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Editor's Note

This volume of *Cultural Intertexts* – a Journal of Literature, Cultural Studies and Linguistics – includes articles by doctoral and postdoctoral researchers, presented at the fourth edition of the International Scientific Conference organized by the Doctoral Schools of "Dunarea de Jos" University of Galati (2-3 June 2016), section 6: "Cultural Spaces: Retrospective and Prospective Views" (official site: http://www.cssd-udjg.ugal.ro/).

Contributions by specialists from the host and partner universities, as well as by independent scholars and researchers, complement the collection and broaden the scope of investigation in the area of interest covered.

Focusing on canonical or newer writing (from Shakespeare to Hawthorne, James, Pound, McCarthy, DeLillo, Modiano, Hare, Hornby and Gaiman), on the metamorphoses of a genre (Restauration and Early Eighteenth-century Drama) or on the palimpsest of individual texts (*The Taming of the Shrew*, *The Road*, *White Noise*, *La Place de l'Etoile*, *Dora Bruder*, *Stuff Happens*, *A Long Way Down*), the articles compare, interrogate, destabilize, transform or re-read the corpora selected, in view of highlighting textual and contextual dialogue, the constant contamination by and contaminating of the global cultural intertext.

The editors express their gratitude to the members of the scientific committee, who have dedicated time and effort to reviewing the papers submitted and to making the publication of this volume possible.

Michaela Praisler

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Patrick Modiano's Voice: from *La Place de l'Etoile* to *Dora Bruder*

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Abstract

The way an author individualizes his writing is expressed through voice, a feature of writing that is often overlooked, generally not analyzed. The phenomenon of voice is not easy to grasp and when we think of Patrick Modiano, an adjective comes to mind, one which makes it even less detectable: imperceptible. Is it possible to analyze a voice that fades, that allows the contents to be "carried on writing"? However, examining Modiano's work, we realize that his voice is not homogeneous. On the contrary, the loud shouting voice of the young writer of the seventies is no longer the one of the mature novelist of the nineties. It has undergone esthetic metamorphoses. It leaves deep traces in the contemporary novel, but no critic would think to connect that voice to a shout.

This paper examines Modiano's voice during the period between 1968 and 1997, attempting to reveal its evolution from La Place de l'Etoile, *via* Missing Person *up to* Dora Bruder, *studying the tension between outcry and whisper that destabilizes the writing. Two main questions demand analysis: What is Modiano's voice at the beginning of his career? Which transformations or tendencies has it undergone along these years*?

Key words*: voice, tone, outcry, whisper, transformation, individualizing writing, history, imagination, unresolved tension, irony.*

> "All that can save [written language] is the speaking tone of voice somehow entangled in the words and fastened to the page for the ear of the imagination." (Robert Frost)

Patrick Modiano's novels have been described as literary detective stories, but the mysteries he examines are never actually deciphered, which is probably the reason why, when informed of his Nobel Prize, he states: "I always have the impression that I write the same book, which means it's already forty five years that I've been writing the same book" (Riding, 2014). The Swedish Academy honored him "for the art

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of memory with which he has evoked the most ungraspable human destinies and uncovered the life-world of the occupation" (Riding 2014). Indeed, memory and his unfinished exploration of the German occupation of France are essential tags for his writing, as is the father's character that is at the heart of most of his novels. However, what seems to be more flagrant in the novels is the epistemological and ethical challenges of relating to these subjects, both strongly linked to the particular "voice" of his writing.

The way an author individualizes his writing is expressed through voice, a feature of writing that is often overlooked, which is generally not analyzed. Bakhtin argues that the power of voice originates in the coexistence with the multiple voices in literature: "For the prose writer, the object is a focal point for heteroglot voices among which his own voice must also sound; these voices create the background necessary for his own voice, outside of which his artistic prose nuances cannot be perceived, and without which they "do not sound" (1981: 278). It is the individual writing style of an author, a combination of a common usage of syntax, diction, punctuation, character development, dialogue, within his oeuvre. A voice can be thought of in terms of the uniqueness of the writer. It comes from the depths and imposes itself from the inside, it is an act without thought; it springs. It is in fact the genius of the writer: to obey a need that is enforced on him. Each writer has his particular voice and anything written should have the author's voice. According to Jean-Pierre Martin: "La voix en écriture est la fiction d'un imaginaire, l'utopie d'un secret. Un mythe, un mirage, au mieux une métaphore, qui ne fait que redoubler le mythe et la métaphore de la voix sensible… Elle est ce qui échappe à la description du texte" (1998: 34). However, the readers "hear" the voice in a text, and when they do, they are often more attracted to read it, as it often makes the narrative much more appealing.

The phenomenon of voice is not easy to grasp and when we think of Modiano, an adjective comes to mind which makes it even less detectable: *imperceptible*. The voice is so difficult to characterize that it seems in fact, at least at first sight, indefinable. Is it possible to analyze a voice that fades, that allows the contents to be "carried on writing"? As Roger Yves Roche argues, even though this voice is indefinable, it is "reconnaissable entre autres, une longue et identique phrase que l'on dirait travaillée à l'économie en même temps qu'élaborée à l'extrême,

simplement, mais exactement, ce qu'on appelle un style" (2009: 15). Considering Modiano's writing, we think of what Barthes called an "impassive" or "innocent" writing. This is a writing that ignores judgments and is only based on their absence: "Cette parole transparente accomplit un style de l'absence qui est presque une absence idéale du style". (1972: 60). However, examining Modiano's work, we realize that his voice is not homogeneous. On the contrary, the voice of the young writer of the seventies is no longer the one of the mature novelist of the nineties. It has undergone esthetic metamorphoses. In his preface to *La Place de l'étoile* in 1968, Jean Cau notes about Modiano's writing:

> Une sensibilité faite de tant de rires, de tant de douleurs qu'aucun Dieu (fût-il d'Abraham) n'y reconnaîtra les siens. En vérité, la voix unique d'un écrivain de vingt ans qui ouvre d'une poussée les lourdes portes de la littérature et qui, hagard, se dresse sur le seuil en jetant un grand cri (Modiano, 1968 : foreword).

Thirty years later, the distinct and typical voice of Modiano resonates more than ever. It leaves deep traces in the contemporary novel, but no critic would think to connect that voice to a shout. It is rather an undeniably present "inner music", as suggested by Pierre Assouline, who considers Modiano "un homme de biais"; or else a "little music" as put forward by Christine Jerusalem noting that at the heart of Modiano's work there is an "éternel retour "… "qui conduit parfois le lecteur à s'égarer dans ses souvenirs et à ne plus savoir dans quel récit il a croisé tel personnage, telle situation" (2009: 87).

This paper examines Patrick Modiano's voice during the period between 1968 and 1997 and attempts to reveal its evolution from *La Place de l'étoile*, via *Missing Person* up to *Dora Bruder*. Two main questions demand analysis: What is Modiano's voice at the beginning of his career? Which transformations or tendencies has it undergone along these years?

Keeping Distance and Screaming

In an attempt to analyse Modiano's voice, it is necessary to consider ethical elements that account for the restrained nature of the imaginative merging in the texts, and the tinge of historical details. The novels are historic in the sense that they embrace a very special period. Modiano, since childhood, has felt both victim and executioner, Jew and

anti-Semitic, French and foreigner. The period that preoccupies him most is undoubtedly that of the Second World War, to which he refers constantly, especially in his first three novels. In 1965, Raymond Queneau mentions that in literature there is a 'before and after' 1945:

> Devant l'horreur des camps d'extermination… on peut estimer que la littérature a trouvé dans l'histoire une concurrence sérieuse. Et l'on ne peut nier qu'actuellement poètes et prosateurs ne soient quelque peu «soufflés» par ce qui leur a été donné de vivre – ou de voir vivre- ou d'entendre raconter (1994 : 183).

It is probably from this observation that the work of Modiano starts: from the historical event that cannot be ignored, from the suffering of anti-Semitism consequences. But the most painful and striking aspect to emerge is the anti-Semitism of the great writers of French literature, especially those admired by Modiano:

> Gide disait que les juifs feraient mieux d'écrire en hébreu. Giraudoux aussi était antisémite… je cite ces gens parce qu'ils représentent l'humanisme français, la quintessence française, tout cela je l'ai éprouvé profondément (Interview 22/9/1975).

According to Charlotte Vardi, writing becomes for Modiano "un acte de vengeance et en même temps de dévouement au père muet devant les antisémites" (2007). To his father he wishes to lend his own voice, a voice stamped by a paradoxical writing, as it uses a perfect French, but as Modiano states, this language "se retourne contre lui-même, de l'intérieur … C'est un peu un travail de sape» (Modiano, 22/9/1975, Interview).

There are shades here of the aesthetic element that seems to contribute most to Modiano's voice in his first novel, *La Place de l'étoile* (1968). A sarcastic and grotesque tone reinforced by irony, black humor, as well as scathing mockery is used, so that Alan Riding claims that it is arguably Modiano's "most explosive novel". (Riding, Dec. 24, 2014). The world described in the novel often unexpectedly switches into a spooky world: incipits, absurd passages mingle with the narrative of historical facts. Modiano tries to get rid of his obsession of occupancy by creation of a world of his own: the one he invents in his personal interpretation of this period (which he has not experienced since he was born in 1945). The "Jewish question" is therefore approached in a tone of parody. It's rather similar to Romain Gary's sarcasm, a comic dramatization that is supposed to save pain. An attempt to incorporate laughter into tragedy

is felt on all levels to reconfigure tragedy as laughter. It seems that the Jewish question hides behind playful or deliberately cynical remarks, in order to conceal the narrator's dismay: in fact, it seems that Modiano escapes into narration, into literature, so that never to have to fully assume the reality of the occupation years and the veracity of the Holocaust in all its horror. In this case, the hierarchical and dialectical irony which, by antiphrastically asserting the opposite of what is meant, reaffirms and arrogates the subject as a privileged source of truth. As Gilles Deleuze's explains: "…l'ironie est la coextensivité de l'être avec l'individu, ou du Je avec la représentation" (Deleuze, 1969 : 166).

From this point of view, Modiano is both near and far from those writers who attempt to testify in their own way to what is possible and impossible to say after the camps. Does the originality of George Semprun, Elie Wiesel, George Perec, Robert Antelme, Primo Levi not come from the new relationship between truth and fiction testimony they have tried to establish? Modiano addresses these issues without aiming to restitute history. In an interview in *Le Point*, he states: "Ce n'est pas vraiment l'Occupation qui me fascine. Elle me fournit un climat idéal, un peu trouble, une lumière un peu bizarre, l'image démesurément grossie de ce qui se passe aujourd'hui" (1974). Modiano's turn in the different novels exemplifies the epistemological and ethical challenges of relating to the Holocaust and its legacy each time in a different manner.

Thus, in *La Place de L'étoile*, the voice of Modiano is intense and resounding. This book, conceived more as a pamphlet than a novel, immediately introduces us into an ironic and buffoon universe, where black humor is present, similar to Albert Cohen's magnificent series *Les Valeureux*. These hallucinated memories tell the psychic trauma of the Jewish people, of the Jewish fear stalked by legacy of centuries of persecution and massacres, revived by the tragedy of the Holocaust in the twentieth century. Accordingly, starting with the epigraph of the book, a voice breaks, its echoes reverberating throughout the whole novel:

> Au mois de juin 1942, un officier allemand s'avance vers un jeune homme et lui dit: «Pardon, monsieur, où se trouve la place de l'Etoile?» Le jeune homme désigne le côté gauche de sa poitrine. (Histoire juive). (Modiano, 1968).

Throughout the novel, between light but ironic and sometimes even burlesque passages, the black lines of the Jewish people's tragedy

described in detail, Modiano's voice is "heard" deep and resonant. The hero narrator Raphael Schlemilovitch (which means "poor guy" in Yiddish) seems to embody all Jews. At the same time, he pursues an amazing spiritual journey where each station or chapter of the book is an attempt to join a system of values, rooted in a geographical space, history and culture, an attempt ruined by the obsessive memory of the collaboration and Auschwitz. Assertive and emotional, Modiano's voice merges with that of Schlemilovitch. Like it, it is strong and burly:

> Si je trouvais Léon Daudet divertissant, le colonel de La Roque m'ennuyait. Horace de Carbuccia et Béraud m'invitaient quelquefois pour parler du complot judéo-anglais. Maurois m'enviait mes amitiés fascistes. Je lui donnais la recette: abandonner définitivement son exquise pudeur de juif honteux. Reprendre son véritable nom. Devenir comme moi, Raphael Schlemilovitch, un juif antisémite. (Modiano, 1968: 25)

The irony in this case, is a form of resistance, expressing the refusal to step into insurmountable suffering. Modiano reveals the violent truth of evil and his way to retort to it is through his young writer's resounding voice of that period.

The passages about Nazism and the Gestapo, carefully mingled with descriptions of Israeli pioneers and heroes of the story, are dedicated to the "white slave trade". Schlemilovitch is a hallucinatory character, through which the lives that could be his come and go in a moving fantasy. The comic, bizarre, buffoon voice is evident. Or even the voice of the remote and playful confession of atrocious facts described in this passage:

> Un matin, profitant de mon absence, Tania se tranche les veines. Pourtant, je cache avec soin mes lames de rasoir. J'éprouve en effet un curieux vertige quand mon regard rencontre ces petits objets métalliques: j'ai envie de les avaler. (Modiano, 1968: 32).

This uttered voice is a resisting voice even in extreme cases. It is clear that the reader, in order not to get lost in a story that constantly forks, must interpret the provocations of the hero-narrator, located in the historical facts implied, or in the literary panorama to which the author refers – irony mingles with great admiration. A constant shock merges with permanent vigor – the voice is of intense violence, whether in tragic rage or sarcastic humor.

A Restrained and Fragile Voice

But it is all too easy to read Modiano as the mere author of a resounding voice. Ten years after his first book, it seems that Modiano's booming voice has undergone some changes. In *Missing Person*, the voice is always his, yet it is less vibrant, more timid, more hesitant. The preamble of the two novels is indeed very different: if in *La Place de l'Etoile*, the opening sentence is solid and confident ("C'était le temps où je dissipais mon héritage vénézuelien. Certains ne parlaient plus que de ma belle jeunesse et de mes boucles noires"), in *Missing Person*, the opening sentence expresses anxiety, revolving around nothingness echoing vulnerability : "Je ne suis rien. Rien qu'une silhouette claire". The voice is disturbed, fragile, broken. The first sentence of Modiano's stories has an essential significance and provides an undeniable weight. According to Jean-Pierre Martin, the tone is "cet esprit fluide, ce génie ou ce démon qui surgit dès la première phrase, ne quitte pas le livre, jusqu'à son dernier mot" Indeed, Modiano himsel explains about the first sentence of a novel: "C'est elle qui donne la tonalité du roman, comme les premières mesures au piano" (Modiano, 2001).

In the case of *Missing Person*, another tone is used to build a completely different linguistic ritual. Indeed, *Missing Person* published in 1978, interrogates memory while incorporating the themes of the Second World War and the Holocaust. But this time, the weakness of the narrator (as well as that of the other characters) is felt. Irony, in other words, is no longer used for assertion of life, a form of resistance. In the course of the narrator's investigation, we share his doubts, we follow false leads. He creates a heavy, distressing, atmosphere inhabited by a shaky voice. He embodies the painful past with vulnerable, fragile characters that hardly dare emerge from the foggy atmosphere; this background finally creates a disharmony effect and contributes to the construction of Modiano's new voice: it is a restrained voice.

In this novel, Patrick Modiano's restrained voice succeeds in being silent without, nonetheless, falling into muteness – a voice in between, a voice on the brink, a precise voice that touches; let us first try to see if Modiano himself can enlighten us on this matter. This is how he evokes the relationship between the narrative in the first person and voice posture:

> "Le «je» … c'est moi et pas moi. Mais utiliser le je me concentre mieux, c'est comme si j'entendais une voix, comme si je transcrivais une voix

qui me parlait et qui me disait je. Ce n'est pas Jeanne d'Arc, mais plutôt comme quand on capte une voix à la radio, qui de temps en temps s'échappe, devient inaudible, et revient. Ce je d'un autre qui me parle et que j'écoute me donne de la distance par rapport à l'autobiographie, même si je m'incorpore parfois au récit" (Modiano, 2001).

Modiano proceeds in the manner of a detective or a sleek historian, who requires from the reader complicity, an attention to detail and especially to what is not written, what is silenced. Modiano's voice becomes a call for a careful reader, able to listen to what is said between the lines. Like a strange and disturbing music, it has a sort of "playback" effect on the reader, a feeling that is hard to describe as it is so intimate. Modiano's voice repeatedly escaping the attempt to locate it preserves the prospect of seriousness by sacrificing laughter and mockery and adopting hesitation and silence. The imbrication of hesitation and silence is established, marking the style of the text of *Missing Person*.

This fragile voice relies on modifiers that serve to display the limits of language and highlight the incapacity of the narrator and the doubtful atmosphere. The characters of *Missing Person* express themselves in scattered elliptic sequences, their voice quiver in broken sentences: "Il a été au consulat de Géorgie à Paris, jusqu'à ce que…" (Modiano, 1978: 36). The sentence is unfinished as if censored, and silence replaces words. The suspended words mean nothing, strictly speaking, but suggest a lot. According to Jean Starobinski: "la parole cherche souvent à s'effacer pour laisser la voie libre à une pure vision, à une intuition parfaitement oublieuse du bruit des mots" (1999 : 12-13). And silence is language. Silence and speech are no longer antithetical or mutually exclusive in Modiano's text, but connected through rhetoric. The tensions then unite into a malleable paste and not in hard rock.

Moreover, this voice, far from being restricted to Stioppa's voice, is also echoing that of the narrator: it expresses inability and paralysis that are finally outspread through the entire novel: "Je restais immobile… et j'étais sûr à ce moment là qu'il me disait encore quelque chose mais que le brouillard étouffait le son de sa voix". (Modiano, 1978: 41) Surprisingly, the voice is not drowned out by a sound but the fog: sight and hearing are strangely inverted reflecting the stagnation of the writing. The narrator sees less and as a result, hears less. Similarly, the writer's voice and that of the character are merged in a space where an indefinite mist cancels the voice. One of the paragraphs of Chapter IV ends with an ellipsis: "Et j'avais découvert dans ce dédale

d'immeubles, d'escaliers et d'ascenseurs, parmi ces centaines d'alvéoles, un homme qui peut-être…" (Modiano, 1978: 38). The narrator's unfinished sentence, reinforced by the word "dédale" (the figure of the labyrinth designed to show imprisonment and inactivity) and the adverb of uncertainty "peut-être" (intended to express doubt), fuses with Stioppa's, as if the author has borrowed his voice for good.

If irony has almost disappeared in *Missing Person*, comical effects (which are somehow recalls or echoes of the voice of the first novel) are still recurring here and there in the text: for instance, in the case of the wandering bride in Heurteur's restaurant, or when the narrator and Stioppa of Djagoriew, too tall to stand in the apartment, are forced to lie in order to talk: "lui et moi, nous avions une tête de trop pour franchir l'embrasure de la porte de communication et j'ai imaginé qu'il s'y était souvent blessé le front" (Modiano, 1978: 33) In this case, the comic effects do not express resistance anymore, but rather embody a kind of discreet, subtle humor, which slips into the seriousness of the novel as if to remind us of *La Place de l'étoile*, and may be understood as the author's wish to send the reader a sign of connivance: "listen, I'm different now and yet, I am still the same."

Whispered Vocalizations

In Modiano's later work, the gradual extinction of the loud voice goes on to be finally replaced by the a delicate and more discreet tone which opens the way for an affirmation of a living tone that leaves far behind irony an cynicism, to construct a "whispering voice". On the occasion of the publication of *A Pedigree*, Modiano explains: "Je ne peux pas trop employer dans la fiction cet 'humour discret, plutôt noir et décapant', parce que, à trop forte dose, cela orienterait la fiction vers la satire, et j'ai besoin que les personnages de fiction me fassent rêver" (Interview, 2005).

We realize that Modiano's voice is not ironic anymore for the last fifteen years, but soft and moderate. It permeates the text almost silently. As Modiano explains: "Au cinéma on peut chuchoter, comme dans un roman" (Bonnaud, 1997). At the same time, in the novels written since the nineties we find no trace of burlesque excess: in *Un cirque passe, Chien de printemps, Du plus loin de l'oubli, Des Inconnues, La Petite Bijou*, Modiano's voice has changed considerably. *Dora Bruder* (1997) is a good example of the development of stylistic elements that have undergone considerable change, influencing the tone, and finally Modiano's voice.

Firstly, the story's tone is an antithesis of the grotesque. The father character is not named Schlemilovitch anymore, he is not arrested by "Gérard Le Gestapiste", but simply by French collaborating administrators who obey the new laws of occupation. The will to prove the young author's writing skill and artistic performance gives way to the humility of a simple and real story, the poignant account of the disappearance of a Jewish teenager. The writing is essentially stripped and nude. Modiano reports the facts noting a strange coincidence between the fate of the young deported Jewish girl and his own father. The ripened Modiano of the nineties has removed the mask of the clown to address his subject with the sensitivity it deserves. *Dora Bruder* is a story -- based on a news item – of a very young girl stalked and broken by the machinery of the occupation, the story of a poor girl on the run.

Secondly, the story is much more emotional. While functioning as facilitator for the memorial, the fruit of eight years of research and reflection, the voice of the narrating "je" disappears here and there to give way to the description of the atmosphere. Accordingly, whenever the narrator loses the track of Dora Bruder, he makes moving efforts to hold on to her dodging story. For example, he tells about the weather of that period:

> Le seul moyen de ne pas perdre tout à fait DB au cours de cette période, ce serait de rapporter les changements du temps. La neige était tombée pour la première fois le 6 novembre 1941...Le 29 décembre, la température avait encore baissé… le froid était devenu sibérien… Le 12 février, il y avait eu un peu de soleil, comme une annonce timide du printemps (Modiano, 1997: 91).

This voice is then one of emotion, it is affectionate and tender. We should also note that immediately after the weather break, Modiano evokes his father, for his fate and Dora's are closely linked: this is Modiano's manner to remember and refer to all the people hunted by the occupation. As Pierre Lepape puts it: "Pour combler les trous, Modiano offre à *Dora Bruder* des fragments de sa propre jeunesse, en mesurant la distance infinie qui les sépare" (1997: 2). According to Laurent Douzou: "there is a constant tension between on the one hand, the will to snatch the young girl from the oblivion, the void, the blankness left by her journey, and on the other hand, the intuition that at the same time it would be impossible." (2009: 126). This position creates an effect of vacillation and hesitation translated in the narrator's voice.

Another significant change in the tone is that the rhythm of *Dora Bruder* fluctuates ambiguously between short, laconic, dry chapters, (like the one on pages 114-115, consisting of the Tourelles register) and long loaded ones. Modiano, artist of the ellipse and conciseness, takes a new path, and doing so, a new voice. In fact, the narrative proceeds by notations or dry pieces of information and has a preference for parataxis and juxtaposition of details: "Lever vers six heures. Chapelle. Salle de classe. Réfectoire. Salle de classe. Cours de récréation. Réfectoire. Salle de classe. Chapelle. Dortoir. Sorties, les dimanches" (Modiano, 1997: 40).

It seems that a hidden voice is behind this dry information, slipping between the concise elliptic sentences and the terse words. A voice without identity, not always attributed to a character, where subject and verb are erased, a voice that looks for a rather strong sensation. A game between fiction and reality, between fiction and life is built. These curt words, stripped of any sense, reinforce the icy description of what Dora's daily life could be, drawing attention to the fact that her life within the walls of the boarding had been very cold and in deep "solitude" (Modiano 1997: 42). Indeed, the narrator concludes by one single, essential word that sums it all up: "Solitude." Behind these lines, the silent voice of the author is here, hidden this time, wishing to express the unbearable suffering, but in fact, only pointing a finger. Modiano argued on this point in 1981: "je n'ai aucune facilité de plume, et écrire est donc pour moi un travail un peu pénible, bien que le résultat donne une impression de simplicité. J'essaie de dire les choses avec le moins de mots possible" (Interview, 1981: 56-57).

Another essential practice related to the rhythm of the novel is the use of repetition and retraction, a kind of refrain or a strand of music in harmony. This is what might be called the "Tango voice": two steps forward, one step back, which implies recurrence. Incidents, gestures, thoughts are repeated with some regularity. However, this is not a romantic tango, but a rather tired, minor tango, a daily tango that escorts the narrator's activities and represents a simple life style closely linked to a quest for identity as well as to the banality and boredom of existence. To that we can add minimalistic music as the one of Eric Satie and Philip Glass: rehearsals are part of the text and provide parallel thought about time and its uses. Because time is that of melancholy to Modiano and, like the story, it is repetitive and cyclical. Thus the voice is naked as the scenes and settings where the lonely narrator moves.

The text of *Dora Bruder* shows other features of style. For instance, the tight frame of the opening is an APB in an ad of Paris-Soir: "On recherche une jeune fille, Dora Bruder, 15 ans, 1,55m, visage ovale, yeux gris-marron, manteau sport gris, pull-over bordeaux, jupe et chapeau bleu marine, chaussures sport marron (Modiano, 1997: 9). It seems that the writer disappears, overtaken by the prose of the world. From then on, the story will only comment on this notice in each chapter without real progress in the inquiry. It will end with the fact that Dora Bruder takes her secret with her, and no one will ever know how she spent the fugue days before her deportation.

In Modiano's whispered voice, many signs of the spoken words are inscribed. Hence we can note the many expressions of hesitation, formulations granting the story the meaning of a gesture: we hear, as in an uncontrollable chorus, the repeated words: "Je ne sais rien" (Modiano, 1997: 32) et "je ne sais pas" (28, 89, 96, 125), "on ne savait pas si" (141) "on ne saura jamais" (110) "je savais vaguement", (102) "Je me demande" (39, 75, 111, 125) "on se demande" (94) "je me demandais si" (63) "Je suppose" (39, 57, 85) "Cela suppose" (109) "Qui sait?" (61) "Longtemps je n'ai rien su de Dora Bruder" (62), "je doute" (43) "j'en doute" (104) "j'ignore si" (75, 85, 129), "j'ignorerai toujours" (147). It is a repressed voice, full of regret of inability to elucidate Dora Bruder's story and, at the same time, it is also the voice of a narrator who lets us know of the evolution of his work still in the making, informs us of its chronology.

These expressions are reinforced by adverbs like "probably" (Modiano, 1997: 92) "maybe" (41,65, 112) and by the conditional of the French verb "pourrait"(the modal "could") Such repetitive effects that are a kind of spoken mimesis in writing, lend themselves to transcribing affectivity trademarks, and refer to a sensitive identification which is absent in other novels (as if Modiano prohibited himself before) as if Modiano indulged himself in this novel, letting his emotional voice be heard. This broken voice, hardly noticeable is the voice of an absence, of a hesitation, an infinite quest that also falls within the spoken word, a voice described by Jean-Pierre Martin as: "cette impulsion respiratoire, ce souffle vital, cette présence d'un corps énonciateur et proférateur qui peut traverser l'écrit comme le parlé" (1998: 263). This new voice comes with many unanswered questions that disrupt the text and give it a surprising rhythm. They come to break the style of the dry detective investigation and turn the story of Dora Bruder into an emotional and moving poetic narrative.

The unresolved tension between outcry and whisper destabilizes any attempt to assign Modiano's voice a final position. However, this uncertainty is what accounts for the author's uniqueness. From the resounding novel to the whispered novel, Modiano's voice is heard. It emerges from the depths of the heavy background of history to tell what is impossible to tell. Finally, there is no theory, no recipe, no solution at all, only a quest, a march against the current, sometimes guaranteed, sometimes stumbling and staggering, where the narration regresses while moving forward, looking into the depths of memory for an unlikely truth. Borrowing Olivier Bardolle's words when he describes Houellebecq as an author who writes "avec sa peau, avec son épiderme", I would like to say about Modiano that he writes with his breath (2002: 48)

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Esse versus Percipi: The Old and the Elderly in Restoration and Early Eighteenth-century English Plays

Katarzyna BRONK*

Abstract

Christopher Martin, in his study on old age in Early Modern English literature, complained that "late to emerge as an orchestrated discipline, age studies have been slower still to find extended application to the fields of cultural and literary criticism" (Martin 2012: 6). Although somewhat exaggerated, humanist, or more specifically literary gerontology has indeed a much shorter history than its purely medical foundation. This interdisciplinary perspective has progressively been applied to the most well-known novelistic, poetic and dramatic genres, resulting in more or less period-focused studies on representations of age and ageing in literature. In the British context, despite the fact that more and more attention is paid to discourses of senescence, longevity and life cycles as represented within theatre and drama, there are few studies on the subject of the old and ageing in post-Shakespearean drama, which go beyond the reiteration of Frye's conclusions on the function of a senex *in literature. The proposed paper focuses on selected examples of Restoration (1660-1700) and early 18th-century English plays in order to analyse their presentations of old(er) characters, including their bodily (self-)perception, as well as the social attitudes of the younger generations towards their elders. It will thus give examples to Michael Mangan's statement that: "Ageing draws attention to the gaps that can exist between esse and percipi: between how one feels oneself to be, and how one may be perceived" (Mangan 2002: 5).*

Key words: *ageing, comedy, drama, Restoration, eighteenth century*

Prisca Von Dorotka Bagnell and Patricia Spencer Soper state that "late life itself is (…) a nebulous existence of unpredictable duration" (Von Dorotka Bagnell and Spencer Soper 1989: xix). Although with a definite 'closing bracket', in terms of its point of beginning this duration is indeed very difficult to assign. Gerontology and geriatrics may have their temporal, yet

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arbitrary frameworks on offer, yet in practice, and historically, these frames not only differ from century to century but also individually. As such, when it comes to the narrative of ageing, and to borrow from Ferdinand de Saussure, it seems that old age is like a free-standing signifier which gains meaning only through a combined paradigmatic and syntagmatic analysis of physiological, mental, social and perhaps even spiritual factors. While there might be a communal and a cultural consensus on the markers of the final stage of life, it still does not facilitate an overall, objective conceptualisation of old age. The present paper utilises this aporia in the subsequent study of variously defined elderly individuals and their attitude towards their own ageing as well as their societies' perception of the same process. The methodology used in the paper draws from the discipline of humanistic gerontology, focusing on its cultural and literary perspective in particular, and takes Restoration and early eighteenth-century British plays as the main research material. The close study of the chosen play texts is organised around the, apparent, dichotomy between the ageing body and the seemingly ever-young mind, of course excluding instances of debilitating ageing, characterized, for example, by dementia.

Interdisciplinary age(ing) studies stress the fact that ageing itself is a binary process in that it involves the body as well as the mind, and the two constituents require equal scientific attention. Although Rene Descartes disconnected the two entities in order to prove the existence and omnipotence of God (Hatfield 2003), he likewise strove to explain how such seemingly independent constituents "interact so as to give rise to a human being capable of having voluntary bodily motions and sensations" (Skirry 2016). Going beyond this Cartesian metaphysics, though not the mechanics, the mind-body dualism is nowhere more applicable than in the eight (and ninth, added by Joan M. Erikson) life cycle, to use Erik Erikson's terminology, that is old age. Experiencing the inevitable changes in himself, and, if one trusts the account of his wife, bearing them with Stoic peace and understanding (Erickson 1998: 4), he identified the concerns and crises that physiological and psychosocial development brings. While the details of his analysis are beyond the scope of this paper, the dominant antithesis of the eighth cycle as seen by Erikson is integrity vs despair (Erickson 1998: 61), with wisdom seen as the wished for strength and result of the conflict's solution. That there might be more despair than prudent calm is suggested by Thomas R. Cole who reminds that "[a]ging … reveals the most fundamental conflict of the human condition: the tension between infinite ambitions, dreams, and desires on the one hand, and the vulnerable,

limited, decaying physical existence on the other – between self and body"
(Cole 1986: 5). Synchronised deterioration of the mind and body is of rare
nature; therefore, the self is usually at odds with the body and finds
deterioration, biological and aesthetic, difficult to accept, and even to
acknowledge. While the Stoic ideal is to accept the passing of time, and
various state apparatuses, as understood by Althusser, expect one to
continue by acting according to the age-related norms, the aforementioned
individualised perception of ageing rarely leads to a meek and complacent
slowdown or retirement. The more positive consequences of such possible
defensive actions aim towards improved longevity, while in the most
extreme examples of ageing, and old age in particular, may lead to frequent
surgical interventions – rarely with the expected results – and depression.
The first type of reaction is the result of a symbiotic relation of the body
and the mind, and thus a coherent self, while the latter suggests the body
and mind at strife. Such a conflict involves either a denial of the body's
ageing processes or various, often quite comical attempts at trying to
transform the body to fit the mind's perception of it. Real life, as well as its
(para)literary expressions, engender various forms of ridicule and more or
less drastic ostracism.

Thomas M. Faulkner and Judith de Luce, in their overview of Greek
and Roman perspectives and representations of old age and the elderly,
state that old people faced the harshest criticism when they broke the rule
or "principle of *tempestivitas*" which meant disregarding appropriate or
age-specific qualities (Faulkner and De Luce 1992: 19). This, of course, is not
Antiquity-specific as in all subsequent epochs transgressions of age-
normative behaviour were penalised one way or the other. As various
moralistic and paraliterary Christian conduct texts taught, old age required
a progressive retirement from the public life and public view. They
suggested a withdrawal within oneself for the sake of self-study and
spiritual preparation of the (after-)life to come. The body was to be
progressively 'silenced', while it physically 'dried' on its own, and all
passions were to be extinguished. Any other situation was potentially
problematic, ridiculous and even monstrous in some way.

Studying literary and cultural paratexts, Lynn Botelho notes that in
the seventeenth century some "… elderly were thought guilty of forgetting
that they were no longer young and up-to-date. Instead, they were
considered foolish in their obliviousness to that 'fact'" (Botelho 2016: xvii).
While reactions to inappropriate conduct are easily identifiable, old age
itself was not. Just as with the variety of the number of (st)age of the life

cycle, each century and culture saw the starting point of old age occurring at different ages. Pat Thane, therefore, noticed that to study ageing one cannot follow just one trajectory but research age in all its complexity. Her suggested typology in the case of old age is as follows: chronological or according to the date of birth; functional or fitness for tasks; biological or physical fitness; and/or cultural, studying the definitions and social perceptions (Thane 2000: 24). This division points to the necessary multidimensionality of ageing studies, and in their gerontological subcategory in particular, but it likewise explains and excuses the lack of neatly set up boundaries for old age.

Literary historians of the Early Modern period, like for example Nina Tauton, suggest that "[t]he onset of old age could be anywhere from the late forties to seventy for men but was accelerated by ten years in women" (Tauton 2011: 1). Despite its vastness, this indeed will be the arbitrary old age framework used in the present paper, even for the eighteenth-century. The Enlightenment itself brought with it not only technological modernisations initiated and prompted by industrialization, but also changes in the attitude towards one's own and others' physicality. For example death was being seen more as an obstacle to overcome, as Stephen Katz found out in his research on "cultural aging" (Katz 2005: 29). The historians of sociology remind that the eighteenth century, with all its transformations in thinking, induced "an enhanced realization of age, time, and quantity" (Pelling and Smith 1994: 5), and apart from formal consequences of this new awareness, such as a more organised welfare system, the eighteenth century also promoted the idea that "…age cannot be conquered or escaped, but its effects can be ameliorated through individual human effort" (Ottaway 2016: Vol. 2, xiv). And as the study of both centuries proves, despite the proliferation of more medicalised conduct/health guidebooks, to feel old and to be old could be two different things; and to be *perceived* as old yet another variable. Therefore, the 'esse versus percipi' conflict was not uncommon both in life and artistic expressions.

Theatre, and drama as its cultural paradigm, offered the most vivid and multi-dimensional exemplars of old(er) age. While the study of the embodiments of the elderly characters is perhaps more appropriate for performance studies – the actors performing age and ageing – published pieces of drama themselves can function as interesting sources of cultural perceptions of the aged/ageing ones. Looking for the formal and thematic origins of Shakespearean comedies, Northrope Frye anatomised the Greek

New Comedy, and characterised the comic conflict as caused by the blocking actions of an *alazon*, quite often a *senex iratus* or, in some cases, the actions of a gullible yet persistent *senex amans*. Restoration theatre (usually dated for the period between 1660 and either 1688 or 1700) in particular offered a plethora of types of *senex* in its comedies of manners, and in their progressive generic transformations, such as libertine comedy, since, like in the previous centuries, comedies were partially based on the intergenerational conflict of more or less related characters. Even though the generic pattern was repeated, as Elizabeth Mignon claims, after 1660 "traditional hostility towards crabbed age reached in these comedies the points of violence" (Mignon 1947: 4). The eighteenth-century offered its more sentimentalised response to the elderly in both comedies and tragedies because 'the cult of sensibility' complicated the relationship between the young and the old characters, most of the times adding a layer of affection and aura of respect to the intergenerational interactions. And yet there are still quite a few examples of plays where the elderly are punished for their inability to accept their ageing or old age, and nowhere more than in the comic repertoire. The following analysis of late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century comedies, namely Thomas Betterton's *The Amorous Widow: Or, the Wanton Wife* (1670), Thomas D'Urfey's *Madam Fickle, or the Witty False One* (1677) and Susanna Centlivre's *The Busy Body* (1709)[1], will present three selected examples of elders who refuse to step aside to let the younger generations design their futures for themselves.

Earl Milner, in one of the early studies, or apologetics, concerning Restoration drama, explains that "the age was like our own in possessing an irresistible urge to talk about matters that frightened and fascinated it" (Milner 1966: 3). While he offers this as the reason for a seeming sexual obsession observed in the comedies, and therefore centuries-long vilification of late seventeenth-century drama as immoral, his argument can be interpreted in much wider terms. If there is a common theme that reappears in the comic genre of both Restoration and the eighteenth century it is unfulfilled appetites of all sorts, with monetary and sexual ones as the favourites. Generically, comedies usually endorse the desires of the younger generations, cheering the sons'/daughters' actions over those of the fathers'/guardians', and chastise the unrestrained appetites of the older characters whose passions should be progressively suppressed. In the comic worlds of the rogues, wits and lovers, there is little understanding for the processes of ageing or its, in a sense, trauma. With female

characters, quite often already widowed, the stigma of ageing seems more devastating because in a 'dog-eat-dog' and libertine world of comedy they carry even more visibly the signs of 'out-of-dateness' on their bodies than the comic men. The latter, however, are the more frequent butts of joke in late seventeenth and early eighteenth-century as their patriarchal status, and with that their wealth, makes them a bigger boon in the wars of generations than the elderly dames. However, in a truly Hobbesian manner, both men and women seem to be engaged in the same constant rivalry because both sexes want the same "in a world in which the desire for possession is infinite and the rewards limited" (Chernaik 2008: 35) – they want to live their lives to the fullest.

The unwillingness to accept the ravages of time is a feature of both sexes but comedies depict women spending much more time on trying to match the way they feel with how they look, usually, with society seeing through the façade. *The Amorous Widow* by Thomas Betterton features old(er) characters of both sexes, but there is no one so insistent on fighting against time and the diminished prerogatives given to older people than Lady Laycock, "the antiquated Piece" of fifty who dares to pursue love, at any time, at any cost and with anyone really. Betterton "conducts the action as a rough sex farce" (Bevis 1988: 79), and a lot of this humour rests on the humiliation of the older woman. Jeffry, the haughty servant, supposes her desperation has already reached the very bottom, and she would probably even take him as a lover for a few compliments or shown interest and affection. Not that he would be interested, since, personally, he wonders how "any Woman can have the Impudence to live, and trouble Mankind after that Age" (Act I). While his opinion is yet another example of Restoration comedy's ageism, the idea that an elderly widow would be so desperate to cling to somebody's attention or immediately trap them in another marriage was a common occurrence in drama based on a not-necessarily-common necessity in actual life. While comedies since the Renaissance onward poked fun at such 'driven' and obsessive amorous projects by elderly widows, socio-feminist studies on widowhood prove that newly acquired singledom could be a blessing rather than a curse, as some of conduct writers suggested[2]. For example, Elizabeth Foyster claims that wealthy widows rarely remarried (Foyster 1999: 112). The stereotype, however, was stronger than the actuality, and so the merry widow seemed to be both the pursuer and the pursued within the comic repertoire. And so the humour, and quite nasty one, rests on Lady Laycock's not only wanting a spouse, but a young and lusty one in particular. As such, Betterton

presents one of a multitude of Restoration examples of elderly women who cannot extinguish their sexual desire as expected from a female of their age, becoming a post-menopausal monster in disguise, preying upon a victim of her insatiable desire. There is no room during Restoration theatre for any serious discussion of women's needs, not to mention sexual inclinations after the childbearing age, and so none of the characters, Betterton or the majority of spectators/readers would have had any other reactions to the lusty widow than scornful laughter. The pitiless reception of such a comic elderly woman is even more deserved in the context of the play because Lady Laycock disregards the warnings concerning inequality in ages, and she is perfectly conscious of her age and related expectations. And yet she keeps on wondering why she is denied the freedoms of her former days. She is, however, likewise aware of the fact that her dreams and desire were even then thwarted by the single thing of being a woman. Betterton allows her to voice some more serious opinions about the age's double standard, such as "When we are Young, they say we sell our selves; when Old, we are forc'd to hire, to buy our Lovers" (Act I).

In a conversation with one of her potential chosen ones, Lovemore, Lady Laycock pretends to initiate an honest discussion of her situation, while Lovemore keeps his charade of courting her to buy the other youth, Cunningham, more time with her young niece. Rather courageously asking Lovemore to assess her age, and probably expecting to hear a pleasant dose of lies, she 'admits' "I do not love to disguise my Age" (Act I), while everything else suggests she is trying to master the art. Her dishonesty towards others, and especially herself, is not only part and parcel of the comic focus, but also one of the reasons why she will not find a supporter and companion in her niece. Her jealousy of the twenty-five-year old, and, what is worse, her pushing herself between Philadelphia and Cunningham and offering her by-gone charms instead of the young niece's, make any form of female loyalty impossible. Pride and vanity in aged ones are social blunders, or 'crimes' that the younger generation will not forgive or understand. This war of ages is so frequent in the comedies of the final decades of the Restoration that Elizabeth Mignon suggests that after 1660 "traditional hostility towards crabbed age reached in these comedies the points of violence" (Mignon 1947: 4). While this is somewhat exaggerated in this particular instance, hostility reveals itself in the promise of a socially humiliating misalliance with the fake Viscount Sans-Terre. What makes it even crueler is the fact that the widow opts for the marriage to save the reputation, and perhaps even the life of her crush, Cunningham. One

should surmise, then, that Lady Laycock is punished for her non-reformed disregard for her age and ignorance of age-appropriate conduct. She needs to see herself as the young ones do – an elderly matron whose life has already happened. As Kirk Combe and Kenneth Schmader notice in the context of a different comedy during the Restoration, "…elder women in comedy are virtual pariahs on stage" (Combe and Schmander 2002: 194), and Lady Laycock's fate is no different. She can now only passively observe the shenanigans of the younger generations.

Being seen for what one really is and not what they want to be is one of the many lessons of the next comedy, by Thomas D'Urfey. As the title suggests, neither Sir Arthur Oldlove nor Old Jollyman are at the very center of *Madame Fickle, or the Witty False One*, but it is their public shaming that contributes to the comic moral of the play on social appearances and masks. It is no accident that D'Urfey makes Sir Oldlove an antiquary since the satire is grounded from the start on the specialist on artefacts, who claims to "redeem lost time from its Chaos of Confusion" and possesses knowledge of different ages (Act III.1), seems to so ignorant or purposefully blind to his own biological clock. Humour is strengthened when it rather quickly turns out that the relics and the artefacts Sir Arthur so cherishes must be fakes. And just as he cannot distinguish between genuine and phony items, he is blind to his own ridiculous exterior. One could blame Sir Arthur's "breeches of Pompey the Great" (Act III.1) on his gullibility, but it seems that this credulousness is part and parcel of his old age. What makes this symptom even worse is that he receives much encouragement and back-patting from his peers, Captain Tilbury and Old Jollyman. While the first one turns a blind eye to his friend's folly to marry his son off with Oldlove's daughter, Old Jollyman may actually be following the same regressive cognitive trajectory as Oldlove himself.

Jollyman is 55 or so, and he is still more than ready for amours, so both men are as conscious of their old(er) age as much as they wish to ignore and disregard it. Sir Oldlove himself concludes that "there is nothing so becoming as Gravity" (Act III.1), and such self-promotion is not new to comedies featuring old(er) men who do not self-assess or want to be judged on the basis of their age, and if it is necessary, then only to their advantage. This is most clearly presented in Act IV. Sir Oldlove, apart from his antiquary mission of "saving time", is busy trying to dispose of his daughter, Constantia, and his niece, the eponymous widow[3], "an approv'd Fortune" (Act III.2). Tilbury's son, Toby, and the Old Jollyman are the lucky candidates. While Toby is too much of a bumpkin in Restoration comedy's

terms to deserve Constantia, as well as the soon-to-be destroyer of the (fake) vial with St Jerome's tears, Old Jollyman's subsequent sexual pursuit of the young girl sparks the expected 'spring-winter' conflict.

When negotiating with Sir Oldlove the permission to marry his daughter, Old Jollyman does what he can to reinterpret, or even reverse, the meaning and value of old age:

> Sir Arth. Troth, Sir, Hope is very necessary in this affair; and if you can but hope my daughter will like your Person and Years, as well as I like your Estate, your Hope will have as ample a Field to range in, as any mans I know.
>
> Joll. My Person and Years—Why, Sir, 'tis impossible she shou'd dislike it; whatever my Years are, I assure you my Imagination is but One-and-twenty.
>
> Sir Arth. But, Sir, in the space of a Week, the strength of your Imagination will be worn away, and your Person will be left to the deliberate age of Eight-and-fifty a month or two over.
>
> Joll. No, 'tis three-months under by my faith, *Sir Arthur*, and what, then? With me 'tis an age of 21; Look in my face, Sir, observe how the blood mounts; here, here's your Complection, without art, *fucus*, or any thing— Then, Sir, peruse my Person—Hah—I think I am well set—Hem—And as found as another man—Besides, I can talk well, walk well, and make Water well—which, udsbores, is as provoking a quality as any man is Master of.
>
> Sir Arth. Sir, in a young man I confess these are additions; but a man that has the misfortune to decline into the vail of Years, were he really Master of all this, wou'd not get credit with the World, he would not be believ'd.
>
> Joll. Not believ'd! Sir, my actions shall give continual demonstration, I am not in the Catalogue of your infirm persons; my Back, Sir, is strong, by Body active; nor has my infirmity been so much my Foe, to abate any part of my vigour: But I can Run, Wrestle, Fight, or Play a Game at Tennis with any Spark i'th' City, and let the World rub. (Act IV.1)

This conversation is even more interesting when one remembers that it is two fifty-year-olds negotiating, meaning that both know what old age is, how it feels and what it might mean in the context of a marriage with a young woman. The fact that Old Jollyman needs to convince Sir Oldlove of the 'spark' left in him, and the latter not agreeing unconditionally, only proves the arbitrariness and relativity of ageing and old age. Oldlove sees

Jollyman as old, but not himself, and vice versa. If this comedy was primarily focused on Oldlove's or Jollyman's plots, then we would have been presented with a scene with the old man proposing himself to the young recipient and her refusing in a nice or impolite way. This, however, is a comedy oscillating around the fake young widow and her young and foolish courtiers, and so the topic of the old man is unresolved and no proper proposal occurs, leaving the audiences with the very joke of Old Jollyman thinking he could even stand a chance.

Despite the changes introduced to English theatre and drama after the 1680s, and with the increasingly advanced ways of thinking about ageing and the prolongation of life, the age-blind elders have remained the source of laughter. *The Busy Body*'s Sir Francis Gripe is yet another example of an old character who cannot see and therefore accept the fact that he is perceived as a ridiculous old fool who due to his age has lost all rights to sexual fulfillment as well as access to the wealth of the younger generation, especially that of his chosen Miranda. Gripe is the designated guardian of Miranda who is also courted by Sir George Airy. The new comedy pattern, as presented by Susanna Centlivre in 1709, requires Miranda to still fulfil the patriarchal duty of marriage, yet she may marry on her own terms, and only after Sir George's virtue is sufficiently tested. As such her body and her riches are to be given to Sir George, and not to Gripe, which further confirms that in this progressively developing new social unit, there is no place for the old, amorous and greedy Gripe. Centlivre further aggravates Gripe's condition/status as the scapegoat and the butt of a joke because of his insistence of marrying his son, Charles, to a tellingly named woman, namely Lady Wrinkle. Charles is particularly shocked by his father's choice as this is no ordinary marriage of convenience in eighteenth-century comedy. The comic sons regularly have their wives chosen by their fathers, but they are hardly ever one-eyed, toothless, hunchbacked, dirty and "wry-necked". In other words, in Charles' words, "a Piece of Deformity" (Act I). He makes a specific objection, suggesting that he will renounce the widow's money for a poor(er) *young* and beautiful girl. As such Charles then points to the core issue in his father's behaviour – while he condemns his son to an old and deformed wife, he breaks the rules of propriety by choosing a beautiful young lady for himself. As mentioned earlier, it is for this transgression that Gripe will need to be punished in Centlivre's comic world as well as for his avarice. And it is the latter, his greed, that allows the destined young lovers to carry out their intrigue. While avarice is a cross-gender and all-ages vice, culturally it became one of the negative

attributes specifically attached to the elderly, and quite often male ones. Hoarding money and craving more is the characteristic feature of blocking fathers and other elderly men in comedies at least since the Renaissance, so Centlivre utilises a very old, ageist stereotype to elicit laughter and scorn.

Thanks to Gripe's greed Sir George buys himself a meeting with the purposefully mute Miranda. In his courting he immediately alludes to the cultural, aesthetic, if not phenomenological impossibility of a young girl preferring an "old, dry, wither'd sapless Log of Sixty-five, to vigorous, gay and sprightly Love of Twenty-four" (Act I). Miranda is not responsive enough to take a stand or answer for herself, but there is a silent confirmation of her 'natural' interests in someone her own age. After the 'interview' the two men eventually part affirmed in their own convictions, with Sir George saying to Gripe later on "I'm positive she is not in Love with Age" (Act I), and warning him that spring-winter marriages inevitably lead to cuckoldry; and Gripe suggesting that contemporary women prefer older and experienced partners to the emotionally (and sexually) unstable youth. It is Gripe's fate, however, that has been sealed; he will be punished for his blindness, gullibility and vanity, and it is despite the fact that, as Melinda C. Findberg notes, he is "an unusually sympathetic character for an obstructing miser" (Findberg 2001: xxiv). His illicit passions guarantee his pathetic end at the mercy of the young lovers.

Out of the two lovers, Miranda and Sir George, it is the woman who has more wit and imagination. She likewise knows how to 'operate' a doting old man whose mind is set on sexual adventures and money, who admits to her "I'm all on fire" (Act III). While offering herself to Gripe as his wife, and lover, she demands of him a written permission to marry, which apparently will prove to all the world – which for both characters, but Gripe in particular, means all younger men – that she willingly chose a man "loaded with Years and Wisdom" (Act III). Even the very hint at Gripe's being of an advanced age makes him uncomfortable, and he refuses to make his age an issue: "Prithee, leave out age, Chargy, I am not so old, as you shall find: Adod, I'm young…" (Act III). It takes many more intrigues to finally remind Gripe were his place is in the social hierarchy, and what his true prerogatives are. In the end, when he is finally let in on the secret and joke, and then presented with the newly married couple, as well as informed about his son's retrieval of his deserved wealth, he cannot contain his anger and leaves. As Nancy Copeland (1995: 24) observes in the context of another play by Centlivre, her eccentric guardians "remain unreformed at the end of the play". No surprise then that even the amicable suggestions

from his age peer, Sir Jealous[4], that they both should accept the fact they have been cheated, or put in their rightful place by the young ones, are dismissed by Gripe. Ultimately, he learns two lessons: the first is that greed is a vice that will not go unpunished, in a rather 'what comes around goes around'-way; and the other that the roles available to a person of his age differ greatly from the function and positions offered to the younger generation. Acknowledging this biological, social and cultural fact is what characterises good ageing in eighteenth-century comedy.

In conclusion, then; while by definition a comedy's trajectory follows from disorder to restoration and affirmation of social concord and order, it does not mean that everyone has their wishes fulfilled. On the contrary, Restoration comedy in particular was known for letting its rogues go free from time to time, even though many witty gallants and libertines were to be eventually socialised into marriage. Ideally, however, social order was to be restored, which meant that each character was to return, or find themselves re-placed, in(to) their normative positions. For the younger generations this meant 'growing up' to assume the roles of wives and/or husbands, and adding their financial and reproductive potential to forward the country and the age. For the older characters the progressively more sentimentalised comedies designated the roles of memorialisers, guardians and supporters of the younger generations, who, however, were not to interfere too much and for too long into their affairs. As Miner (1966: 4) reminds, "youth challenged the forms and conventions inherited from age, wittily mocking those elders who … sought youth's freedom…". As such placing oneself above the younger generations was always doomed to failure and social and financial chastisement and a loud burst of laughter from the cheering audiences.

Acknowledgement

Notes
1. The title has been variously spelt, either as one or two words.

2. See my forthcoming "'Next unto the Gods my life shall be spent in Contemplation of him': The close study of Margaret Cavendish's dramatised widowhood" for more on Juan Luis Vives' perception of widows.

3.As this play shows, not every comic widow is an 'antiquated dame' and as the Restoration repertoire proves, the young ones are the most 'dangerous'.

4. Sir Jealous is not the main focus of this analysis as his subplot is not so much focused on being an old man than being a controlling/blocking father. He wishes his daughter, Isabinda, to be more chaste than the English ladies whose passions and appetites run wild. He even employs a lady to guard or monitor Isabinda's morality and conduct, only to come to a conclusion that the old ways of assigning an older chaperone will not do. Isabinda will, of course, eventually marry Charles, Gripe's son. More on Sir Jealous see Findberg (2001: xxiv-xxv).

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The James Bond: Psychology and Fiction

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Abstract

This paper looks at the work of two famous American brothers: William and Henry James. The purpose of this research is to identify and discuss the nature of the relationship between the two brothers. This has been done by examining the psychological essays of William James and the critical essays of his brother, Henry James, as well as the correspondence between them. The bond between the novelist (Henry James) and the psychologist (William James) grew into the creation of the James literary and psychological heritage.

Key words: *psychology, experience, consciousness, perceptions, emotions, stream of consciousness.*

Family is the main social unit where the members actively cooperate with each other. The James, a clan-like family, whose members were not always educated in accordance with high social standards and values of the nineteenth century America (morality, freedom and schooling), though, demonstrate a close and fruitful collaboration between one another. Henry James Senior was an esteemed American theologian, journalist, and social activist, as well as the father of the psychologist William James, the novelist Henry James, and the diarist Alice James. As mentioned by Jennifer Eimers, "New York offered a cultural education, which the James children were allowed to experience fully. […] the family often went to the theatre, art shows, and Barnum's American Museum. The James children were also surrounded by books, and allowed to read nearly anything that came into view" (2008: 278). Throughout their life, although William was older and more confident, Henry, however, proved to be more determined than his brother. He began his career as a writer and critic much earlier than William, and was devoted to it. William, on the other hand, was at first seriously interested in painting, then in medicine, and finally decided to commit himself to philosophy and psychology (Edel 1963; Putnam 1997: 1). The link between the James brothers draws a special attention, though there is nothing new in reading Henry through William's perspective. Careful attention was also paid to the correspondence between the brothers, as their letters constitute a generous source of information about

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the state of their relationship. In the connection between the two brothers were interested many scholars and biographers, such as Leon Edel, Percy Lubbock, Kristin Bourdeau, Collin Meissner, Greg W. Zacharias, Wendy Graham, and Ross Posnock, among others.

The table below presents a parallel chronology of both brothers' works and activities during their life.

A William James Chronology		A Henry James Chronology	
11January 1842	Is born in New York City, first child of Henry James, Sr. and Mary Robertson Walsh	**15April 1843**	Is born at 21 Washington Place, New York City, United States. Second child of Henry James, Sr. and Mary Robertson Walsh
1858	Interested in painting with William Morris Hunt	**1858**	Attends Berkeley Institute under the direction of Reverend W. C. Leverett.
1859	John La Farge comes to Newport in the summer to study with Hunt. Becomes friends with William and Henry.	**1859**	Henry attends the Institution Rochette and continues to write.
1864	Enters Harvard Medical School	**1861**	Attends Lawrence Scientific School at Harvard
1867–8	Travels to Europe. Studies physiology at Berlin University, reads philosophy, psychology and physiology.	**1862**	Enters Harvard Law School.
1869	Receives M. D. degree, but never practices.	**1864**	First tale, 'A Tragedy of Error,' published, unsigned, in *Continental Monthly.* Begins writing book reviews for *North American Review* (*NAR*).

1872	Accepts the offer to teach undergraduate course in comparative physiology at Harvard	1865	'The Story of a Year,' his first signed story, published in the *Atlantic Monthly.*
1874-5	Begins teaching psychology; establishes first American psychology laboratory.	1867	Writes reviews for *The Nation* and *NAR.*
1878	Publishes 'Remarks on Spencer's Definition of Mind as Correspondence' in *Journal of Speculative Philosophy.*	1869	Sails for Europe to travel and improve his health. Writes extensively to his family members and friends at home.
1879	Publishes 'The Sentiment of Rationality' in *Mind.*	1871	*Watch and Ward* (his first novel) is serialized in *Atlantic.*
1880	Appointed Assistant Professor of Philosophy at Harvard. Continues to teach psychology.	1875	*Roderick Hudson* is serialized in the *Atlantic.* Writes articles on Parisian life and culture for *New York Tribune.* Meets Turgenev, Flaubert, Zola, Goncourt, Maupassant, and Daudet.
1884	Lectures on 'The Dilemma of Determinism'. Publishes 'On Some Omissions of Introspective Psychology' in *Mind.*	1878	Publishes 'Daisy Miller' and *The Europeans*
1885-92	Teaches psychology and philosophy at Harvard: logic, ethics, English empirical philosophy, psychological research.	1880	Publishes *Washington Square*, writes and publishes *The Portrait of a Lady* in *Macmillan's Magazine.*
1890	Publishes *The Principles of Psychology*	1882	Publishes 'The Point of View'

1897	Publishes *The Will to Believe and Other Essays in Popular Philosophy*.	1884	Publishes 'The Art of Fiction' in *Longman's Magazine*.
1899	Publishes *Talks to Teachers on Psychology: and to Students on Some of Life's Ideals* (including 'On a Certain Blindness in Human Beings' and 'What Makes Life Worth Living?').	1885 1886	*The Bostonians* serialized in *Century*. Travels to Florence.
1904-4	Publishes 'Does 'Consciousness' Exist?,' 'A World of Pure Experience,' 'How Two Minds Can Know the Same Thing,' 'Is Radical Empiricism Solipsistic?' and "The Place of Affectional Facts in a World of Pure Experience" in *Journal of Philosophy, Psychology and Scientific Methods*.	1887 1897 1899	Stays for a long period in Italy. Writes *The Aspern Papers* and begins *The Tragic Muse*. Settles at Lamb House in Rye, Sussex. Publishes 'The Future of the Novel'
1907	Publishes *Pragmatism: A New Name for Some Old Ways of Thinking*.	1900	Publishes stories while working on *The Wings of the Dove* and *The Ambassadors*.
1909	Publishes *A Pluralistic Universe*.	1902 1903 1907-9	*The Wings of the Dove* is published. *The Ambassadors* is published. Writes the prefaces to his novels.

1910	Publishes 'A Pluralistic Mystic' in *Hibbert Journal*. Dies in August of heart failure at summer home in Chocorua, New Hampshire.	1910	Publishes 'Is There a Life after Death' in *Harper's Bazar* (January-February).
		1913	Publishes *A Small Boy and Others* and
		1914	*Notes of a Son and Brother*. February 28 dies in
		1916	London.

(Edel 1975; Simon 1998)

The table allows one to compare and understand how and when did William and Henry influence one another, while also telling about their accomplishments in the professional field. For instance, the acquaintance with John La Farge with the James brothers in the summer of 1859 played a very important role in their intellectual and moral growth. Henry Adams states that La Farge "soon took on the role of the intellectual mentor to the James brothers, introducing them to French literature, discoursing with them on philosophical questions, and going on painting excursions with them" (1985: 60). This idea has been extended by Linda Simon (1998); she emphasises the importance of the collaboration of the James brothers with William Morris Hunt and John La Farge, stating that William "was learning something more than drawing and painting. He learned that artists were subject to the whims, preferences, and dislikes of their audience" (1998: 81). This was the reason why William started pondering over the idea of continuing his career as a painter or shift to the study of science. On the other hand, Adams believes that the three young men, William, Henry and La Farge, were influenced by the writings of the Anglo–Irish philosopher Bishop Berkeley (1685-1753) and therefore all of them became interested in a new philosophical viewpoint, and "shifted the focus of attention in their work from the object itself to the perception of the object in the field of consciousness" (1985: 60). That is to say, the perception of reality was also altered, considering that it was based on "an awareness of the ambiguities of sensation" (1985: 60). Consequently, the further writings of the artists reflected a similar point of view of reality:

> La Farge converted the painter's canvas from a representation of the external world to a depiction of visual sensations; Henry James

transformed narration from a description of revealed events to an account of the narrator's perceptions and interpretations; William James rejected materialism and idealism to develop radical empiricism, a philosophy founded upon the primacy of sensations and mental entities over material realities (Adams 1985: 60).

This belief is evident later in William's *The Principles of Psychology* (1890) when he speaks of impressions and sensations. Not only did William cite Berkeley while speaking of perceptions, but he also agreed with his affirmation that one receives accurate information "by association merely"; James concludes that "perception differs from sensation by the consciousness of farther facts associated with the object of the sensation. […] Sensational and reproductive brain-processes combined are, then, what give us the content of our perceptions" (2008: 76).

In comparison, Henry James appears to also have knowledge about the concept of impressions and sensations, if one takes into account his correspondence with his sister Alice James. In his letter addressed to her in 1869, while visiting London, he writes about the impression that the magnificent city of London produced upon him, concluding that "this feeling is owing to the singular permanence of the impressions of childhood, to which any present experience joins itself on, without a broken link in the chain of sensation" (James 1975: 90).

Although different, the James brothers supported and encouraged each other throughout life. They wrote each other letters for almost half a century. If there to be traced any similitudes of ideas and beliefs between William and Henry's works, one must look through their correspondence. The correspondence demonstrates their close relationship through a wide variety of topics, as they discussed not only family issues, but historical, economic, social, professional and personal matters as well. The editors of *William and Henry James: Selected Letters* (1997) claim that there were written more than 740 letters and postcards; besides, they mention that the tone and atmosphere of the correspondence were almost always official, as the brothers were aware of the fact that the letters will constitute later a family archive (Scrupskelis and Berkeley 1997: xxx). On November 14th, 1878, in his letter addressed to William, Henry expresses his gratefulness towards his brother appreciating his objective receptiveness and constructive criticism:

I hope you will continue to give me, when you can, your free impression of my performances. It is a great thing to have some one write to one of one's things as if one were a third person, and you are the only

individual who will do this. I don't think however you are always right, by any means (H. James 1975: 193).

The lines of this letter speak about a true and interactive relationship between the aesthete and the philosopher. In his letters, Henry is always very attentive and respectful to his brother; in addition, they seem to be inspirations and critics for each other seeing that a thorough reading of their letters demonstrates their mutual and constructive feedback on almost every essay or book published, as for example in the following lines of the letter addressed to William in 1878:

> I was much depressed on reading your letter by your painful reflections on *The Europeans*; but now, an hour having elapsed, I am beginning to hold up my head a little; the more so as I think I myself estimate the book very justly and am aware of its extreme slightness. I think you take these things too rigidly and unimaginatively — too much as if an artistic experiment were a piece of conduct, to which one's life were somehow committed; but I think also that you're quite right in pronouncing the book 'thin' and empty. I don't at all despair, yet, of doing something fat. […] As for instance in your objection to the closing paragraph of *Daisy Miller*, which seems to me queer and narrow, and as regards which I don't seize your point of view. J'en appelle to the sentiment of any other story-teller whatsoever; I am sure none such would wish the paragraph away (H. James 1975: 193).

Speaking of the interconnection of ideas in their works, there are various empirical and pragmatic ideas in William's writings that might be actually applied to Henry's theory of fiction. To thoroughly investigate certain psychological and philosophical aspects of Henry and William relationship there will be considered William's essays on psychology, namely *The Principles of Psychology* (1890) and *Pragmatism* (1907), as well as Henry's essays on the theory of fiction: *The Art of Fiction* (1884) and *The Future of the Novel* (1899).

Even though the James brothers had a very strong friendship, "their relationship reflects the rivalry and secrecy that characterized all relationships in the James family" (Zacharias 2008: 371). Notwithstanding, as Peter Rawlings puts it, William James "exercised a significant impact on James's theory and practice of fiction" (2006: 4). Indeed, the understanding of various concepts as: perception, experience, consciousness, multiple perspectives, and other concepts as well, is very similar for both of them. For instance, in *The Future of the Novel* Henry James asserts that the novel had come to "self-consciousness" (Edel 1984: 100), what in William's

perspective is the tendency to progress and perfection. Therefore, James notices that the novel had done its best "to make up for lost opportunities" (Edel 1984: 100).

In his seminal essay on the theory of novel, *The Art of Fiction*, Henry James marks out that a novel "is a personal impression of life" (Edel 1984: 48), that is to say, it reproduces the impressions, perceptions, and association of life of the novelist through his/her characters; similarly, for William, life is made up of impressions, strong or weak, influential or, on the contrary, insignificant, that have an impact on human's perception of life. According to William James, it appears that "Pure sensations can only be realized in the earliest days of life. They are all but impossible to adults with memories and stories of associations acquired" (2008: 7). Therefore, a person's perception of life, once contaminated by impressions and associations, becomes biased. Thus, when Henry James asserts that the reader rejoices at the mere fact of reading about and, as a consequence, living other people's life, he then agrees with his brother that associations influence the reader's perception of the novel; while speaking of the reader, he assumes that:

> He likes to live the life of others, yet is well aware of the points at which it may too intolerable resemble his own. The vivid fable, more than anything else, gives him this satisfaction on easy terms, gives him knowledge abundant yet vicarious. It enables him to select, to take, to leave; so that to feel he can afford to neglect it he must have a rare faculty, or great opportunities, for the extension of experience – by thought, by emotion, by energy – at first hand (James in Edel 1984: 103).

Henry James is aware, due to his brother, that life constitutes a series of impressions and associations that are in fact, experience. To this extent, in *The Future of the Novel*, he infers that a good novelist should know that he/she has to give his/her reader a representation of life, as he calls it - a "picture" - that will satisfy the reader's "general appetite for a picture" (Edel 1984:102). In his novels, Henry James pays much attention to the character, in other words to the "subject" of the novel (Edel 1984: 102). It appears that the subject for him is "the whole human consciousness" (Edel 1984: 102). In comparison, William's idea about human consciousness in his chapter on 'The Stream of Thought' may be explained as follows: personal consciousness consists of thoughts; the thoughts are in constant change and continuity; moreover, they are cognitive and selective (2006: 224-91). This implies that Henry James, taking as the subject for his novels the human consciousness, has an amassment of ideas and thoughts to deal with, while

creating his characters. Virginia Woolf will later have a similar attitude with reference to character, specifically, she will argue that:

> all novels, that is to say, deal with character, and that it is to express character – not to preach doctrines, sing songs, or celebrate the glories of the British Empire, that the form of the novel, so clumsy, verbose, and undramatic, so rich, elastic, and alive, has been evolved [...] The great novelists have brought us to see whatever they wish us to see through some character. Otherwise they would not be novelists (2000: 749-50).

At this point, it is important to appraise the idea of *the stream of consciousness* in both brothers' works. William James was the one who coined the term *stream of consciousness* in his highly respected work *The Principles of Psychology* (1890). To William James, considering that the state of mind is in constant change and ceaseless flow, consciousness appears as a "river or stream" (2006: 239); moreover, he does not completely agree with the earlier connotation of this concept as "chain or train", because he believes it to be incomplete. To contrast the previous description, he encourages everyone to call it "the stream of thought, of consciousness, or of subjective life" (2006: 239). Henceforward, the term *stream of consciousness* was successfully used both in psychology and fiction. Henry James, in a letter to his fiend Grace Norton, writes about consciousness, and refers to it in almost the same words:

> consciousness is an illimitable power, […] yet in the way it propagates itself from wave to wave, so that we never cease to feel, and though at moments we appear to, try to, pray to, there is something that holds one in one's place, makes it a standpoint in the universe which it is probably good not to forsake (H. James 1975: 424).

The novelist reinforces the idea that consciousness is constantly moving and is alternately engaged in a continuous process. Regarding the work of both brothers in parallel, it is worthy to notice that while William James is trying to explain and give an accurate account of consciousness in quite general psychological terms, Henry James in his novels passes consciousness through the mind of his characters. For example, William James confirms that "the only states of consciousness that we naturally deal with are found in personal consciousness, minds, selves" (2006: 225); Henry, on the contrary, offers the readers the opportunity to 'experience' in a way, somebody else's consciousness and state of mind. As stated by William E. Cain, both writers conjointly, the philosopher and the novelist, "provide a moment of intersection between philosophy and literature

through their investigations, both theoretical and aesthetic, of the concept of consciousness. Consciousness is that fund of self-knowledge, protected like a treasure" (2002: 62).

On the assumption that human consciousness is a flow of subjective life, as stated by William, the novel, in Henry's perspective is "the most immediate and […] *treacherous* picture of actual manners – indirectly as well as directly" (Edel 1984: 107) that reflects all the changes in society; it is therefore, a subjective representation of life. Henry's biographer, Leon Edel, refers to the novelist as a prolific writer, and one of the finest critics and theorists (1963: 5). Besides, Edel confirms once over the assumption that Henry James embraced the empirical ideas of experience and sensation, that is, the novel for Henry was a "great repository of life; and he believed that if the novel is a mirror in a roadway, it reflects not only the panorama of existence, but the countenance of the artist in the very act of experiencing the world around him" (1963: 6). Beyond doubt, Henry's fount of experience came from heavy reading and extensive travelling.

In his chapter on 'Consciousness of Self' the psychologist explains what the Empirical self of each of us is, referring to it as a person's "inner or subjective being"; and presents the constituents of the Self: the material self, the social self, spiritual self and the pure Ego, pointing out that the spiritual self may be regarded from various perspectives and, on the top of that, a person may have many social selves (2006: 292-99). This very concern, namely the rivalry and conflict of the different selves, will represent a part of Henry James's novels, too.

As to the matter of experience, again, some affinities can be noticed. In his last chapter of *The Principles of Psychology* dedicated to experience, William James attempts to define experience explaining that it is "a particular sort of natural agency, alongside of which other more recondite natural agencies may perfectly well exist" (2008: 625); and eventually, experience is a cumulative process, whereas he narrows the definition of experience "to processes which influence the mind by the front-door-way of simple habits and association" (2008: 628). Moreover, the process of experience is infinite; it is a time process that is influenced by impressions, emotions, perceptions and associations:

> Experience means experience of something foreign supposed to impress us, whether spontaneously or in consequence of our own exertions and acts. Impressions, as we well know, affect certain orders of sequence and coexistence, and the mind's habits copy the habits of the impressions, so

that our images of things assume a time- and space-arrangement which resembles the time- and space-arrangements outside (2008: 619).

The alikeness at this point between William and Henry lies in their attempt to comprehend experience as a cumulative and illimitable process. While discussing experience in his essay *The Art of Fiction*, Henry James is repetitive, as he remarks that "experience consists of impressions", yet complemental; for him experience is "never limited and it is never complete; it is an immense sensibility"; besides, he sees experience as a wonderful faculty, a "power to guess the unseen from the seen, to trace the implication of things, to judge the whole piece by the pattern, the condition of feeling life" (Edel 1984: 52). Therefore, Henry James promotes the idea of fictional experience to novelists and readers alike: "[w]rite from experience, and experience only" (Edel 1984: 52), thus offering the possibility to openness and wideness of knowledge and indirect experience through fiction.

In conclusion, the parallel reading of the famous James brothers proves a strong and close bond between them and shows a set of similitudes of ideas in their works and semblance in their philosophical outlook on life; furthermore, it seems that Henry formulated his theory of fiction being strongly influenced by his brother's theories in psychology.

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Catastrophe and its Aftermath in Cormac McCarthy's *The Road* and Don DeLillo's *White Noise*

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Abstract

This paper focuses on the less exceptionalist images of America in McCarthy's The Road *and DeLillo's* White Noise. *The two novels evoke a world dominated by violence, catastrophe, on its way to the final, the post-apocalyptic white noise and the human resistance over death as contemporary aspects of the 21st century.*

DeLillo's 1985 novel shows features of mass manipulation and simulation, such as those in the chapter 'The Airborne Toxic Event', largely speculated by the media. The novel explores the theme of death as a metaphor for the "white noise" of the contemporary world. DeLillo's novel describes several responses, more or less adequate ways of coping with it. The metaphor of "white noise" might be seen as dramatizing death in contrast with an intangible transcendence in a world fed up with confusing images promoted by an ever more powerful force associated with the mass-media. Besides, the novel explores what Randy Laist calls in his Technology and Postmodern Subjectivity in Don DeLillo's Novels the "semiotic influence of television" (2010: 90), in which the characters are trapped in the center of televisual consumer disclosure.

Another representation of catastrophic death is conveyed in Cormac McCarthy's The Road. The novel offers an even more chaotic, post-apocalyptic image of America in parallel with the portrayal of an affectionate father-son relationship. The characters of the novel plough through a desolate landscape strewn with ash and devoid of living animals and vegetation, as a metaphor for the loss of hope in a world that has lost its bearings, where traces of humanity still glimmer here and there, without many chances of survival. The paper reimagines exceptionalist America in exceptional circumstances, but these circumstances are far from being beneficial for anyone, American or otherwise, due to the American image of power as being overshadowed by nihilism and desolation.

Key words: *exceptionalism, image of power, desolate landscape, white noise*

This paper aims to examine how the representation of catastrophe, nihilism and the ephemerality of human nature are depicted as a characteristic of American postmodern literature, such as in Cormac McCarthy's *The Road* and Don DeLillo's *White Noise*. The former expresses a post- apocalyptic

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image of the United States of America, portraying also the relationship between a father and his son and their struggle to survive in a desolate place. The latter represents features of mass manipulation in which the theme of death is used as a metaphor for the "white noise", the nothingness and superficiality of the contemporary world.

Cormac McCarthy's *The Road* describes the journey south taken by a young boy and his father after an unnamed catastrophe has struck the world. The man and the boy, who also remain unnamed throughout the entire novel, travel through the rough terrain of the south-eastern United States. The conditions they face are devastating: rotted corpses, landscapes destroyed by fire, abandoned towns and houses. These two travellers are among the few living human beings remaining on earth, who have not been driven to committing murder or cannibalism.

The novel begins with the man and boy in the woods, as the two of them are making their journey along the road. The story is set in a post-apocalyptic world, date and place unnamed, though the reader can assume that the place is set in the United States because the man tells the boy that they are walking the "state roads" (McCarthy 2006: 43).

If we are to refer to Friedrich Nietzsche's philosophy in his "The Parable of the Madman", human nature is no longer a creation of God since God itself became a "divine decomposition". Nietzsche's famous quote "Gods, too, decompose. God is dead. God remains dead. And we have killed him" (Nietzsche 1882: 181) suggests the ephemerality of divinity and its creation, the fact that human nature is transitory and so its belief in God. This idea is represented at the very beginning of the novel when the father from *The Road* speaks his first words: "If he is not the word of God, God never spoke" (McCarthy 2006: 5). In other words, the man declares that his son is the word of God or that God never spoke and this ambiguity presides throughout the novel. The man's statement suggests that either his son is the word of God or that the universe has lost its creator, God.

McCarthy also chooses to use no quotation marks in dialogue and he leaves out the apostrophes. Because the novel is a post-apocalyptic story, the absence of these punctuation marks might serve as a way for McCarthy to indicate that in this new world, remnants of the old world like electricity, running water and humanity no longer exist or they exist in very limited amounts.

Despite their misfortune, the man and the child remain determined to survive, reaffirming to themselves that they are the "good guys" who do not seek to harm others. Unfortunately, the father's health worsens as they

travel and by the time they reach the ocean, he is near death. He continually coughs up blood, and the two are forced to move at ever slowing rates each day. Finally, he dies in the woods lying next to his son in the middle of the night. The boy remains by his side for several days after his father's death but eventually he meets a kind family who invite him to join them.

What links McCarthy's novel to the principles of civilization is the fact that it contains both a perceivable moral code and a view about what makes life meaningful despite all the hardship. What relates *The Road* to catastrophe and the decline and disaffection of civilization is its story and the faith of its characters.

As related to Freud's *Civilization and Its Discontents*, Freud transfers the intra-psychic conflict between the ego and the id, the pleasure principle and the reality principle, the unconscious and the conscious mind etc. that he had analyzed in his psychoanalytical writings over to the domain of human civilization. Civilization itself comes to be defined as a space of conflict or as an extension into cultural community of the tensions that stigmatize the individual psyche. In this sense, Freud shares general cultural pessimism or anti-modernism, a kind of scepticism about the accomplishments of civilization. He recalls three sources of human suffering:

A. The human body: it is fragile, weak, mortal; the body causes pain; it is unavoidable; people cannot overcome the frailty of their bodies and will never control nature completely.

B. The world: the superiority of nature; natural catastrophes; people's inability to control nature; nature as necessity.

C. Social relations: society, social legislation. These two limit the satisfaction of human nature's pleasure; social relations should be under human control. People cannot explain why they cannot dispense with social suffering, why they cannot control their social interactions in such a way that they do not avoid the greatest displeasure for all.

Therefore, one can attest that the reason why we cannot dispense with social displeasure is because a piece of nature lies behind social conflict. Moreover, according to Freud's theory, common feelings are regarded as features of civilized human nature. *The Road* is also an example of how

human feelings abandon the human mind and are replaced by the "instinct of destruction" (Freud 1962: 69).

Set sometime in the future after a global catastrophe, *The Road* chronicles a father and a son as they tread along a forsaken patch of highway peopled by marauders and cannibals. *The Road* can also be viewed as a possible aftermath of the post-9/11 world in which civilization becomes a catastrophe. The post-apocalyptic setting plays upon the public's fear of terrorism, pandemics, genocide and weapons of mass destruction. The desolate landscapes stand for a wasteland in which life deserted: "Trees as dead as any. He picked up one of the heavy leaves and crushed it in his hand to powder and let the powder sift through his fingers" (McCarthy 2006: 209).

The landscapes are filled with destruction, fear of death, death itself dominating what once was full of life:

> "The cold relentless circling of the intestate earth. Darkness implacable. The blind dogs of the sun in their running. The crushing black vacuum of the universe. And somewhere two hunted animals trembling like ground-foxes in their cover. Borrowed time and borrowed world and borrowed eyes with which to sorrow it" (McCarthy 2006: 138).

Despair and the fight for survival dominate their journey into darkness and fear. The travellers were hunted by cannibals and they could only hide in the forest, waiting for them to vanish:

> "They left the cart in the woods and he checked the rotation of the rounds in the cylinder. The wooden and the true. They stood listening. The smoke stood vertically in the still air. No sound of any kind. The leaves were soft from the recent rains and quiet underfoot. He turned and looked at the boy. The small dirty face wide with fear. They circled the fire at a distance, the boy holding on to his hand. He crouched and put his arm around him and they listened for a long time" (McCarthy 2006: 210).

Cormac McCarthy's early novels were set in Tennessee, whilst his later move to El Paso resulted in the extension of his interest in Texas and the Mexican borderlands for his later works. For McCarthy, these lands largely symbolized the decline of the mythology of American ideals of frontier and of the civilizing of the wilderness, with his lyrical descriptions of the landscape and nature counterpointing the decay of the rural past and the ever-present evil in his stories: "Evil hovers over the corpus of McCarthy's writings, like a vulture, waiting to descend" (Welsh 2010: 88).

McCarthy's later novels also show his exploration of the inter-cultural issues and ethnicity of the Southwest, together with the decline of the myths of American pastoral utopianism.

The Road appears to be a significant departure for McCarthy involving the desperate quest of a father and son to survive an unexplained, and seemingly global, disaster. In The Road, the erasure of history and civilization is placed in the near future, whereas all of McCarthy's earlier works are placed in the past.

Death and the spectre of death pervade *The Road* from the onset through descriptions of the landscape, the protagonists' struggle to survive and the constant threats of murder and starvation. The earth is already steeped in death and ashes. Most living creatures and plants have not survived the disaster that has destroyed civilization. For example, cows are extinct and the boy has never before seen birds or fish: "On the hillsides old crops dead and flattened. The barren ridgeline trees raw and black in the rain" (McCarthy 2006: 18).

John Cant agrees in his *McCarthy, and the Myth of American Exceptionalism* that in *The Road* "we are present in another of McCarthy's allegorical worlds". He suggests that *The Road* can be seen to depict modern America and by implication the whole of the Western world as literally and metaphorically a waste land, with a rural past as corrupt and devalued; he further argues that there is a continuity throughout McCarthy's works that depicts the failure of the "grand narrative" of American Exceptionalism (Cant 2008: 268).

Also, Lydia Cooper suggests a different interpretation of *The Road* as a quest to find the lost holy grail of Jesus. She echoes others who see the novel as a response to an "immediate and visceral fear of cataclysmic doom after in the US 9/11" (Cooper 2011: 221). Cooper questions whether human beings deserve to survive or whether the decline of the West and America has gone apart from redemption. She suggests that the constant reference to "carrying the fire" in the novel is a metaphor for the practice of civility and ethics that seem to be totally endangered throughout the novel. *The Road* depicts a nightmare world of fire and ash as a visual metaphor for death and cultural collapse. Cooper also describes *The Road* as "a viscerally realistic wasteland" (Cooper 2011: 221) and also sees the devastation as a metaphor for internal corruption.

What Ely, the only person with whom the protagonists have contact says: "There is no God and we are his prophets" (McCarthy 2006: 143) suggests that he and others are there to preach the central message of the

reality of their world: that it is the only world. Prophets are necessary in order to correct the usual ways of the world. If the atheists are prophets, it is because they are correcting an error such as human hope. In this view, humans shape civilization and do not possess any divine comprehension of life or of the universe. To Ely, it seems that the universe is so indifferent to humans that humans need to learn this basic lesson in order to confront reality.

McCarthy points out to the readers the vulnerability of the human nature--the fire of human compassion is all too easily extinguished when it encounters adversity.

In Don DeLillo's novels, such as *White Noise* and *Libra*, simulation stands for a symbol of forsaken reality, a manner of manipulation of the masses, the inability of the human mind to grasp the trickiness of various power games.

Catastrophe, human vulnerability, simulacra and chaos are also suggested in Don DeLillo's 1985 novel *White Noise*, which stages a primal scene of the electronic age. The Gladneys have their eyes captivated by the TV screen, taking in image after image of "floods, earthquakes, mud slides, erupting volcanoes" (DeLillo 1986: 64). The scene is familiar enough, but there is something arresting about the enthusiasm of these media consumers for all things catastrophic: "Every disaster made us wish for more, for something bigger, grander, and more sweeping", so narrates Professor Jack Gladney (DeLillo 1986: 64).

The "instinct of destruction" Sigmund Freud recalls in his Civilization and its Discontents recurs in Don DeLillo's *White Noise*, as well. Throughout his novel, especially in the second part of the novel calamities are perceived by the characters as events that give them the awareness that life is real and intense and not monotonous and useless, as it is presented in the first part of the novel.

White Noise explores several themes that emerged during the mid-to-late twentieth century, e.g., rampant consumerism, media saturation, novelty academic intellectualism, underground conspiracies, the disintegration and reintegration of the family, human-made disasters, and the potentially regenerative nature of human violence. The novel's style is characterized by a heterogeneity that utilizes different tones, styles, and voices that have the effect of yoking together terror and wild humour as the essential tone of contemporary America. Also, DeLillo's *White Noise* emphasises the political influence on people, as the ultimate force of

manipulation, corruption, invented reality and destructive power of simulation.

The TV in *White Noise*, especially in the first part of the novel can be viewed as a direct means of simulation offering a hyper reality to people, the main characters of the novel who perceive virtual reality as being real.

> "You have to learn how to look. You have to open yourself to the data. TV offers incredible amounts of psychic data. It opens ancient memories of world birth. It welcomes us into the grid, the network of little buzzing dots that make up the picture pattern. There is light, there is sound...look at the wealth of data concealed in the grid, in the bright packaging, the jingles…the medium practically overflows with sacred formulas if we can remember how to respond innocently" (DeLillo 1986: 49).

What makes disasters so fascinating, so thrilling, so involving? The answer will be that the visual media turns *all* events into entertainment and there is the human cathartic need for consuming such news. *White Noise*, to the extent that it is a story about a disaster, "an airborne toxic event," is a symptom of the culture of calamity. It also offers a diagnosis. Troubled by the inevitability of death, haunted by post nuclear anxieties about impending technological and environmental annihilation, the novel presents disasters as an expression of existential anxiety, as an entirely natural response to the prospect of personal and collective abolishment.

The fact that anxieties and desires fuel an appetite for spectacles of destruction is especially significant precisely because disasters thoroughly present themselves to the reader as spectacles.

In the novel, the toxic event first started as a curiosity for the Gladneys then it emerged as being an image of destruction inflicting fear and death:

> "The enormous dark mass moved like some death ship in a Norse legend, escorted across the night by armored creatures with spiral wings. We weren't sure how to react. It was a terrible thing to see, so close, so low, packed with chlorides, benzines, phenols, hydrocarbons, or whatever the precise toxic content. But it was also spectacular, part of the grandness of a sweeping event, like the vivid scene in the switching yard or the people trudging across the snowy overpass with children, food, belongings, a tragic army of the dispossessed"(DeLillo 1986: 127).

For the main protagonist of the novel, the calamity or the "airborne toxic event" is the proof that life occurs unexpectedly: "Let him bloom, if that's what he's doing" says his father, "in the name of mischance, dread,

and random disaster". The protagonist is transformed from spectator to actor, exhilarated with a powerful sense of self: "Was it possible that out of the turmoil and surge of this dreadful event he would learn to make his way in the world?"(DeLillo 1986: 131).

White Noise, as the title suggests it, consists of a chorus of background sounds that hum throughout the narrative. The traffic hums, Babette hums, the supermarket is filled with endless sounds, and commercials and fragments of television shows continually interrupt the narrative.

Also, the question "Who will die first?" frequently recurs in Jack and Babette's conversations and provides an insight into their relationship to each other. Each claims to want to die first, because the burden of living without the other would be more unbearable. The irony, however is that each is so terrified of death that they can hardly bear to live.

DeLillo properly places disasters at the centre of contemporary fields of desire, gesturing at a theory of attention for the postmodern age. The culture of calamity reveals a general psychological addiction to images and stories of disaster in our society, though this varies in significant ways across registers of class, gender, and race. There is also a decisive structural or ideological component to the American dependency on disasters.

Evoking critical aspects of the contemporary world, Cormac McCarthy's *The Road* and Don DeLillo's *White Noise* describe a world in which disasters are always happening, a world dominated by nihilism, catastrophe and the struggle for survival, the expulsive need of the human mind to believe as well as its inability to see the truth.

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Documentary Theatre as Dissidence:
Textuality of World Politics in David Hare's History Play *Stuff Happens*

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ABSTRACT

In an age of manipulation through text and image, when television and the internet have seized representation and forwarded it as truth, political fiction struggles to remain a significant conveyor and commenter of information. Post-9/11 literature attempts to re-establish the supremacy of representation, and hints at the prevalence of a web of discourses hardly contingent with an actual, non-imposed truth. It is the case of David Hare's docudrama Stuff Happens, *a mixture of actual statements made by Bush, Tony Blair, Condoleezza Rice, or Colin Powell – transposed as characters in the play – and a collection of imagined dialogues allegedly exchanged behind closed doors. Hare's play blurs the relation between factuality and representation. The aim of the present paper is to disclose this strategy by analysing the discursive practice at work within the literary text.*

Keywords: *political play*, *Bush administration*, *War on Terror*, *discursive practices*, *reality and fiction*

1. INTRODUCTION

Political decisions are rarely made in the public eye. Generally, they are made available to people via media channels, which more or less distort them. In the traditional communication scheme, media should be in the middle, between sender and receiver. Along these lines, one could say that media act as a vehicle between politicians (sender) and the writers interested in political topics for their fiction (receiver). However, things are not that simple, as power structures intervene and affect this communication scheme. More often than not, media actually dictate to and impose on the political class, which consequently sends the message required by the medium. Ideally, media voice the public concern and their impositions upon political class would have to do with the concept of democracy or, at least, that is their claim. Thus, it appears that the media are in the middle, as they occupy a central position, being actually more

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than "the Fourth Estate". Contemporary literature is *informed* by the media – and the verb can be read either in the sense of providing information or that of imposing shapes, principles, aesthetics, etc.

The relationship between politics and history and the individual – as both creator and silent victim – has been a concern of literature for ages. Political fiction has always been intrinsically related to the political context of its time – be it propagandistic or, on the contrary, subversive. Twenty-first century literature is no exception; if it were, perhaps we would witness profound renewal at the level of the modes of writing. In a post-communist environment, after the dismantling of USSR, the new political context that rises at the world's level in the dawn of the twenty-first century is that of a concentrated offensive against a new enemy, one which the officials and the media endow with the attribute *evil*: the Muslim terrorism. Along these lines, literature unavoidably reacts, rapidly producing a new genre – perhaps one that has had the fastest development in the history of literature: post-9/11 fiction.

In what concerns the role of such literature as mass phenomenon which facilitates manipulation, the question is whether literature in general still has such an impact. Unarguably, literature has had this role since its inception and it probably preserves it until today but, in the light of the rapid development of many other possibilities of entertainment (films, games, and the internet, to name just the most important ones), the politically-engaged writer of today seems to have been touched by quixotism – if there is no one there to read what one has to say, how can one manipulate?

2. AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

Quixotic, subversive, propagandistic or just engaged, it is a fact that a significant part of today's literature deals with politics, and indirectly with contemporary history. The text proposed for this analysis is set against the spectre of the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center, in New York, on September 11, 2001 and its aftermath, with serious consequences for the world politics. In relation to this particular political/historical context, political thinking informs the contemporary aesthetics as a whole and affects/constructs identities at the micro and macro level, revealing the complex relationship between the individual and history. This is the reason why the major aims of this paper are to account for the way in which the marks of the political media can be traced at the level of fiction and to prove that their imprint is manifest through two

interrelated concepts: context and text (language). Focus is laid on puppeteers who hold inextricably the strings in their hands, thus contributing in the perception of national identities as informed and affected by power structures.

The critical theory which governs the present work is a combination of American New Historicism and its British counterpart, Cultural Materialism, theories which lay emphasis on the political, social, economic and cultural context in which the literary text is produced and disseminated, aiming, consequently, at finding a balance in the analysis of both literary and non-literary texts. The two theories follow the Foucauldian take on discourse: every text is constructed discourse; therefore, any truth that a given text forwards is also constructed and serves a specific purpose. The blending of factuality and fiction in the case study proposed in the present paper is intent, as the subsequent subchapter will strive to prove, on depicting the level of *fictionality* in the actual statements made by American and British statespersons on the occasion of the outburst of the War on Terror. The premise of the analysis is that the dramatic discourse is subversive and operates as dissidence within and against the discourse of power.

3.   EAVESDROPPING IN THE OVAL OFFICE

An inquiry into the literature "after the fall" (Gray, 2011) reveals striking similarities with that in the aftermath of World War I in point of attempting at trauma resistance through escape from reality and abandonment to fiction. Nonetheless, their conveyance of "reality" is, in most cases, much more anchored in the surrounding reality than it was with the great experimentalists in the 1920s and 1930s. Perhaps this comes as a consequence of the media impact in this age of information: one simply cannot hide from the news, which is why one chooses to incorporate it into fiction and, consequently, to create alternate realities. It is precisely this partial fictionalization of events that a whole world has witnessed what renders a significant part of the twenty-first century fiction experimental, although the interplay of textual structures and architectures with various writing techniques 'with a twist' definitely contributes to deepening the degree of defamiliarization, even in cases in which, at a first glance, what textual evidence provides might seem utterly familiar. In the end, however, "due to the fact that a text can never be mistaken for the reality it refers to, literature (as written art) cannot imitate reality directly" (Praisler 2000:23). Playing the authority, the objective source of information, should never be

an aim of the literary text. Nonetheless, when literature meets journalism and, especially, when it deals with politics without hiding itself behind different dystopian worlds, the former seems to actually attempt at regaining a position long lost in the public sphere: that of a cultural apparatus able to form opinions.

Such is the case of the political play *Stuff Happens* (2004) by British playwright and Academy Awards nominee scriptwriter David Hare, a play which he defines not as political, but as "historical", having in view the *history of the present*. Mention should be made at this point that this term has been preferred to contemporary history, as the latter is said to cover a much larger time span than the one in focus here. Both terms are elusive and subjected to change with the passing of the years. Nevertheless, as historian Jerry H. Bentley points out, "when historians address the past from global points of view and examine processes that cross the boundary lines of societies and cultural regions, the problems of periodization become even more acute" (1996: 749). For methodological purposes, it has been considered in the present paper that such a concept may roughly apply to the period starting with the first year of the third millennium, a year marked by an event that has completely reshaped the global policy: the attacks on the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001. The British playwright seems to maintain a similar view, since his points of reference for contemporary history are, chronologically, the controversial election of George W. Bush as the forty-third president of the United States at the end of the year 2000, his entering into office on January 20, 2001, the attacks on the World Trade Center and the subsequent announcement and initiation of the War on Terror – the offensive against Afghanistan, set out on October 7, 2001, together with the British allies, joined later by other forces in the Northern Alliance, and the war in Iraq, starting on March 20, 2003.

Such a list of historical dates and events may seem out of place in a paper which deals with a fictional work, as long as it preserves its degree of fictionalization and does not slip towards mere historicism. Once the text has identified itself, both meta- and paratextually, as historical, it has inscribed itself in that category of texts marked by historicity, that is to say, among texts which overtly embrace "the cultural specificity, the social embedment" (Montrose 1989: 20) and, at the same time, construct and mediate a discourse that is contingent with a reality perceived outside their own textuality. It is precisely what Hare's play provides: a historiographic metafiction transposed in the more straightforward, more to-the-point dramatic genre and, at the same time, in a past that is almost overlapping

and definitely affecting the present. As per Hutcheon's definition, Hare's play "parodically cite[s] the intertexts of the 'world' and art, and, in so doing, contest[s] the boundaries that many would unquestionably use to separate the two" (1988: 127). Specifically, what David Hare constructs with *Stuff Happens* is what may be described as a theatricalization of actual, verifiable historic events and, what is more, of actual, verifiable statements referring to these events. In the eyes of Carol Martin, professor of drama at New York University, author of *Get Real: Documentary Theatre Past and Present* (2009) and editor of the volume *Dramaturgy of the Real on the World Stage* (2012), this theatricalization, "created from a specific body of archived material: interviews, documents, hearings, records, video, film, photographs, etc" (Martin 2012: 6) produces an interrogation for the relation between factuality and representation, with an aim at reopening trials, at creating additional historical accounts and at reconstructing events (13). Even with understanding of the fact that 'the real' and 'the present' are continually revised and reinvented, she remarks that theatre and performance that engage the real participate in the "larger cultural obsession with capturing the real for consumption"(1).

David Hare's play seems to be obsessing with something radically different from simply capturing the real or interplaying between fiction and reality: it brings forth the geopolitical transformation of the entire world decided by a handful of people, according to the interests of their nation. This fact is obvious at the first glance – suffice it to take a look at the list of *dramatis personae*: Donald Rumsfeld, Colin Powell, Condoleezza Rice, Dick Cheney, Paul Wolfowitz, George Tenet, George Bush and Tony Blair are the characters that are actually given a name (or, rather, the real persons whose names are rendered as such). Almost all the others characters are introduced just as "an actor" or "a journalist", which points in the direction of their insignificance on the scale of history, politics and international relations, of their facelessness and lack of individuality on the world's stage. Hare's claim, in the preface of the play, that his play is a historical one, seems to suggest that he understands history not in postmodern sense, as fragmented bits of *petite histoires* put together, with the participation of the unknown, the unseen, the unnamed, but rather in the traditional, nineteenth century historicist direction. Thus, Hare's view on history seems to be that its course is determined by authoritative forces that make decisions to which the others, actors and journalists, are only witnesses, having the right to comment on them, but finding themselves in the impossibility to oppose them.

Stuff Happens moves away from the common traits of *verbatim theatre*, which presuppose the direct transposition of various real, recorded statements on stage, although the play displays a significant number of declarations made by the public figures listed above, on the occasion of the attacks on the World Trade Center and afterwards, which can be traced in newspapers and television archives. These statements are counterbalanced by a larger number of fictitious renderings of what the same public figures could have said or, in the author's words, of statements that are "not knowingly untrue" (2004, author's note). If one were to look for the meanings of Hare's declaration, one should, most probably, understand that, whilst signalling the fictionality of his play, he also seems to emphasise the possibility that such statements could have been truly spoken at some point. This is an artful authorial intrusion, which contributes in the interplay of reality and fiction, making the reader/spectator unable to tell one from another. In what follows, the present paper provides examples of the two techniques in the play: the direct transposition of an official statement and, by contrast, a number of fictional dialogues between the American officials with regard to the strategy they would further pursue during the War on Terror.

The title of the play is 'borrowed' from a press statement issued by Donald Rumsfeld, the US Secretary of Defense, when asked by the journalists why the American troops had pillaged Baghdad, attacking innocent people, after the conquest of the Iraqi city. An Iraqi character will voice, towards the end of the play, a concern about the racism of the statement: "then Donald Rumsfeld said 'Stuff Happens'. It seemed to me the most racist remark I had ever heard" (2004: 120). It is interesting to note that carelessness is regarded as racism, which may or may not be the case. Be it as it may, Rumsfeld's statement, translated almost verbatim in the second scene of the first act, was as follows:

> RUMSFELD: I've seen those pictures. I could take pictures in any city in America. Think what's happened in our cities when we've had riots, and problems, and looting. *Stuff happens!* But in terms of what's going on in that country, it is a fundamental misunderstanding to see those images over and over and over again of some boy walking out with a vase and say, "Oh, my goodness, you didn't have a plan". That's nonsense. They know what they're doing, and they're doing a terrific job. And it's untidy, and freedom's untidy and free people are free to make mistakes and commit crimes and do bad things. They're also free to live their lives and do wonderful things, and that's what's going to happen here (Hare 2004: 3-4).

The statement is archived on the website of the US Department of Defense and may be accessed for free. Apart from a small alteration of the introductory sentence, the discourse in the fictional text is identical with the speech recorded in the official archive. The goal seems to be to emphasise the recklessness of the statements made by the American administration. Should it not have been made famous through fiction and performance, Rumsfeld's indifference towards the fate of the innocent people in Baghdad would have remained hidden in plain sight – available to the great public, indeed, but who is really in the habit of reading the briefings on the Department of Defense website?

The American official's statement lacks the adequacy and propriety of the diplomatic language, which should be order in such circumstances. On the contrary, what Rumsfeld utters is rather an annoyed, colloquial speech – if one is to consider the phrases he uses: *stuff happens* (which is a euphemism which replaces the taboo term in the original idiom), *nonsense*, *my goodness*, etc. Unwillingly, the Secretary of Defense has managed to render his discourse appropriate for performance through the (ab)use of a stylistic device, repetition (*freedom is untidy and free people are free to… and they are also free to…*) which, paradoxically, sounds almost constructed. This statement is placed at the beginning of the play so as to suggest that the entire development of the plot, which chronologically spans between January, 30, 2001 (ten days after Bush's inauguration) and April 11, 2003 (the date of Rumsfeld's actual statement), is under the sign of indifference towards the fate of other nations. As Dick Cheney (the character in the play, not the actual Vice President of the United States) remarks at some point, in a fictitious dialogue exchanged behind the closed doors of the Oval Office, they openly disregard what everybody else wants, including their British allies: "What I want is to follow this country's legitimate security concerns. And, for me, those come above everything [...] Now: if those interests happen to coincide with an Englishman's fantasy of how he's one day going to introduce some universal penalty system – three strikes and the UN says you can overthrow any regime you like – then that's fine. If not, not, and we won't miss him" (Hare 2004: 104). The Englishman he refers to is the British Prime Minister Tony Blair, who is belittled on the course of the same dialogue by George Bush, (again, the same distinction should be made between actual person and character), who states that "if he's not pro-American, he's nothing" (105).

Perhaps the most tragic instance of "stuff happens", that is to say, of American carelessness and pursuit of their ends at all costs, is the

representation of a discussion between Bush, Rice, Wolfowitz, Powell, O'Neill, Tenet, Cheney and Rumsfeld – the War Cabinet assembled at Camp David. Of course, the conversation in the play is completely fictional, but it is, at the same time, intended as explanatory for some decisions and actions of the American government in what was next to sweep over the Middle East until the capturing and killing of Osama bin Laden, on May 2, 2011: the War on Terror. In a nutshell, the discussion starts from the plans to attack Afghanistan, which is "a kind of demonstration model, so that other countries can look and say, 'Oh, I see. That's what happens'" (Hare 2004: 20). Yet, this message is considered not powerful enough: "Afghanistan's a big country, but what are we going to bomb? […] Have you looked at Afghanistan? Terracotta pots and straw roofs!"(21). This opens the way for deciding to attack Iraq, too, in order to establish democracy, as they claim.

Moving from fiction to reality, it has become obvious for everybody that Iraq was not involved in the attacks on the World Trade Center, but, during those years, the mechanisms of propaganda used to connect Al-Qaeda with the Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein. A good example in this respect is the publication of a leaked official memorandum in the newspaper *The Weekly Standard*, which is further **advertised** by Dick Cheney, who declares it "the best source of information":

> Osama Bin Laden and Saddam Hussein had an operational relationship from the early 1990s to 2003 that involved training in explosives and weapons of mass destruction, logistical support for terrorist attacks, al Qaeda training camps and safe haven in Iraq, and Iraqi financial support for al Qaeda--perhaps even for Mohamed Atta--according to a top secret U.S. government memorandum obtained by The Weekly Standard (Hayes, The Weekly Standard 2003).

Hare's take on this aspect seems to be that the public opinion has been manipulated into believing this and opposes it with this *make-believe* strategy of putting fictional words in the mouths of real persons, which makes readers and spectators approach the play "as an accurate source of information"(Hammond and Stewards 2008: 3). In Hammond's and Steward's view, shared by David Hare, whom they cite, such drama type is similar to journalism and the dramatist has the moral obligation not to misrepresent: "no play, like no newspaper article, is without bias and inflection, but […] people who work in the theatre tend simply to have much less to gain from lies and spin and much more interest in being honest" (4). Therefore, in journalistic spirit, Hare adds lines that have never

been spoken as such by the potentates of the world in view of showing the great public various hypotheses in what concerns the political, diplomatic and military decisions with an impact at the world's level. The risk induced by such an approach lies, however, in the people's tendency to take fiction for reality; in other words, one should not disregard the fictionality at work in the play and should not take Hare's 'exposure' as truth. As long as the reception of the play remains in the representational sphere, the reader/spectator is entitled, nevertheless, to question the political decisions made by the Americans and their allies in the aftermath of 9/11, much in the way in which the play itself does it.

4. CONCLUSIONS

The mix of actual and fictional dialogues in *Stuff Happens* should not be regarded as misrepresentation, but sooner as an attempt at disclosing the misrepresented alliance between the United States on the one side, and the United Kingdom and the rest of the Northern Alliance, on the other. The dissidence of the enterprise should be sought in the way in which what is perceived as real, as true – the actual, verifiable statements of the politicians cited in the play – represent, in fact, just an angle, which may have been backed up by what has not been heard.

Hare describes his production as a "history play which happens to centre on very recent history" (2004, author's note), and, in doing so, he places his fictional work in a quest for historic objectivity, although the play may definitely look as overtly anti-American. The perspective adopted in the present paper is that one can no longer separate contemporary history and contemporary literature from information and communication and, consequently, that this history play becomes a communication vehicle as effective as the traditional means of imparting information.

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"'Tis Bargain'd 'Twixt Us": The Reclamation of Kate in *The Taming of the Shrew*

Mary L. HJELM[*]

Abstract

Using games as a theoretical structure helps to bridge the gap between Renaissance expectations and modern wishes concerning Kate's behaviour and Petruchio's treatment of her in William Shakespeare's The Taming of the Shrew, *allowing us to recognize which of the two main characters' actions are for entertainment only and which are intended to produce significant and lasting results that benefit the players and contribute to the forward movement of the play. Two different game structures exist in* The Taming of the Shrew. *The sparks of sexual tension are the most readily apparent indication of the linguistic game, but an analysis of the underlying social games reveals that their relationship is largely about restructuring Kate's voice and actions in a more acceptable fashion for a Renaissance audience. The key difference is that, while society and/or characters are unchanged by a recreation game, in re-creation games both are transformed in permanent and significant ways.*

Key words: *games, role play, recreation/re-creation, social decorum, Shakespeare*

Readers and audiences who dislike *The Taming of the Shrew* often object to what they perceive as a misogynistic posture expressed in *The Taming of the Shrew*. For them, a happy ending to the play can only be achieved by ignoring a great deal of Petruchio's conduct or applying readings to the play which make Kate's comportment anachronistic for Renaissance audiences, even though they would also disagree with the social expectations of those audiences. But to read Kate's aggressive voice and rebellious stance as attempts to assert her independence and reclaim her personal autonomy makes her anachronistic for the Renaissance audiences for whom she was created, audiences who expected women's demeanour to be fairly circumspect and radically curtailed[1].

If we look past the witty repartee of the surface game to locate such an underlying social game structure, we are able to explain Kate's behaviour, as well as Petruchio's, in a far more satisfying manner than simply that of an ongoing skirmish in the "battle of the sexes". An analysis of *The Taming of the Shrew* which locates and discusses these social games

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reveals that Kate and Petruchio's relationship is largely about restructuring or revising Kate's vocality and boldness in a more acceptable fashion for a Renaissance audience. He is not deliberately subduing her personality or violating her right to be what she is, he is helping her understand how discourse can be most effective.

Games have been with us since time began, according to Johan Huizinga, author of *Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play Element in Culture* (1950), and they continue to be used today with great effectiveness. Certainly many dramas portray the struggles of adults as they learn to cope with new challenges just as children learn how to behave as adults—through the games that society plays with its members. To pursue a study of drama as a game, or perhaps a compilation of many games, that educates or teaches its characters new modes of behaviour follows a tradition of perceiving game within drama in which characters learn how to perform their social roles effectively and also provides the literary critic with a means to examine "the goals and norms of ... culture" (Wilson 1990: 8).

Game, as a construct, has five major characteristics upon which all major game theorists such as Huizinga and others cited herein agree. First, play is free time and what we indulge in when we are not involved in the business of living or sustaining our lives. Second, a game is not ordinary life but outside the realm of the everyday and, therefore, somehow, appears special or unusual. Third, even though games are often spontaneous, they create order through their own set of rules which eliminate chaos so that many players may participate, and any deviation from those rules spoils the game and generates disorder. Fourth, they are spatially separated from real life by specific boundaries (i.e. a game board or playing field hedged off from the rest of the world) in which the rules are strictly maintained. Fifth, play is, in spite of a player's utter absorption in it, conscious of being only pretend.

The problem remains that simple definitions of game, a singularly unsimple concept, do not completely suffice for an understanding of how game-playing can be used to delineate between the recreation and re-creation games. Therefore, the distinction between the ostentatious or incidental and the greater challenge and intellectual effort to the player is a distinction between games played for recreational pursuits (i.e. punning, bragging, practical joking, flyting) and those played to re-create, re-educate, or re-claim particular individuals or social situations which threaten to disrupt more productive experiences, allowing players to direct their energies into achieving their goals rather than merely protesting about the inequities they face. Thus, at least two different levels of game playing are

employed in Shakespeare's comedies: the first, which is recreational in nature, and a second which is re-creation and involves a more deliberate action and which is task or goal oriented.

While the major characteristics of game described above can tell us much about play and game, they do not tell us much about those who play those games. And such information is vital if we are to understand the characters who employ games structures—either their motives or their intentions for and during the game. Henry Hamburger, a sociologist and game-theoretician, asks the very questions we need in order to make important determinations about the characters involved in game playing, the same questions which also provide a vital difference between games of recreation and games which re-create: Who has decisions to make? What are the different options available? What will be the results of the various possible combinations of choices? Which results are preferred by whom? Hamburger tells us that, because these questions concern decisions, we must eliminate as players "anyone who has no decisions to make" or "anyone who has no preference among the possible outcomes of the situation" (Hamburger 1979: 2). His emphasis on decision-making allows us to define the key difference between recreation and re-creation games: recreation rarely relies on decision making as anything other than a strategy used to win a game; but, for re-creation game players, however, decisions — and the authority to enforce them — separate players from non-players in every attempt to control and manipulate others into specific reactions.

The re-creation game lies beneath the linguistic level of "entertainment" but is rooted in action and motive rather than on linguistic dexterity. It possesses the same major characteristics of recreation games, but the stakes in re-creation games are much higher than those of recreation games and they almost always help move the plot along, forcing the permanent resolution of an issue brought into contention by another player's move. Bernard Suits says: "To play a game is to engage in activity directed towards bringing about a specific state of affairs, using only means permitted by rules, where the rules prohibit more efficient in favour of less efficient means, and where such rules are accepted just because they make possible such activity" (Suits 1978: 34). These additional features are key issues. Without them, nothing exists within the action of the play to engage our interest beyond the pleasure of the moment. We would neither care about the outcome of the action nor, indeed, if there were action at all.

Re-creation games produce a tension which engages our interest and involves us, intellectually and emotionally, in the machinations of the

antagonist and the conflicts facing the protagonist, so that we care about the resolution of the plot instead of leaving the theatre before the play ends. Roger Callois, author of *Man, Play, and Games*, explains how this tension is a necessary part of play: "[Play] is uncertain activity. Doubt must remain until the end, and hinges upon the denouement. … An outcome known in advance, with no possibility of error or surprise, clearly leading to an inescapable result, is incompatible with the nature of play" (Callois 1965: 7). Tension implies not only an engagement of our interest, but also that something important is being risked by the players. In re-creation games the thing risked most frequently is not material, but intrinsic. "Play often involves personal vulnerability, challenges, and dangers, calling as it does for self-surrender or self-surpassing behaviour" (Farrell 1975: 40). In games that re-create, players wager a certain outcome at the peril of their honour; in other words, they give their word that a thing will come to pass. If it does, their reputations increase; if not, their reputations suffer.

In *The Taming of the Shrew*, Petruchio is the agent by whom Kate is saved from herself, as it were, and from her reputation as an undesirable woman. His taming of her is a clever game in which her intellect and spirit of competition are engaged for the purpose of restraining the behaviour which prevents her from achieving her goals and implementing, instead, an alternate behaviour based on accepted social patterns which Shakespeare's audience would have recognized and which ultimately proves far more successful than bullying her. Essentially, Petruchio, in claiming that it is "bargain'd 'twixt us", reconstructs Kate's public persona from a woman out of control to one who can control others (2.1.304). He helps her re-create herself while retaining the best parts of her personality, bringing her from a woman who protests to a one who acts to achieve her goals.

Of the two different levels of game playing employed in *The Taming of the Shrew*, the linguistic, or recreation game, is, first and foremost, a mode of self-presentation (Gadamer 1992: 108). Petruchio's mask of blustering chauvinism is a sign of the game in which entertainment via linguistic self-presentation is the primary reason for playing. This game is witty, spontaneous and often employs elaborate language, different from the plain speech of business or normal living, and is generally exercised in intimate or small circles because it tends to become unwieldy in large or uninitiated groups. His explanation to Hortensio of why he is in Padua makes this clear:

> I have thrust myself into this maze,
> Happily to wive and thrive as best I may.
> Crowns in my purse I have, and goods at home,

> And so am come abroad to see the world. […]
> I come to wive it wealthily in Padua;
> If wealthily, then happily in Padua. (1.2.55-58 and 75-76)

Linguistic recreation is what we all participated in as children, where pretending was a major factor of the games, in which linguistic dexterity was a highly prized advantage. The stakes at this level are generally never very high, and (accidents aside) a bruised ego is the most serious injury that can be sustained.

The second level of game, the re-creation game, requires a more deliberate stroke to begin the action and is task or goal oriented in its purpose. Because it is goal-oriented, the stakes in re-creational games are much higher and they almost always help move the plot forward by forcing a reaction from another player. The best players, therefore, are those that continually move the plot forward to completion. Perhaps the most challenging example of this type of deliberate stroke is Petruchio's soliloquy at the end of Act 4, scene 1 where he plots how to "kill a wife with kindness" (4.1.208) which, most detractors believe, shows little regard for Kate's welfare and is a plan of torture and repression. However, the speech cannot be taken literally, as he deprives them both—not only her—of a single meal and one night's sleep, and bears a striking resemblance to his soliloquy in Act 2, scene 1, where he cheerfully intends to oppose her anticipated bad temper.

While a number of games are being played between the various characters of this play, and in the Induction, those between Kate and Petruchio provide the clearest examples of the two levels of "game" within the play. Almost all of their encounters fit the paradigm for game discussed above: first, most are played during "free time" since, technically, Kate and Petruchio are on their honeymoon and not engaged in the business of everyday life; second, they are outside the parameters of the everyday in that they are married but virtual strangers to each other, a fact which increases their tension level because they are not yet comfortable enough to act unguardedly; third, their games create order because Petruchio helps Kate find a way to relocate herself within a social construct she had been excluded from for chaotic behaviour; fourth, they are spatially separated from the other characters for most of the game, either appearing alone together or away from family members and long-time acquaintances; fifth, while both characters are utterly absorbed in the game, they are, at various times, conscious of an element of pretend. Petruchio's speech to the audience, prior to meeting Kate for the first time, clearly indicates that he

will deal with Kate's behaviour by pretending, or manipulating, her responses:

> I'll attend her here,
> And woo her with some spirit when she comes.
> Say that she rail, why then I'll tell her plain
> She sings as sweetly as a nightingale;
> Say that she frown, I'll say she looks as clear
> As morning roses newly wash'd with dew;
> Say she be mute, and will not speak a word,
> Then I'll commend her volubility,
> And say she uttereth piercing eloquence;
> If she do bid me pack, I'll give her thanks,
> As though she bid me stay by her a week;
> If she deny to wed, I'll crave the day
> When I shall ask the bans, and when be married. (2.1.168-180)

Petruchio's abrupt but clear switch only moments later from the linguistic and recreational game he has been indulging in with Kate to his plain speech signals the beginning of a re-creation game. Here he sets aside the pretend to clearly and deliberately tell her:

> setting all this chat aside,
> Thus in plain terms: your father hath consented
> That you shall be my wife; your dowry 'greed on,
> And will you, nill you, I will marry you. […]
> For I am he am born to tame you, Kate,… […]
> I must and will have Katherine to my wife. (2.1.268-271, 276, 280)

With this declaration, Petruchio has three options: first, to let Kate continue to disrupt the lives around her; second, to help her relocate her behaviour in a fashion that will meet with social expectations; or third, to physically intimidate her into submission and conformity. The possible results of his choice are: first, to be a husband at the mercy of an unruly wife; second, to have a spirited, but happy wife who has learned to govern herself; or third, to have a wife frightened of him and broken in spirit. His preferred outcome is easily predicted: he, like most of us, would prefer to have a happy marriage with a woman who retains the spirit which attracted him in the first place. His shift here from playful flirting through language foils Kate's attempts to dismiss him as a suitor, "Let him that mov'd you hither/Remove you hence …/Go, fool" (195-196 and 257), but he persists and the plot—again—moves forward.

Kate becomes a player in this game when she does not leave the very late and madly-dressed Petruchio at the church in Act 3. Her choices to this point are not necessarily good ones, but she does not have a lot of power from which to negotiate, since Petruchio and Baptista have arranged the marriage between themselves without asking her opinion. While she has a preference in the outcome of the game she is involved in, and can choose to be either happy or unhappy once she is married, she has no real decision to make concerning the offer of marriage to her since it is arranged between the two men. The options which she has once she is married, however, are clear: she can either leave her home and take her chances with Petruchio or stay home and be miserable as an unwanted and humiliated old-maid daughter: "Now must the world point at poor Katherine,/And say, 'Lo, there is mad Petruchio's wife,/If it would please him come and marry her!'" (3.2.18-20). Since she has never indicated that she would prefer to remain unmarried, she chooses Petruchio and uncertainty over inescapable misery.

When it comes to linguistic play—the recreational game—Kate is talented but unsophisticated. While she is witty and possesses a skilful tongue, she does not understand the rules of the social game that Petruchio plays so deftly. One reason for this lack may be that there are no other women — save Bianca — in the dramatic structure of *The Taming of the Shrew* from whom she might have learned such necessary social, interactive skills. Her mother is absent, as are aunts and serving women. If this were a real-life situation, Kate as the eldest daughter would have stepped into her absent mother's place and taken over the management of her father's house. Because Baptista is a wealthy man, she may have been directing a large household staff and acting as his hostess from a relatively young age. She, in essence, would have been forced to feign an adult position while Bianca enjoyed being cherished by her father and taught — at least by example — how to behave in social situations. For Kate, language is an aggressive form of rebellion and a sword she wields to protect or to assert herself. The violence of her linguistic attack is an indication of her level of frustration at being unable to interact the way she sees others doing. Yet, this inability on her part does not detract from her skilful and clever manipulation of the language. In her article "Petruchio the Sophist and Language as Creation in *The Taming of the Shrew*", Tita French Baumlin points out that: "Katerina is, in short, using her language to drive away not only potential, undesirable suitors but family members and potential friends, as well. Her language serves then, not to graft her firmly into the network of social interaction but rather to isolate her from all humanity" (Baumlin 1989: 238). She does not

know how to play the games that those around her play, and she needs the encounters with Petruchio in order to learn the socially acceptable forms of language which allow her to enter into the same social and cultural game in which everyone else participates.

Petruchio hopes to help Kate re-create herself in a manner more in keeping with Renaissance expectations for female deportment and to authorize her public voice under more decorous circumstances. His task is to *show* Kate how to act and then help her find a way to suitable reactions. He cannot *tell* her, because she would misinterpret his words as criticism after the fashion of her family and her sister's suitors. In fact, a visual example may be more helpful than words in any case because Kate is equally as skilled as Petruchio at verbal play and may misinterpret his words as an invitation to verbal battle. His use of re-creation games, in this case as both example and instruction, helps move the plot forward for it allows him to show her how her actions appear as well as how it affects others, and he is able to redirect that behaviour and speech into a far more acceptable configuration. Without a re-creation game to help move the plot forward, Kate would continue the disruptive activities which exclude her from society's acceptance.

Petruchio's efforts to show Kate how he values her begin early in their relationship -- practically with his decision to marry her. When Gremio and Tranio bait him about Kate's "I'll see thee hang'd on Sunday first" (2.1.299), after he has announced they will wed in a few days, his cold "If she and I be pleas'd, what's that to you?" (2.1.303) protects Kate from their offensive attacks as well as prevents any more from occurring. He has made it clear that an insult to her is an insult to him.

Petruchio's interest in redirecting Kate's behaviour into more acceptable mien is the impetus behind his seemingly inappropriate behaviour on their wedding day. Petruchio is clearly not bothered by his mad attire and disruptive deportment at the wedding, but at no point does he turn his performance against Kate, instead his actions are directed toward the wedding guests, the priest, and the sexton. His reply to Tranio and Baptista's attempt to get him into more appropriate clothing, "To me she's married, not unto my clothes" (3.2.117), foreshadows the words he will use later with the tailor to drive home the notion that clothes are not important: "'tis the mind that makes the body rich" (4.3.172). The qualities which make Petruchio the man he is are more important that the clothes he wears or the actions he takes, just as what is central to Kate lies not in the turbulent behaviour everyone mistakes for the real Kate.

Petruchio's protestations of burned meat and an improperly made bed can also be attributed to the fact that he believes she is worthy of better things; and, to insure that she comes to realize it also, he personally oversees her re-creation. We must remember that he is her companion throughout the game; nothing happens to her that he does not share. He does not eat or sleep just as she does not eat or sleep. He travels back and forth from his home to Padua the same number of times as she does. He even decides they should both appear in old clothes at Bianca's wedding feast in order to keep the tailor and haberdasher from dictating how Kate should appear in public. All these prove the truth of his earlier claim "that all is done in reverend care of her" (4.1.204). He repeatedly demonstrates that he and she together are better than she has been by herself. Callois explains that play is present in various forms: "some serious, some playful, but all rooted in … productive culture by allowing the innate human need of rhythm, harmony, change, alternation, contrast and climax, etc., to unfold in full richness … that strives for honour, dignity, superiority and beauty" (Callois 1965: 75). None of his re-creative acts are torture or punishment as those who object to this play claim; this is, after all, a comedy and not a tragedy. Rather he allows her to behave as she chooses, but he makes clear that consequences will follow those choices.

Petruchio helps Kate re-create her mental image of herself as a person of value whose "honour peereth in the meanest habit" (4.3.174) and is not dependent on or disguised by outward display. That he means to join her in a more modest attire is an outward symbol that she is of more value to him and to his reputation as a person than their fancy dress would be. Martha Andresen-Thom, in her article "Shrew-Taming and Other Rituals of Aggression: Baiting and Bonding on the Stage and in the Wild", points out that they *both* will appear at the wedding feast in the clothing of those who "conspicuously align themselves against a world that sets too much store in appearances" (Andresen-Thom 1982: 135). Her observation cannot fail to point out the differences between this couple who values the inner qualities and the other characters gathered in their finest "ruffs and cuffs, and fardingales, and things" (4.3.56).

We should recognize the interchange between Kate and Petruchio on the road back to Padua for Bianca's wedding in Act 4, scene 5 as the moment at which Kate finally understands what Petruchio is attempting and willingly begins to participate in the game rather than oppose him. Their play is a re-creation game in which Petruchio teaches Kate that he will not ask words or deeds of her frivolously, a knowledge which has a

tremendous impact on the ending of the play. In this scene it only appears as if he wants her to agree with what he says no matter how outlandish it may appear: "It shall be moon, or star, or what I list,/Or ere I journey to your father's house" (4.5.6-8). Contrary to those opinions which point to this section of the play as further evidence of Petruchio's insistence on male superiority even in the most ridiculous of instances, Kate has learned, by untold stops and starts in her journey toward Padua, that Petruchio has a reason for asking her to agree with him. Here, he not only wants her to trust him, but he also authorizes her to speak in public even if it is only silly speech—unlike her father and the suitors who constantly deride her discourse no matter what she says. While she may not understand the reasons for his insistence on this point, she eventually agrees "it shall be so for Katherine" (4.5.22). When Vincentio enters the scene few moments later, Petruchio engages in a game of make-believe designed to test her resolve to trust him and to speak at his direction. But, without warning, Kate comes to understand the larger goal and almost runs away with the game. Her willingness to tease old Vincentio signals a trust in Petruchio that she does not bestow on anyone else and that trust is rewarded by Vincentio's amusement and his calling her a "merry mistress" (4.5.53) rather than the ugly names used by her sister's suitors.

This moment is pivotal in Kate's re-creation because if Kate does not learn to trust Petruchio at some point, they will be doomed to reenact the conflict which has brought them together. Neither will find peace or happiness in their relationship. But Kate does take a chance and, as a result, learns that Petruchio will neither humiliate her nor deliberately place her in a situation where she would embarrass herself. As long as she can trust him to protect her, she can do as he asks. What she knows, and the others do not, is that Petruchio values *her* and would not frivolously request her compliance. Both the recreation and re-creation games at his country house and on the way back to Padua have reconstructed her esteem to the point that she knows his requests somehow concern her value to him and that she need not worry about what others may be thinking of her.

Kate has come to realize that, when Petruchio asks her to say a certain thing or to act a certain way, he is offering her a choice and that her choices will have consequences, as they do for everyone. He demands nothing from her. Certainly he does not demand that she abandon her autonomy and personal sovereignty for his ideal of womanhood. She understands that "To *say* as he says, to *do* as he directs, is not necessarily to *be* what he may wish -- that is, his thing, his possession, an extension of

himself. She can be herself, she can assert herself, moreover, using just those behavioural and verbal forms Petruchio has insisted upon" (Andresen-Thom 1982: 136-137). Her acquiescence, to both his call to come and his commands to first discard her hat and then to instruct the other wives, is a measure of her willingness, in turn, to value Petruchio above what the rest of the assembly may think of the both of them. And because they have become partners joined against those who would devalue them both, Kate does not address society's expectations of women (something in which she *is* an expert), but confronts a husband's realistic expectation for the woman he values above all others: that their "soft conditions and … hearts/Should well agree with [their] external parts" (5.2.167-168). Kate's humble offer to place her hand beneath her husband's foot, far from being surrender, is a public acknowledgement of his value to her as helpmate and chief supporter, just as his prevention of the action and his support of her public voice is a measure of his valuation of her right to speak and act as she chooses.

And speak she does. The supposedly repressive content of Kate's final speech is at odds with the implicit message of independence represented by a powerful female protagonist giving the longest speech of the play (Newman 1986: 99). No one has forced her to speak *these* words; she makes her own choice to do so. It contains no references to the supposed moral inferiority of women or of alleged unalienable male rights to expect submission from women. Its emphasis, instead, is on the "reciprocity of duties in marriage, based on the complementary natures of man and woman", as well as the reciprocity of respect and value of a married couple for one another's public and private reputations (Bean 1983: 68-69).

Throughout their interactions in the play, Petruchio has repeatedly stressed the fact that he honours Kate. His defence of her to the suitors, the wedding guests, and the tailor and haberdasher have convinced her that she can trust him to protect and defend her against those who would devalue her. His constant reinforcement of her public voice and teaching her the proper times in which to speak boldly have told her that he respects her right to express opinions and make observations about the world in which she lives. She has learned that, as long as he continues to protect and care for her, "to watch the night in storms, the day in cold" (5.2.150) so to speak, she can do as he asks. Her entire speech, in fact, is a reiteration of the bargain she and Petruchio have forged between them during her re-creation: to value and honour the one who has earned trust. As long as he does this, she can do anything he asks of her. Therefore, we must see Kate's

speech as her vocal contract with Petruchio to depend on and believe in his appreciation of her abilities.

Her final speech cannot be taken out of the context of the game playing --both recreational and re-creational -- that precedes it. Perhaps here, where she has an opportunity to castigate the company for their treatment of her, we see the strongest evidence of her re-creation. She has never pretended to be anything less than what she has always portrayed herself: an intelligent and independent human being capable of making her own decisions, who values herself and is of value to those who can appreciate what she has to offer. She restrains any impulse she might have had to behave in an unseemly fashion and because she speaks rationally, persuasively, sincerely, and quietly, they have no other recourse but to listen. She remains what she has always been, but now she possesses an awareness of the rules of which, earlier, she was unaware: "My mind that been as big as one of yours,/ My heart as great, my reason haply more" (5.2.170-171).

Petruchio helps Kate realize that she lacks a recognizable discourse which allows her value to be acknowledged and ratified by those who originally scorned her. So, rather than Petruchio's "taming" of Kate being representative of the brutal mistreatment dealt to women who defy the patriarchal order, Petruchio instead teaches Kate how and when to re-create her words and actions to harmonize with social expectations. He provides her the means by which she is able to join in a social and cultural game which allows her to manipulate the situation and scold those who have scolded and manipulated her.

Notes

1. Authors of conduct books of the period repeatedly stressed the importance of a woman curtailing her public appearances, her tongue, and her public and private demeanour. For example, see Juan Luis Vives, *A Very Fruitful and Pleasant Book Called the Instruction of a Christian Woman*, (1523), Edmund Tilney, *The Flower of Friendship* (1568), and Philip Stubbes, *A Crystal Glass for Christian Women, containing a Most Excellent Discourse of The Godly Life and Christian Death of Mistress Katherine Stubbes* (1591).

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Nathaniel Hawthorne in the Discourse of the Popular Religious Culture of the Second Great Awakening

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Abstract

The article explores the modern issues of scholarly analysis of Nathaniel Hawthorne's literary work in the discursive space of American religious reformism that was an essential part of popular democratic culture in the United States during the first half of the nineteenth century. Due to the recent discovery of numerous elements from the religious discourse of The Second Great Awakening throughout Hawthorne's work, contemporary scholars are only beginning to comprehend the significant connections between Hawthorne and the national discursive practices of the age in which he lived, the American Renaissance.

Key words: *popular democratic culture, North-American Romanticism, religious reformism, discursive practices*

In the majority of scholarly publications (which have been an important, if not a constitutive element of academic research of the North American Romanticism) on various aspects of Nathaniel Hawthorne's creative development, it is possible to identify one particular issue that traditionally inspires contentious scholarly debates. It is the religious substrate of the writer's creative heritage and his specific religious worldview.

A large number of critics and scholars emphasize the powerful connection of Hawthorne's creative thought to the ethical norms and theological dogmas of Calvinism. In *Hawthorne and Puritanism* (1948), which clearly reflected the state of affairs of American Hawthorne studies at that time, Professor Barriss Mills assertively identified the writer with famous American theologians who practiced Calvinism. For instance, he referred to him as "a spiritual contemporary of Cotton Mather born out of his time." (78)

A conceptual resonance of such opinions can be found even in *The Foreign Literature of the XIX century: The Age of Romanticism* — one of the most widespread Ukrainian history books on the North-American

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Romantic movement, which has become an indispensable study guide for modern students-philologists.

The authors of that work also point out the correlation of Hawthorne's creativity to "the puritan religious thought and worldview" and emphasize his "Calvinistic outlook". In general, those Ukrainian scholars, who explore Hawthorne's propensity towards American Puritanism, do not suppress his negative attitude towards certain aspects of that dogma, but they invariably accentuate that he always remained under the heavy influence of the Puritan religious culture.

At the same time, there exists a contradictory point of view. One of the most prominent Hawthorne scholars in the United States, Professor Frederick Crews, was the first American academic who openly challenged the notion of Hawthorne as a Calvinistic author, criticizing the excessive concentration of his predecessors on spiritual and intellectual connections of the writer with the religious practices of the puritans of New England. In a rather facetious tone, he characterized the previous generation of scholars, who laid the foundation of American Hawthorne studies, as adepts of "churchly symbol mongering that had plagued the literary academy." (1989: 274). In his groundbreaking study, *The Sins of the Fathers* (1966), Crews completely abandoned all the theological subjects and focused his primary critical attention on a complex combination of artistic psychology with the rudiments of Puritan culture and worldview which are manifested in Hawthorne's major fiction.

It should be noted that Professor Crews has had a highly authoritative status in the modern academic circles of the United States. As an editor and research advisor, he was directly involved in the creation of the majority of American university anthologies and student textbooks on Hawthorne's life and works. Along with the head of the National Endowment for the Humanities, Lynne Cheney, and William John Bennett (who served as the Secretary of Education and an adviser of President Reagan), Crews actively participated in the process of reformation of the national system of higher education, initiated by the Federal government in the 1970s. Consequently, it is not surprising that Crew's *The Sins of the Fathers* established the fashion for the anti-religious sentiment of literary interpretations of Hawthorne's illustrious "Puritan worldview" in American universities at the end of the twentieth century. According to the editors of *The Cambridge History of American Literature* (1995), American Puritanism, and Calvinism as its confessional foundation, transformed into some amorphous "ideology" (674) that lacked any meaningful associations

with the national religious symbolism, and thus it was isolated from its social and cultural environments of the first half of the nineteenth century.

Although their evaluations differed considerably, such famous American critics as Barriss Mills, Yvor Winters, Richard Chase and Leslie Fiedler agreed that the American Puritanism of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was an essentially religious element of Hawthorne's fiction. On the contrary, the next generation of scholars (Henderson, Foster, Bercovitch and others), who followed the critical pattern established by Professor Crews, concentrated on anything but religion, and even if they did touch that subject in their analysis, it was transformed into something that resembled modern psychology or sociology. The immediate result of such intentional secularization was the general disregard of the academic community towards any historically conditioned associations of Hawthorne with the religious discourse of the United States during the first half of the nineteenth century. It became simply unnecessary to search for the true cultural origins of his subjects, characters and symbolic images amidst the "metaphysical" complexity of eclectic critical theories, which created the imaginary "useable past" (in Russell Reising's terms) of American letters of the 1800s, with critics completely estranged from the real context of the writer's national discursive environment.

From the time of the publication of the revisionist work of Frederic Crews, his numerous followers have been deliberately cleansing the life and works of Hawthorne of any significant religious traits. In the course of this reconsideration, Puritanism was transformed into something quite secular by many in the academic community. In his book *Their Solitary Way: The Puritan Social Ethic in the First Century of Settlement in New England*, Stephen Foster described the Puritan movement as "a form of social organization beyond the bounds of the church" (1972: 19); Harry B. Henderson characterized it as "a complex system of moral and ethical education" (1974: 82) in *Versions of the Past: The Historical Imagination in American Fiction*; finally, Sacvan Bercovitch, in his renowned works *The Puritan Origins of the American Self* and *The American Jeremiad* argued that American Puritanism was nothing else but a preliminary form of the national ideology. Bercovitch also stressed that any creative contacts between Hawthorne and the culture of New England cannot be determined by his artistic attention towards the national religious practices. Professor Alexey Aksenov, one of the main representatives of Hawthorne studies in the Russian federation, claimed in his essay *Nathaniel Hawthorne and American Puritanism: the antinomy of the creative thought* (that "the writer's

attitude towards the puritan religion was the attitude of the person who had nothing to do with the church." (2006: 28)

In a paradoxical manner, all the modern attempts to isolate Hawthorne from the religious context of the United States of the 1800s resemble the old scholarly methodology of the Soviet American Studies, given that it was obligatory to substantiate that just about every talented American author unavoidably had to suffer from acute spiritual isolation in his native land. For instance, Professor Yuri Kovalev in his book *From the Spy to the Confidence Man* called the writer "a strange American", who was "hardly influenced by the dynamics of the age in his creative development". (2003: 123) Thus, it is necessary to acknowledge the non-constructivity of the dominant critical tendencies of interpretation of the religious components of Hawthorne's fiction. Any scholarly efforts to completely immerse the writer into American Puritanism are just as erroneous, as are the attempts to entirely free him of the influence of the national religious environment. In both cases, we come across the vestiges of classical scientific paradigm of the humanities, marked by the implications of ideology, and inattentive to the innate connections of the art of letters with the discursive practices of a society.

It follows that there is a need to apply modern methods of discursive analysis, which developed out of post-classical scholarship, in relation to the literary heritage of Hawthorne. His literary activities were connected with that period of American history known in our time as the Second Great Awakening (1790–1840). The absolute majority of the population of the United States (from the presidents to the enslaved African-Americans at the plantations of the South) created and participated in that nation-wide religious revival which embraced the entire country. Accordingly, Hawthorne could not have possibly existed outside of that discursive continuum. Therefore, a truly modern interpretation of his major works should be conducted beyond the bounds of that old binary opposition "religious vs. secular", which encouraged the scholars to participate in endless and unproductive debates over whether or not Hawthorne was an ardent partisan of Puritanism.

To this end, it seems necessary to uncover at least some of the elements of the national religious discourse during the 1800s in Hawthorne's novels and short stories. Taking into account the long-lived attempts of the American academic community to either deliberately secularize his fiction, or transform his works into an artistic manifestation of sacred puritanical dogmas, it is justifiable to speak about a novel vector

of critical comprehension of complex creative connections between the writer and the national discursive practices of the popular democratic culture and religion of the United States. Critics and scholars willingly or unintentionally disregarded what Hawthorne's close friend and the central representative of American Renaissance, the writer Herman Melville in his famous critical essay *Hawthorne and His Mosses* (1850) characterized as an inseparable discursive relation of a true artist with his national cultural environment, when he wrote: "great geniuses are parts of the times, they themselves are the times, and possess a corresponding coloring". It is in the discourse of popular democratic religion of the independent American nation of the nineteenth century that we may find Hawthorne's "corresponding coloring" in relation to the religious substrate of his fiction.

Religion was truly a moving force of social and cultural progress in the young democratic republic of the first half of the nineteenth century. In the period before the beginning of the Civil War, the number of officially registered protestant churches and sects increased by at least 600 percent. The pioneer of American cultural studies, the French aristocrat Alexis de Tocqueville (1805-1859) was deeply amazed at the atmosphere of pervasive religiosity that dominated the cultural and social life of the United States. According to him, there was no country in the world where the Christian religion retained a greater influence over the souls of men than in America.

In the North American lands, Christianity was startlingly heterogeneous and variable. Among the most powerful church organizations that had over 500,000 members were the Methodists, the Baptists, the Catholics, the Presbyterians and the Lutherans. However, next to them were many dozens of other churches, associations, cults and sects, and their overall influence on the religious life of the country was no less powerful and important. Religious tolerance, as one of the fundamental principles of American democracy, provided an opportunity for legal establishment and proliferation of the most fantastic dogmas and spiritual practices. Through the streets of Washington D.C. walked the followers of Robert Matthews who proclaimed himself the living God. The farmer Joseph Smith from the state of New York claimed that angels had given him the new Bible — the Book of Mormon. All over the states traveled the adepts of William Miller — the self-proclaimed prophet of Apocalypses, who persuaded thousands of American citizens to prepare for the inevitable end of days that was supposed to commence in the near future. Foreign guests, who were shocked by this astonishing diversity of democratic religion, often asked Americans, how it was possible to retain

sanity in their strange country, where a new church or another sect was created practically every day.

In the times of the Second Great Awakening, the majority of believers in the United States had already abandoned the strict Calvinistic doctrine of Puritanism, and many were searching for new religious inspirations. In American democratic churches, the path to salvation was open to everyone: the pursuit of self-perfection, charity, and the sense of personal spiritual unity with God were viewed as the essential characteristics of the renewed Christian faith. Public worship and popular religious literature were supposed to help the society to establish a stronger spiritual connection with the divine powers, but it was widely believed that the most important assurance of the promised redemption was the participation in the mass sacred ceremonies of the so-called "conversions", or "spiritual awakenings".

The rapid growth of the number of parishioners and the spread of new church organizations had led to the creation of a new profession of "circuit riders" — self-employed clergymen who journeyed to the farthest populated areas of the Frontier—who preached before the congregations of inhabitants of wild American borderlands. Their fiery "popular" sermons, which combined such elements as sensational stories, vivid biblical allegories and "lowbrow" humor, subverted the traditions of American Calvinism. The expressive and shrewd democratic rhetoric of their speeches (and popular publications, as in many cases the sermons of circuit riders were also printed and sold as religious pamphlets) inevitably attracted attention of several major writers of the age of American Renaissance. The title of Walt Whitman's celebrated collection of poetry *The Leaves of Grass* originated under the influence of the author's early acquaintance with the head of the sect of American Quakers from Long Island, Elias Hicks, who employed the sacred images of "divine leaves of grass" in his sermons and theological tractates. Likewise, the prototype of the characters of Captain Ahab and Father Maple in Herman Melville's novel *Moby-Dick* was Reverend Edward Taylor, an outspoken Methodist minister from Boston, who was regarded as one of the most popular American preachers of the Second Great Awakening.

Even though some literary historians prefer to portray Hawthorne as "the recluse from Salem" (see, for example, the newest American biographies of the writer by Brenda Wineapple and Milton Meltzer), he actively participated in the social and political life of his country, and, similar to other canonical representatives of American romanticism, he

attentively followed the development of the national religious culture. The writer published more than a dozen of his stories in *The Democratic Review*. The chief editor of that authoritative journal, John L. O'Sullivan, was the creator of one of the most popular religious and political doctrines of Americanism — the Manifest Destiny. He described Hawthorne as one of the sincerest and most spiritual American authors of his times. (2008: 264) This appraisal was in many ways conditioned by the writer's special attention towards the subject of contemporary American beliefs and religious practices.

For instance, in *Main Street* and *Earth's Holocaust* (both short stories were published in *Mosses From An Old Manse*), Hawthorne with evident sympathy recreated the circumstance of a typical ceremony of "spiritual awakening", which were organized by the American circuit riders. As in most cases such worships were held outside of church buildings, which could not possibly accommodate all the attendees who came to listen to popular sermons, large congregations of believers assembled in nearby woods: "With the alternative of kneeling beneath the awful vault of the firmament, it is strange that men should creep into this pent-up nook, and expect God's presence there." (*Main Street*, online) When the circuit riders preached before the inhabitants of American borderlands, church meetings (often called religious "camp-meetings") were conducted in the very heart of the forest, mostly at night, so that the frontiersmen would not be distracted from hard work during the daytime: "All is well, the wood-paths shall be the aisles of our cathedral, the firmament itself shall be its ceiling. What needs an earthly roof between the Deity and his worshippers? Our faith can well afford to lose all the drapery that even the holiest men have thrown around it, and be only the more sublime in its simplicity." (*Earth's Holocaust*, online) As most biographers of the writer tend to agree, Hawthorne was not a frequent churchgoer, but for many years it was his professional habit to visit various locations of religious gatherings in the open air, where he could easily observe and learn their all the special rites of conduct of American believers.

According to the testimonies of many contemporaries, who witnessed the ceremonies of "spiritual awakening", those popular religious services resembled horrifying pagan rituals or satanic orgies. At first, the congregation loudly sang Christian church hymns, but then the participants started to scream furiously, curse like crazy, and howl, as if they were wild forest animals. It was believed that in the process of "spiritual awakening", in their souls and minds commenced the final battle

between God and Devil, who was supposed to make an obligatory appearance at the site of camp-meetings to prevent the newly-converted individuals from achieving salvation. Consequently, wild songs and crazy screams were called special "spiritual exercises", which helped the partakers of the rituals to defend themselves against the satanic forces. Frances Trollope, an English Novelist, who explored the democratic religious culture of the Second Great Awakening, attempted to explain to her British readers her experience of the first American camp-meeting she went to: "But how am I to describe the sounds that proceeded from this strange mass of human beings? I know no words which convey an idea of it. Hysterical sobbings, convulsive groans, shrieks and screams the most appalling, burst forth on all sides. I felt sick with horror."(1832: 54) Although she was already familiar with some bizarre customs of contemporary European sectarianism, what Trollope found particularly astonishing was that mass democratic worship under the open sky were dramatically different from anything she had ever witnessed in the Old World. Attended by many thousands of believers, they were so loud and wild that the European visitor felt completely overwhelmed. It is not surprising that such popular rituals of American democratic church were also represented in Hawthorne's fiction.

In *Young Goodman Brown* (1835) we come across a vivid description of a comparable religious ceremony. The young farmer Brown, the main character of the story, travels to the local forest in the middle of the night to participate in a mysterious religious service. After wondering the forest paths for a while, Brown finally unexpectedly hears some strange sounds: "He paused, in a lull of the tempest that had driven him onward, and heard the swell of what seemed a hymn, rolling solemnly from a distance, with the weight of many voices. He knew the tune; it was a familiar one in the choir of the village meeting-house. The verse died heavily away, and was lengthened by a chorus, not of human voices, but of all the sounds of the benighted wilderness, pealing in awful harmony together. Goodman Brown cried out; and his cry was lost to his own ear, by its unison with the cry of the desert." (online) It is in fragments such as this one we can observe that Hawthorne's concerns with the national religious practice is quite obvious. However, as it was asserted earlier, the previous generation of American scholars had dismissed this aspect of his work. Frederic Crew, for example, interpreted Hawthorne's religious scenes in *Young Goodman Brown* as a symbolic (and wholly secular) embodiment of "the classic Oedipal pattern", while the abovementioned passage, in his opinion, was

nothing but the imaginary subconscious expression of "Brown's own horror of adulthood", as this mature (and married!) man virtually "remains the little boy who has heard rumors about the polluted pleasures of adults, and who wants to learn more about them despite or because he finds them disgusting." (1989: 105)

On repeated occasions, Hawthorne also addressed in his works those dramatic interfaith controversies, which accompanied the process of rapid development of democratic religion. Charles G. Finney, the most popular American preacher of the 1830s, often claimed that the modern American church was no place for complex theological concepts of "Old Divinity" Calvinism. The solid foundation of the renewed American faith was to consist of clear and simple, "popular" concepts, oriented towards the mass democratic audience: "Many ministers are finding it out already, that a Methodist preacher, without the advantages of a liberal education will draw a congregation around him which a Presbyterian minister, with perhaps ten times as much learning, cannot equal, because he has not the earnest manner of the other, and does not pour out fire upon his hearers when he preaches."(1835: 182) At that time, the Presbyterians — the last upholders of archaic dogmas of Puritanism of the previous century, were clearly losing the confessional battle for the heart and minds of American believers. The membership of their churches was decreasing rapidly, while their main competitors from American democratic churches enjoyed a steady stream of new converts. Their burning rhetoric — that "fire" which was "poured upon" the hearers, was exactly what the congregation wanted to hear, as Charles G. Finney reasonably pointed out. On the contrary, most Americans were completely unwilling to listen to "highbrow" preaching from the drowsy Presbyterian pulpit. That spiritual fire, transformed into the symbol of the renewed Christian faith, was likely the most significant symbol of popular American religion of the 1800s. Charles Finney was confident that only by the implementation of the "fire" of unrestrained emotionalism, ignited in the souls of men by the rituals of "spiritual awakening", was it possible to achieve complete absolution from sin and at last unite with the merciful God. So it is not without reason that the northern part of the state of New York, where such "fiery" religious sermons originated, was given the expressive name of "the burned over district" by the penny-press. Hawthorne was fully aware of this popular shift that had taken place in the contemporary religious life of his country, and attempted to represent some of its essential characteristics in his works.

The mysterious preacher from the story about the nighttime adventure of young Brown also arranges for his congregation an impressive fire ritual: "At one extremity of an open space, hemmed in by the dark wall of the forest, arose a rock, bearing some rude, natural resemblance either to an altar or a pulpit, and surrounded by four blazing pines, their tops aflame, their stems untouched, like candles at an evening meeting. The mass of foliage, that had overgrown the summit of the rock, was all on fire, blazing high into the night, and fitfully illuminating the whole field… As the red light arose and fell, a numerous congregation alternately shone forth, then disappeared in shadow, and again grew, as it were, out of the darkness, peopling the heart of the solitary woods at once." (1835)

It should be noted that the wild emotionalism of such religious rituals was repeatedly condemned by many recognized American preachers, who also strived for liberalization of theological dogmas of Calvinism but were convinced that popular forms of worship could not arouse truly deep and lasting religious feelings in the souls of the democratic congregation. William Ellery Channing proclaimed: "We do not judge of the bent of men's minds by their raptures, any more than we judge of the direction of a tree during a storm. We rather suspect loud profession, for we have observed, that deep feeling is generally noiseless, and least seeks display." (1903: 272)

Still, the formation of the negative reputation of popular democratic religion among "moderate" American Christians was to an even greater extent intensified by numerous eyewitness accounts of the unrestrained immoral behavior of the participants of mass worships. As a means to support the spiritual energy of their parishioners, some preachers and circuit riders did not hesitate to use strong liquors, which they openly sold to the people. In a state of religious euphoria, enhanced by alcohol, men and women hardly paid attention to moral conventions. Contemporary American journalists even joked that during the forest ceremonies of "spiritual awakenings" as many new souls were conceived as were saved. Deeply shocked by moral relativism of the adepts of popular democratic religion, the main character of *Young Goodman Brown* exclaims in desperation: "My Faith is lost!" (1835). It is easy to perceive this statement as something of an indication of the author's disillusionment in religious matters. However, it is clear that Hawthorne did not abandon the subject of popular practices of American democratic church in his later works. He continued to explore various aspects of the national religious culture from different perspectives not as "the person who had nothing to do with the

church" (as it was declared in A. Aksenov's *Nathaniel Hawthorne and American Puritanism: the antinomy of the creative though* and Y. Kovalev's *From the Spy to the Confidence Man*), but as an American writer who could realize his creative intentions only in the complex and contradictory discursive environment of the Second Great Awakening.

The theme of alcohol abuse among the parishioners of democratic churches attracted the attention of several other American writers of the 1800s. For instance, the publication of *Deacon Giles' Distillery* (1835), which was written by Hawthorne's fellow student George B. Cheever, initiated heated nationwide debates among critics and readers since the author went so far as to claim that the spread of alcoholism in his country was directly related to destructive religious practices of popular preachers, whom he identified with "devils". Hawthorne also did not stand aside from the "anti-alcohol" theme. In his satirical story *A Rill from the Town Pump* (1837), the writer describes desperate (but fruitless) attempts of contemporary temperance advocates to persuade the Christian democratic community to limit their daily consumption to "milk and water." As a professional writer with an eye on the mass democratic audience, Hawthorne wanted to attract the interest of American consumer of popular printed products by producing literary works on the sensational subject of alcohol abuse in the religious environment of his country, which was simultaneously culturally determined and fascinating for the reading public. Still, there were other sensational aspects of the national religious discourse that attracted the writer's attention.

In the early 1840s, the rapid spread of popular sectarian movements encouraged the formation of a new image of the democratic church as the center of sexual licentiousness in the collective social consciousness of the American nation. It seemed that the puritan moral restrain of the previous century had vanished without a trace. The founders of the most powerful sectarian organizations in the United States, Jacob Cochran, Michael Hull Barton, Isaac Bullard, Elijah Pierson, Robert Metthews, and John Smith, openly propagated polygamy and considered free sexual relations among parishioners and preachers as an essential component of the renewed democratic religion. The self-proclaimed "Messiah" Jacob Cochran, a married man and the father of three children, was very proud of the fact that he had seven more "spiritual wives" among his female followers. John Smith had to construct several additional buildings to house his large "divine family" which consisted of 33 wives and more than 60 children. Many of the women who lived there previously abandoned their husbands

and families to unite with their religious leader. Against such a cultural background, the story of adultery committed by Hester Prynne and Arthur Dimmsdale seemed like an immediate continuation of numerous sensational accounts concerning sexual life of licentious American clergymen and their female parishioners.

In his novel *The Scarlet Letter*, Hawthorne attempted to find the answer to the question: can the American nation of the age of the Second Great Awakening perceive at least a minute indication of a moral crime in adultery, committed by a minister and a married woman from his parish? In order to enhance the effect of moral condemnation, the writer employed in his novel the historical decorations of the bygone puritan culture. In Hawthorne's opinion, his American contemporaries could realize that love in marriage and traditional family values did not lose their social significance only by comparison of the old-fashioned spiritual conventions of Puritanism with the unrestrained immorality of the modern democratic church. However, it is safe to say that the writer's generation largely ignored his moral didacticism, as they had bought only about 35 thousand copies of *The Scarlet Letter*. At the same time, American readers purchased over 700 thousand copies of sensational novels of such popular authors as Maria Monk, George Lippard and George Thompson, who celebrated sensual laxity and sexual crimes, which dominated in the democratic church.

Hawthorne's novel *The Marble Fawn* was his last tempt of gaining artistic control over the wildness and moral relativism of American religious environment. Realizing that the spiritual authority of Protestantism and sectarianism was too powerful for a direct confrontation, he turned to exploration of an alternative religious movement, the Catholic Church, which was regarded as the main adversary of the national confessions in the tense competitive struggle over the salvation of the souls of American believers. As Catholicism was able to effectively oppose the chaos of religious reforms over many centuries, it became something of a safety valve that allowed releasing of the wild energies of democratic religious consciousness in a secure and controlled manner.

Still, that artistic "conversion" to the Catholic faith should not be interpreted as the writer's attempt to isolate himself from the influence of the national religious atmosphere. In *The Marble Fawn*, Hawthorne simply described one of the processes of transformation of the democratic religious consciousness in the times of the Second Great Awakening. For instance, many of the former founders of the utopian reform community of Brook Farm, whom Hawthorne depicted in *The Blithedale Romance*, finally became

so disillusioned in popular democratic religion that they willingly converted to Catholicism. Such prominent literary figures as Orestes Brownson and Isaac Hecker, who had been searching for many years for true "spiritual awakening" amidst the kaleidoscopic multiplicity of American Protestantism, did not just convert to the Catholic faith, but were officially ordained and became priests.

Nevertheless, unlike those protestant turncoats, who maintained friendship with Hawthorne till the end of his life, the writer never considered Catholicism as his last spiritual resort. In the rough draft of his unfinished novel *The American Claimant Manuscript*, which he started in 1864, Hawthorne once more attempted to stand up to the challenge of many-sided and controversial religious life of the young American nation.

Even a short review of the roots of Hawthorne's fiction in the North American religious discourse of the first half of the nineteenth century attests the unproductiveness of the traditional binary opposition "religious vs. secular", within the limits of which the academic community has been interpreting Hawthorne's creative development. The situation is far more complex: the immersion in the discourse of religious reformism of the Protestant church of the United States enabled the writer to conduct daring and conscientious artistic experiments in his search for the true spiritual and moral essence of democracy, manifested in the wild and fiery nature of popular American religion of his age. In his fiction, Hawthorne willingly attempted to discover the efficacy of the spiritual potential of popular democratic religion of the Second Great Awakening, which engulfed the entire country as a wildfire. Further discursive studies of his creative work in that context will open wide new horizons for literary analysis.

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Twenty-first Century Novel Discourse.
Nick Hornby's *A Long Way Down*

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Abstract

The identitary, social and political dimensions seem to govern most contemporary writing and Nick Hornby's is no exception. Exceptional, however, is the way in which he manages to build on traditional narrative practices, applying them to present-day philosophies of life – dictated by the current global social imaginary. The novel considered for analysis is A Long Way Down (2005).

Key words: *identity, society, politics, novel discourse*

Introductory lines

The novel is inescapably the product of historical experience, whose traces it carries despite established modernist claims of fleeing from it (by revolutionary denial), or more recent postmodernist assertions of avenging it (by interventionist re-writing). Having witnessed the full circle in the metamorphosis of literary modes of writing (from realism to metafiction) and being generated against a background of demented world unrest, the contemporary novel returns to more stable, personal accounts of meditating on and interacting with others, in an attempt at counteracting levelling forces, the volatility of global events and the threats thus posed to personal identity. This policy not only redefines the itinerary and features of twenty-first century novel discourse, but also matches the readers' expectations. As has been pointed out, "the need to restore a comprehensible human dimension to historical experience is perhaps the chief reason for the phenomenal popularity of old-fashioned, highly individualized accounts of moments of extreme crisis." (Mengham 1999: 2)

Particularly since it mostly highlights individuals, the novel today also foregrounds the external and internal forces impacting destinies, with the former being developed by the society people are trapped within, and the latter resulting from the shared representations of the broader stage of life at the turn of the millennium. On the one hand, the presentation and ensuing criticism of acute social realities places new writing within the

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(almost) three century long tradition of the novel in English, with its manifest love- hate relationship with reality, whether it be that of the spirit, of the material world beyond the covers of the book, or of the book itself. On the other hand, the fact that the new generation of novelists carefully exploits the social imaginary or "the ways people imagine their social existence, how they fit together with others, how things go on between them and their fellows, the expectations that are normally met, and the deeper normative notions and images that underlie these expectations" (Taylor 2004: 23) brings this genre into contemporaneity and anchors it into pervasive philosophies of life.

The novel addresses identitary, social and political issues pertaining to the new environment, capitalising on its popularity to make pertinent statements. In the context of concepts like 'society' becoming ambivalent or "stretched between two imaginaries: the national and the global" (James and Steger 2010: xviii), the English contemporary novel opens up to an international readership and becomes an effective instrument for discussing universal human values and for mediating across cultures.

Nick Hornby's *A Long Way Down*

One of the writers who are read and appreciated worldwide for the reasons mentioned above is Nicholas Peter John Hornby. His success as a writer is especially due to the seven novels published to date – *High Fidelity* (1995), *About a Boy* (1998), *How to Be Good* (2001), *A Long Way Down* (2005), *Slam* (2007), *Juliet, Naked* (2009) and *Funny Girl* (2014) –, three of which have further developed into film adaptations – *High Fidelity* (2000), *About a Boy* (film, 2002; television series, 2013) and *A Long Way Down* (2014).

Focusing on individuals in impasse, who attempt to establish impossible relationships, or on recluse cases who avoid interaction with others altogether, the novelist approaches the contemporary situation while practically tackling the human condition via metonymical characters who resemble people we know. Rob Fleming's fear of commitment (in *High Fidelity*), Will Freeman's late maturing (*About a Boy*), Katie Carr's explorations of the morality crisis (in *How to Be Good*), Martin Sharp's, Maureen's, Jess Crichton's and JJ's weighing the pluses and minuses of life and death (in *A Long Way Down*), Sam Jones's precocious entry into parenthood (in *Slam*), Annie's sterile internet-facilitated interactions (in *Juliet, Naked*) and Barbara Parker's meandering path to stardom (in *Funny Girl*) are generated by and support the recurrent central themes which situate Hornby's novels between the tragic and the comic, the reasonable

and the absurd, the natural and the artificial defining the present day societal milieu.

The particular instance of *A Long Way Down* subversively deals with the fantasy of inclusion, multiplies the mould of the social outcast, and reiterates the notion of opposition to mainstream dominant structures. Its four protagonists paradoxically act out an absurdist play to escape the blandness of their lives. On New Year's Eve, they all contemplate suicide and meet on top of a tower building in London known as Topper's House (how else?). From then on, their life stories converge; postponing death and deciding on a common list of New Year's Resolutions, the four unlikely friends live intensely for three months, in charge of their new destinies, empowered by the freedom to reschedule the final step.

The novel's tripartite architecture at once hints at the consubstantiality of divinity and deconstructs it. Perfection is beyond reach and omniscience is relativised. The three-part narrative is clipped, forwarded by the four characters taking turns, in no apparent order, at introducing themselves and their beliefs, and at scrutinizing the other three. These "constructed and imagined narratives, experiences and relationships [...] offer important alternatives and corrective perspectives on the dominant schemas of globalization." (Connell and Marsh 2011: 154)

The first person used throughout, complemented by the third person limited point of view, is deliberately ambiguous, despite the fact that each sub-section is attributed to Martin, Maureen, Jess or JJ. Essentially different, their lives only resemble one another in that they are in shambles, while their accounts add important missing pieces to the overall gloomy puzzle which is gradually assembled, although it is deemed to remain incomplete (see the open ending provided).

The technical control exercised by the novelist in contrastively outlining the four main characters and collectively engaging them in furthering the story contributes, on the one hand, to revealing the relational nature of identity, "referring to the system of differences through which individuality is constructed" and, on the other hand, to its conventionally discursive formation, "according to the formal principles of narrative." (Currie 1998: 17)

The language characters use does not function as a classical means of character drawing. It does not necessarily reflect on their age, gender, or class, but sooner shows "the speakers' self-monitoring – hence their ability to avoid stigma." Their shift in style and concentration on particular topics

"[accommodate them] to their audience – primarily their addressee."
(Eckert 2011: 299)

Hornby's craft of devising verisimilar language patterns, as well as that of manipulating point of view, create the illusion of reality and induce the anticipated, politically engaged reader response to the flaws of social ethics – valuing the welfare of society over the interests of the individual and, more broadly, the pre-eminence of globality over locality.

Middle aged celebrity TV presenter, Martin, loses his well-paid job on a high ranking national programme and his status of happily married man with two children on account of sleeping with an underage girl. After having served a three-month prison sentence, he is currently employed at FeetUpTV!, a low rated TV channel, has an affair with his former partner and feels he has wasted his life. He is introduced to the reader abruptly, as are all the narrators shaping the novel discourse.

> Can I explain why I wanted to jump off the top of a tower-block? Of course I can explain why I wanted to jump off the top of a tower-block. I'm not a bloody idiot. I can explain it because it wasn't inexplicable: it was a logical decision, the product of proper thought. [...] You might sit down with a bit of paper and draw up a list of pros and cons. You know:
>
> > *CONS – aged parents, friends, golf club.*
> >
> > *PROS – more money, better quality of life (house with pool, barbecue, etc.), sea, sunshine, no left-wing councils banning 'Baa-Baa Black Sheep', no EEC directives banning British sausages, etc.* (2006: 3)

Martin's tone is ironical, and his language sharp (to match his name). As for the 'respectable', globally resounding economic and political pros and cons, they are not actually his, with the personal dimension overriding the public one.

> There simply weren't enough regrets, and lots and lots of reasons to jump. The only thing in my 'cons' list were the kids, but I couldn't imagine Cindy letting me see them again anyway. I haven't got any parents, and I don't play golf. (2006: 3-4)

With 51 year-old Maureen, single mother of disabled Matty, life is resumed to daily home health care and to Sunday church going, to scraping by to make ends meet. Although she loves her son immensely, she cannot but be conscience-stricken due to repressed dreams of going on an impossible holiday. Her decision of committing suicide is preceded by another sin – that of telling a lie – to someone who is unaware of semantics.

> I told him I was going to a New Year's Eve party. I told him in October. I don't know whether people send out invitations to New Year's Eve parties in October or not. Probably not. [...] But I couldn't wait any longer. I'd been thinking about it since May or June, and I was itching to tell him. Stupid, really. He doesn't understand, I'm sure he doesn't. They tell me to keep talking to him, but you can see that nothing goes in. And what a thing to be itching about anyway! It just goes to show what I had to look forward to, doesn't it? (2006: 4)

Unlike Martin, Maureen's focus is not on material things. Her preoccupations are with moral issues and with religious teachings, which she nevertheless questions, sinfully.

> If you spend the day looking after a sick child, there's little room for sin, and I hadn't done anything worth confessing for donkey's years. And I went from that to sinning so terribly that I couldn't even talk to the priest, because I was going to go on sinning and sinning until the day I died, when I would commit the biggest sin of all. (And why is it the biggest sin of all? All your life you're told that you'll be going to this marvellous place when you pass on. And the one thing you can do to get there a bit quicker is something that stops you getting there at all. [...]) (2006: 4-5)

Her worries do not interfere with her acquired passivity and general acceptance of the world order, but she is overwhelmed by perpetual guilt, which prevents her from enjoying what little life has to offer.

Maureen's exact opposite is Jess, the middle class eighteen year old brought up in a family who offers her everything except the things that matter: love, attention, implication. Her father, a politician, is always absent, while her mother has not yet recovered from her older daughter's, Jen's, running away from home and supposedly having committed suicide (that Jess blames herself for). On top of everything, she has recently been abandoned by her boyfriend Chas, which unleashes acute anger, extreme behaviour and foul language.

> I was feeling sorry for myself. How can you be eighteen and not have anywhere to go on New Year's Eve, apart from some shit party in some shit squat where you don't know anybody? Well, I managed it. I seem to manage it every year. I make friends easily enough, but then I piss them off, I know that much, even if I'm not sure why or how. And so people and parties disappear.
>
> I pissed Jen off, I'm sure. She disappeared, like everyone else. (2006: 7)

Adolescence is Jess's only excuse for finding a way out (or down!), and is ridiculous in itself to everyone except her. The young woman refuses

to glimpse at her future; instead, she seeks the status of heroine which has been snatched from her by her sister.

> I could feel the weight of everything then – the weight of loneliness, of everything that had gone wrong. I felt heroic, going up those last few flights to the top of the building, dragging that weight along with me. Jumping felt like the only way to get rid of it, the only way to make it work for me instead of against me; I felt so heavy that I knew I'd hit the street in no time. I'd beat the world record for falling off a tower-block. (2006: 12)

Jess's teenage rebellion finds a deeper version in JJ – the American would-be famous rocker, who now delivers pizzas in London after his band "Big Yellow" breaks up and his girlfriend Lizzie leaves him. His Europeanised American dream gone wrong, JJ is trying to cope with the circumstances, but remains baffled by inertia and existential complacency.

> I told a couple of people about that night, and the weird thing is that they get the suicide part, but they don't get the pizza part. [...] So, anyway, I tell people the story of that New Year's Eve, and none of them are like, 'Whaaaaat? You were gonna kill yourself?' It's more, you know, 'Oh, OK [...] Sure, I can see why you were up there.' But then like the very next second, they want to know what a guy like me was doing delivering fucking *pizzas*. (2006: 22)

JJ is portrayed both directly, through the things he says, and indirectly, through the references to the books he reads – crafty metafictional, intertextual insertions which also define the novel itself.

> Ok, you don't know me, so you'll have to take my word for it that I am not stupid. I read the fuck out of every book I can get my hands on. I like Faulkner and Dickens and Vonnegut and Brendan Behan and Dylan Thomas. Earlier that week – Christmas Day, to be precise – I'd finished *Revolutionary Road* by Richard Yates, which is a totally awesome novel. (2006: 22)

Worth retaining – besides the socially-oriented literary experimentalism of Faulkner, Vonnegut, Dickens, Behan and Thomas – is Yates's *Revolutionary Road*, with its avowed main theme, "that most human beings are inescapably alone, and therein lies their tragedy" (in O'Nan 1999, online).

Like the other members of "Toppers' House Four", JJ is angry with himself, people and society, and his anger is a covert means of carrying out the critique of dehumanisation and of economic globalisation, as obvious in his presentation of injustice and false hierarchy.

Anyway, the point is, people jump to the conclusion that anyone driving around North London on a shitty little moped on New Year's Eve for the minimum wage is clearly a loser, and almost one stagione short of the full Quatro. Well, OK, we are losers by definition, because delivering pizzas is a job for losers. But we're not all dumb assholes. In fact, even with the Faulkner and Dickens, I was probably the dumbest out of all the guys at work, or at least the worst educated. We got African doctors, Albanian lawyers, Iraqi chemists... I was the only one who didn't have a college degree. (2006: 23)

In flight from this entire predicament, Martin, Maureen, Jess and JJ adopt the next best strategy, propelled by Maureen's dream, Martin's money and Jess's and JJ's remaining youthful enthusiasm. After fighting the newspapers and their version of the group's suicidal attempt, fictionalising the event further to get back at the reader avid for gossip, they go on a trip to Tenerife, enjoying an implausible holiday like an untimely happy ending.

The story is then taken up once again within domestic boundaries, with the three adults having found something to do (Martin is now a teacher, Maureen is employed at a newsagent's and JJ plays his music in the streets) and with Jess having made peace with her mother.

At home, every now and then they meet at or around Topper's House – where decisions for reintegration are made and clearer perspectives are offered. Significant is the extended 'family reunion' organised by Jess with relatives of all four – which goes wrong, but counts as a sign of the return to 'social normality'. Memorable also is the silhouette of the London Eye projected against the sky in the distance – which appears on the last page of the novel – offering the protagonists food for thought on the wheel of life and the passing of time, and underlining the perennial quality of the dire situation that forms the core of the plot in Nick Hornby's *A Long Way Down*.

Concluding lines

The common practice in novel writing today is frequently said to be giving pre-eminence to formal technicality, to the apparent disadvantage of ideational content. However, the judgements on the various hypostases of the private and the public self which are inevitably woven into the novel discourse emerge from underneath the transparent fabric of the rhetoric of narrative and the underpinning scaffolding of narrative control, reaching and potentially manipulating audiences. "It is part of the referential illusion

of fictional narrative [...] that we make inferences about fictional characters no different from the inferences we make about real people"(Currie 1998: 17). And writers know it all too well.

In Nick Hornby's case, the deliberate verbalisation and/or representation of collectively recognisable identitary, social and political concerns at the heart of his otherwise intricate narrative patterning serves a twofold purpose: it uses familiar subject matter and character typology to soften the blow of structural defamiliarisation; it formulates a critique of moral decline, social devaluation and political impotence.

Hornby's 2006 book, *A Long Way Down*, is representative for his novel discourse, reinforcing the diction and style of previous artistic accomplishments, and announcing future thematic and architectural literary ventures. Its trademark is the subversive approach to present day social imaginaries, inscribed within the broader frame of contemporary writing, yet exercised less through formal experiments, and more through direct characterisation. Free to express themselves, his protagonists spotlight the overshadowing spectrality, confront taboos, and advance prescriptions for their treatment. Their personal accounts "defy and complicate the powerful abstractions of globalization [...], bring[ing] back into discourse the sexed, gendered and racial bodies of its actors." (Connell and Marsh 2011: 154)

Placing individual lives (and deaths) under the lens, the novel humanises the arid norms of social cohabitation and economic integration which are in place today. It assumes an angry attitude and adopts a sarcastic tone, resorting to the corrective function of the black comic for instructive purposes. In so doing, it teaches without preaching and makes for truly entertaining reading.

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The Importance of Space and Time in Neil Gaiman's Novels

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Abstract

Neil Gaiman is a renowned British author of fantasy, science fiction novels, children's books and short stories. In Gaiman's works, time and space are major elements, playing a key-role in his narratives. "The intrinsic connectedness of temporal and spatial relationships that are artistically expressed in literature" was termed as chronotope by Bakhtin. The chronotope is an important literary element, having narrative, plot-generating, representational, and semantic significance, and providing the basis for distinguishing generic types (Bemong, Borghart 2010). However, the chronotope in fantasy fiction is a rather complex notion. Due to its magic and supernatural elements, fantastic literature employs multiple chronotopes, making a step from a single chronotope of reality (or rather of its representation) to those of alternate worlds or realms. This article aims to examine Gaiman's novels from a spatio-temporal point of view and to analyze the importance of space and time in Stardust, Neverwhere, *and* American Gods, *by using Bakhtin's concept of chronotope, and Foucault's concepts of heterotopia and heterochronia.*

Key words: chronotope, fantasy fiction, multidimensionality, impossible topologies

Traditionally, time and space in literature were analyzed from a narratological point of view: space as a particular place, and time as narrated events' order, duration, frequency, linearity or speed (Genette 1980). More recently, the concept of spacetime or chronotope has been increasingly used instead of just temporal or spatial analysis of narratives. The explanation for the view of narrative space and time as one concept is the fact that: "narrative is always temporal and the narrative representation of space cannot be separated from its representation of time" (Gomel 2014: 26). According to Bakhtin, the chronotope is the fusion of temporal and spatial indicators in the narrative (1981: 84). These indicators have narrative, plot-generating, representational, and semantic significance, they "provide the basis for distinguishing generic types" (Bemong, Borghart 2010: 6). What is specific to the Fantasy genre, it is the fact that it usually employs "impossible" temporal and spatial indicators (Gomel 2014: 11). These are

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impossible from the point of view of Newtonian-Euclidean paradigm of homogenous, uniform, three-dimensional spatiality and linear, chronologic temporality. In other words, these disrupt spatiality and temporality by creating, what Gomel calls impossible chronotopes (2014: 29).

According to Nikolajeva, Fantasy fiction displays three types of chronotopes: the chronotope of multidimensionality realized by transition between chronotopes; the time travelling or time displacement chronotope (which oftentimes involve space displacement, as well); and the chronotope of heterotopia or of a multitude of discordant universes (2003: 141-145). The first type of Fantasy specific chronotope is this transition between Primary World (the chronotope of reality) and the Secondary World (the alternative realm chronotope), thus anchoring the plot in the recognizable reality (2014: 142). The second type of chronotopes, the time distortion chronotope, sometimes called time travelling or time displacement chronotope, involves intricate patterns of time: multitude of possible parallel times; of time going at different paces or even in different directions in separate worlds, its philosophical implications (questions like predestination and free will), and its metaphysical character (mechanisms of time displacement themselves, and various time paradoxes) (Nikolajeva 2003: 142-143). The third type of aforementioned chronotopes is that of heterotopias or of a multitude of discordant universes. It was inspired by Foucault's concept of heterotopias and heterochronies. This chronotope "denotes the ambivalent and unstable spatial and temporal conditions in fiction" (Nikolajeva 2003: 143). It differs from the chronotope of multidimensionality by the total absence of a chronotope of recognizable reality, which even if present in the novel, undergoes a process of defamiliarization, so it becomes unrecognizable (2003:144). Foucault termed heterotopias the "counter-sites, a kind of effectively enacted utopia in which the real sites, all the other real sites that can be found within the culture, are simultaneously represented, contested, and inverted" (1984: 3). In his conception these are the places that exist outside of all places, even though it may be possible to indicate their location in reality. They are "a sort of simultaneously mythic and real contestation of the space in which we live" (Foucault 1984: 4). According to Foucault (1984), heterotopology can be described according to six principles. They are (1) forbidden places, that have a (2) determined function in society according to the synchrony of the culture; and are (3) capable of juxtaposing in a single real place several places that are in themselves incompatible. They also have (4) a function in relation to all the space that remains, which unfolds between two extreme poles: reality and illusion, which (5) presupposes a system of

opening and closing that both isolates them and makes them penetrable. And lastly, they are (6) linked to slices in time, which Foucault calls *heterochronies* that exhibit an absolute break with the traditional time. As one can see, Foucault's heterotopias are inevitably affected by time, which makes them relevant in discussing chronotopes, especially the "impossible" chronotopes of postmodern fiction (Gomel 2014). These impossible chronotopes are extensively used in non-realistic genres, and primarily in Fantasy fiction. In *Fantasy: The Literature of Subversion* (1981) Jackson stated: "literary fantasies have refused to observe unities of time, space and character, doing away with chronology, three-dimensionality, and with rigid distinctions between animate and inanimate objects, self and other, life and death." (Jackson 2003: 1).

In *Narrative Space and Time* (2014) Gomel discusses five ontological strategies, used for the creation of impossible chronotopes that determine the final shape of the storyworld: layering, flickering, embedding, wormholing, and collapsing. The first strategy - layering places a fantastic extradiegetic space "on top" of a realistic diegetic space (2014: 33). The second strategy - flickering, presupposes deployment of an unreliable narrator or of multiple focalizations (2014: 34). Embedding – the third strategy doubles the storyworld by enclosing a separate mini-universe within the diegetic chronotope (2014: 35). The fourth strategy - wormholing implies an actual physical distortion within the utopian spacetime (2014: 36). The last strategy discussed by Gomel is that of collapsing, which entails a superimposition of multiple spaces within a single diegetic locus (2014: 37).

The corpus for analysis consists of three novels written by Neil Gaiman: *Neverwhere, Stardust* and *American Gods*. All three novels are primarily Fantasy fiction; however Gaiman's works are renowned for their generic hybridity. *Neverwhere* is an Urban Fantasy novel (which can be classified as Urban Gothic as well), set in the nineties London. Richard Mayhew, the novel's main character, explores the London's underground, like his namesake Henry Mayhew, the Victorian urban sociologist, who wrote *London Labour and the London Poor* (1851). Gaiman depicts the destitute, homeless and poor that live in London Below, "inhabited by the people who fell through the cracks in the world" (1998: 79) as literally invisible. Richard's adventure starts when he helps a wounded, homeless girl, which makes him invisible for the inhabitants of London Above. As a result he follows the girl into the London Below, in order to find his way back into his life in London Above. However, he ultimately rejects his old life for a new one in London Below. London in the novel is a vertical

structure, composed of two cities of London: London Above and London Below. This division introduces the first type of chronotope encountered in Fantasy fiction, represented by the transition between the chronotope of reality (London Above), and the chronotope of alternative realm (London Below). The alternative realm functions differently from the recognizable reality chronotope. London Below is organized in a medievalist, feudal structure. When Door wakes up in Richard's flat, first thing she inquires is: "Whose barony is this? Whose fiefdom?" (Gaiman 1998: 18). Both time and space are warped and distorted in London Below, which introduces the second type of chronotope present in the novel, the chronotope of time displacement. The characters travel between the London Above and London below by opening special doors that function as wormholes between the two dimensions, altering the spatiality and temporality. These either exist organically and certain characters know about their existence (Marquis de Carabas), or are made by opening portals (Door). For example, when Marquis de Carabas takes Richard Mayhew back to his London flat, he takes a shortcut by opening a manhole cover. It is necessary to mention that this happens at nighttime. Afterwards by climbing some steps, they end up on top of Old Bailey's in daylight; and by opening another door on the side of the building, they end up in Richard's apartment building, in a broom closet by his apartment door, back in the nighttime (Gaiman 1998: 29-32). In London Below they also travel by "phantom" Tube trains (Earl's Court train) that stop in unused, closed underground stations (British Museum Station), by walking through the labyrinth, where time and space change continuously (assorted time fragments of London above), etc. The last type of chronotope encountered in the novel is the chronotope of heterotopia or multidimensionality. It can be exemplified by the black hole chronotope (Gomel 2014: 172), which enables present and past spatiality and temporality to coexist. As stated in the novel: "There are little pockets of old time in London, where things and places stay the same, like bubbles in amber" (Gaiman 1998: 142). This chronotope is enabled through the strategy of collapsing, where the two different spaces coexist, and are squeezed in the same diegetic space. In this case the two coexisting spaces are the two representations of London. These two representations are based on binary oppositions. The financial district "a cold and cheerless place of offices" (Gaiman 1998: 102) is opposed to "loud, and brash, and insane, and it was, in many ways, quite wonderful" (1998: 230) crowd at the Floating Market; people at Stockton's exhibition in Armani suits opposed to mudlarks selling garbage and lost property; Harrods opposed to Floating

Market; etc. While London Above is situated in real-world (or rather its representation), and London Below is situated in London Above's underground. The Tube is the border between the two cities, between reality and illusion, which makes it "a handy fiction that made life easier but bore no resemblance to the reality of the shape of the city above" (Gaiman 1998: 4). The London Below is the heterotopic mirrored image of the London Above, a repository of all London history (from its Celtic and Roman roots through Black plague, to the nineties London), people and myths. All the things forgotten and lost can be found in London Below, which is represented paradigmatically, as well as syntagmatically. In London Below the time and places of London Above, even those long gone and disappeared from London Above, still exist. Nothing truly disappears from London Above without leaving a trace. All the traces and memories are buried away in London Below. "There were a hundred other little courts and mews and alleys in London [...] tiny spurs of old-time, unchanged for, three hundred years" (Gaiman 1998: 48). E.g. a Roman Legion coexists with an abandoned Victorian Hospital and with the Tube. Each London Tube station has a corresponding London Below place: Knightsbridge, Earl's Court, Islington, Shepherds' Bush, etc. For example, Earl's Court is a real medieval court, set in a Tube train, where alongside the lost possessions of commuters that use the Underground, can be found an actual Earl, his men at arms in chain mail, a falconer, a jester, etc. and where the visitors are served with Coke and Cadbury's Fruit and Nut chocolate bars. London Below is the inverted image of London Above. The old London itself was stripped of its personality, by the impersonal financial district that rose in the place of former castles and cathedrals. "The actual City of London itself was no bigger than a square mile [...] a tiny municipality, now home to London's financial institutions, and that that was where it had all begun" (Gaiman 1998: 4). The sterile body of the financial district, where no one lives anymore, is the embodiment of the new depersonalized, soulless city. The cold, modern city of London is inverted in the "carnivalesque", loud, smelly London Below. Where Knightsbridge, one of the most attractive areas of central London, becomes Night's Bridge, one of the most dangerous places of London Below, inhabited by nightmares that gathered there "since the cave times". Angel Underground station and Islington district become in London Below an actual Angel named Islington, and who is the novel's main villain. Blackfriars station becomes an abbey in London Below, inhabited by black friars. The entire London Below is a heterotopia, because it is a non-place,

isolated, with restricted access for outsiders, where time and space function differently. It is a forbidden place for the inhabitants of London Above, which once glimpsed by them would slip their minds, being perceived as an illusion. However, London Below contains other heterotopic spaces as well, like Floating Market, Night's Bridge, Shepherd's Bush, Labyrinth, etc. For example: "the labyrinth […] was a place of pure madness. It was built of lost fragments of London Above: alleys and roads and corridors and sewers that had fallen through the cracks over the millennia, and entered the world of the lost and the forgotten" (Gaiman 1998: 190). While the Floating Market is a heterotopic space, which is difficult to access, bound by specific rules, it is also marked by the chronotope of carnival-time: "animated and illuminated by the ancient public square's spirit of carnival and mystery" (Bakhtin 1981: 249). Not only the entire London Below is a heterotopic space, but London Above contains numerous heterotopias (which are simultaneously heterochronies), as: National Gallery, Tate Gallery, Big Ben, Harrods, Harvey Nichols, Tower of London, etc. Alongside the impossible Fantasy fiction, chronotopes can be identified the alternative history chronotope - "corresponding to the two forms of temporality that Lyotard called 'myth' and 'contingency'" (Gomel 2009: 336); and the chronotope of trauma (Gomel 2014: 173) evoking the traumatic historic events, since "the city is a palimpsest of its history", and it is "haunted by the memory of the cataclysm and the premonition of its return" (2014: 173), (Black plague, "Great stink", "pea-soupers", etc.). Another classical chronotope is the road chronotope, which combined with the motif of meeting, usually leads to adventures, according to Bakhtin (1981: 98). The road chronotope combined with adventure-time chronotope realizes the metaphor of "the path of life" (Bakhtin 2008: 120), which in literature is inherited from folklore. According to Bakhtin, the adventure-time chronotope represents a combination between the Greek adventure-time chronotope, which is "an extratemporal hiatus that appears between two moments of a real time sequence" (1981: 91), and the chronotope of everyday life, which exposes "layers and levels of private life" (Bakhtin 2008: 127). All the separate adventures: the road to Floating Market, the search for the Angelus, the Ordeal of the Key, etc., are parts of Richard's quest and constitute the adventure-time chronotope.

Stardust is a portal-quest Fantasy (that also can be classified as a Steampunk (a variety of Science Fiction), where the main character Tristran Thorn explores the realm of Fairy in a quest for a fallen star, which is in fact a woman, called Yvaine. In *Stardust*, as in *Neverwhere*, one can find the three

types of Fantasy fiction chronotopes discussed above. The chronotope of multidimensionality is the first type of chronotope that can be identified. It is realized through the strategy of layering (Gomel 2014: 39). *Stardust* is set in an alternative Victorian age, in a small village of Wall. The village got its name from the high grey rock wall situated nearby, and which has a gap guarded by village folks round the clock to prevent people entering the Faerie realm or magic beings getting into the village. Beyond the Wall is a meadow and beyond it, the land of Faerie. Every nine years the meadow hosts a fair, where Fair Folk trade with the inhabitants of the village of Wall. The meadow fair embodies the chronotope of carnival-time, while the opening in the wall is marked by the chronotope of "threshold", which "is connected with the breaking point of a life, the moment of crisis, the decision that changes a life" (Bakhtin 1981: 248). The Primary world is represented by the village of Wall, while the Secondary world - by the land of Faerie. The transition between chronotopes is made through the opening in the wall, which functions as a portal to Faerie. The realm of Faerie is inspired by folklore and fairy tales. In the novel it is a heterotopic space, which presents an unusual spatiality and temporality. The time passes differently in Faerie (in a few hours can be covered the distance of six months travel time), and some of its inhabitants are immortal. Its space is described as being "bigger that the world", because "since the dawn of time, each land that has been forced off the map by explorers and the brave going out and proving it wasn't there has taken refuge in Faerie" (Gaiman 2005: 25-26); and its maps are unreliable, and may not be depended upon. This heterotopic chronotope is the second type of chronotope that can be identified in the novel. The entire Faerie realm is an inverted utopia, or a heterotopia, containing numerous heterotopias, like: the meadow fair, the Serewood, the Lilim's hall, the sky-ships, Diggory's Dyke, Mount Huon, Hall of Ancestors, Mount Head, Mount Shoulder, Mount Belly and Mount Knees, the Chariot Inn, etc. For example, Serewood is a flesh-eating forest, which traps and consumes every living thing that gets into it, leaving only "dry bones". It is a forbidden place, that once entered cannot be exited. In the novel the Serewood trees were "stinging and smarting when they touched Tristran's skin, cutting and slicing at his clothes" (Gaiman 2005: 34). The only thing that saved Tristran was his ability to find his way through the Faerie, inherited from his mother. A further example of heterotopia is the Lilim's Hall, a heterotopic space unlike any other in the novel. At first glance it is a small peasant cottage in the woods inhabited by three old women. However, once entered, the cottage has "a mirror of

black glass, as high as a tall man, as wide as a church door", which shows a completely different image of reality. "There were three other women in the little house. They were slim, and dark, and amused. The hall they inhabited was many times the size of the cottage; the floor was of onyx, and the pillars were of obsidian. There was a courtyard behind them, open to the sky, and stars hung in the night sky above" (Gaiman 2005: 26). Another interesting heterotopic space is the sky-ship Perdita, which flies around Faerie hunting for lightning, and trying to capture it with a copper chest. It takes Tristran and Yvaine from a cloud they ended on, when their Babylon candle burned out, and takes them to a harbor-tree. The sky-ship is an inaccessible space for people, aside from its crew. It does not belong to a certain fixed space, but rather permanently changes its position, in accordance with the storms brewing in the skies. Similarly to a boat, it is "a place without a place, that exists by itself, that is closed in on itself and at the same time is given over to the infinity" (Foucault 1984: 9) of the sky. The sky ship also belongs to the third type of Fantasy chronotope that can be identified in the novel - the time and space displacement chronotope. All the magic transportation means in the novel are also means for space and time displacement. For example, Tristran Thorn travels through Faerie in search of his star by candlelight, which is a very fast movement through space and time using a Babylon candle. Unlike the wormhole effect of the opened doors or portals in *Neverwhere*, which is almost instantaneous, this type of travel takes the shortest route to one's destination through caves and mountain passes, through clouds and wild forests, lakes and "lonely crags", but it also takes time and depends upon the speed with which the candle burns out. It enables the main character to cover a distance that takes six months to travel in just mere minutes, as long as it takes to burn just half of a Babylon candle. This travelling method was inspired by the traditional nursery rhyme "How many miles to Babylon?", which is cited in the novel (Gaiman 2005: 32). Other means of transportation in the novel are: by means of the sky-ship Perdita, by means of a Lilim's cart, by unicorn, etc., which are all fast, yet slower than travelling by candlelight. Alongside these Fantasy specific chronotopes, one can also identify the traditional chronotope of the road combined with the motif of meeting, and the adventure-time chronotope, as well. In *Stardust* this adventure-time chronotope begins with the Dunstan's choice to help a stranger and his crossing of the threshold into the Faerie, and ends with Tristran's return to *Stormhold*. The adventure-time is constituted of short segments that form distinct adventures: the *Serewood* episode, the encounter with the unicorn,

the travelling by candlelight, the deaths of princes of *Stormhold*, etc. interwoven with instances of everyday life chronotope. Another chronotope that can be identified in the novel is the alternative history chronotope:

> Queen Victoria was on the throne of England, but she was not yet the black-clad widow of Windsor: she had apples in her cheeks and a spring in her step […] Mr. Charles Dickens was serializing his novel *Oliver Twist*; Mr. Draper had just taken the first photograph of the moon, freezing her pale face on cold paper; Mr. Morse had recently announced a way of transmitting messages down metal wires (Gaiman 2005: 2).

Gaiman uses an assortment of real historical events in a mixture with imagined ones, in an attempt at anchoring the narration in the recognizable reality chronotope, this way enabling the transition between chronopes.

American Gods exhibits probably the most complicated chronotopic structure of the three novels. It is a Fantasy novel, with elements of road trip novel, Americana, detective fiction, Gothic fiction, Science fiction, and Horror. Shadow Moon, the main character of *American Gods* is a former convict, released early from prison, because of his wife's untimely death. He is hired as a bodyguard and embarks on a journey through America, which ultimately ends up being a journey of self-discovery, during which he succeeds in saving the world. Aside from the main plot, the novel contains a series of subplots and a number of narrative episodes titled *Coming to America*. As a result, its chronotopic structure is more complex than those of the previously presented novels. The first type of chronotope is that of multidimensionality, obtained by transition between chronotopes. It is realized by transition between the chronotope of recognizable reality, represented by the nowadays United States of America, and the alternative realm of "ideas" and deities, the world "behind the scenes" (Gaiman 2002: 348). The transition between chronotopes or the chronotope of multidimensionality is obtained by the strategy of sidestepping, which is "the projection of the spatial axis of narrative onto its temporal axis", and implies that "extra spatial dimensions are displaced upon extra timelines" (Gomel 2014: 146). The realm of deities coexists with that of reality, and Shadow can see glimpses of deities' "immortal forms". For example, Mama-ji, the representation of goddess Kali is an old, shriveled woman, but looking at her Shadow gets the vision of a "huge, naked woman with skin as black as a new leather jacket, and lips and tongue the bright red of arterial blood. Around her neck were skulls, and her many hands held

knives, and swords, and severed heads" (Gaiman 2002: 138). In the alternate realm of "behind the scenes" time flows differently than in the recognizable reality chronotope. Several hours spent "behind the scenes" take almost a month in the real world (2002: 343 - 360), and a few steps become miles. This stepping "behind the scenes" also falls into the chronotope of time and space displacement. Another instance of this type of chronotope is that of traveling by means of a Thunderbird, which takes Shadows from the World Tree to the Rock City in mere minutes, or by stepping as through a wormhole, which involves Shadow's trip from the Hall of Death to Whiskey Jack's shack. The third type of chronotope present in the novel is that of heterotopia. There are multiple heterotopias in *American Gods*: the prison, the graveyard, the carousel, the mortuary parlor, motels, inns, the Rock City, the House on the Rock, the Urd's Well, the World Tree, the Lookout Mountain, the abandoned farm, "behind the scenes", etc. Among the traditional chronotopes used, one can identify: the road chronotope, combined with the motif of meeting (since it is also a road-trip novel); the chronotope of threshold (the carousel, the Hall of Death); the idyllic chronotope, which is represented in the novel in the form of a utopia. In the novel the small town of Lakeside, flourishes among the desolation and slow death of the surrounding towns, due to the protection of a kobold. It is, as claims the bus-driver, taking Shadow to Lakeside: a "good town", as well as the "prettiest town" she has ever seen. Nevertheless, this idyllic town hides a dark secret, which is the main reason for its prosperity. This idyllic chronotope is realized through the strategy of wormholing, where the utopia is marked by flaws, hidden carceral zones (Gomel 2014: 35) or heterotopias concealed in its midst. For example, the town of Lakeside is renowned for and got its name from the lake that it surrounds. The same lake that hides the bodies of the town's missing children, claimed as offerings by its kobold. The chronotope of carnival-time marks such places, like: carousel, Rock City, House on the Rock. Other chronotopes present in the novel are: the alternative history chronotope and the trauma chronotope (representing the historic trauma), both found in the narrative episodes *Coming to America*, that depict struggles, loss, and suffering, erased from the embellished and fictionalized history.

> The important thing to understand about American history … is that it is fictional, a charcoal-sketched simplicity for the children, or the easily bored. For the most part it is uninspected, unimagined, unthought, a representation of the thing, and not the thing itself. It is a fine fiction …that America was founded by pilgrims, seeking the freedom to believe

as they wished, that they came to the Americas, spread and bred and filled the empty land (Gaiman 2001: 73).

These episodes present the accounts of the first American settlers that brought their deities to the American land: the story of the twins sold as slaves, Agasu and Wututu; the story of Essie Tregowan sentenced to transportation for life; the story of nomads of the Northern plains, etc. The alternative history chronotope and the trauma chronotope are rooted in postmodern representation of history as fiction, as discourse, and in the concerns raised by this fictionalized history. The novel is organized through a number of narrative segments of everyday life and distinct adventures, which combined, form the adventure-time chronotope. E.g. Shadow's time in prison, Shadow's trip home, Shadow's abduction by spooks, the time he spends in Little Egypt, the trip to the Rock City, etc.

In Neil Gaiman's novels, time and space are of an utmost importance, mostly due to the fact that the alternate world or realm functions as a character, rather than just a setting. His chronotopes are vital to the narrative. For example, in *Neverwhere*, London is the main character. Every allusion, every reference in the novel, be it historical or geographical, literary or mythological, points towards London, its complexity, history, multiculturalism, and plurality. In *Stardust*, which is structured as a fairytale, if you place the plot somewhere else, it falls apart, because the plot events only make sense in the context of the alternate realm of Faerie. In *American Gods*, the entire narrative is impossible outside its main chronotope – United States of America, which is the main character in the novel, as well; tying up this way the disparate narrative episodes to the main plot. Gaiman bends space and time for the purpose of his plots. His "impossible topologies" encountered in the novels define the genres he writes in, and give his writings their specificity, allowing the treatment of such socio-historical controversial issues, as: homelessness, poverty, racism, discrimination, and others. The characters in the novels are also shaped and influenced by the chronotope. The common traits of the spacetime in the analyzed novels are: the use of the impossible chronotopes along with traditional chronotopes; the treatment of history as a fiction, and of maps as "unreliable"; the usage of alternative history and trauma chronotopes. Gaiman relies on the usage of intertextuality (Kristeva 1980, 1986) and on cultural codes, which make the dominant cultural and historical values, attitudes and beliefs seem self-evident, timeless, and obvious (Barthes 1977: 127-130), thus anchoring the texts interpretation to the chronotope of the recognizable reality. The differences between the chronotopes encountered

in the novels mainly consist in the employment of different strategies in obtaining these chronotopes.

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Ezra Pound's Cantos. Why so *meta*?

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Abstract:

If the general acceptance of meta- (μετά-) is something beyond or about something else, with Ezra Pound, it tends to be something about everything. Within an epistemological vortex of references, from American politics to medieval France, we, the readers, are given critical suggestions, reconsiderations and a considerable amount of work to do about and beyond the meaning of the words on the page. The Cantos *are a brilliantly assembled register of cultural signifiers. Merging in a context of dynamism, they signify beyond the primary connections to factual data. Myths, metaphors or metamorphoses become decontextualized representations, models and vehicles for a higher, more abstract or more complex vision of the whole. Pound is constantly using and manipulating meaning for a higher goal. This does not guarantee a full understanding of the characteristics of the signifiers, nor is it intended to. Therefore, the current paper focuses on the ways of and the reasons for writing about and beyond cultural elements.*

Keywords: *context, cultural signifiers, metadiscourse, metaphor, metaphrase, metamorphosis, metareferentiality, metatext, modernism*

Introduction

Since the bulk of our doctoral research has focused mostly on the extrinsically pertinent aspects concerning Pound's internationalism, with a focus on such imagological concepts as spector-spectant, ethnocentrism and otherness, as they appear in the Cantos (and not only), we find it profitable to tackle here some of the more intrinsic mechanisms of meaning production by focusing on the interplay of signifiers branching into an intricate network of intra- and intertextualities. It is, as W.K. Wimsatt put it, the critic's task or commitment to go into the poem and bring out trophies (1965: 215). And trophies we find in abundance in this American poet's texts, if only one takes the time and the patience to look for them. For the modern reader, several Pound Companions (Terell, 1993) are nowadays available and necessary in order to reach a fuller comprehension of texts like the Cantos. These forms of meta-literature compensate for the missing information, characteristic of Pound's laconic style, or for the actuality that has become outdated today. But poetry, according to Pound is "news that stays news" and the literariness of the text is conveyed by the poems'

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capacity to strike the reader's intuition and sensibility by a constant use of foregrounding and backgrounding of semantic references and context. The modernity of this device, together with Pound's encyclopaedic knowledge, makes the readers of poetry feel they are in the presence of greatness. With the inclusion of non-literary texts in the poem, doubled by sudden changes of code (of language) or even of alphabets (Chinese, Sanskrit), not to mention the blanks on the page, the reader is taken beyond his or her legitimate expectations of a poem. The poem becomes something about something else.

What part ob yu iz deh poEM? (Mauberley: 37)

The answer is in the *inclusiveness* of the epic. The poet (Pound/ Mauberley) uses the lyric as a poetic catalogue of signs. Parts of it relate to previous texts, others refer to the distant past or to the far-distant. Filtered through the personality of the writer, the poem superposes several layers of texts into one, to give a new, personal orientation to the whole. The text in itself becomes a part of its creator.

Modernisms

With the Modernists' reconsideration of the poem in the early '20s and their undertaking to *make it new*, special topoi, as well as poetic registers, have made their (re)entry into the literary, together with the revisitation of earlier models, like the Provençal, the Renaissance or the Antiquity. The poets of the High Modernist generation, with Ezra Pound as arguably the most aggressively modern of them all, and their fascination for the remotely past or the remotely far, helped accomplish an artistic re-evaluation of culture from a modern perspective. A secondary level of literariness was invented: literature *about* literature, and *including* (not only) literature. Hence the *meta-* dimension of the poems. The polyphony and the heterogeneity of the text make up the difficult beauty of poems like The Cantos, The Waste Land or Paterson, to be comprehended as a whole. Rather, the multitude of references, voices and centrifugal meanings span from philological re-interpretations of previous texts to social models, history, politics and ambitions of a post romantic cultural renaissance. In this irreducible abundance, Ezra Pound extended the limits of the language of poetry into a progression through ages and texts for the partisans of a cultural renaissance. In order to do so, Pound turned towards the Ancients:

> And then went down to the ship,
> Set keel to breakers, forth on the godly sea, and
> We set up mast and sail on that swart ship,

> Bore sheep aboard her, and our bodies also
> Heavy with weeping, and winds from sternward
> Bore us out onward with the bellying canvas.
> Thus with stretched sail, we went over sea till day's end.
> Sun to slumber, shadows o'er all the ocean. (C: 3)

These are the opening lines of the Cantos, in Pound's English version of the eleventh book of the Odyssey. Beginning *in illo tempore* with "And then…" suggests that the poem may already have begun long before the poetry reader started reading. Pound's magistral opening, in the mythical mode, starts by addressing our memory, more precisely the modern reader's prior knowledge of the Odyssey. Forwarding this passage in initial position (as it was first designed as the ending of Canto III) functions as a first attempt to intertextual recovery. Pound credits, apparently, his idealized readership with an enlightened reading practice so as to trigger an ideogrammic energy of symbolization from revisited texts.

Metaphrase

Revisiting Homer via a Latin translation by a sixteenth century poet, Andreas Divus, in other words poetically re-translating a poetic translation, rather than familiarizing the subject, it defamiliarizes what we knew about Homer by making the passage strange again. Latin was already a dead language at the time of Andreas Divus' translation, so by using a late Renaissance text loosely translated into an archaic-sounding English, the *metaphrase* functions as a go-between from mythical past to re-actualized present. This is, of course, aesthetically relevant for Pound's technique of *poetic actualization*. Raising the curtain on Ulysses setting sail and further addressing the spirits of the dead is in itself a *metaphor* of this poem populated by ghosts. It is also a *metadiegesis*, an epic within the epic. In the imposing archaic register of this Homeric epic, the shadows of the dead, who drink from the sheep's sacrificial blood, will start speaking in human tongues. This passage sets the tone for the voices and the masks to come to life.

Voices, in the Cantos, manifest themselves visually on the page as foreign dialects or in between inverted comas, in truncated quotations or in shifts of register. Pound defended this process used at length by inserting untranslatable and un-familiar linguistic forms everywhere: "I have never intentionally used any classic or foreign form save where I asserted: this concept, this rhythm is so solid, so embedded in the consciousness of humanity, so durable in its justness that it has lasted 2000 years or nearly three thousand. When it has been an Italian or French word, it has asserted

or I have meant it to assert some meaning not current in English, some shade of gradation." (Pound, 1991: 251) What the poet asserted is the truthfulness, or fidelity of the sources with the atmosphere or intention of the target text. In the beginning of Canto 20, for example, we read:

> Sound slender, quasi tinnula
> Ligur' aoide : « Si no'us vei, Domna don plus mi cal,
> Negus vezer mon bel pensar no val. (C: 89)

The quotation is from Bernart de Ventadorn's Provençal poem *Can par la flors* (when the flower appears). It means "If I don't see you, Lady for whom I must burn, even not seeing you can't match my beautiful thought of you." (Terell, 1993: 81) Its sounds are as close to Latin or to Romanian as phonetically possible. Here, Ventadorn, as Pound's poetical mask, speaks not in metaphrase but in the original. His discourse melts into the modernist text as a *luminous detail*, a fragment whose beauty would be spoiled by metaphrasing. Quotations are used as objects in the Cantos; they symbolize as things. They represent slices of reality included in the text. Translation, on the other hand, for Pound, was to be an ingenuous 'turning' of previously produced text, which in Aristotelian rhetoric would be the equivalent of *metaphorical translation*.

Here we have the two processes more frequently used by Pound to mirror and work through revisited texts: conceiving a rough *equivalent* of an unfamiliar source or using it *as such* in his Canto. The musicality which the poet found and praised in Provençal verse comes to meet the requirements of the long modernist poem, just as its title (Cantos) indicates. From this perspective, the poem has an elitist cast. Medieval sourcing represents an artifice taking the reader beyond the relative opacity of the Procençal and into a diafane *melopoeia*, i.e. words "charged" beyond their normal meaning with some musical property which further directs their signification. (1954: 25) As elitist as Pound's intention may seem, the sound of the verses appeals to any reader, whereas alliterations ("**S**oun**d**s**l**en**d**er", "**D**om**n**a **d**on"), assonances ("L**i**gur' ao**i**de: S**i** n**o'u**s") and the rhythm of the lines create an impression of ancient music. The awareness of a go-between from present to medieval past introduces a *diachronic* dimension in the synchronicity of writing. Once we comprehend, via footnotes or Companions, phrases such as Catullus's "quasi tinnula", Homer's rendering of the songs of the sirens, "ligur' aoide", besides the quotation from Ventadorn's lyric, we incorporate meaning from earlier literature into the context of the Cantos. "Any mind … worth calling a mind" will

discover "needs" beyond the existing categories of his or her language, Pound explains. (1961: 87-88)

About the opportunity or desirability of inserting passages from the classic or the foreign into the modern lyric, what needs to be clarified is the necessity of re-working them into a new sign, or a cluster of signs. The interpreter of these signs, made accessible to him from a poly-lingual context, must construct a *semiosis* based on the justness of their cultural context. The outcome of this process of interpretation is a signifying unit in the manner of a hieroglyph or an ideogram. The archaic, the classic and the melopoeic fuse together in a sort of signifying compound, which becomes the heart of the Canto. Imbued with the musicality of the Provençal, Canto XX continues:

> Betw**ee**n the **t**wo almon**d** tr**ees** flowering,
> The **vie**l held clo**s**e to hi**ssi**de;
> **A**nd **a**nother: **s**'a**d**or**a**".
> "P**oss**um eg**ona**turae
> **no**n memini**ss**e tuae!"   Qui son Properzio ed Ovidio. (C: 89)

The glittering melody of the *alliterative verse* (in bolded characters) above is enhanced by the preceding lines, when suddenly Ovid and Propertius (and possibly Eliot – *Possum*) join in this musical decorum of alliterative lyric, intermingling languages and sounds. The Canto slipped into a form of reminiscent diachronic set of motifs illuminating the synchronicity of the discourse. Hence the *metatextual* dimension of this passage in which Pound's text expands into a harmonious blending with other texts.

Metadiegesis

On a different level of interpretation, *the epic within the epic* has proven its efficiency as Pound's favourite technique of textual blending. In order to defend the inclusions of texts so different in nature into his poem, Pound forwards the notion of *historical equivalence*. In other words, *luminous details* found in history (Western or Oriental), art and texts can be joined together, if the link is pertinent. Translation, transliteration, quotation or metaphrase can enrich the epic if they prove relevant and if they render some of the qualities of the target text more vivid, in other words more authentic. If literal translation often fails to "make new" a poem to the modern sensibility, poetic assimilation or authentication in a broader epic such as the Cantos give the quotes a renewed signifying energy.

Pound's extensive use of quotations superposes layers upon layers of cultural signifiers, by a new articulation of subjects and by developing or

re-using themes or epic pieces, such as the often cited passage from Canto IV about Soremonda's death: "And she went toward the window/ The slim white stone bar/ Making a double arch" (C: 13). Later on, the same motif is reused, in Canto CXVII "Without jealousy / like the double arch of a window / Or some great colonnade" (C: 678). Another variant is pasting a quotation in its original form and reusing it in paraphrase in another Canto. Circe's words from the Odyssey, for example, appear in original form in Canto XXXIX "κακα φαργακ' ἐδωκεν" and in a paraphrase at the beginning of Canto XLVII. It is clear that such a palimpsest of quotations produces a special topos, by-passing the time and space coordinates and putting together voices from the past or the legendary with voices from the present, including Pound's own. Quotation, metaphrasing and repetition of motifs transform the modernist text into a literary *palimpsest*.

The question whether this process makes the references more accessible and poetic, or on the contrary, makes the Cantos more obscure and hermetic, is still a matter of debate. Pound's lifelong project had always been to assemble an epic for the Western civilization. As such, his Cantos were intended to be a practical instrument for instructing and rejuvenating the West by presenting it with the treasures of the Orient, and to that end the poet compiled a modernist encyclopaedia (from the Greek *enkyklios* 'well rounded' and *paideia* 'education') or *paideuma*, as Frobenius called it. Nonetheless, the poem, written with the declared intention of building something unique and singular, becomes the repetition of a repetition, which is the very essence of the modernist meta-diegetic epic.

Metaphor

Before moving further to consider some textual evidence of the above, we have to mention Pound's views on the metaphor, as it represents the very essence of his poetical discourse. Influenced by the orientalist Ernest Fenollosa, Pound saw in metaphor the very primitive device which speech is built on, and the first generator of poetry. The *meta-* in metaphor, standing for the subtle *transfer* or *carrying over* of meaning between tenor and vehicle, allows the tenor to go beyond *(meta-)* its habitual sphere of reference and to bear (*-phero*) unexpected semantic qualities (*luminous details* in Pound's terms) without impregnating it with abstraction. It charges the meaning to the utmost possible degree, much more than an *as if*. "Metaphor... is at once the substance of nature and of language". (1964: 23) So the Cantos builds itself into a knot of intersecting metaphors. To complicate things even further, Fenollosa introduced Pound to the Chinese ideogram, the metaphorical writing par excellence. In the ideogram, the

subject and object are fused together because the ideogram visually depicts the metaphoric layers of reality, as all the words are things. Pound used this as a metaphorical fusion technique between motifs, themes and characters. As in Canto IV, when the Provençal enriches the mythical mode as follows:

> Thus the light rains, thus pours, *e lo soleills plovil*
> The liquid and rushing crystal beneath the knees of the gods...
> > Danäe! Danäe!...
> the god's bride, lay ever waiting the golden rain (C: 15-16)

Notice how Pound blends the notions of light, rain and the divine fertility in Provençal original and the paraphrased myth. These are motifs of love, eroticism and rebirth, blended into a metaphor of the vital flow of creativity.

Another of Pound's metaphorical use of motifs resides in the social and political motifs that overlap so as foreground qualities and ideals observable in one of the models. For instance, the figure of John Adams appears in Cantos LII-LXXI, dealing with China and with American history, overlaying social themes in the juxtaposition China/America. Each world modifies the other and both are shaped at times into a loose allegory in favour of the Italian Fascist regime and of its leader. One line referring literally to nature can be considered as a moral reading of the Chinese history to follow, of all history and of the Cantos: "Strife is between light and darkness."(C: 320) The conclusion to be drawn from Chinese history is that good emperors and ministers follow good (Confucian) principles and bad ones do not. This is superposed over the principles of Western rule, for governments, as well as dynasties, take their "mandate" from the people (C: 322) and fall 'from losing the law of Chung Ni/Confucius". This is an ominous note, for it is the accusation Pound will bring against himself and Mussolini five years later in the Pisan Cantos, after the fall of the Fascist regime. In line 55, the Duke and the Italian people are addressed directly: "TSONG of TANG put up granaries/somewhat like those you want to establish". The Chinese emperor is obviously Mussolini in disguise. Personal identity surrenders to the interplay of moving identities.

After the last of the China cantos (Cantos LXI) carry the history of China down to about 1776 and anticipate the American Revolution and the rise of the Adamses, Pound presents the figure of John Adams metaphorically as an American equivalent for the Confucian good ruler. The ten Adams cantos that follow borrow extensively from the *Works of John Adams*. Pound's Adams is the man who, more than any other before him, brought about the birth of the United States as an independent nation.

His character is summarized by the Greek word *θυμόν* (that which animates breath, spirit, force of mind and will), showing the President as a vital force in the shaping of America by virtue of his passionate commitment to the respect of the law as the basis of liberty. That is what places Adams in the line of succession to the exemplary emperors of Confucian China.

What is intended here is a transformation of Western thought, modelled upon the East. Not only do motifs and political ideologies transform one another, but, as seen above, one often finds examples of toponyms, events, identities, or poetic voices in transformation. "It is ultimately a *metaphorical* device" – William J. Gordon explains – because a local object or situation in a poem, always by parody or analogy, tends to suggest another object or situation which is not present." (Gordon 1961 in Moss and Morra, 2004: 186)Thus, in Canto IV, mentioned earlier, Itys and Cabestan are presented in a metaphorical relation, just like Actaeon and Vidal in the same canto. The same holds true for De Tierci and Menelaus in Canto V, or, further on, for both of them, in opposition to Saint Boniface in the next canto. We may thus speak of a poetic technique relating metaphor to *metamorphosis*.

Metamorphosis

Used allegorically as an interplay of ideologies, stories and myths, metamorphosis as a poetic technique is justified in the light of its ability to *make new*. This expression is repeated in Canto LIII, together with its corresponding ideogram:

新

The symbol joins the notions of *sun* and *new* in a compound, meaning 'rejuvenation, renewal day by day'.

Another example points to the metamorphosis of the idea that it is immoral to twist the will, to defraud one's fellow in need: it is the case of usury. To express this in verse, Pound uses two stories in transformation: first that of Circe who appears extensively throughout the first half of the Cantos. Canto XXXII shows the mutations she inflicts on men: "and thus are become as mere animals/ ...where in a sty, a stable or a stateroom" (C: 158-59). Canto XXXIX is focused entirely on her, and it mentions the potions she concocts for her male victims:

First honey and cheese
　　　honey at first and then acorns
Honey at the start and then acorns
　　　honey and wine and then acorns (C: 194)

In a later canto, Circe's myth is linked to the idea of *usury* and of *lust* which transforms men into pigs:

> every bank of discount is downright iniquity
> Robbing the public for private individual's gain
> *nec benecomata Kirkê*, мah κακα φαργακ' ἐδωκεν
> neither with lions nor leopards attended
> but poison, veleno
> in all the veins of commonweal (C: 208)

Here we have Latin and Greek besides English used jointly to communicate the evil effects of usury. Greed is the link between the bank of discount and the luring traps of Circe. By intermingling the two threads in the canvas of the poem, Pound cleverly uses the theme of metamorphosis to transform the mythical into the social as Circe becomes a cultural signifier for greed.

Elsewhere, in the Chinese Cantos, we find the ruler Hien of Tang who dies in search of the alchemist's elixir "seeking the trasmutation of metals / seeking a word to make change" (C: 313). Immediately after we see the ideogram for *to transform*:

變

Here "seeking a word *to make change*" by plunging into Orientalism, as he saw it, had long been one of Pound's techniques for building a metatext. Everywhere the poet superposes cultural signs, or themes or referents; he adds an ideology to the source text(s), which was not present in the original. As in the episode of Soremonda's death, in Canto IV:

> Ityn!
> *Et ter flebiliter,* Ityn, Ityn!
> And she went toward the window and cast her down,
>   "All the while, the while, swallows crying:
> Ityn!
>   "It is Cabestan's heart in the dish."
>   "It is Cabestan's heart in the dish?"
>   "No other taste shall change this."
> And she went toward the window,
>   the slim white stone bar
> Making a double arch;
> Firm even fingers held to the firm pale stone;
> Swung for a moment,
>   and the wind out of Rhodez
> Caught in the full of her sleeve.

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        . . .  the swallows crying:
'Tis.  'Tis.  'Ytis! (C: 13)
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After being served her lover's, Cabestan's, heart in a dish by her jealous husband, Soremonda prepares her own defenestration. Here, the motifs of metamorphosis are highly intensified as Pound's text is woven from the epic of Cabestan and that of Itys, Procne's son, served in a dish to his adulterous father by Philomel. The legends blend with an echo from Horace, which makes the allusion even richer: *Ityn flebiliter gemens* (Horace, Odes, IV, 12): the swallow (Procne, metamorphosed) weeps Itys with such lamenting tones while making her nest. It is from the incessant leitmotif of the swallow's cry that the metamorphosis overtones are obtained. The two myths intertwine with the theme of love which must be free.

The metamorphosis of an idea operates a change within a change. Firstly, the text foregrounds a transformation as example (Circe's, Actaeon's, Procne's) and then turns it into an allegorical instrument for the extraction of a theme or idea (*love must be free from repressive action*) followed by its actualization in the cotext (*The Cantos*) and context (for example, Pound's incarceration due to his manifested ideology). About the *metamorphic* actualization of myths, Pound wrote in a 1915 essay in The New Age (quoted in Hirsch 1999: 132-33):

> The first myths arose when a man walked sheer into "nonsense", that is to say, when some very vivid and undeniable adventure befell him, and he told someone else who called him a liar. Thereupon, after bitter experience, perceiving that no one could understand what he meant... he made a myth—a work of art that is—an impersonal or objective story woven out of his own emotion, as the nearest equation that he was capable of putting into words. That story, perhaps, then gave rise to a weaker copy of his emotion in others.

Following this, the essay goes on to discuss myths that can be used allegorically to express political or ethical ideals.

Metamorphosis as metaphor

When Pound uses metamorphoses as metaphors, he makes them available to the sensibility of the informed reader in a form of language that by-passes language. Themes and motifs such as violence, beauty, freedom of love, perversity of usury or good leadership are generated out of this multifaceted diegesis that *transforms*, *adapts* and *repeats* them, mapping a multitude of semantic signs onto the canvas of such a broad metatext. The variety of signs, together with the interactivity of epics in Pound's never-

ending poem, is born out of a drive to use and to re-use the stories meta-diegetically into a cluster of ideas so as to *make it cohere* (C: 816). For this, Pound uses another term borrowed from the anthropologist Frobenius, that of *sagetrieb* (the instinct to tell stories, observed by Frobenius in the oral cultures of African tribes). Pound's drive to tell and re-tell legends is manifested everywhere in the Cantos, but the poem's originality consists in having the epics interact with one another, in energizing them, so that they become interconnected, mutually revealing.

For example, Pound's fascination for the Orient and his fascist ideals are treated in analogy, as Pound's Confucius lends moral authority to the Italian dictator's political goals. Theories on social credit and proper value increase, as opposed to usury, are placed in relation to writing techniques (good and bad writing). Further through the Pisan Cantos, Mussolini's fall and execution are poetically assimilated to Pound's own detention and François Villon's macabre lyric, *Testament*.

Recollection triggers meditation and association of ideas, such as in the Pisan Cantos, where the poet had almost no sources available for poetry writing, and memory pointed out references forwarding the motif of a consciousness of loss, against the background of the Italian detention camp. The tone is that of Villon:

> Saw but the eyes and stance between the eyes,
> color, diastasis,
> careless or unaware it had not the
> whole tent's room
> nor was the place for the full ειδωσ
> interpass, penetrate
> casting but shade beyond the other lights
> sky's clear
> night's sea
> green of the mountain pool
> shone from the unmasked eyes in a half-mask's space.
> What thou lovest well remains,
> the rest is dross
> Fist came the seen, then thus the palpable
> Elysium, though it were in the halls of hell (C: 540-41)

There is much seeing in this passage, as the Canto mirrors back one of Cavalcanti's *Canzone*, where *love* comes from *seeing*, which in turn leaves so many "forméd traces" or elements of experience in the consciousness of the lover, so that the heart becomes an *Elysium* able to record and store images

in itself, like a poem. Pound's *Canto*, or the Cavalcanti's *Canzone*, lyrical forms of verse meant to be read out loud, or sung, or learned *by heart* take us back to the notion of *sagetrieb*, the drive or instinct to tell legends, orally, to the members of the community; the stories told in the final instalments of the Cantos foreground a series of myths gravitating round such themes as *metamorphosis* and *substitution*, on a background of *loss*, *regret* and *fear* of futility and of madness. These fragments of Cantos reach an ultimate shattering of the voice as in the following lines:

> I have brought the great ball of crystal;
>   who can lift it?
> Can you enter the great acorn of light?
>   But the beauty is not the madness
> Tho' my errors and wrecks lie about me.
> And I am not a demigod,
> I cannot make it cohere. (C: 815-16)

The metaphor of the ball of light is all too illustrative here. For the legend teller, who no longer uses masks but the *I* more than anywhere else in the Cantos, the *sagetrieb* is threatened by the incoherencies and contradictions in the epic. This disillusioned retrospective assessment shifts the technique from prevalence of *metaphrase* to *metaphor*, as the overwhelming quantity of the signifying units, forming the magician/ storyteller's *ball of crystal*, jeopardizes the intended finality of this all-too-inclusive poem.

Towards the end of the passage, the tone takes the form of lament:

> Let the Gods forgive what I
>   have made
> Let those I love try to forgive
>   what I have made. (C: 822)

Jean-Michel Rabaté (2010: 140) sees in forgive some remnants of give, of transmission of the gift of the poem, paraphrasing Mallarmé, but also of forget, which compromises the sagetrieb and the very essence of an epic. The former make it appropriate for the unfinished poem to be "given forward" and allowed to be reworked into new intertexts. The latter justify a lyric of regret and a subsequent silence of the poet that lasted until his death. As Pound's Cantos were intended to express a poetics of impersonality, the dislocations, cracks and the irregularities in the discourse prevail, but the intertextualities and the frequent plunges into semantic areas of different cultures and eras in search of the "gold thread in

the pattern." (C: 807) make up the meta-textual dimension of this epic at the scale of the 20th century.

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