As Eduardo de Gregorio-Godeo defines, he describes "the features characterizing such a fascinating and seductive figure as Ligeia" (110). Eric Carlson makes mention of Hellenic features while describing Ligeia. He specifically mentions the following: "Ligeia is not a woman, but a mediatory spirit embodying the Platonic idea of harmony. The interpretation is suggested by the spiritual qualities attributed to Ligeia's eyes and Hellenic features" (8).

The plot soon takes a turn for the worse, as Ligeia suddenly becomes ill. After his wife's death the narrator moves to England where he marries for a second time; this time to Lady Rowena Trevanion of Tremaine. Eric Carlson noticed that Rowena's beauty was "physical, not spiritual" (8). A month after their marriage, Rowena mysteriously falls ill. Her health quickly deteriorates until she enters a state of insanity and she finally perishes. Hours after her demise, however, readers become aware of the fact that Rowena is still alive. Devastated and full of memories of Ligeia, Poe's male protagonist faces a resurrection of the corpse which has now taken the form of his first wife, Ligeia. As Hoffman remarks, "in the end his truer love reasserts her claim upon his intellectual fealty" (246).

Beyond the shadow of a doubt, readers can encounter several references that could connect Poe's tale to Hellenic literature. To begin with, one has to primarily focus on the story's title. The name Ligeia was first encountered in Homer's *Odyssey*. During his return to Ithaca from the palace of Circe, Odysseus had to follow a specific route which would be particularly dangerous; his first trial was the Sirens. According to Pierre Grimal, the Sirens were "demonic sea creatures, whose body from the waist up was that of a woman and the other half was similar to a bird" (613). The myth specifies that the Sirens were the daughters of a god named Achelous: they were three and their names were Parthenopi, Lefkosia and Ligeia. The Sirens were located somewhere in the Mediterranean Sea and, using their magical and irresistible voice, they attracted sailors who had the misfortune to hear it. The Sirens lured their boats close to rocks shipwrecking them, finally devouring the remaining sailors (614).

In Homer's *Odyssey*, Odysseus orders his men to plug their ears using wax and to tie him to the mast so that he can hear the Sirens' song without being able to give in to their enchantments. Pietro Pucci (1987) asserted that Odysseus was desperate to hear the mesmerizing song of the Sirens; in fact, as he claimed, their

song could be identified with knowledge itself. In accordance with Hoffman's study, "it is incontestable that Ligeia herself is associated, in Narrator's mind, with knowledge" (246). Thus, one can infer that "Ligeia" and Homer's *Odyssey* could be connected. Astonishingly, no Poe scholar has so far made mention of this probable Hellenic allusion so far. *Odyssey* proceeds with Odysseus being mesmerized by the beauty of the beastly creatures, ordering his men to untie him. Unquestionably, the use of such an unusual name as Ligeia itself might be a strong indicator of a Hellenism in the story. Poe's Ligeia is described as an irresistible woman just as in the case of Homer's Sirens. In addition to the above, Odysseus was affected by his encounter with the mythical creatures. In the same vein, Poe's narrator bears identical feelings for his own Ligeia. "Of all the women whom I have ever known, she, the outwardly calm, the ever-placid Ligeia, was the most violently a prey to the tumultuous vultures of stern passion," states Poe through the words of his protagonist. His description could be closely compared with the description of Homer's Ligeia—as Impelluso explains, her name brings to mind the idea of charm, of seduction which can be dangerous to those who cannot resist it (464).

One should not omit the presence of the paranormal in Poe's story. The gothic element is undoubtedly dominant. As Maurice Levy illustrates, "menacing Gothic castles rise on the horizon of 'Ligeia'" (20). He also mentions that "the entire drama of Ligeia takes place in a room that he decorates in a semi-Gothic, semi-Druidical style which was already old in the history of taste" (20). Similarly, Jean Richepin depicts Homer's Sirens as follows: "The sirens were sitting on a field surrounded by piles of human bones and dead bodies which are slowly rotting" (211). Perhaps that is the reason why Malini Schueller claimed that "it has been obvious to the readers of the tale that at the constative level, Ligeia and Rowena represent contrasting types of womanhood—the dark and the light. It is also clear that at the performative level Poe clearly constructs this traditional symbology. The dark, passionate Ligeia also has a low sweet voice and a cold, marble touch" (607).

Readers also witness Ligeia's resurrection and the narrator's endeavor to identify her. Tangentially, her reappearance could be linked to the demonic nature of Homer's Sirens and the need of all the sailors to approach them, succumbing to their magical aura.

The reason why the American author might have decided to establish these connections between Hellenic Ligeia's demonic ambience and his story could be deducted through Silverman's meticulous study of Poe's life. According to the aforementioned scholar, during the period when this tale was composed Poe had possibly married for a second time and he was going through a challenging period in terms of his literary production (129). As Silverman distinctly mentions, "Poe's break with the *Messenger* seems to have brought him a long period of unemployment, poverty and disenchantment with literary life" (129). He also adds that "Poe's need to keep writing versions of the revenant plot indicates clearly enough his own difficulty in putting the past to rest" (140). Edgar Allan Poe cherished the motif of a beautiful woman coming back to life.

Knowing for a fact that Poe had an expertise in the analysis of Homer's masterpieces—in accordance with Stashower's analysis, "by the age of eleven the boy was studying Horace in Latin and Homer in Greek." (xxii)—I can infer that Poe had indeed had knowledge of Ligeia's myth. Its ambience might have served Poe's literary message and perhaps that is the reason why we witness an apparent Hellenism in this particular tale.

4. Conclusions

The aim of this paper is the detection of a probable Hellenic influence on Poe's storytelling through "Eleonora" and "Ligeia." My study also delves into the possibility of a philhellenic pattern existing in the American author's works that has barely been considered so far.

I am able to conclude that there are strong indications of philhellenic patterns in Poe's works. The reference to Plutarch's Pyrrhus of Epirus, the allusion to the myth of Oedipus and the demeanor of the ancient Greek gods Aeolus and Eros in Poe's "Eleonora" all support the above claim. Poe was perhaps captivated by Hellenic literature and, as I demonstrated, he may have actually read Plutarch's *Parallel Lives*. In fact, he seems to have borrowed Pyrrhus from Plutarch's chapter dealing with the life of the homonymous king of Epirus. I also identified that the choice of the name Ligeia for Poe's protagonist might itself be a connection to one of Homer's Sirens.

Nevertheless, my study only indicates the potential of this topic, illustrating the need for additional research. Poe's "Ligeia" and "Eleonora" conceal further Hellenic references that have not been extensively examined. Following my interpretations, future research should examine the reasons why Poe's "Ligeia" has a happy ending while Homer's myth has a tragic one. One should also attempt to identify who is Homer's Penelope in Poe's tale, if such connection may be established. I would also recommend paying close attention to several of Poe's other stories, such as "The Raven" or "A Predicament," since I was able to locate a number of further Hellenic allusions that have not been discussed up until very recently. A systematic exploration of the topic is fundamental so that the American author's literary devices and philosophical resonances are interpreted, keeping in mind Filippakopoulou's mention of "Poe's permanence in Greek literature" (37). Finally, in order to further comprehend the reasons why Poe resorted to these Hellenic references, research should further delve into Poe's education, his literary idols, and his affection for Greece through studies such as Silverman's (1991) and Ackroyd's (2008) so that one can draw safe assumptions as to why Poe turned to Greece as a source of inspiration.

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ELOQUENT SILENCE: THE TRANSFORMATION OF SPAIN IN BRITISH BALLADRY BETWEEN THE PENINSULAR WAR AND THE CARLIST WARS

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Abstract

Among the ten items labelled "Peninsular War ballads" in the website Broadside Ballads Online of the Bodleian Libraries two evidently date from the First Carlist War, and show a different mood. The remaining eight items related to the 1807-1815 period are actually only five, as two of them are different editions of the same songs, and another is merely about the setting in the Horse Guards Parade, London, of a memorial to the lifting of the siege of Cádiz in 1812. While the five true Peninsular War ballads represent it as a patriotic enterprise on behalf of brave Spaniards fighting tyrannical invaders, the two set in the Carlist War portray a more individualized adventure of soldiers of fortune. This new approach after 1815 suggests a more limited popular understanding of Spanish politics. Spain is no longer a scenario for the defence of universal principles, but for the reckless adventure of particular men.

Keywords: Broadside ballads, popular culture, 19th-century literature, war poetry, British interventionism in Spain.

Resumen

De los diez documentos denominados "Baladas de la Guerra Peninsular" en el sitio web "Broadside Ballads Online" de las Bibliotecas Bodleianas, dos evidentemente datan de la Primera Guerra Carlista, y muestran un carácter distinto a los demás. Los ocho restantes referidos al periodo 1807-1815 en realidad son solo cinco, pues dos de ellas son ediciones diferentes de la misma canción, y otra se refiere a la erección en el Horse Guards Parade, Londres, del monumento conmemorativo al levantamiento del asedio de Cádiz en 1812. Mientras que las cinco baladas auténticas de la Guerra Peninsular la representan como una empresa patriótica a favor de los valientes españoles que combatían a los tiránicos invasores, las dos de la Guerra Carlista narran una aventura más individualista de soldados de fortuna. Este nuevo enfoque tras 1815 sugiere un entendimiento popular de la política española más limitado. España ya no es el escenario donde defender principios universales, sino donde intrépidos aventureros prueban su osadía.

Palabras clave: Baladas de pliego, cultura popular, literatura del siglo XIX, poesía de guerra, intervencionismo británico en España.

1. Introduction

In this article I examine a small corpus of Peninsular War ballads in the Bodleian libraries, which interestingly turns out to contain two ballads from a different Spanish war, the First Carlist War (1833-1839).[1] A comparison between the former, which are based on the 1807-1814 war, and the latter, reveals the change of attitude towards intervention in Spanish wars that took place after 1815, from an internationalist fight for political freedom to an adventure for individual glory, followed by a complete waning of interest in writing ballads about British interventionism in Spain.

In order to explain the sort of approach to events in the ballads I will discuss the characteristics of broadside balladry as an expression of popular sentiment, and also as a traditional form of poetry which calls for comparison between ballads about different wars and political causes, such as the Jacobite and the Carlist ones.[2] The essay concludes by establishing an analogy between Lord Alfred Tennyson's silence after his own brief Spanish intervention, and the absence of English ballad-making about Spain during Spanish king Ferdinand VII's reign,[3] pointing, beyond that, to future English writing about the Spanish

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[1] During the War of Independence liberalism became popularly associated with the French invaders in Spain. In spite of Ferdinand VII's conservative inclinations and his cancellation of the liberal Constitution of Cádiz, traditionalists tended to distrust him. This was especially due to a military rising in 1920, which forced him to accept a new liberal regime. However short-lived, as this liberal phase lasted for three years before a French army (the 'Hundred Thousand Sons of St Louis') was sent against it, King Ferdinand remained associated with liberalism, anticlericalism, political centralization and the assault on noble privilege among those traditionalist groups, particularly in the North and North East of Spain, who rallied to the cause of his brother and presumptive successor Don Carlos. Civil war broke out in 1833 when Ferdinad died and his widow María Cristina became Queen Regent on behalf of their daughter Isabella II. The Carlists invoked the old "Salic Law" forbidding females and those descended in the female line to succeed to the titles or offices in the royal family, and took arms against the *Cristinos* (or *Isabelinos*) for "God, Country and King."

[2] The Jacobite cause had ideological features in common with Carlism. The Jacobites supported "the Old Prentender" James III and his son Charles Edward Stuart (popularly known as "Bonnie Prince Charlie" in the songs) in their uprisings of 1715 and 1745 to regain the British throne for the male line of descendants of the House of Stuart. Like the Spanish Carlists of one century later, the Jacobites embodied the ideals of social traditionalism, political absolutism and religious conservatism, and they also had a strong regional component, as the Jacobites became associated with the cause of the Scottish (particularly Highland) identity, while Carlism had particular impact on the Basque Country and Catalonia. In popular memory and folklore both the Jacobites and the Carlists are often depicted either as gallant idealists fighting for a lost noble cause or as anachronistic, quixotic desperadoes.

[3] Ferdinand VII, known by his supporters during the War of Independence as "the Desired" (*el Deseado*), ascended to the Spanish throne in 1808, only to be forced to abdicate by Napoleon, who established his own brother Joseph Bonaparte as king of Spain. However, within that same year the Council of Castile proclaimed Ferdinand king again, which was also acknowledged by the British government in January 1809. By the end of 1813 Napoleon also had to acknowledge his coronation, and allow him to return from his exile in France. The English ballads about the Spanish War date from before 1813, when Ferdinand's reign was in dispute, and after 1833, the year of his death.

Civil War. Thus it outlines a brief survey of British interventionism in modern Spanish wars. The theoretical frame adopted responds in general terms to Iris Zavala's semiology of silence (1987), which she initially defines as "desentrañar lo que dice y lo que no dice un texto, en tanto en cuanto todo discurso es ideológico" (Zavala 147),[4] but it is extended to include what ballad texts did not say about King Ferdinand's Spain.

2. The Bodleian corpus of "Peninsular War ballads"

Street ballads are a curious blend of journalism and poetry. Often called "broadsides" (because of the broadsheets on which they were printed), they were a popular form of passing opinions and expressing public feelings since the later Middle Ages, and particularly after the advent of the printing press and before the popularization of newspapers, when a growing audience purchased them. Among the ten items labelled "Peninsular War ballads" in the website Broadside Ballads Online of the Bodleian Libraries, two clearly date from a later war, and show a different mood. In one of these, "Henry's Departure to the Spanish War", the narrator overhears Henry's love "pretty Nancy" begging him "Pray do not throw yourself away my love you may get slain, / And your sweet life is dear to you beyond the queen of Spain."[5] Henry, therefore, departs to fight for the queen of Spain, who must be Isabella II,[6] supposedly against the Carlists. In the other, "My Master's Gun", the feisty "prentice boy" boasts that "General Evans came up to me, / Said he, 'Bob, show no quarter: / You're a valiant youth, I plainly see, / And you shall marry my daughter.'"[7] Bob, therefore, joins Sir George de Lacy Evans's volunteers in the Siege of San Sebastian of 1836,[8] which the

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[4] "Working out what a text says and does not say, inasmuch as every discourse is ideological" (my translation).
[5] "Henry's Departure to the Spanish War", lines 7-10 in the extant broadside in the Bodleian Libraries. A subheading under its title specifies the printer and the workshop address in central London: "Pitts, Printer, Toy and Marble Warehouse 6, Great St. Andrew Street, Seven Dials." "Henry's Departure to the Spanish War" was printed together with a song called "Here's a Health Bonny Scotland, to Thee", to be sung to the air called "The King, God Bless Him", a patriotic drinking song reminiscent of some of the Jacobite songs. such as "The Three Healths."
[6] The troubled reign of Isabella II (1833-68), King Ferdinand's eldest daughter, was marked by political instability, civil wars and military rule. Her lack of political ability, her failure to implement a more progressive regime, and her amorous life, contributed to the decline of prestige of the Spanish monarchy, and culminated in her deposition by a military coup of moderate generals which ushered in the First Spanish Republic.
[7] Lines 31-34 in the extant print in the Bodleian Libraries. The ballad "My Master's Gun" consists of 6 stanzas of 8 lines each adding a refrain repeated at the end (except in the last stanza): "With my master's gun, / I fought my way to glory." It is printed together with a companion satirical piece entitled "Doctor Brown" in which another young man complains to the Doctor about the way his master makes him work hard and starves him.
[8] Sir George De Lacy Evans was the first commander of the Auxiliary Legion which the British government sent to support Queen Isabella II and the Liberals against the Carlists in 1835-37. Most of the 9,600 soldiers forming the Legion were volunteers from British army line regiments, rather than regular troops. Supported by naval gunfire and Spanish forces, the

website wrongly dates in 1813, mistaking it for the Siege of Sebastian that took place in the latter year during the Peninsular War,[9] for Evans was not in the siege of 1813, but in that of 1836, during the First Carlist War, supporting Queen Isabella. Thus although all the ballads in the small corpus refer to the war in Spain, not all of them are about the *same* war.

The remaining eight items in the Bodleian corpus of "Peninsular War ballads", which are the ones actually related to the 1807-1815 period, are in fact only six, because two of them, "The old woman and the Spanish war" and "What d'ye think of the new Spanish war", appear repeated in two different editions of the same songs. The number could be further reduced to five if we also excluded one called "The Big Bomb" which is about the setting (on 12 August 1816, in the Horse Guards Parade, London) of a memorial to the lifting of the siege of Cádiz on 24 August 1812.[10] With its ironic claim that "My price is not very great, since my subject's so heavy, I swear" (lines 6-7), [11] "The Big Bomb" marks a transition from those ballads in which, like in the two repeated ones mentioned above, the Spanish war was regarded as a grave heroic subject, towards a mock-heroic mood. Although it has none of the radical subtlety and scatological humour of William Hone's "The Regent's Bomb", both deal with the same subject and coincide in suggesting that the Cadiz memorial made little heroic or political sense after 1815: as "The Big Bomb" says, "Who knows but the mighty big Bomb, / May serve just to frighten the Crows" (line 32), or at least, as its final stanza concludes, to make the ballad-seller's pocket weightier with money (lines 43-44: "For tho' I've great weight in my Bomb / My Pockets

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Legion attacked the Carlist army besieging San Sebastian from nearby heights at Hernani on 5 May 1936. The succeeded in raising the siege, but it is estimated that the victory cost the Allies over 600 of the 5,000 men who took part in this battle.

[9] The Siege of San Sebastian of 1813, a more complex and notorious episode than the Carlist siege of 1836 described above, took place from 7 July to 8 September, and the Allied Spanish, British and Portuguese forces were led by Arthur Wellesley, Marquess of Wellington, against the French garrison occupying the city under the command of General Louis Emmanuel Rey. It finally resulted in the ransacking and burning of San Sebastian by a riotous mob including British and Portuguese troops.

[10] The naval base at Cádiz became Spain's chief seat of power after the fall of Madrid to the French. The city was massively strengthened by the Duke of Albequerque bolstering the garrison and then with the arrival of British and Portuguese reinforcements. The French Marshall Claude Victor besieged it with over 60,000 troops but failed to make much progress. The siege was finally lifted when the Duke of Wellington's advance on Salamanca made the French fear that their besieging army could be caught between Cádiz and the enemy armies approaching from the North. The Siege of Cadiz Memorial, also known as the "Prince Regemt's Bomb", is a French mortar mounted on a cast-iron Chinese dragon. It was presented to the Prince Regent by the Spanish Government to commemorate the raising of the siege. and can still be found in Horse Guards Parade in Westminster, London.

[11] Lines of "The Big Bomb in the Park" cited from the extant copy in the Bodleian Libraries. This broadside includes a subheading stating its editor and place of publication (largely coinciding with those of "Henry's Departure to the Spanish War"): "Printed and sold by J. Pitts, 14, Great St. Andrews Street, 7 Dials." The song consists of 5 stanzas of 8 lines plus a conventional chorus ("Sing col & c.").

they never were lighter"). While the five true Peninsular War ballads represent it as a patriotic enterprise on behalf of the brave Spaniards fighting tyrannical invaders, the two set in the First Carlist War portray a more individualised adventure of soldiers of fortune who try to prove their personal mettle and to win gold or glory fighting in a foreign land for no evident human ideal or political ideology. Spain is no longer the scenario where universal principles could be defended, but a setting for the reckless heroics of particular men. This new approach to Spanish conflicts after 1815 suggests a more limited popular understanding of Spanish politics.

3. The time of ballads: chronology and reception in the broadsides

The chronology of popular balladry is a complex issue, which calls for separate attention. Ballads, even topical ones about recognizable moments in history, can be considered faithful witnesses to contemporary historical events only to a limited extent. They are an *echo* of the event, rather than a record of it. Though five of the ballads in the corpus refer to the Napoleonic period, their extant printed versions are dated at later dates: "Corunna's lang shore" in 1849-80; "What d'ye think of the new Spanish war" c. 1822; "What d'ye think of the new Spanish war" between 1801 and 1831; "Arise, arise, brave sons of Spain, arise" between 1812 and 1821; "The old woman and the Spanish war" is not assigned any date; and "The Big Bomb in the Park", between 1802 and 1819, despite the fact that the Cadiz Memorial it depicts could not be earlier than 1812. Such chronological uncertainties should not be put down to carelessness on the part of the Bodleian website. It is inherent to the nature of this sort of popular poetry. Even if their allusion to topical issues may be very specific in some of these printed songs, their appeal to emotional response aspired to success and lasting memory, as with other sorts of creative literature, beyond the particular context wherein they originated. The dates suggest that the Peninsular War ballads remained popular in the 1814-1823 period. However, they were bound to that origin only until the public perception of Spanish issues evolved, and rendered the earlier emotions obsolete.

Broadside ballads, whose complete distinction from traditional popular ballads is now widely questioned (Atkinson 19-31), are a peculiar kind of poetry. The Poet's Box,[12] the printers' shop which produced the first of our items, "Corunna's Lang Shore", illustrates their context of production. An old newspaper article defines the purpose of this important but now largely forgotten literary institution, in ways that cast light on the character of this sort of literature. *The Glasgow Herald* 17 March 1926, reports that:

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[12] The Poet's Box, founded and owned by Matthew Leitch, was a publishing shop in operation between 1849 and 1911. It produced the largest extant collection of song-sheet broadsides in Britain, which is now kept in the Mitchell Library, Glasgow. See <http://libcat.csglasgow.org/web/arena/poets-box>.

> Mr Harry Lumsden, LL.B. read a paper entitled 'The Poet's Box' at a meeting of the Bibliographical Society of Glasgow (…). The lecturer said that all over Scotland, from fifty to a hundred years ago, publications in single sheets known as Broadsides or Broadsheets were hawked about the streets at a charge of a halfpenny or a penny. They consisted of short poems or songs, stories and anecdotes, recitations in prose and verse and topical verses, national and local, on political, sectarian, and social questions.

> Before the days of the cheaper newspaper many men and women made a fair livelihood in this way. (…) Versifiers resorted to establishments like the Poet's Box for publication of their effusions, which were readily purchased on the streets.

> The Poet's Box of Glasgow was only one of many similar establishments which published such leaflets.[13]

Thus the *Glasgow Herald* reporter, situating the decline of the broadside "towards the end of the nineteenth century" (in the same article and page), describes a past cultural context that in 1926 was still within living memory. Broadside ballads were the true precedent of the popular press. As such, their aim was as much to inform as to stir feelings and emotional reactions to current events. However, unlike the prosaic tabloid, the broadside was poetry, it used a poetic language purposefully, and it had an audience that could enjoy them as literature, not just as pieces of news. The best of them exhibit "the typical virtues of the tradition: good-natured humour, shrewd criticism of society, sturdy realism and powerful rhythm" (Sola Pinto and Rodway 14).

Reception theory, as it has been applied to the English traditional ballads (Atkinson 8-13), helps to explain the "implied audience" (and the reader's "consistency-building"), the "gaps of indeterminacy" of ballad texts (the "unwritten" parts of texts), the constraints in the possible range of meaning as a result of the interpretive framework embodied in the concept of traditional referentiality (the "horizon of expectations"), and the generation of meaning by metonymy from formulaic phrases and traditional themes or motifs. For example, "Henry's Departure to the Spanish War" contains a great deal of traditional motifs, beginning with the narrator's conventional introduction à la *chanson d'aventure*, as the result of overhearing an amorous dialogue or lover's complaint. The dramatic dialogue of the departing soldier is also traditional, and so is the young man's boast that he will either lose his life or win gold and reputation for his lover's "friends" (or her family) to find him more acceptable on his return. The fact that he is going to fight for the queen of Spain only adds romantic flavour. Something similar happens in "My Master's Gun", where

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[13] *The Glasgow Herald* 17 March 1926. Page 12 in the electronic edition: <https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=2507&dat=19260317&id=m5hAAAAAIBAJ&sjid=QKUMAAAAIBAJ&pg=5104,2270903&hl=es>.

emphasis is laid on the traditional young man's desire to escape a boring apprenticeship and win fame "in songs and magazines too."[14] Proving a thematic continuity between the Napoleonic war and the Carlist one, and a comic contempt for political logic, he dreams of becoming "the British Bonapartey" for the Spaniards. The active creation of meaning on the part of the audience implies that Peninsular War ballads were not just about the Peninsular War of the Napoleonic period, but potentially about almost any Spanish war in the popular imagination: any foreign war where brave Brits volunteered to fight for a great cause, for glory, or simply to win their fortune.

Many British readers heard about such war adventures for the first time in the nineteenth century milieu through the Peninsular War ballads. The Spanish fight for Liberty continued later, though not against the "Tyrant" from France, but against the tyrannical King Ferdinand, whose name, however, is never mentioned in any of the ballads. The general public in Britain, at least the popular audience of street ballads, would not know or particularly care who the king of Spain was, since there were no regular British armies fighting there after 1814. Yet the call of the Spanish adventure remained for longer in the broadsides that continued to be re-printed.

4. The Jacobites and the Carlists: a tale of two hapless rebellions

A possible antecedent for the Spanish war ballad was the eighteenth-century Jacobite ballad, which remained very popular in the nineteenth century. The last stanza of "Corunna's Lang Shore" ("And when we were parted it was with great pain / But we still having small hopes for to meet each again; / Our hopes are all over, and I'll ne'er see you more, / So I leave you, my Peggy, on Corunna's lang shore")[15] is reminiscent of the chorus of a particular Jacobite ballad, "The Bonnie Banks o' Loch Lomond" in its melancholy farewell to the loved one and its nostalgic evocation of place ("O ye'll tak' the high road and I'll tak' the low road, / An' I'll be in Scotland afore ye; / But me and my true love will never meet again / On the bonnie, bonnie banks O' Loch Lomond").[16]

"Corunna's Lang Shore" is a tragic farewell letter from a dying soldier to his sweetheart, "Pretty Peggy". The only reference to time and place is in the title itself, "Corunna's Lang Shore", repeated in the first and last line, and to a battle that was fought there (line 3). It may be based on Sir John Moore's death at the

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[14] Line 52 in the extant copy from the Bodelian collection. See footnote 6 above.

[15] Lines 17-20. This is the last of the five stanzas of four lines in the extant print of "Corunna's Lang Shore" in the Bodleian Libraries. The title is followed by two subheadings, one advertising that the song could only be had in the Poet's Box, followed by the shop's address, and another stating the name of the air to which the song should be sung: "The best of friends must part."

[16] Lines 5-8. This is the chorus of the standard original version of "The Bonnie Banks o' Loch Lomond", No. 9598 in the Roud Folk Song Index. It was first published in The Vocal Melodies of Scotland, Volume 4. 1841. Ed. Finlay Dun and John Thomson. Edinburgh: Paterson & Roy.

Battle of Corunna (1809), amidst the Peninsular War. On the other hand "The Bonnie Banks o' Loch Lomond" is an anonymous song first published in 1841, but there is also a broadside of it from Dundee, probably produced in the Poet's Box, of unknown date. The "Loch Lomond" song is traditionally attributed to a Jacobite prisoner after the 1745 Rising, writing it in the prison of Carlile where he languished awaiting his fate, nearly a century before the ballad was ever found in print. The legendary origin of the piece, another illustration of the problems of chronology I discussed above, bespeaks the traditional nature of balladry, its transmission beyond the event on which it was based initially and its somewhat conventional or formulaic nature. Ballads about different wars could influence and resemble each other, which is what makes their differences most significant.

The Jacobite song, as defined by Donaldson (1988), tends towards the sentimental. It longs for a king that is defeated and will never return, in sharp contrast to the Peninsular War's political struggle for the return of a "desired" king, Ferdinand VII, known in Spanish historiography as "el Deseado" who, however, would prove a tyrant on his return. Disenchantment is a worse source of inspiration than nostalgia for spirited ballads. The Carlist wars, quite similar to the Jacobite campaigns in several ways (they were also fought by people from the traditionalist culture of the "highlands" of the Basque Country defending an absolutist monarchy), might have proved more inspiring, but the initial romantic flame was fading. The Carlists, like the Jacobites, fought for an *ancien régime* which matched the ideology of King Ferdinand as opposed to the Liberalism which inspired the Peninsular War ballads. As "What d'ye think of the New Spanish War" said: "And what to d'ye think of the bold Spaniards then / I think for their liberty they'll all fight like men."[17] If anything, Carlism sounded like a doomed, anachronistic, quixotic venture, like Jacobitism in Walter Scott's novels, such as *Waverley* (1814), *Rob Roy* (1817) or *Redgauntlet* (1824), only even more so, over a century later, and in a foreign country. Hence in the two English Carlist War ballads the heroes do not fight on the Carlist side, but on the Liberal side against the Carlists.

The mood of Peninsular War ballads, catering for a different public, contrasts with that of English novels of the Peninsular War, generally "based either on direct observation or on careful historical research" (Dendle 64), some of them written by British army officers who served during the campaigns,

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[17] Lines 15-16. "What d'ye think of the New Spanish War" consists of seven stanzas of four lines preceded by two lines which seem to be offered as a chorus. The printer's shop is given at the end of the sheet: "Bishop, Brinter [sic], 10, Parker street, Drury Lane, London." The piece preceding it in the Bodleian Libraries is a comic song called "What a Shocking Bad Hat" with the tune called "The Silly Old Man." The latter piece, however, has a different printer: "T. Birt, 39, Great St. Andrew Street, Seven Dials, London." While "What d'ye think of the New Spanish War" celebrates the cause of Liberty, its tone is light-hearted and frolicking, like its chorus: "And they're all for clipping clip, clip, clipping / And they're all for clipping [sic] the Liberty of S___n."

which "offer a realistic, at times caustic view of their experiences, very different from the 'Romantic' approach of many foreigners to nineteenth-century Spain" (Dendle 50). The ballads are in the latter "Romantic" mood. Meanwhile realistic Peninsular War novels continued to be published and read by more "educated" readers: it is partly a similar case to the difference existing between the readership of "quality papers" and "popular tabloids" which would emerge in the twentieth century. The Carlist Wars scarcely produced any literary response in Britain, which provides added value to the uniqueness of the two Carlist War ballads. The reign of King Ferdinand elicited even less literary production in Britain. Only silence.

5. Poetic interventionism in Spanish wars: Tennyson and after

In order to understand the spirit of the two Carlist War ballads, it is necessary to place them in a wider context, including the subsequent British views on fighting Spanish wars. British interventionism in Spain acquired a different, more refined taste after the failed Liberal Triennium, in the "Ominous Decade" (1822-33), when Alfred Tennyson, the future Poet Laureate, had a small part as a member of his Cambridge club, the Apostles, in a conspiracy of General Torrijos and the Spanish exiles in 1830.[18] Tennyson was 21 when he went on an expedition across the Pyrenees to carry dispatches to Torrijos and the insurgents who were in Gibraltar.

When comparing this adventure with that of the intellectuals who intervened in the 1936 Spanish Civil War, Graham Greene argued that Tennyson must have felt lucky that his Cambridge term prevented him from travelling to Gibraltar, since Torrijos and his supporters were captured and executed while trying to reach Malaga soon afterwards. As Greene observed, the poet did not write about the subject: "Tennyson's silence was unbroken. He may have reflected that only a Cambridge term had stood between him and the firing party on Malaga esplanade" (Greene 69). Many years later Tennyson published "The Revenge. A Ballad of the Fleet" (1870), about the Elizabethan Anglo-Spanish

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[18] José María de Torrijos y Uriarte was a Liberal army officer. His distinguished participation in the Peninsular War made him a Brigadier General when he was only 23. He opposed Ferdinand VII's restoration of absolutism, and participated in a failed *pronunciamiento* (military uprising) which led to his imprisonment (1817-1820). Released during the Liberal Triennium, however, the new restoration of Ferdinand's absolutism in 1823 forced him into exile. After five months in France he felt his actions were strongly invigilated so he moved into England, where he spent six years organizing plans for the next *pronunciamiento* against the Spanish king. The Spanish exiles, led by Torrijos and aided by a few Romantic Englishmen such as Tennyson, and particularly an Irish officer of the British army called Robert Boyd who had previously been fighting for the liberty of Greece, spent a whole year in Gibraltar stirring an insurrection from the periphery towards the centre. But all the attempts failed and they eventually fell into a trap. Torrijos, Boyd and other fellow plotters were executed by firing squad on a beach in Malaga. The shooting is depicted dramatically in a celebrated Romantic painting of 1888 by Antonio Gisbert Pérez.

War, which included an allusion "to these inquisition dogs and the devildoms of Spain",[19] perhaps also referring to the image of Spain that Ferdinand VII had brought back.

However inconclusive and silenced, the young poet's adventure would find an echo in the popular imagination, though deprived of the Liberal ideas which motivated him as well as the Peninsular War ballads: in the Carlist War ballads, politics and the ideal of liberty are secondary to the Hemingway-like urge to test one's manhood in yet another Spanish war. Like Tennyson, ballad-makers kept quiet about Spanish politics after the first Carlist War had turned intervention in Spanish wars into a dubious cause. Rather than a fight for political ideals, it had become a reckless youthful adventure in the popular mind.

6. Conclusion: the eloquence of silence

The lack of ballads about the 1814-1823 period is indeed an eloquent silence. A silence suggesting that Spain had ceased to be an inspiration for great political causes. Zavala referred to the censorship established during the period as "the semiology of silence" (Zavala 147-48). The internal silence of censorship found a correlation in the silence about Spain in the English popular ballads. British ballad-mongers and their popular audience were no longer motivated by Spanish politics, because the subject, particularly during the Ominous Decade, had become too complicated for the simple emotional expression characterizing broadside ballads. It was also the silence of a Spain that turned inside herself, as if meditating on her own contradictions and tensions, and did not show a face that could be easily depicted from outside. Those contradictions would implode in the following century, making this country, once more, the subject of Spanish Civil War poets and writers like W.H. Auden and George Orwell. Once again the crucible of political principles, human rights, and ideas of Europe. Some would see the Spanish War poets as champions of a great cause, like heroes of Peninsular War ballads; others would regard them as juvenile adventurers, like Graham Greene saw them and Tennyson, and like the heroes of the two Carlist War ballads. Between those two extremes lay the uninspiring, yet eloquent, gap of Ferdinand VII's reign.

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THE FRICTION LINE BETWEEN "LYING" AND "TRUTH", OEDIPAL CONFLICT, AND TRAUMATIC SPEAKING AND SILENCE IN PAT BARKER'S *REGENERATION*

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Abstract

The present article analyses the first part of Pat Barker's trilogy *Regeneration* (1991-1995), of the same title. It is set in the First World War and turns around the encounter between psychiatrist E. M. Rivers and War poet Siegfried Sassoon when the latter suffers from shell shock and publishes a complaint against the war politics of the British government. From the analysis of Sassoon's Declaration, my main contention is that the novel addresses the liminal territory between "truth" and "lying" when representing and memorialising a traumatic event like WWI. In the second part, I delve into the poetics of psychoanalysis and (poetic) language as the narratives Barker uses to articulate the rapport between generations: fathers furthering a war in which their sons are involved. With this in mind, the paper analyses their oedipal conflict, as well as that between healer (Rivers) and trauma victim (Sassoon) both at a personal and national level.

Keywords: "Lying", "truth", oedipal conflict, WWI trauma.

Resumen

Este artículo analiza la primera parte de la trilogía Regeneration (1991-1995). Ambientada en la Primera Guerra Mundial, gira en torno al encuentro entre el psiquiatra E. M. Rivers y el poeta Sigfried Sassoon cuando éste sufre de "Shell-shock" y publica una protesta contra la política bélica del gobierno británico. Desde el análisis de esta Declaración, mi tesis es que la novela hace referencia al territorio liminal entre "verdad" y "mentira" al representar y memorializar la Primera Guerra Mundial. En la segunda parte, exploro la poética psicoanalítica como la narrativa que Barker utiliza para articular la relación entre generaciones: padres fomentando una guerra en la que sus hijos se ven envueltos. A partir de esto, el artículo analiza el conflicto edípico, así como el que se da entre el sanador (Rivers) y la víctima del trauma (Sassoon) a nivel personal y nacional.

Keywords: "Mentira", "verdad", conflicto edípico, trauma de la Primera Guerra Mundial.

1. Introduction

Pat Barker's *Regeneration* Trilogy (1995) gained its author international acclaim. Its first part, *Regeneration* (1991), was made into a film in 1997. *The Eye in the Door* (1993) won the Guardian Fiction Prize. And finally, *The Ghost Road* was the winner of the Booker Prize in 1995. Many factors explain the success of the trilogy. However, for John Brannigan, it is the fact that few of the First-World-War combatants survived in the 1990s to celebrate the Remembrance Day service, which "meant that the subject was ripe for valedictory fictional representation" (93). In other words, the conflict was becoming a liminal event, one between the memory of its victims and protagonists and the transformational and deferred articulation of fiction. It is my main contention that Barker's trilogy, and *Regeneration* in particular, addresses the liminality of traumatic experience and its repression. In this sense, the paper will delve into the poetics of "truth" and "lying", and health and disease concerning war neurosis from Sassoon's protest against war politics. Next, the article will move into the liminal and blurring territory between science and affects in the context of the Oedipal battle of trauma victims and second-hand witnesses. With all this in mind, when acts of remembrance for the victims, heroes and veterans of the Great War recur, my paper delves into *Regeneration* as a trauma-inflected literary reappraisal of the conflict. It is a "historical" trilogy; yet, the events recalled are so close (they constitute the beginning of the Western conception of a worldwide conflict and presentness) and so far (their first-hand witnesses being dead) that our identification with the victims is as powerful as our disengagement from a world our own and not our own any more. Although the novel deals with historical events, they are narrated against themselves, particularly deconstructing the so-called "authenticity" of history. In other words, characters' remembrance constitutes a valid approach to the past, rather than classic historiography. Hence, *Regeneration* fits in what Linda Hutcheon called historiographic metafiction, namely "those well-known and popular novels which are both intensely self-reflexive and yet paradoxically also lay claim to historical events and personages" (1988: 5). Yet, Hutcheon does not discard history as obsolete. She mainly claims it is "being rethought as a human construct" (1988: 16). The fact of combining real historical characters with fictional ones is key in this turn of the screw; as it is the slippery nature of the past, which is only *knowable* "through its textualized remains" (1988: 19-20). Thus, *Regeneration* makes up a *tour de force* between historical and fictional characters' discourses and experiences about the war, and between so-called traumatic truth and surrogate traumas. In concrete, Dominick LaCapra's "empathic unsettlement" (as a desirable stand of reader/spectator to avoid overidentification with victims of traumatic events as in some Holocaust texts) will be useful in the analysis of the novel. The distance between the "authentic" testimony of the historical victim and the deferred one of fictional/secondary victims/witnesses is thus put to the fore. *Regeneration* works as a liminal territory for current readers to bear witness to their own temporality and agency, which helps renegotiate the dynamics between discourses of memory, "lying" and "truth".

In approaching the First World War, Barker's novel answered to postmodern cultural anxieties, namely issues like "gender, emasculation, bisexuality and role reversals" (Brannigan 94). From the 1990s the impact of the Yale School of "trauma studies" and queer theory necessarily changed our vision of the conflict. Recalling Roger Luckhurst's *The Trauma Question* (2008), Karolyn Steffens argues that Barker's trilogy is "fully immersed in our contemporary trauma culture" (37). And, although Steffens thinks that many critics assume that *Regeneration* fundamentally relies on current "trauma theory",[1] she points out that the novel "puts the trauma discourse of the late-twentieth century in conversation with W. H. R. Rivers's specific psychoanalytic method" (38). In this sense, Barker's text seems to rely on new conceptions of memory, like Michael Rothberg's "multidirectional memory", rather than on more classic memory readings (Kirk 1999, Winter 2000, Wurtz 2009) in view of first-centenary revivals of the Great War. Multidirectional memory prompts the multiple relations that memory traces establish with each other in multiple and unexpectable directions and in a more or less direct fashion: the memory of a traumatic event like the Holocaust is the metonymic reference to other traumatic events it recalls. It is in this sense that Steffens addresses the conversation between Rivers's psychoanalysis and late-twentieth century trauma theory as interconnected discourses of memory. However, when reading the Great War through a text of the 1990s, the event itself is doubly displaced. This is inevitable though, for, although Barker's postmodern text presents historical events as cultural artifacts, current criticism revises the way "truth" is accessed behind the artifact. Being psychoanalysis itself a "survivor" of the Great War (Jay Lifton, in Caruth 81), its corollary "trauma theory" has been used to revisit the conflict and to explore how it is memorialized. Likewise, gender discourse (particularly masculinity and the Oedipal intergenerational struggle as a complex phenomenon) is culturally significant and relevant to understand current rewritings of the War and its protagonists. In the last years, and particularly with the anniversary of the WWI, biographies of heroes and anthologies of War poets have been published. Many of them approach the conflict and its protagonists from a self-indulgent ideological and nostalgic viewpoint. There are new texts however that, like Alan Hollinghurst's *The Stranger's Child* (2011) –a biography of the fictional war poet Cecil Valance− are closer to Barker's ironic discourse. Being Hollinghurst's novel a fictional recreation of a fictional war poet, it shows how he is recalled in multifarious ways depending on each moment's anxieties, interests and concerns. Barker's *Regeneration* is also a site of conflict and link of memories, past and present discourses which play on so-called reality representation.

Of the three parts of Barker's trilogy I will focus my attention on the first one, *Regeneration*, because it features the actual encounter between the soldier-poet Siegfried Sassoon and psychiatrist W. H. R. Rivers. My main point is that the dialectics between both men compels the reader to analyze the articulation of

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[1] Likewise, Roger Luckhurst points out that Barker's Trilogy "retrofits the Great War with modern trauma theory" (53).

"lying" and "true memory" in war politics, as well as the articulation of masculinity, oedipal conflict and trauma healing in WWI. The novel constitutes a brilliant *tour de force* centred in Sassoon's anti-war stand and his treatment by doctor Rivers at Craiglockhart hospital. Against first impressions, both characters' views are complex, fluid and even contradictory, which greatly enriches the debate on war, its representation and its political and moral implications. Barker's Sassoon is not a pacifist (neither was the actual poet) although historical figures such as Bertrand Russell used his anti-war complaint to suggest he was one. As concerns Rivers, although he was more a sociologist than a psychoanalyst, the novel focuses on his Freudian healing practices and the moral concerns they arouse when he tries to convince Sassoon to return to war. The role of poetry in this return to the past to better understand the present is also remarkable. War poetry in Barker's novel is both the testimony of a bygone era and a potential healer. It is not only that poets bear witness to the horrors of warfare through poetry, as has been done for centuries. Sassoon and Owen use poetry to overcome trauma and re-articulate masculinity, emasculation and, particularly, Oedipal "conflicts" which transcend themselves.

2. The articulation of "lying" and "truth" in WWI in *Regeneration*

Steffens argues that *Regeneration* is not properly a post-structuralist text, but a realistic one that sets a dialogue between the author, Rivers, and Freud (47-48). Although I consider the novel a postmodern text, this point of the article will focus on how Barker makes up this "realistic" discourse, particularly through historical characters. I do not mean "realistic" in the classic sense, though; that is, a discourse that attempts to reflect the reality out there. It is rather, a discourse that addresses the complexity of so-called reality to make readers comply with it as a textual construct. The novel starts with Sassoon's anti-war declaration, which I quote at length:

> I am making this statement as an act of willful defiance of military authority, because I believe the war is being *deliberately* prolonged by those who have the power to end it.
>
> … I believe this war, upon which I entered as a war of defence and liberation, has now *become* a war of aggression and conquest. …
>
> I have seen and endured the sufferings of the troops, and I can no longer be a party to prolong these sufferings for ends which I believe to be *evil* and *unjust*.
>
> I am not protesting against the conduct of the war, but against the potential errors and *insincerities* for which the fighting men are being *sacrificed*.
>
> On behalf of those who are suffering now I make this protest against the *deception* which is being practiced on them.   (Barker 5, my italics)

Sassoon's complaint, which, Barker argues, is a real fact (220), constitutes the core of the novel. Not being a pacifist, the poet recriminates the authorities' manipulation of truth and straight use of lies to prolong the war for unknown reasons. This delay, he denounces, provokes unjustified suffering, sacrifice and death on young soldiers. To better understand his morally-inflected statement I will make reference to Hannah Arendt's views (as revised by trauma theorist Cathy Caruth) on the construction of lying from the First World War onwards. Also, I will use LaCapra's "empathic unsettlement" to consider the degree of implication of Rivers and Sassoon on the traumas triggered by war. Drawing on Arendt's "Truth and Politics" (1967) and "Lying in Politics" (1972), Caruth explores the interaction between lying and history. I find her reading particularly illuminating to tackle Barker's revision of Sassoon's anti-war declaration. Assuming "the pervasive role of lying within the political sphere in the modern world" (39), Caruth describes how political action has been progressively replaced by political lie. On the outburst of WWI, Arendt already explained how the factual truth was rejected in favour of much more politically-concerned lying. This shift from reality and political action to the fictitious world of lying took place "when the massive destructiveness of [the Great] war … inaugurated a new world of technological violence … [which] is itself denied. The denial of the responsibility for the beginning of the war … may be the first lie … that leads to th[e] modern world" (Caruth 43).

Sassoon's words are in line with Arendt's arguments. Both reveal the starting point of contemporary deception. And somehow both take for granted a truth prior to the overall lie that covers the contemporary. An unknown power has distorted the "true" origin of the war and the political action taken as an answer to actual facts. It is no longer factuality and truth, but hidden interests, that determine the evolution of the war, not as political action, but as a lie that effaces what originally justified that political action. In other words, Sassoon's declaration is not only a complaint against the British government and its war management. It is Barker's late-twentieth-century recrimination of warfare politics, its lies, and its effects on individuals and whole populations. Obviously Sassoon could not foresee how war politics (of lying) would evolve. But Barker knows; and she injects her knowledge into the character's words. In other words, *Regeneration* plays with layers of meaning and memory, the postmodern one of the text and the fictional one of the WWI protagonists. With Vietnam War, the process of deception was perfected to fulfil a process of image-making (45). Thus, war is manufactured as self-contained and self-justifying imagery. In the case of the USA and Vietnam, the imagery trapped and effaced actual facts to sustain an image of omnipotence that determined a fictitious political action. For Arendt and Caruth, the image defactualises the scenario and becomes the framework itself (48). This is, it seems to me, what underpins Barker's use of Sassoon's complaint against an invisible authority that uses soldiers like marionettes and delays the end of the war with lies. This invisible authority not only puts to the test the way we interact and recall. It also puts forward the emasculation that characterises Barker's trauma discourse. However, the poet still believes there is a concrete political action behind their suffering and

sacrifice; at least at the beginning of the conflict. Little by little, the cause that triggered the effect/war fades away, or is perverted, and hence, the effect/war becomes an unfair performance without a justifying cause. Fighting then becomes a meaningless event that remains violent, but with no redeeming feature as it is when politics and moral principles support it. In this light, the novel addresses the imagery of British imperial power as an abstract concept soldiers were not informed about and did not agree to fight for.

There are two remarkable issues in the process of Sassoon's awareness of meaninglessness. First, it recalls trauma belatedness; that is the period of latency in which the traumatic event does not come out, but remains "hidden" so to speak. Caruth masterly explains it in relation with shell shock and, later, PTSD. It is the "response, sometimes delayed, to an overwhelming event or events" (1995, 4) which takes different unwilling manifestations "stemming from the event" (4). In this sense, the victim's discourse is a return of/to the event that escapes its meaning: neither truthful nor deceitful because it is non-representable in "logic" terms. It is just a performance of human vulnerability when confronted with the unthinkable. Yet, after a period of latency, Sassoon works out the trauma and can render it in his declaration. In the second place, trauma poetics, as implicit in Sassoon's logically narrated complaint, address the complex articulation of masculinity. With shell shock, soldiers were vulnerable not only to the physical effect of physical harm. They were exposed to an emasculating perception of masculinity. With queer theory, Barker adapts the representation of WWI masculinity as psychologically vulnerable −Freud himself was startled (Caruth 5) and keen to understand soldiers' neuroses. In seminal *Gender Trouble* (1990), Judith Butler argues that gender is a social construction and can thus be deconstructed. In fact, she thinks gender is the effect of repeated performative acts that are socially meaningful and ascribed to pre-established gender roles: "Gender is the repeated stylization of the body, a set of repeated acts within a highly rigid regulatory frame that congeal over time" (33). In this light, the traumatic emasculation of Barker's male characters is only a proof of how masculinity is just the effect intertwined performative acts. Indeed, when confronted with the trauma of war, all her characters are unable to articulate their alleged masculinity. Barker uses historiography against itself, re-defining taken-for-granted truths and lies, memory and identity.

Convinced by his friend Graves and afraid of being court-martialled, Sassoon prefers to pass for (i.e. perform) a shell-shocked soldier than for a conchie. The option of being sane and against the war was not feasible at the time. Yet, in the novel, the battlefield moves from the French trenches to the dialectics of disease/trauma and health, and lying and truth. The problem turns out that very often in the novel the limits between health and truth, and disease and lying are subtle. In fact, Sassoon's trauma is closer to "a medicalization of dissent" (Barrett 240) than to a disease to be healed. I am using health here in a Foucauldian sense, assuming it to be a cultural *dispositif* used to control people's bodies and minds. In this sense, Sassoon's arrival at Craiglockhart is a challenge not only for the poet, but especially for Rivers. The hospital is a self-contained

world, a sort of gigantic wounded brain inside which characters move around. Thus, in arriving there, one felt "daunted by the sheer gloomy, cavernous bulk of the place" (Barker 10). Craiglockhart proves to be the site of control, discipline and punishment which recalls Foucault's "panopticon" wherefrom the one in power watches the other (Foucault 201). Rivers is the supervisor who disciplines the bodies and minds of his patients from a tower at the top of the building accessible to nobody else (Barker 19, 63). Thus, control, health, masculinity and "truth" are not only applied, but also represented physically. He stands on top as a metaphorical father figure, which, as will be shown, constitutes a recurrent trope along *Regeneration*.

In line with postmodernism, Barker's novel "deconstructs" the binary system whereby concepts like health, truth, masculinity and reason are regarded as positive in contrast to their opposites. This relies on Jacques Derrida's thesis on logocentrism, binary oppositions and hierarchy (41). Rivers embodies *a priori* the "positive" side of the binary. He is presented as a Freudian who over-values the healing potential of remembering, even if "the typical patient … had usually been devoting considerable energy to the task of forgetting whatever traumatic events had precipitated the neurosis" (25). As concerns the dynamics of forgetting and remembering, Steffens's analysis is rather contradictory. Firstly, she points out that Barker "offers successful working through … insist[ing] on survival through voiced remembrance" (40). Paradoxically, a few pages later, she argues that "'healing' is highly problematic in Rivers' case, since it implies a forgetting of the event in order to return to the Front" (47). In any case, Western holistic and Freudian-inspired culture regards the fact of remembering as positive because it helps reintegrate the past and the present into a coherent, cohesive and fully integrated narrative. When a patient remembers, the process of healing allegedly starts because (his/her/the) truth comes out from a psychoanalytic frame of mind. In this sense, verbalizing becomes the magic event, the way to enter the Symbolic order and overcome the oedipal conflict. In my view, *Regeneration* questions and supports this stance. Rivers fights against his patients' denial to remember, through hypnosis sessions with deplorable results (Barker 62). However, the doctor insists in using abreaction to heal victims of shell-shock by assuming their "truth". The novel thus addresses how "truth" is constructed, articulated and performed. It is forced upon its victims who, tortured by war or a medicalized discourse, must share their perpetrators' desires and orders. Sassoon's case is singular from the very start because it addresses what Arendt and Caruth put forward. His manifesto does not only denounce the violence of war, but the denial of the arbitrary and deceitful delay of that war (Caruth 44). Thus, remembering itself becomes a political act against the poetics of lying. His determination to remember, the narrator argues, "was motivated … by a determination to convince civilians that the war was mad" (Barker 25). In brief, this is an act of rebellion.

From Vietnam War onwards, American politics have made up a whole system of make-believe related to the country war politics and its propaganda. In this context, Caruth makes a distinction between public relations managers and

problem-solvers. In her view, the former "*make images to sell the war*" whereas the latter "*make war to sustain an image*" (45). Sassoon is implicitly denouncing both techniques and/or figures. The authorities he accuses of lying are lying because an image had to be devised to convince the troops and population to go on fighting and/or resisting against the Germans. However, the lie feedbacks itself. Once the image has been created, the war has to go on. Otherwise, the image makes no sense. In his Introduction to *Poetry of the First World War*, Tim Kendall recalls Wilfred Owen's conviction to fight as if he "was perpetuating the language in which Keats and the rest of them wrote" (xv). In other words, an image of Britain has to be re-created and secured in the same way as masculinity must be performed to be affirmed. In preserving Britain's literary (and cultural) achievements, these poets felt theirs was an ethically-justified war. They fought not out of hatred, like Germans did, but in defence of their national values (Kendall xv). That is, the British Empire had an image to be preserved and war seemed the only way to do so. If late-twentieth-century USA has "to behave like the greatest power in the world" (Arendt 17), the same applies to early-20th-century Britain. The gap between both moments/discourses is bridged in Barker's Sassoon, a late-20th-century character performing an early-20th-century figure.

3. Psychoanalysis and poetry as narratives of oedipal conflict in *Regeneration*

Beyond the politics of "lying", "truth", and memory that Sassoon addresses, *Regeneration* draws on the poet's writing and the implications it has in his relation with Rivers. Sassoon's writing is, for the psychoanalyst, a Freudian event, a narrative that is triggered and aims to overcome trauma:

> Writing the poems had obviously been therapeutic, but then Rivers suspected that writing the Declaration might have been therapeutic too. He thought that Sassoon's poetry and his protest sprang from a single source, and each could be linked to his recovery from that terrible period of nightmares and hallucinations." (Barker 25)

The fact that First World War Poetry and the protest against the conflict have the same origin is disturbing for Rivers and the culture he cares for and that, paradoxically, the poet embodies. In fact, this oxymoron has unexpected effects on both men along the novel.

As mentioned above (Kendall xv), preserving Britain's literary (and cultural) achievements justified the war against the Germans for Rivers and, until his 1917 anti-war declaration, for Sassoon as well. However, their encounter reveals the side-effects of the politics of national lying at a personal level and vice versa. The novel turns around an oedipal battle between doctor and patient. However, their conflict can be extrapolated to an intergenerational one (Atkinson 2015) whereby a new generation of males confronts the decision of the old one to preserve and guarantee Britishness against the enemy. In short, the text recasts

the Great War as an oedipal battle which was fought both in France and at home. In this sense, Barker's text is aptly titled *Regeneration*, for regeneration is not akin to rebirth. That is, the novel does not feature the birth of a new nation through warfare. It is a more complex process where the new absorbs (and replaces) the old, questioning but not denying it. The new generation, here voiced by Sassoon, preserves old values, but also recriminates the elder generation the disengagement with which youths are sacrificed, especially as the war is prolonged artificially. The crisis of truth and trust between fathers and sons constitutes the traumatic core of *Regeneration* and finds its correlate in religious iconography, especially Abraham's sacrifice of his son. In this sense, the oedipal in the novel is rather ambivalent. It addresses the ambiguous relation between father and son, disregarding the role of the mother. In this sense, the oedipal redirects the libidinal desire of the male "child" (Sassoon/Owen) from the mother towards the father figure, here represented by Rivers. Or otherwise, in line with Deleuze and Guattari's *Anti-Oedipus* (1972), the oedipal is reframed outside the limits of the family well into the social. Hence, the intergenerational conflict between fathers and sons as passive and active agents of war respectively. As mentioned above, the oedipal is related to Abraham's sacrifice of his son too, also a conflict between father and son where the mother is absent. However, unlike the classic libidinal desire of the son for the mother in Freudian and Lacanian Oedipus, Abraham submits himself to Father/God even to kill his own son. The intergenerational conflict between fathers and sons has thus in *Regeneration* a twofold referent that makes it particularly complex.

Eventually the oedipal "truth" of the novel −which de-constructs masculinity as a fixed and natural identity− can only be rendered in the form of poetry whereby two generations of men involved in the war relate to each other. In Barker's text, youths take refuge from chaos (78) and feel safe since father figures like Rivers "share the[ir] horror and the[ir] conviction" (79), at least at first glance. This takes us to LaCapra's "empathic unsettlement", a desirable stand that prevents witnesses from overidentifying with victims of traumatic events: "Being responsive to the traumatic experience of others, notably of victims, implies not the appropriation of their experience but what I would call "empathic unsettlement" (41). The young generation, who suffers from trauma, first in the trenches and later at Craiglockhart hospital, is somehow equalled to their fathers. Fathers, the narrator says, share the sons' horror in their turn. However, as LaCapra aptly argues, being the victim of a traumatic event is not akin to bearing witness to it (47). In other words, the father figures who further the war are not trauma victims, at least not as those directly involved in the conflict. The role of empathy in the secondary witness is valuable. It involves, LaCapra points out: "A kind of virtual experience through which one puts oneself in the other's position while recognizing the difference of that position and hence not taking the other's place" (78). Trauma is thus untransferable. Yet, the oedipal restores (as well as short-circuits) the affective link that connects victim and secondary witness. In fact, even in the most brutal of conflicts, the narrator points out: "The relation between officers and men … was domestic. Caring" (Barker 97). Back at home, Sassoon, Owen and other victims of war

must come to terms with their trauma through Rivers's expertise. In fact, *Regeneration* is a catalogue of traumatic experiences.

Sassoon describes his shell-shock trauma after a period of latency in a pedagogic fashion in his exchange with Rivers: "'Nightmares and hallucinations come later'. … 'I did have nightmares when I first got back from France. I don't have them now.' 'And the hallucinations?' … 'It was just when I woke up, the nightmares didn't always stop. So I used to see …' A deep breath. Corpses. Men with their faces shot off, crawling across the floor.'" (Barker 13). There are more extreme cases of belated war trauma other than Sassoon's which uphold the novel's pedagogic discourse. Burns is also a patient of Rivers's, and a paradigmatic case of shell-shock:

> He'd been thrown into the air by the explosion of a shell and had landed, head-first, on a German corpse, whose gas-filled belly had ruptured on impact. Before Burns lost consciousness, he'd had time to realize that what filled his nose and mouth was decomposing human flesh. Now, whenever he tried to eat, that taste and smell recurred. … He hardly looked like a human being at all. (19)

The imagery used is very effective, almost synesthetic, because the smell of that flesh can almost be "read". Obviously, readers are doubly deferred from the trauma itself, which is only vicariously rendered by the narrator. The empathy of readers towards the victim is unsettled (i.e. not over-identifying), though justified. It is meaningful that Burns's reiterative acting-out of trauma transforms him into a man who does not look a human. Dehumanizing the victim is the last step in traumatic suffering. He is diseased beyond understanding, an abject presence, and therefore he can no longer be recognized as a human, but as an animal or monster. In this line, Susan Sontag argues that "the most terrifying illnesses are those perceived not just as lethal but as dehumanizing" (38); and in many cases, the diseased are metaphorically infected by and/or mutated into animals (39, 41). Although Sontag deals with the physicality of illness, her dehumanizing/animalizing metaphors can be applied to Barker's traumatized characters. They are queered not only from a sexual viewpoint; the gayness of WWI poets and their poems being a case in point. They are also queered because, in being emasculated, the "essence" of masculinity is discarded.

The language the novel uses to address trauma is, as has been shown, enmeshed in the Yale school of the 1990s and ultimately in Freudianism. Indeed, Rivers interprets the meaning of dreams (Barker 42-43). The horrors of the victims of so-called war neurosis are repressed for him to abreact them later. His encounters with his patients help understand the fight between wilful forgetting and imposed remembering, and between unhealthy acting-out and the curative working-through that upholds Rivers's oedipal fathering of his patients. However, *Regeneration* is rather ambivalent. Are Rivers's language and science the adequate tools to heal these men? Is he a *bona fide* father to his patients/sons? The discourses of traumatic memory and poetry prove valid in this revision of masculinity.

The bond between Rivers and Sassoon helps articulate men's ambivalent interaction during the war. Their oedipal struggle makes a change in their views; particularly in the former, who eventually understands the origin of his own traumatic stammering and questions his job as healer/murderer of his metaphoric sons. Paradoxically he cures them to be sent to the reason why they fell ill. He is, in brief, the father in crisis. The bond Sassoon-Owen is also a father-son one. They put forward how the oedipal struggle between generations can be gentle. If the tandem Rivers-Sassoon recalls the Freudian oedipal battle, that between Rivers and Owen draws on Abraham's oedipal conflict of love and submission. Yet, there is a third angle to the oedipal in *Regeneration*, namely the "love" relation between Sassoon and Owen which draws on classic elegies. Anne Whitehead considers Sassoon's revision of Owen's "Anthem for Doomed Youth" as "an analogy for [Barker's] methods of writing the past" (in Monteith 215). It is in this sense that poetry and memory interact in the novel. The fact that Barker intervenes in both men's re-creation of war for second-hand witnesses to have access to the traumatic events they experienced first-hand is significant; especially because both the novelist and readers can only bear witness to the War vicariously (Joyes 173). This is how Barker shows the process of poetic re-creation of traumatic facts. Owen's original reads:

> What minute-bells for these who die so fast?
>
> −Only the monstrous/solemn anger of our guns. (Barker 126)

The revised version with Sassoon's help reads:

> What passing-bells for these who die … so *fast*?
>
> −Only the monstrous anger of the guns. (126)

Sassoon's palimpsestic changes on the original poem demonstrate not only the confluence of the soldier-poets' voices. They also address how language makes memory, and eventually, history. The final poem does not only address British troops ("our guns"), but all the European soldiers ("the guns") involved in the war. Also, the glorious "solemn" is replaced by "monstrous". It is no longer a nation's glory, but the betrayal of the older generation of men on the new one in Europe which prevails. The discourse of *Regeneration* turns thus a counterdiscourse, for it questions the logic of intergenerational love by re-defining the oedipal as ambivalent but valid to render the trauma of masculinity and its performative character. Sons are betrayed by their fathers in what constitutes not only a historical but a cultural trauma.

The oedipal circle is closed with another of Owen's poems, "The Parable of the Old Man and the Young". It links Rivers' experiences to Owen's words. The doctor rewrites and is rewritten by Owen's poems and, in the process, becomes his father figure, as is Sassoon's first. When Rivers attends a church service and examines the "eastern stained-glass windows" at the beginning of chapter fourteen, he appreciates two Biblical scenes, namely "a crucifixion" and

"beneath it, a much smaller, Abraham's sacrifice of his son" (133). Christ's redemptive death and especially the scene of Abraham about to sacrifice Isaac, are not only metaphors of Rivers' use of his patients-sons. They also address the First World War as a mass sacrifice: "Rivers thought … If you, who are young and strong, will obey me, who am old and weak, even to the extent to … sacrifice your life, then … you will inherit … the same obedience from your sons. … The inheritors were dying … while old men … gathered … and sang hymns" (133). The images in the church also address Owen's poetic performance of masculinity in crisis. As Joyes argues, the biblical scenes and the war episodes Rivers recalls inspire Owen's "The Parable of the Old Man and the Young" (174-75). The poem draws once again on the oedipal. As a matter of fact, while Rivers is admiring the stained-glass windows in his childhood church, the narrator points out the two Biblical scenes represent "the two bloody bargains on which a civilization claims to be based" (133). The doctor fathers his patients because, in Sassoon's view, they turn him "into a Daddy" (59). Sassoon's case is particularly extreme. At the end of part 3, after an Epiphanic crisis, he comes to connect his sense of loss at war with his sense of abandonment. The scene turns around a hallucination or self-splitting process whereby he bears witness to himself as an abandoned child. This he associates to Rivers's eventual abandonment, which, since the doctor has become "his father confessor", constitutes a sort of "second abandonment" (129). The problematic relation between father and son at an individual or national level is a leit-motif, "never simple, never over" (139). Frictions come out between both in the way they interact, when the son remembers and replaces the father, and when the father regrets having overpowered the son.

This paper and Barker's novel start with Sassoon's declaration and Rivers' answer as a professional to what is reported as a shell-shock case to the military authorities. However, the doctor's response evolves from a psychoanalyst's to that of a psychoanalyzed; from a father-redeemer's to that of a redeemed; from a scientist's to one who embraces affects and spiritualism in his interaction with the other. It is not that Rivers suffers from empathic unsettlement. It is only that the different methods of abreaction as unwilling memorizing trigger off a crisis of his role as authority in a Patriarchal system. His masculinity and authority are queered by his "sons" and by himself. That is the ultimate trauma that *Regeneration* reveals. He feels firstly disarmed about his rationalism in an exchange with his colleague Brock. Talking about Sassoon's contradictions on war politics, Rivers notices, against Brock, that they are trying to impose rationality on irrationality (67) when their alleged rationality is defending the irrationality of a no-longer-justifiable war. His doubts increase when he reads Sassoon's poem on his hallucinations and he is "not capable of saying anything" (168). The doctor feels increasingly guilty because he is fostering a war politics he no longer believes in unconditionally (104). Also, he feels the characteristic guilt syndrome of trauma survivors when he understands he is involved in the sacrifice of the new generation. New doubts about (his) science and rationalism arouse when, on chapter 22, Rivers bears witness to doctor Yealland's practices with trauma victims; particularly when the latter uses electric shocks to make a

voiceless soldier recover his speech arguing: "You must speak, but I shall not listen to anything you have to say" (203). Yealland's "Faradization" (Barrett 237) is a dehumanizing technique. Despite being "cured", Yealland's patients are denied a voice or any trace of empathy, taking LaCapra's "empathic unsettlement" to the extreme. Rivers, a mere witness to the session, counteracts Yealland's method assuming an empathic stance, remaining still, scarcely moving (Barker 202). Although Jennifer Shaddock's article escapes the scope of this paper because it deals with *The Ghost Road*, it analyses Rivers's crisis. Confronted with Melanesian culture he begins "overtly to question the ethos of the Western scientist –the detached, authoritative empiric− and enact an alternative ethic, that of the engaged, complicit healer and emotional as well as intellectual father" (Shaddock 671).

Regeneration closes, as I advanced before, with Rivers at the height of his crisis, both as a doctor and as a fellow countryman of Sassoon and other soldiers-victims: "He was amused by the irony of the situation, that he, who was in the business of changing people, should himself have been changed" (Barker 218). Yealland's dehumanizing practice not only makes River suspect the validity of science to come to terms with trauma. It also triggers the recurrence of his own traumas, particularly his oedipal complex, whose main symptom is his stammering. Both the traumatic event, his inarticulate rapport to his father, and his speech impediment merge in his father's "dual role as priest and speech therapist" (137). In other words, being his father a spiritual father and a master of language, Rivers's stammering is meaningful and his entering the Symbolic proves to be as compulsory as a traumatic outcome of the oedipal phase. He eventually confesses to have spent his whole life "trying not to say" (88). Most of the men the psychoanalyst "fathers" to sublimate his oedipal conflict share his difficulty/inability to speak: Owen (74), Prior (94), and Thorpe (183). Rivers summarizes the relation between trauma, its silencing and its utterance, particularly through psychoanalysis narratives, in a Freudian discourse with sociological undertones. What remains unknown is to what extent they are helpful for his own crisis:

> I imagine … mutism seems to spring from a conflict between *wanting* to say something, and knowing that if you *do* say it the consequences will be disastrous. So you resolve it by making it physically impossible for yourself to speak. … What you tend to get in officers is stammering. And it's not just mutism. All the physical symptoms: paralysis, blindness, deafness. They're all common in private soldiers and rare in officers. It's almost as if for the … labouring classes illness has to be physical. (87-88)

Class implications apart, the transference from a psychic trauma into a physical impediment reverts the logic of shell-shock, which was primarily a bodily disorder. In any case, what matters is that, with Sassoon's words, *Regeneration* proves to be a neo-Freudian trauma-inspired text revising the poetics of representation of so-called reality, memory and masculinity.

4. Concluding remarks

Gender issues, as Brannigan argues, are still central when analyzing Barker's return to the War. However, there are new concerns worth mentioning which enrich the trilogy, particularly the representation of trauma, the complex interaction between victims, healers and perpetrators, between generations, the crisis and revision of masculinity, "truth" and memory, and its ethical consequences. The extradiagetic narrator argues that Sassoon's protest is "a completely honest action" (Barker 219), which puts to the test the conflict between poetry and war, poetry and pacifism, life and death, heroism and victimhood, and glory and misery.

Being a postmodern novel that bears witness to particularly critical episodes with trauma theory, Freudianism and Rivers's own methodology as a framework, *Regeneration* opens more windows than it closes. The poetics of lying and truth, when it comes to political issues like war management, prove to be rather intricate. Power must confront any rebellious traces in a society under trauma and in crisis. Rivers controls dissenters' minds and bodies for the Establishment's sake. In other words, he forms part of the medicalizing strategy whereby dissent is treated as a disease to eradicate. Through his encounter with Sassoon's narratives (poetic, psychic, traumatic), the doctor evolves from a scientific analyzing and regulating behaviour to a man in crisis. In this sense, unlike Steffens, I contend that Barker questions Rivers, not only from a moral viewpoint, but from a professional one. Or rather, it is the doctor himself who questions his allegiance with Power. He is eventually a *bona fide* father with his patients, not because he overempathizes with them, but because he learns to bear witness to their suffering from LaCapra's "empathic unsettlement". It is a fact that he stammers, a belated effect of a prior trauma. However, his is due to a Freudian oedipal complex from childhood whereas his patients' traumata are war-neurosis processes. Hence, that Rivers' own oedipal complex is eventually transmuted to his rapport with his patients is metaphoric, rather than the effect of the identification between one and others.

Barker's novel enhances the role of poetry in the memorialisation of the Great War in Britain. Sassoon and Owen were famous poets, cultural icons of how the country managed to come to terms with the conflict through a genuine British literary tradition. In *Regeneration* Rivers, Sassoon and Owen make up a triangle of father-son affiliations which addresses some key issues: the difficult task of uttering the war when one is involved in it as victim and/or witness; the painful re-entering into the Symbolic when the oedipal struggle is ambivalent and the act of speaking itself becomes an (im)possibility; the role of poetry as an alternative language to come to terms with the "reality" of war; the opportunities and limitations of psychoanalysis to narrativise and heal post-traumatic stress disorders (formerly shell-shock); and the problematic representation of masculinity when these men are confronted with each others' traumata and with war. To be a WWI warrior in Barker's novel is no longer heroic. Masculinity is queered as a performative role in the hands of the discourses of "truth" and

"lying" and, hence, once the traumatic catastrophe occurs, these men are just vulnerable poets.

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THE WRITING OF POLITICS AND THE POLITICS OF WRITING IN HELEN MARIA WILLIAMS' *A TOUR IN SWITZERLAND* (1798)

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Abstract

British author and political activist Helen Maria Williams (1759-1827) dedicated the greatest part of her career to describe and analyse the French Revolution and the consequences of its aftermath. She is known for her *Letters written in France* (1790), an eyewitness account of her first visit to France. At the beginning of her career, Williams was praised in Britain for her sensibility poems. However, when she moved to France, and especially after the publication of *A Tour Switzerland* (1798), she shows her commitment to the ideas of the French Revolution while presenting her writing a source for accurate political and historical information. For this aim, she employs a series of strategies that situate herself in the position of an informed intellectual. This article focuses on *A Tour in Switzerland*, a work that has received less critical attention than *Letters* but deserves reconsideration.

Keywords: Helen Maria Williams, women's writing, 18th century, French Revolution.

Resumen

La autora y activista política británica Helen Maria Williams (1759-1827) dedicó la mayor parte de su carrera a describir y analizar la Revolución Francesa y sus consecuencias. Es conocida por su obra *Letters written in France* (1790), un testimonio de su primera visita a Francia. Al principio de su carrera, fue elogiada en Gran Bretaña por sus poemas de sensibilidad. Sin embargo, cuando se traslada a Francia, y especialmente tras la publicación de *A Tour in Switzerland* (1798), muestra su compromiso con las ideas de la Revolución Francesa mientras presenta sus obras como fuentes de rigurosa información política e histórica. Con este propósito, emplea una serie de estrategias para situarse en la posición de una intelectual informada. Este artículo se centra en *A Tour in Switzerland*, una obra que ha recibido menos atención que *Letters* por parte de la crítica pero que merece ser reconsiderada.

Palabras clave: Helen Maria Williams, escritura femenina, siglo XVIII, Revolución Francesa.

1. Introduction

On March 1798, the French army occupied Switzerland marking the end of the Old Swiss Confederacy and the beginning of the new Helvetic Republic. Only a few weeks before this episode, British author Helen Maria Williams released her *A Tour in Switzerland* (1798). As explained by Deborah Kennedy, this timing "automatically and deliberately involved the book in the politics of the moment" (128). Regardless of the fact of being largely ignored or marginalized by the critics when compared to Williams' *Letters written in France* (1790), *A Tour in Switzerland* is compelling inasmuch as is it offers the reader something more than a travel narrative. In this book, Williams recasts as a travelogue the diary that she kept in her six-month stay in Switzerland in 1794. The outcome is eclectic since it combines political analysis and journalism with travel anecdotes and a romantic description of alpine landscapes. Elizabeth Fay writes that travel literature was a genre that allowed the author to show her or his literary skills from the safe position of an amateur rather than an authority or scholar (7). In this case, Williams is far from presenting herself as an amateur since she adopts the position of an intellectual who is informed about the political debates of her time. After her journey across Switzerland, Williams ceases to put herself in the position of a spectator of her previous works in order to adopt the viewpoint of a political reporter. Here, Williams unfolds her critical thinking more than in any of her previous tracts. In the chapters devoted to political analysis, Williams displays a method of gathering, interpreting and presenting information that situates her in a position of authorial control. Deborah Kennedy argues that "by the middle of the 1790s, Williams had attained an unprecedented position for a woman writer by becoming a well-known authority on an international event of immeasurable historical importance" (122). In *A Tour in Switzerland*, Williams wields this reputation with decisiveness and presents herself as a political analyst.

In the eighteenth century Williams was a respected figure in the revolutionary francophone circles. Her work was complimented by figures such as Elizabeth Montagu, Samuel Johnson, Dorothy and William Wordsworth, Mary Wollstonecraft, Hester Piozzi or Alexander von Humboldt. Born from a Scottish mother and a Welsh father in 1761, she received a presbyterian upbringing. After moving to London in 1781, Williams and her family became members of the congregation of the Reverend Dr Andrew Kippis, who praised her poetry and introduced her to the dissenting literary circles. She published her first poetry works in her early twenties, *Edwin and Eltruda* (1782), *Peru* (1784), and *Ode to the Peace* (1786). Williams already starts to express her political curiosity by appealing to strong emotions when she articulates her political ideas. These early sensibility poems were received favourably, and her next publication, *Poems* (1786), gathered around 1500 subscribers. In 1790 she published her first and only novel *Julia, a Novel Interspersed with some Poetical Pieces* (1790) which was inspired by Rousseau's *Julie ou la Nouvelle Héloïse* (1761). This novel does not address political issues directly, but it includes a poem "La Bastille: A Vision", which is representative of Williams' interest in

the French Revolution. As a result of her support for revolutionary ideas, coupled by her admiration for French literature, she would travel to France that same year. She recounted the events that she witnessed in her acclaimed work *Letters Written in France*. In 1792, she established herself in France accompanied by her mother and sister. In the second volume of her *Letters*, published in 1794, she starts to detach her arguments from the literature of sensibility. She gradually starts to portray herself as an informed and intellectual writer. This renders her work not merely literary, but also journalistic and philosophical, which becomes particularly evident in *A Tour in Switzerland*.

Despite the significance that Williams' writings on the French Revolution had in Britain at the end of the eighteenth century and at the beginning of the nineteenth, scholars have devoted scant attention to her contribution to both history and political thought. Several studies on Williams have studied her role as a sensibility writer, paying attention mainly to her literary style, while other scholars have focused on her biographical aspects and connections. This is the case of the only monograph dedicated to Williams, *Helen Maria Williams and the Age of Revolution* (2002), written by Deborah Kennedy. This work is a good starting point to address Williams' corpus on the whole but it fails to provide a thorough analysis of each of her works. Williams is known mainly for her *Letters Written in France* (1790), which has been treated as representative of her political discourse, while the way in which her political thinking evolved over time is overlooked. In "From Liberty to Lechery Performance, Reputation and the "Marvelous Story" of Helen Maria Williams (2010)" Louise Duckling recognises that Williams established "her own brand of political philosophy" (74). However, the article only deals with the first volume of *Letters*, even though, only in the 1790s, she published eight volumes of her experience in France.

Williams has left us an extensive literary legacy. As a poetess, her numerous poems of the 1780s and two books of poems, *Poems* (1786) and *Poems on Various Subjects* (1823), stand out. Besides, she created twelve volumes dedicated to the historical and political analysis of Revolutionary events between 1790 and 1827. She also worked as a translator, producing the first translation into English of Bernardin de Saint Pierre's *Paul et Virginie (1795)* and Alexander Von Humboldt's *Researches (1814)* and *Personal Narrative (1814-26)*, which consists of seven volumes. Her only travel narrative, *A Tour in Switzerland* (1798), has received, as stated before, little critical attention. In her book published in 2013, entitle*d Revolutionary Women Writers, Charlotte Smith & Helen Maria Williams*, Angela Keane dedicates one chapter to *A Tour* in Switzerland. This short chapter contains an overview of the whole two volumes, and it discusses its main themes -sublime experience, politics, exile…- without pausing to offer a more detailed analysis of its intellectual elements. Besides, this book is also representative of what has been stated in the previous paragraph since in its section dedicated to *Letters from France*, Keane writes that "the first volume [...] is the main focus of my discussion" (99). Chris Jones' "Travelling hopefully: Helen Maria Williams and the feminine discourse of sensibility"

(2000) focuses on Williams' chronicles of France. Although it is published in a volume about travel writing, it is centered on Williams' sensibility and romantic rhetoric elements and her experience of the contemplation of nature. Helen Maria Williams' writings deserve reconsideration from the viewpoint of her engagement in the intellectual debate of her time. This is particularly urgent in the case of *A Tour a Switzerland*, which is rarely chosen as an object on analysis by scholars who explore Williams' writing.

In the first part of this article, I place Williams' *A Tour in Switzerland* in relation to the works of other contemporary authors with the aim of providing the context of its publication. The second part is dedicated to analyse Williams' engagement with political writing and the strategies that she uses to convey her arguments in an effective way. Likewise, I take into consideration similar strategies that she had employed with the same intention in previous publications. In the third part, I explore how Williams constructs an account of herself as an intellectual by showing awareness of recent publications and aligning her writing with a philosophical approach. At the same time, I draw attention towards Williams' self-fashioning as a philosophical writer. Following that, I interrogate how Williams' gender shaped the reception of *A Tour in Switzerland* at the moment of its publication.

2. The Controversy in Britain surrounding the Revolution

Both Helen Maria Williams' *Tour* and her chronicles of the French Revolution were published amidst all the political fervour in Britain surrounding the French Revolution. *Letters from France* was published in the same year as Edmund Burke's *Reflection on the Revolution in France* (1790). As opposed to Williams, Burke positioned himself against the revolution and he aimed to convince the British readership of its pernicious influence. Mary Wollstonecraft replied to Burke's conservatism with her *Vindication of the Rights of Men* (1790). Another woman writer who challenged Burke was Catharine Macaulay with her *Observations on the Reflections of the Rt. Hon. Edmund Burke, on the Revolution in France* (1790). Macaulay wrote mainly historical texts and was an open supporter of revolutionary causes. Anna Laetitia Barbauld, who had traveled to France shortly before the Storming of the Bastille, wrote *An Address to the Opposers of the Repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts* "roused by Edmund Burke's attacks on the French Revolution" (McCarthy). Barbauld and Williams had been raised in dissenting households and Williams was an admirer of her work to the extent that she quotes her *Epistle to William Wilberforce on the Rejection on the Bill for Abolishing the Slave Trade* (1791) in *A Tour in Switzerland*. Barbauld's *Epistle* and Williams' *Poem on the Bill Lately Passed Regulating Slave Trade* (1788) show the commitment of these two authors to the abolitionist movement. In 1791, one of the most influential responses to Burke was published, Thomas Paine's *Rights of Man*. Paine had become a strong advocate for the American independence, a cause that Williams also supported. Not surprisingly, they now also shared their defense of the French Revolution. In

the same way as Williams, Paine would also travel to France during the Revolution. When compared to Burke's *Reflection*, Williams' *Vindication*, Macaulay's *Observations* and Paine's *Rights of Man*, Williams's writing is original in that she does not frame her arguments as a reply to Burke, thus showing initiative as a political writer. While the works mentioned were published as political tracts, Williams published her account of the French Revolution as an epistolary exchange not devoid of political analysis. In her *Letters*, Williams adopts the perspective of an eye-witness as means to ensure the accuracy of her chronicles. In 1792, Wollstonecraft would also travel to Paris. As Janet Todd indicates in *Mary Wollstonecraft: A Revolutionary Life*, they both attended the same revolutionary salons, and Wollstonecraft became "a firm friend" of Williams (212). Wollstonecraft published *An Historical and Moral View of the French Revolution; and the Effect It Has produced in Europe* (1794) in the same year that Williams travelled to Switzerland. Wollstonecraft's work is of a less heterogeneous nature and focuses on historical and political analysis, while Williams combines this aspect with other subjects as I have already indicated. Although the authors mentioned above continued to show interest in the Revolution, Williams devoted almost her entire career to the political analysis of revolutionary events and she went on to write about it well into the nineteenth century. Her last work, entitled *Souvenirs de la Révolution Française* was published on the year of her death (1827), which confirms her commitment to the cause until the last days of her life.

3. Politics and the Writing of Informed Observation

In 1793, during the Jacobin's time in the French government - known as "the reign of terror"- Williams' home was searched on a few occasions. At that time, she was settled in Paris and had already become a well-known figure in the Girondine circles. In September the "Law of Suspects" ordered the incarceration of all suspected counter-revolutionaries. As with all British citizens residing in France, Williams was imprisoned for a short period of time. Fearing further retaliations, Williams travelled to Switzerland the following year together with friend and life companion John Stone. During the six months that she stayed in Switzerland, she kept a detailed diary in which she records not only her travel anecdotes and impressions of the country, but also an study on how Swiss governments operated in each canton. Her previous chronicles of the French Revolution were criticized, in Jacqueline Leblanc's words, for "lacking serious critical perspective" (26) something that Leblanc agrees with. In similar terms, Angela Keane suggests that Williams' early works are lacking in "depth and variety in social discourse" (87). Maybe in order to prevent a negative reception based on the superficiality of her political ideas, Williams claims political and historical authority by presenting her writing as the result of detailed observation: "I made a number of notes of what I had myself seen" (A Tour in Switzerland Vol II 10), and the subsequent reworking of these notes. She writes the final version of the *Tour* four years after her visit, going over her initial diary, which becomes both a journalistic and intellectual task. She registers the

conversations that she held with different inhabitants of the country from different social classes that allow her to form a complete picture of the social and political structure. Besides, she describes her visits to Swiss libraries and her interviews with intellectual figures which give her access to detailed and accurate political and historical data. Such an attitude is also reflected in the work's formal structure. *A Tour in Switzerland* is the first non-narrative prose writing by Williams in which she does not make use of the epistolary form. Williams wants to distance her personal emotions from her political passages since her way of writing was well-known in Britain for the intense subjective feeling of her early literary career. She chooses to organise her *Tour* in different chapters in which she includes a subtitle with the different topics that she deals with in each section. In this manner, the book follows an encyclopedic structure in which the reader can easily access specific information. The aim of this is to create a work that appears to be informative and objective.

Chapter One opens with Williams' strong criticism of the Jacobin regime calling it a "new species of tyranny which assumed the name of revolutionary government" (A Tour in Switzerland Vol I 1). From the very beginning Williams takes an overtly political position and repudiates a form of government that she considers violent and repressive. This strategy already appears in the second volume of *Letters* (1794) when she opens the first letter with a harsh criticism of the *Commune Provisoire*:

> While the real patriots of France … risked their lives … and by their desperate valour confirmed the liberty of their country, a set of men … contrived … to seize upon a considerable portion of power; and never surely in the annals of tyranny have we heard of power more shamefully abused … The short period of their usurpation, committed more crimes than despotism itself would have achieved in ages. (Vol II 2-3)

Here, Williams rallies against the Jacobin leaders by portraying them as being more oppressive than the despotism they initially fought against. In the same way, they are defined as a 'set of men', a small group that rules over the majority of people, who are considered by Williams the 'real patriots'. Williams always defended the Revolution as a necessary step to attain freedom and social equality, but this does not prevent her to be critical towards those who had misused it. In these lines, she reinforces her belief in freedom as the ultimate achievement of the Revolution. In the case of *A Tour in Switzerland*, Williams goes a step further by presenting herself as a political fugitive, which she uses to ensure the readership that her account is verifiable. This strategy is already evident in her preface to her translation of *Paul et Virginie*, published in 1795 after her return from Switzerland. Here she writes that amidst the "Jacobinical despotism, which, while it murdered in mass, persecuted in detail, the resources of writing, and even reading, were encompassed with danger" (Vol I iii). Williams' escape to Switzerland is not only due to the fact that she finds herself in a risky situation, she also wants to arrive at a place where she can perform her profession as a writer as well as have access to reading and study. She is thus

presenting herself as being committed to her writing of political denunciation. Significantly, in *Tour*, she claims that the political pressure that she underwent the year before was not due to her political affinities only but also to her flagrant denunciation of the current political affairs through her writing:

> I was not merely involved in the common danger which threatened every individual in France, but had claims to particular proscription. It was not only remembered by many of the satellites of Robespierre, that I had been the friend of the Gironde, of Madame Roland, martyred names which it was death to pronounce, but that I had written a work, published in England, in which I traced, without reserve, the characters of our oppressors. (Vol I 1-2)

In this passage Williams is claiming her proximity to Madame Roland, a key figure in Girondine politics, and, as a result, she is implying her own relevance and involvement in the same cause. At the same time, she highlights the repercussion of her own writing. She puts herself in the position of an influential writer whose political opinions are not only heard by the public but that also provoke distress in the current government. In this way, Williams presents her writing as a political act in itself. What is more, she points to her previous writing as one of the first texts to present and condemn the situation while providing a faithful description of the political events: "No danger could be more imminent than that of living under the very tyranny which I had the perilous honour of having been one of the first to deprecate, and to proclaim" (A Tour in Switzerland Vol I 2). According to her own words, her chronicles were a first-hand narration of the political situation in France, and the reader may expect to find the same about Switzerland in the present work. In these passages she suggests that rather than having merely artistic interests, she acts in the manner of a journalist. Besides, she also wants to make certain that her readership does not take this book as the telling of a pleasure trip. Switzerland had become in the eighteenth century an obliged destination for the Grand Tour. Although Williams sometimes adopts the position of a traveller, especially when she describes the powerful effects that the contemplation of nature has in her writing, she reaffirms that the reasons for her travel are political. Not only the purpose of her travel is connected to the political events, but also the publication of the work itself: "It is the present moral situation of Switzerland that justifies the appearance of these volumes, in which an attempt is made to trace the important effects which the French Revolution has produced in that country, and which are about to unfold a new era in its history" (Vol I 1). This perspective differentiates her *Tour* from other travel narratives of the time.

Williams' engagement in political analysis is made evident in the structure of her chapters about political organization. Every time she describes her arrival to a new destination in Switzerland, she dedicates a few paragraphs to analyse how the canton is governed. Gary Kelly, Chris Jones and Deborah Kennedy argue that in *A Tour in Switzerland* Williams participates in a critique of the government of the Swiss cantons in order to defend the necessity of a revolution in this country as means to prove her strong belief in the revolutionary cause

despite the later events. While I agree with this reading of Williams' work, I would also add that she does not limit herself to participating in the revolutionary discourse but elaborates one of her own. By criticizing the political organization she is also asserting her position as an outspoken reporter, a persona that she keeps throughout the book. As a result, she forcefully criticizes the power structure and employs harsh language such as "usurpation in the eyes of the people" (Vol I 172), "the abuses which exist in these Swiss governments" (Vol I 216); "reins of arbitrary power" (Vol I 216); "the government is nothing but a mere oligarchy, incompatible with every idea of free political institution" (Vol II 58); "civic degradation" (Vol II 58); or "their governors have instituted the most illegal and arbitrary customs" (Vol II 140). However, she does not direct all her criticism to the Swiss. As I have already mentioned, she attacks the jacobin government, that she even labels as "the pestilential reign of terrorism" (Vol II 89). Williams delves into political analysis when she compares the state of affairs in Switzerland and France, both before and after the French Revolution. This comparative slant is one of the characteristics that best differentiates *Tour* from the rest of her previous work. The subtitles make the comparison clear, for example: "Comparative View of the Spirit of Commerce in France, before, and since the Revolution" or "Comparative View of French and Swiss Peasantry before the Revolution".

In her retelling of her visit to Switzerland, that took place four years before she published her *Tour*, Williams also adds relevant information in the current state of politics. As a journalist, she goes over her previous notes and brings them up to date. An example of this are the sections dedicated to Napoleon Bonaparte. With these passages, Williams may be showing that she does not only aim to write a mere historical account but a relevant political analysis. At the same time, I believe that Williams is making use of a strategy that she had already employed in her novel *Julia* (1790) and that Louise Joy explains in her article "Emotions in Translation: Helen Maria Williams and "Beauties Peculiar to the English Language"". In *Julia*, the narrator is presented as someone observing the scene, in the same way as Williams observes the sociopolitical context both in France and Switzerland, but in this case she also participates in it. According to Joy, even if the narrator uses the present tense, it doesn't narrate its experience with immediacy and it acquires "the stability of a fixed recollection. Crystallized by the passing of time and neatly sculpted into coherent language, it is offered up as an account that bears only one interpretation" (154). Williams goes one step beyond in *Tour in Switzerland* by using the past tense and distancing herself even more from her experiences in Switzerland that took place four years before. In this way, her intention may be to offer a controlled analysis of the events she describes.

4. Self-Representation and Reception

Another strategy used by Williams to assert herself as an authority in political matters is to show that she has read the most recent and influential

works about Swiss politics. Williams quotes several times the british historian William Coxe's *Travels in Switzerland* published in 1789, only a few years before Williams started working on her travel diary. However, Coxe's and Williams' renderings of Switzerland are different. One way in which she develops her argument is by challenging Coxe's conservative vision of Switzerland. Coxe admires this country for the peaceful cohabitation of its inhabitants as well as for its strong democratic values. The English saw a connection between their own nation and Switzerland and, in Williams' words, both countries even shared the same heroes: "Tell is in England, as well as Switzerland, the hero of our infancy" (A Tour in Switzerland Vol I 147). In Coxe's *Travels*, Switzerland is presented as an epitome of freedom and equality, an idea that Williams takes down in her writing. For instance, Coxe praises the city of Basel because its inhabitants are educated and interested in intellectual matters and literature. On the same subject, Williams writes that "whatever were the Halcyon days of taste and learning in the period of Mr. Cox's visit, it is a melancholy fact that his literary spirit has entirely evaporated since his departure" (Vol I 115). Williams, who sometimes tends to subtle irony in her writing, leaves open the possibility of doubting about Coxe's description of Switzerland. She does not hesitate to challenge leading intellectual figures of the eighteenth century, including Rousseau. She writes that "Rousseau had also probably overlooked those inconveniences of Democracy" (A Tour in Switzerland Vol II, 54) after presenting the democracy in Switzerland as a mere illusion, because its rulers were chosen only between a few aristocratic families.

One of the most interesting aspects to look at in order to study Williams' self-representation as an intellectual writer is the shift in Williams' perception of herself. In a letter to her friend Ruth Barlow, written in 1794, the year in which she travels to Switzerland, Williams writes: "Indeed I become every day more philosophical, and perhaps what has hitherto appeared to me the greatest of misfortunes, may prove to be my greatest good" (45). She implies here that with a philosophical thinking and method she can produce her best works. In her personal correspondence, Williams acknowledges that she is embracing a new mode of thinking that is inextricably bound up with an evolution in her style of writing. This becomes evident four years later when she fashions herself a philosopher, a position allows her to question figures such as Coxe or Rousseau as I have already mentioned: "Happily a new era opens to the world; the maddening charm of the poet is at length dissolved by the mild wand of the philosophy, and the heroes meed arises from other exploits than those of multitudes destroyed, and provinces desolated" (Vol II 37).Williams is referring to a time when historical events were narrated by poets and she distances her writing from this historical and even epic tradition. With this quotation Williams places her work in line with this new way of commenting politics, which is much more moderate and objective. By contrast, in *Poems,* Williams had presented herself in accordance with the past tradition: "To describe an important event with accuracy, and to display with clearness and force the various causes which combined produce it, would require all the energy of genius, and the most glowing colours of imagination" (Vol II 53). In her early poetic works, such as

Edwin and Eltruda, *An Ode to the Peace* and *Peru*, Williams celebrates in a panegyric verse the independence of the New American Nation and highlights the plight of native minorities who seek political liberation. However, the discourse that she employs is different from the one we find in the later volumes of *Letters* and *A Tour in Switzerland*. In her early poems, she presents her political arguments as a result of the feelings of the heart, which is characteristic of the literature of sensibility. While she never completely renounces to feelings, in her later prose works Williams pays attention to the context of the events and elaborates her political arguments from there.

In order to reinforce her position as a philosopher, Williams narrates her interview with a renowned Swiss intellectual, Caspar Lavater: "We staid long enough at Zuric to visit its first literary ornament Lavater ... no traveller of any lettered curiosity passes through the town, without paying him the homage of a visit" (A Tour in Switzerland Vol I 66). She presents herself as somebody with 'lettered curiosity', but it is in Lavater's visit to her where she really claims a position as a learned writer. "He came to pay me a visit, which I was taught to consider as an unusual compliment, since it is his general rule not to return the visits of strangers" (Vol I 70). She then continues to explain the conversation that they shared about theology. She emphasizes not only her position as thinker, since she deals with learned matters with an eminent philosophical figure of her time but she highlights that it is Lavater himself who enables this intellectual exchange between the two. Interestingly enough, he made an impression on Williams in that "there was more of feeling than of logic in his conclusion" (Vol I 71), but this does not invalidate her admiration for him as a philosopher, but quite the opposite. Her reputation as a sensibility writer sometimes meant for Williams that her political opinions were dismissed for being articulated on feelings rather than on pure reason. Regardless of the fact that her *Tour* does not present as many characteristics of the literature of sensibility as her previous works, Williams implies here that feelings are not incompatible with intellectual abilities.

Williams' aim is to demonstrate that she is in the position to contribute to the debates of the current state of political affairs. Yet, some of the readers of her and our time did not recognize Williams' writing as a reliable source of political or historical information. Devoney Looser investigates in *British Women Writers and the Writing of History, 1670-1820* women's contribution to historical writing. Looser writes that despite the fact of being undoubtedly taking part in the construction of historical discourse, "what women had to face that men did not, of course, was the "problem" of their sex, assigned by a culture that usually did not imagine for them an equivalent place in history or in history writing" (27). As a matter of course, Williams had to deal with the strong prejudices against women writers in the late years of the eighteenth century, in which Britain was becoming increasingly conservative. This rejection of women's writing was even stronger if they were writing not only about history but also about politics, a topic traditionally restricted to men since it belonged to the public exercise of power. In this work Williams does not present herself as

being in any inferior position to deal with history or politics on account of her gender, but this is something that affected her reputation as a writer, especially after the publication of *A Tour in Switzerland*. She had already been the object of satire, as well as other writers such as Laetitia Barbauld or Catharine Macaulay, since the three of them are parodied in the satirical print "Don Dismallo running the literary gantlet" (1790). Although some of the critics received William's *Tour* favourably, some commentaries insist on a distinction between poet and philosopher while they emphasize their preference for Williams' previous style of writing: "As a poetess Miss Williams attracts us much more than as a politician" (*London Review* 390). In the same year as the publication of her *Tour*, Williams was featured in Richard Polwhele's *The Unsex'd Females*. In a note from that poem the following words can be read: "Helen Maria Williams is doubtless, a true poet. But it is not extraordinary, that such a genius, a female and so young should have become a politician". What these commentaries have in common is their preference for Williams as an artistic writer exclusively and their dismissal for her interest in politics. Looser's analysis goes in this same direction when she notes that still today most women writers "are highlighted as novelist, poets, literary critics and playwrights" (5) while their contribution to other areas of knowledge is overlooked, and, I would add, superficially read. The strong opposition that women had to face in the public opinion may be what Williams considered "the greatest of misfortunes" in her letter to Ruth Barlow.

5. Marvelous History to Future Times

A Tour in Switzerland transcends conventional expectations for female writers while fully develops Williams' self-representation as a reporter and political activist. Even though Williams already engages in political writing from the beginning of her literary career, and especially since *Letters Written in France*, in *A Tour in Switzerland* she moves a step further by openly presenting her position not as a casual eyewitness but as an intellectual writer who presents a critical reflection of the historical moment she observed. Thus, her *Tour* detaches itself from the literature of sensibility. This work allows the reader to not think of Williams merely as a travel writer or sensibility poet. Williams consolidates here a role as political analyst that she already pointed to in her first chronicles of the French Revolution. What is compelling of this is that Williams specifies her process of developing this work and how she gathers information from various sources, which becomes an intellectual task. At the same time, she adopts a very assertive tone to claim the relevancy of her work in the political framework of the moment. Williams is aware that she is living a crucial time in history and politics and she wants to have her own voice heard within the latest debate as well as recording the events that she witnesses for future generations: "My narratives make a part of that marvelous history which the eighteenth century has to record to future times, and the testimony of a witness will be heard" (Poems on Various Subjects x) [sic]. In looking back, Williams shows awareness of the fact that she has devoted herself to political writing for the greatest part of her life as she writers in the preface to *Poems on Various*

Subjects (1823): "I have long renounced any attempts in verse, confining my pen entirely to sketches of the events of the Revolution" (ix-xx). For most of her career she did not see herself as the complimented poet of sensibility of her early years but as a political commentator, journalist, and therefore, an intellectual. Even though she already saw herself as such before 1798, it is with *A Tour in Switzerland* that she consolidates this position through her writing of informed observation.

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BOOK REVIEW

CLAUDIA JOHNSON. 2014. *JANE AUSTEN'S CULTS AND CULTURES*.

Chicago: University of Chicago Press, ISBN: 9780226155036, 224 pages.

Rosa María García-Periago

Universidad de Murcia

Jane Austen's Cults and Cultures is a valuable, more-than-welcome addition to the growing field of analyses of Jane Austen's afterlives. It offers a comprehensive overview of Jane Austen's status as a consequence of a historical process, carrying different cultural meanings over time. Proof of the scholarly interest in Austen's afterlives is the proliferation of volumes on the topic, namely Harman's *Jane Austen's Fame: How Jane Austen Conquered the World* (2010), Brownstein's *Why Jane Austen?* (2011), Welles's *Everybody's Jane: Austen in the Popular Imagination* (2012), Barchas's *Matters of Fact in Jane Austen: History, Location and Celebrity* (2012), Dow and Hanson's *Uses of Austen: Jane's Afterlives* (2012), Yaffe's *Among the Janeites: A Journey Through the World of Jane Austen Fandom* (2013), Raw and Dryden's *Global Jane Austen: Pleasure, Passion and Possessiveness in the Jane Austen Community* (2013) and Mirmohamadi's *The Digital Afterlives of Jane Austen: Janeites at the Keyboard* (2014). Johnson's aims in this monograph seem to be to ascertain how Austen has become such a cult figure and to understand why readers have continued to love her from the 19th century to the present.

In a well-written introduction that succeeds in bringing a smile to the readers' faces, Johnson begins with the telling of a ghost story, where the spectre is no other than Jane Austen herself. Johnson explores her own journey from being a 'serious' Austen scholar (an Austenite) carrying out textual criticism on *Mansfield Park* to being a 'Janeite' who decided to write this book when she invoked Jane Austen's spirit. All jokes aside, there is no better way to start a book on Austen's cults than by alluding to the phantasmal quality that is present in Janeism: the idolatrous enthusiasm for Jane Austen that emphasizes again and again the living quality of Jane Austen, as if she had never died.

The book is divided into five chapters. Chapter one, entitled "Jane Austen's body", provides the best analysis of Jane Austen's portraits so far. The gripping and engaging chapter sheds light upon the Austen portraits since they are all equally responsible for the creation of Jane Austen's legend. Trying to solve the mystery of what Austen really looked like, Johnson explores the authentic portraits – the unsigned pencil and watercolour sketch by Cassandra purchased by the National Portrait Gallery and the watercolour sketch by Cassandra which focuses on Jane Austen's back – and the fake portraits and engravings that aimed to prettify the sketch and that have become widely reprinted, as is the case of Andrews' engraving. Johnson also analyses Austen's grave and tombstone above it, as well as a three-panelled stained-glass window at Winchester cathedral, silhouettes, and even recent controversial acquisitions such as a portrait by Roy

Davids, which has of late given rise to heated debates about the authenticity of the piece. The chapter finishes ironically and hints at the impossibility of knowing Austen's true looks since the only genuine portrait of the novelist – the other one is unsigned – is the one which depicts the authoress with her back turned. Given that she was apparently invisible and disembodied, the portraits have then played a crucial role in constructing her legend. Chapter two, "Jane Austen's Magic", concentrates on the presence of Jane Austen in the Victorian period. Johnson traces the development of Austen in order to understand Janeism, but also pays attention to how she "provided and relieved anxieties about modernity and its attendant exhaustion that were distinctively Victorian" (69). Johnson's concluding remark is that Austen was simultaneously located in the mundane and in the marvellous in the Victorian era; there was a tendency to invest Austen's mundanity with magical quaintness.

Of particular interest are chapters three and four, which focus on the appropriation of Jane Austen during WWI and WWII respectively. With these two chapters, Johnson aims to challenge the long-held view of Austen as an apolitical writer, since she had an overwhelming effect and relevance during the wars. In chapter three, for instance, Johnson highlights the fact that Austen's novels were often the cherished companion of the WWI generation in general and of English soldiers in particular. As Johnson claims, Austen 'the writer' died when the great conflict of her time was concluding, and her death was commemorated when another great conflict was happening. Rudyard Kipling's story "The Janeites" – set at a London Masonic Lodge in 1920 with a shell-shocked veteran as the protagonist – is explored in depth. Thus, Jane Austen entered the modernist imagination via the trenches. The main difference between Victorian Janeites and Kipling's Janeites lies in the fact that the former linked Austen nostalgically to a gentle England, whereas the latter regarded the writer as already part of a violent atmosphere; she was "with them there on the [WWI] front, offering a way to be in an absurd and doomed world beyond their control" (104). Therefore, Kipling's Janeites equated war to domesticity. Chapter four emphasises Jane Austen's popularity during WWII; many people read her books during the bombing raids since her art was found to be comforting under circumstances of shocking duress, but also because she was a gentle individual who embodied a therapeutic "ideal of the graciousness of the English and England during the late Georgian period in periods of comparable loss and desolation" (127). In this chapter, Johnson delves into *MGM Pride and Prejudice* (1940), to demonstrate how political the movie was. The film adaptation was made to create a space of Anglo-American solidarity, for it represented English character, gender and landscape as issues worth fighting for. The last pages of chapter four are devoted to the opening of Chawton Museum in 1948, which became a memorial for Philip John Carpenter, a lieutenant and Austen devotee who died in action in Italy in 1944, and to Austen herself. Claudia Johnson offers a strong conclusion to the section referring to Winston Churchill's desire to read Austen's novels to recover from the war, highlighting, once again, the political nature of her fiction.

The last chapter, entitled "Jane Austen's House", tackles the issue of literary tourism. It focuses on Jane Austen's dwellings and emphasises that the visitors will be both charmed and disappointed at the same time. Although there are indeed some genuine Austen objects in the house, most of them are not original and there are even several items that are not connected with Jane Austen at all. There are yet more paradoxes and contradictions. In spite of the fact that Chawton is known as Jane Austen's house, the writer only lived there from 1809 to 1817, the building was inhabited by a considerable number of poor people, by farmers, and even two murders took place there. Yet, the place is haunted by nostalgia now, since Janeites memorialize Austen at Chawton: there is a desire to impersonate and recover the writer's personal objects. The volume is brought to a close with an afterword that stresses Jane Austen's ubiquity, popularity and even power to sell: she serves a commercial purpose. Curiously enough, "the conditions of Austen's current celebrity seem to rescue Austen from the disembodiment that has been a steady theme in this book" (181). Johnson ends her monograph asking herself rather thought-provoking questions, wondering about what the future holds for Janeism, or whether it is going to ever end at all. She even alludes to the newest tendency of Janeism: Austen fans prefer the film versions to her books. As for its Afterword, its main drawback is its length, as it should have been turned into a new chapter. Given that Johnson explores the evolution of Jane Austen's cult, she should have provided a deeper analysis of Jane Austen's appropriation in present-day society. The readers are left stranded with appetite for more.

Claudia Johnson's *Jane Austen's Cults and Cultures* is a bold work that constitutes a major contribution to the field of the novelist's afterlives. Its captivating, well-researched and, sometimes even hilarious chapters argue that the status of Austen as a cult figure is the result of a historical process/evolution. With this work, Johnson paves the way for future research and highlights the necessity to understand the role that Jane Austen has played and still plays in the popular imagination.

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Double quotation marks should be used for text quotations, while single quotes should emphasise a word or phrase or highlight its figurative meaning. Only foreign words and titles of monographs may appear in italics. If exceeding four lines, block quotes should be separated from the main text and the whole quotation indented **1,4 cm** (0,5") on its left margin.

References should include the page numbers or, if the author is not mentioned earlier in the paragraph, the surname(s) of the author(s) plus the page numbers. Examples:

References embedded within the main text (four lines maximum):

In his work, "Fiedler focused on Shakespeare only, and he included women and 'Indians' ...", while in my analysis I will include a wider corpus of early modern English texts (10) or (López-Peláez 10).*

*If more than one work by the same author is included in the bibliography, the citation should include the first word(s) of the title of the book/article: (*Strangers* 10) or (López-Peláez, *Strangers* 10).

Block quotes (five or more lines):

> ... the Spanish monarchs Isabel and Fernando were simultaneously campaigning to defeat the last Iberian stronghold of Islam, the kingdom of Granada. The year they succeeded, 1492, was also the year in which they obliged Spain's remaining Jews to convert to Christianity or emigrate. Ten years later Muslims were given the same

> choice. After another century of tensions Philip III moved to expel all Moriscos in 1609. (Burns 188–89)

If part of the original text is omitted, three dots without brackets should be included.

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Citations: (*Lie Down* 123) or (Follett, *Lie Down* 123); (*Pillars* 123) or (Follett, *Pillars* 123)
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· Double inverted commas should be used for "Titles of articles" or "Quotes
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· Bold font should be used for headings and subheadings only.
· Abbreviations such as pp., i.e., e.g., etc., should be avoided. Use instead: that
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· Long dashes should be used for additional comments, and the spaces between
dash and comment should be removed.
· Footnotes numbers must be included after punctuation marks.
· Centuries must be referred to as follows: "18th" instead of "18th."

THE ALTAR
George Herbert
(1593-1633)

A broken A L T A R, Lord, thy servant reares,
Made of a heart, and cemented with teares:
Whose parts are as thy hand did frame;
No workmans tool hath touch'd the same.
A   H E A R T   alone
Is   such a   stone,
As   nothing   but
Thy pow'r doth cut.
Wherefore each part
Of my hard heart
Meets in this frame,
To praise thy Name;
That, if I chance to hold my peace,
These stones to praise thee may not cease.
O let thy blessed S A C R I F I C E be mine,
And   sanctifie this A L T A R to be thine.

EL ALTAR
George Herbert
(1593-1633)
Traducción de Luciano García García

Un ALTAR roto, Señor, tu siervo ha levantado,
Hecho de corazón, con lágrimas cementado,
Cuyas partes, cual tu mano las formó,
Ningún peón con útiles las labró.
Un corazón solamente
Es esta piedra viviente,
Que nada salvo tu poder
Puede tajar o hender.
Y por él cada porción
De mi duro corazón
Se une en este hombre
Para alabar tu nombre;
Tal que si por fortuna mi paz durara,
Esta piedra de alabarte no cesara.
Haz mío tu bendito SACRIFICIO sin tardar,
Y santifica, para hacer tuyo, este ALTAR.