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*** The contributors are solely responsible for the scientific accuracy of their articles.**

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Editor's Note

The current issue of *Cultural Intertexts* – a Journal of Literature, Cultural Studies and Linguistics – comprises eighteen articles and two book reviews signed by scholars and researchers from seven countries.

The articles focus on various cultural manifestations and representations, as well as on their subtle but relevant interrelatedness. Literary texts and contexts, public/media discourses, private correspondence, visual art, museography, film and geopolitics are all tackled in view of highlighting the real versus the imaginary, identity (re)constructions, strategies of (re)writing, power structures, post-totalitarianism, manipulation and rhetoric, fictional cartographies, narrative techniques, translation and editing issues, linguistic contamination and multimodal communication.

The corpus selected by the authors covers a wide range of traditional and modern cultural texts: the Bible and its translated versions; Shakespearean plays and recent translations/adaptations; Victorian women's writing; early modernist fiction in English; contemporary American, Canadian and Georgian novels; films foregrounding self and other; speeches by famous international leaders or by local politicians; prospectuses for educational marketing; private letters of political victims and victimisers; the conceptual poster at the crossroads of fine and applied arts; the museum as a vehicle for national identity and shared heritage.

As for the book reviews, they advertise the outcome and findings of undergraduate and post-graduate research at the Faculty of Letters in Galati, Romania, with reference to a collection of essays in the field of Film Studies written by master's students, and a volume based on a doctoral dissertation in Literary Studies.

The editors thank the members of the scientific committee for their invaluable suggestions and corrections, which have made the publication of this volume possible.

Michaela Praisler

"But They're Nothing Like Us!" A Pedagogic Approach to Shakespearean Drama in Kuwait

Shahd ALSHAMMARI*

Abstract

This paper considers teaching British canonical texts such as William Shakespeare's tragedy Othello, the Moor of Venice *in multicultural settings. The author discusses her experiences with teaching Shakespearean drama to a group of undergraduate students who are not essentially interested in Western texts. Making connections to the students' immediate lives proves to be essential in drawing the students into a more active learning environment that brings Shakespearean texts closer to home. By localizing Shakespeare's text, the students were able to find literary value that resonates with their own lived experiences. The classroom thus becomes a place of safety and finding one's voice both inside and outside the classroom.*

Key words: *Shakespeare, Arab, personal narrative, pedagogy, cultural studies*

When teaching literature to undergraduates, it is crucial to be aware of the cultural implications involved in addressing students with different backgrounds. We cannot simply transfer William Shakespeare's work to a group of Kuwaiti and Arab students and expect them to feel as interested as students in a Western classroom. Literature breaks through boundaries and crosses national frontiers, but how transferable is British literature to a contemporary Kuwaiti classroom? Renaissance drama has always been part of the canon of English literature and the presence of a name like Shakespeare's in the undergraduate syllabus is almost unquestionable. We cannot deny the prevalence of British literature in the construction of the English canon, although it is contested by postcolonial critics, and there tends to be a pedagogical move away from 'English Literature' and towards 'literatures written in English' or 'World Literature.' Yet we cannot have graduates of English literature without exposing them to the literary

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genius of Shakespeare and the provocativeness of his work. Kuwait can boast about Sulayman Al-Bassam, playwright and theatre director, founder of the Zaoum theatre company as well as of the Sulayman Al-Bassam Theatre of Kuwait. Al-Bassam is famous for re-workings of Shakespeare (i.e. *The Al-Hamlet Summit*, *Richard III: An Arab Tragedy*). Although his works are well known internationally, not many students are aware of his adaptations. Scholars are interested in Al-Bassam's work while students remain distant and disconnected from the arts in general, and theatre in particular. To teach them a Shakespearean text and illustrate its importance is crucial to draw their attention to the universality of the work and its timelessness. But how is this done in a very practical sense? This paper draws on personal and pedagogical experiences in teaching Shakespeare.

I used to teach at an undergraduate institution in Kuwait that caters to students from different socioeconomic backgrounds, those that are less privileged socioeconomically. I do not wish to categorize or homogenize their experiences, but, for the sake of qualitative data, many of my students come from tribal backgrounds. The majority of the students were *Bidoon*. The Bidoon Rights Organization defines this category as Kuwait-born individuals who do not possess citizenship, and are also referred to as 'stateless' or, more recently, 'illegal immigrants.' According to Rania Al-Nakib in her *Education and Democratic Development in Kuwait: Citizens in Waiting*, Kuwait's population is heavily divided:

> Kuwait's population is usually split into a series of binaries: Kuwaitis / non-Kuwaitis; original / naturalized citizens; Muslims / non-Muslims; Sunnis / Shias; hadar (townspeople) / bedouins; men / women; and adults / children. With these varying categories come varying degrees of legal rights and social belonging. In each binary, it is the first that is most recognized, so 'original' Kuwaiti Sunni Muslim, hadar and male adults – a decidedly small group considering that expatriates outnumber locals by almost two to one, and women, bedouins and youth make up the majority of the local population. This divisive approach often puts members of the various binaries into dichotomous relationships (...). (2015: 5)

Al-Nakib accurately diagnoses the split conditions in Kuwaiti society. When teaching the youth one must be vigilant about the social and political atmosphere while utilizing literature to assist the youth in thinking critically about their own lives. Most of the youth are passive learners, struggling to deal with their socio-political realities. In Kuwait, the Bidoon community suffers from a denial of access to public education, healthcare, employment, and other basic rights and services. As such, my students are

part of an under-privileged community in their own country. They come to the campus with personal burdens, personal stories about the lack of human rights, and the long dead Shakespeare is certainly not on their agenda of priorities. At times, I felt slightly uncomfortable with teaching them about Shakespeare, a Western figure, so alien to them and their troubles. I knew I had to make Shakespeare semi-interesting, semi-relevant and tailor his work to their interests and lives

The Renaissance course I teach deals with sixteenth-century British culture, history, and socio-political ideologies. In an over-packed semester, students must engage with the material and approach the difficult Shakespearean language. For Arab students, the English language is not easily accessible, and there is no question about the daunting language of the Renaissance. To address the complexities involved in teaching both language and content that is difficult to grasp, one has to first become acquainted with culture; culture cannot be separated from the classroom.

As any teacher of literature, I started the semester feeling excited about teaching. But there is always a contradiction, a conflict between theory and the practice of teaching literature. When I first introduced Shakespeare's *Othello* to my students, I was met by blank faces. Every teacher of literature expects (perhaps naively) that students will react favourably to Shakespeare. There was an overwhelming silence in the classroom, and a general consensus that Shakespeare was overrated, boring, and too difficult. More significantly, the man is dead. Did the students really care whether Shakespeare was the epitome of the English literary tradition? There was a huge cultural gap between Renaissance England and modern-day Kuwait. It was a lot to ask of today's students to relate to a time and culture that seemed so distant. Not only did I want my students to absorb the material, but I was also striving to instil an appreciation of the studied works. I felt slightly optimistic and, at times, worried that I was aiming too high. I believed wholeheartedly that the instructor's job was to transfer that love of literature to students. Drama was one way I could begin to explore this goal.

Rudyard Kipling's *The Ballad of East and West* asserts that East is East and West is West but contrary to Kipling's conviction, my own research has always been centred on the idea that "East is East and West is West, and the twain *do* meet." Recent postcolonial scholarship has highlighted the importance of upholding difference, specifying different experiences of women worldwide, and fearing homogenizing "women" or "Easterners." Although this approach is critically crucial, and has liberated different women from falling under one category, it has neglected human

commonalities and parallels in the human condition. My personal approach to teaching literature is that it is universal, and it is this universality that I attempt to underline and accentuate in my teaching. In "Borders and Bridges" Ngugi Wa Thiong'o insists:

> It is only when we see real connections that we can meaningfully talk about differences, similarities, and identities. So the border, seen as a bridge, is founded on the recognition that no culture is an island unto itself. It has been influenced by other cultures and other histories with which it has come into contact. (2005: 391)

As a literature teacher, I am deeply committed to finding the humanitarian value in reading literature. When I assign texts, my intention is to find commonalities between the characters' fictional lives and reality. Patrick Hogan's *The Mind and Its Stories: Narrative Universals and Human Emotion* underpins this very idea of human commonality. He argues that "literature…is not produced by nations, periods, and so on. It is produced by people. And these people are incomparably more alike than not. They share ideas, perceptions, desires, aspirations…and emotions" (2003: 3). As such, even though Shakespeare's work is 'coloured' with Englishness, the text still manages to speak to the readers on multiple levels. At a first glance, these commonalities are not immediately obvious. Given that connections and parallels are important in establishing a bridge between different cultures, I aim to tackle the similarities between Othello and Desdemona's fate and my students'. In *Othello*, the question of gender is perhaps not as obvious as the problematics of race and social intolerance. However, *Othello* remains 'infested' with racial slurs and social discrimination.

To begin with the question of race, we address the issue of social hierarchy. Othello is a Moor, a black man, and, it is inferred, a Muslim. Usually, I insist on students understanding his racial and religious background, and, admittedly, I highlight the "Moor/Muslim" part of his identity so that they could empathize and connect with him. Because Othello also seems to convert to Christianity, I tread carefully when discussing his religion. My aim is never to highlight Othello as a traitor of Islam as apostasy is considered a serious crime in Islam. Since students need to connect with Othello, I do not draw their attention to this issue, but rather choose to focus on his outsider status. Othello is of a darker skin colour and, in Kuwait, as in many other gulf states, darker skin colour is often regarded as inferior. Students immediately pick up on the racial slurs

and their interest is peaked. There are racial politics at hand within the classroom and the community. My aim is to start a critical debate and discuss issues of identity, citizenship, and tolerance. I ask the students to pause and think: how different is Othello, Shakespeare's creation, from us? Immediately, we are able to discern that Othello is an outsider, rejected by society, who struggles to make a home for himself. Like my *Bidoon* students, Othello finds himself on the margins of society. He belongs and does not belong, he is both an insider (having married Desdemona) and an outsider (racially). He has worked for the country, served in the army, and yet he remains "unhoused" (1. 2. 230). Othello is at once at home in Venice and a stranger. This question of belonging is at the heart of the discussion in class. Because my students are born and raised in Kuwait, yet do not have legal status, they suffer from a complex relationship with identity. What does it mean to belong to a community? What kind of psychological repercussions are implicated in identifying oneself as a member of a community that does not grant you equal rights or socio-political status? Othello's tragic flaw is his insecurity, his uneasiness about rightfully belonging. Although Desdemona chooses to marry Othello, he remains unconfident about his place in her heart (as well as about his place in society). It is this lack of belonging that mitigates his jealousy and insecurity. After questioning her fidelity, Othello finally murders Desdemona. The couple's tragic ending can be interpreted in endless ways. The discussion with my students is always fruitful. For the most part, they perceive Iago as the symbol for society's backwardness, racism, and social intolerance. The annihilation of Othello is due to external factors (Iago's manipulation, society's injustice) rather than any mere action on Othello's part. They are able to sympathize excessively with Othello, while at times, even excusing his murder of Desdemona. When I explain what the tragic flaw means, this tends to become the main issue in the debate on the meanings of Shakespeare's *Othello*. Everybody admits that they have a tragic flaw. They have felt insecure, afraid of rejection (especially in love matters), and they have acted out of character. Most male students tend to sympathize with Othello's jealousy and do not label it as "jealousy" but rather choose to see his murder of Desdemona as him defending his honour. Honour must be protected at all times, and while murder is highly problematic, and a sin, the students recognize that Othello cannot allow himself to be cuckolded. The discussion often begins with nervous laughter and ends with a solemn consideration of the murder of the beloved – does it really benefit anyone? Othello ends up killing himself and that, too, in Islam, is considered a sin. How successful is Othello in maintaining his

honour and fulfilling his life as an outsider, a soldier, and a lover? The text raises many questions that disturb my students and we are left pondering what they might have done in a similar situation.

Othello and Desdemona's interracial marriage is transgressive in every way. It is a personal act of love, yet it also carries political significance. In *Shakespeare, Race, and Colonialism* Ania Loomba states that "Desdemona not only disobeys her father and chooses her own husband, she defends her choice in front of the Senate, openly affirming her sexual passion for Othello" (Loomba 2002: 101). There is a plethora of feminist debates surrounding Desdemona's stance in the play. Is she an active socio-political agent? Is she passive, allowing Othello to commit her to "whoredom" and becomes a victim of a man's irrational bouts of jealousy? While there are many different interpretations, I urge my students to consider the ways in which Desdemona's desire to choose her marriage partner mirrors the dilemma of traditional marriage versus marriage for love in their own lives today. In Kuwait, and in many parts of the Middle East, traditional marriage is still alive and well. Gender relations are dominated by patriarchal ideologies. It is not common for a woman to rebel against her family's (or father's) wishes, let alone in a conservative or *Bidoon* community. There are multiple factors that shape my female students' experience. Like Desdemona, they are expected to be modest, "good girls", "honourable" and refrain from upsetting the status quo. Desdemona's choice is considered a betrayal of her father. Brabantio (Desdemona's father) states: "O, she deceives me past thought… O treason of the blood!" (1.1.169). Brabantio's understanding of this familial responsibility and fixation on blood ties and kinship is very reminiscent of Bedouin and *Bidoon* traditional culture. The emphasis on patrilineal blood ties is a distinctive part of tribal culture. As such, Shakespeare's Brabantio is not altogether different from Bedouin and *Bidoon* fathers who will not have their honour threatened. Similarly, the concept of purity of race is still a dominant ideology in modern Kuwait. Blood does not mix, in the same way that sixteenth-century English culture upheld the concept of "pure" Englishness. Blood is mentioned many times in the text and it is this obsession with blood as both a physical, visceral, and biological element as well as a social marker of identity and lineage that is theorized in our interpretation of the play. Blood is understood in multiple ways, and it is almost always a marker of lineage, and that lineage is considered one of purity and bearing the essence of the family.

When we consider Desdemona's insistence on choosing her husband, students are usually divided in opinion – there are those that

support her rebellion, while there are some who believe her death is the price of her calculated rebellion. This brings us to the topic of ethics and ethical criticism. How do we make a moral claim, if a moral claim cannot be universal and absolute? Are we, as readers, making moral judgments about the characters? I tell my students that it is our job to interpret, to give the text meaning and, at the same time, there are many ideas (such as gender roles) and questions that are touched upon in our discussions. Can my students separate their own cultural assumptions from the text? An objective reading is impossible. Desdemona's choice to marry Othello is provocative and dangerous, yet it grants her agency. When we consider gender roles in the region, Desdemona's performance of this agency is not always regarded favourably. The aim of highlighting Desdemona's choices is for students to consider different gender roles and expectations. Both Othello and Desdemona suffer because of society's expectations of ideal femininity and masculinity. When juxtaposing these fictional experiences with real lived experiences of men and women living in the Middle East today, the play's message becomes one of tolerance and inclusivity. It is an ongoing debate and allows the students to think critically and express their own lives verbally and in a written form.

As such, *Othello* is not a text that is simply concerned with patriarchy and even less, "femaleness." It deals with marginality, otherness, and the subversion of power structures. When considered in this light, it opens up room for more discussion. Literature, then, (Shakespeare, in this specific context) is meant to be inclusive. It should not alienate students, but rather bring them closer to the text, bridge the gaps between their lives and imaginary lives. Using the texts as starting points to create a sense of personal agency is crucial. For instance, my students' personal experiences and oppressive environments are significant. When we discuss these experiences we bring the text to life and bring their experiences to the forefront of the discussion.

> When the student feels the validity of his own experience, he will cease to think of literature as something that only a few gifted spirits can enjoy and understand in an original way… The instructor's function is… to help students realize that the most important thing is what literature means to them and does for them (Rosenblatt 64).

The Humanities, then, are not apolitical. The study of literature is relevant and instils a deeper understanding of one's reality. Empathy is also fuelled and developed through understanding other realities and

cultures. By bringing Shakespeare to modern-day Kuwait, at the end of the semester, my students are able to enjoy the work, yet they are also able to develop critical insight into their own lives and their status in society. At the universal level, we are able to stress commonalities and parallels, while at the social level, in particular, we are able to address issues that truly matter.

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Clowns, Guns and a Writer's Block: Romanian-American Encounters in *Her Alibi* (1989)

Gabriela-Iuliana COLIPCĂ-CIOBANU*

Abstract

When Bruce Beresford's film Her Alibi *was released in early 1989, it was unenthusiastically received by the American critics and audiences as just another mixture of romantic comedy, crime and mystery, better suited perhaps to television than to the big screen. What seems to be paid little attention to in numerous professional or amateur reviews of the film is that it actually foregrounds the encounter of the American culture with the Romanian other. Not only does it reflect cultural differences that shape the sense of identity of the American hosts and of the Romanian migrants, but it sets them against the background of the tensions between the West, represented by the USA, and the East, represented by communist Romania, over the last years of the Cold War. The paper proposes an imagological exploration of the interplay of images of American identity in the late 1980s and of the Romanian migrant, trapped between 'Home' and the 'West', in an American production that, more or less explicitly, draws on propaganda-ridden Cold War themes.*

Key words: *film, self/other, migration, East/West, propaganda*

As early as December 1988, *Variety* magazine announced the coming out of a Warner Bros. film that got "high-gloss, top-talent treatment" yet was disappointing by its "general lack of credibility" (Variety Staff 1988). Directed by Bruce Beresford (famous, at the time, for *Tender Mercies*, 1983, and *Crimes of the Heart*, 1986), written by Charlie Peters, produced by Keith Barish, designed by Henry Bumstead ("who's done everything from *Vertigo* to *To Kill a Mockingbird* and from *The Sting* to *The Little Drummer Girl*") and assembling "a world-class technical slate" [1] (Benson 1989), *Her Alibi* did not impress the critics upon its release in the USA on the 3rd of February 1989, being dismissed as "endless, pointless and ridiculous, right up to the

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final shot" (Ebert 1989), a "bad" movie Simon 1989), "a romantic melodrama of a boringness to make your average tooth extraction seem preferable" (Canby 1989). Three major flaws were recurrently signalled, even in reviews dated years later (e.g. Minson 2000, Weinberg 2003): Beresford's surprisingly "weak direction" (Minson 2000); the casting of Tom Selleck and Paulina Porizkova in leading roles; and, above all, the plot of the screenplay, described as "dodgy" (Minson 2000), "loosely crocheted" (Benson 1989), "a wandering mess" (Weinberg 2003). Tom Selleck, well known to the American audiences from the successful comedy *Three Men and a Baby* (1987) and the TV series *Magnum, P.I.* (1980-1988), particularly adored then by female viewers as "the closest thing (...) to Clark Gable" (Benson 1989), impersonates Phil Blackwood, a writer of successful, though rather bad, mystery novels, who, desperate to overcome a writer's block, seeks inspiration in the cases tried in court. There he falls in love with a murder suspect, Nina Ionescu, performed by the "gorgeous international model" (Simon 1989), "turned-hopeful-actress" (Weinberg 2003), Paulina Porizkova. His uncanny decision to provide her with an alibi, even if it entails the risk of his being imprisoned for visiting her in jail disguised as a priest and then for lying about their alleged affair, triggers a series of 'accidents' that endanger his life. Many of Phil Blackwood's experiences – which put Tom Selleck in the position of "lurching about like Chevy Chase" (Benson 1989) – are incorporated in a new novel and reshaped, in bombastic prose, to make his fictional alter-ego Peter Swift hero-like. The contrast between macho Swift's actions and Phil's "own klutzy behaviour" (Benson 1989) is intended as a source of fun in the film. Mixing "sexual tension, physical danger and quirky black humour" (Variety Staff 1988) with "not very inspired slapstick" (Simon 1989), the film's narrative thread progresses, naturally, towards a happy ending: a family is reunited amidst a crowd of merry clowns, the lovers are reconciled and the villains are arrested. Still, doubts about Nina's innocence seem to linger on.

Interestingly, although a large number of critics' reviews refer to the Romanian nationality of the leading female character Nina Ionescu, that remains, more often than not, a mere detail; actually, many viewers have even chosen (ever since) to ignore it in their unprofessional reviews posted online, for instance, on IMDb or Rotten Tomatoes. There seems to be little to no interest among the largest share of audiences in the fact that, though the film plot involves several (allegedly) Romanian characters, there is no Romanian actor/actress in the cast: the Romanian protagonist of *Her Alibi* is performed by a Czech-born model, whereas the minor Romanian characters are played by American actors (with the exception of the Polish-

born Liliana Komorowska). Moreover, focusing almost exclusively on acting and directing style, on the construction of romance as well as of the comic moments, film critics and ordinary viewers alike seem to pay little attention to cultural differences and the way they are represented in Beresford's film or to the ideological charge that is unavoidably added to its plot by the encounter of American and Romanian characters, of the capitalist 'West' and the communist 'East'. The present paper aims to explore, from an imagological perspective, precisely this dimension of *Her Alibi*, in order to reveal how, as a product of American popular culture in the 1980s, it constructs images of the American self and especially of the Romanian other, as perceived in the American collective mindset in the late years of the Cold War, subtly lending itself to anti-communist propaganda.

As Joep Leerssen points out, images are meant to be studied "as properties of their context" (Leerssen n.d.). Therefore, the proper understanding of the self/other representations in *Her Alibi* must be based, to a certain extent, on "historical contextualization" (Leerssen 2007: 28), in other words, on the consideration of the factors characterising the text production context, here including the political and social realities in the observing – American – culture, and the attitudes towards the foreign - Romanian – other at the time when the film was made. Although the film was released on the 3rd of February 1989, within days after Ronald Reagan was succeeded at the White House by George Bush, its production belongs to the last year of the Reagan era.

It is true that it is not the purpose of this paper to provide a detailed description of life in the USA in the 1980s and particularly towards the end of the decade, yet it is worth mentioning that, within this temporal frame, President Ronald Reagan's policies definitely reshaped American economic, social and political thinking. At home, Reagan promoted "a more optimistic and positive conception" of conservatism, labelled, hence, "new conservatism" (Dunn and Woodward 1996 qtd. in Busch 2015: 100), which fostered a "forward looking, individualistic, and freedom-loving political culture" but also caused "the conservative emphasis on restraint [to lose] to the seductive appeal of a materialist paradise" (McAllister 2003: 58, 55 qtd. in Busch 2015: 100). The economic plan that he and his advisors advocated, known as "supply-side economics", which presupposed "giv[ing] the tax cuts to the top brackets, the wealthiest individuals and largest enterprises, and let[ting] the good effects 'trickle down' through the economy to reach everyone else" (Greider 1981: 46–47 qtd. in W Brownlee 2015: 137), turned out to be less successful than expected, unable to stop recession in 1981-1982 or to prevent the crash of the stock market in 1987.

Even so, many middle-class and wealthy Americans continued to support Reagan's economic policies, choosing to turn a blind eye to the record budget deficit it created. The changes at the economic level and their social effects implicitly impacted on Americans' identity. As Bryn Upton puts it, "the flower children of the 1960s [who] became adults in the 1980s (…) struggled to reconcile their 1980s-era quest for financial reward with their youthful idealism"; they "embrace[d] a renewed image of America as a land of prosperity and opportunity" and measured success mainly in terms of material gain (2014: 128). But, though intrinsically related to "economic expectations", adult Americans' identity was also marked by emerging anxieties, chief among which the fear of losing one's job, and doubts about whether success should be measured exclusively in financial terms or whether getting more money was worth the sacrifice of personal happiness and self-esteem (Upton 2014: 128, 176). All these transformations in American public and private life, with its ideals but also worries and uncertainties, were represented in a wide range of products (music, television, cinema) of the 1980s American popular culture.

As for American foreign policies in the 1980s, they should be regarded against the background of the Cold War. President Reagan's administration continued to play on the ideological differences between the 'West' and the 'East', capitalism and communism, authoritarianism and democracy, and made efforts, therefore, to counter the spreading of Soviet influence in the world. In particular, from among the communist states, Romania had been the "the darling of the United States" (Kirk and Raceanu 1994: 1) since the mid-1960s. Romania's determination to be an independent socialist state resenting Soviet domination, as well as its openness to trade and good relations with the West, had brought about "a qualitative leap" in the American – Romanian contacts especially during the Nixon and Ford administrations, the best expression of which was the "U.S. extension of MFN [most-favoured-nation tariff treatment] to Romania" in 1975 (1994: 4). The renewal of MFN on a yearly basis by the American administration was conditioned, in the 1970s, by Ceauşescu's government granting the permission to migrate to the USA to Romanian citizens who applied for a visa and preventing human rights abuses. After the accession to the White House of Ronald Reagan, in the 1980s, stress rather shifted from U.S. concern with emigration issues to the violation of human rights in Romania "including religious freedoms, release of imprisoned dissidents, and even the economic deprivation of the Romanian people" (1994: 6). By that time, the increase of Romania's foreign debt had determined Ceauşescu to implement, "at the cost of substantially lowering

the Romanian population's standard of living" (1994: 9), a series of austerity measures meant to contribute to eliminating the debt, including cuts in housing, healthcare, education, culture and science-related expenses, as well as the rationalization of electricity, heating, hot water consumption, petrol and even basic foodstuff (bread, milk, cooking oil, sugar, and meat). That added to: the decline of Romanian industry and the decrease of real incomes; the growth of Ceauşescu's autocratic power (which tolerated no criticism of the 'beloved' socialist leader) and of state control over all aspects of life with the help of the *Securitate*; the denial of the freedom of speech, assembly and religion; and the unacceptable development of Ceauşescu's personality cult to which all media had to be subordinated. Against this background, with the drastic fall in imports from the USA and increasing trade with the Soviet Union in the first half of the decade, with Ceauşescu's reluctance to respond to American demands regarding human rights issues (fuelled by his paranoiac conviction that "Reagan was out to overthrow him for ideological reasons" – 1994: 13), the "special relationship" between the USA and Romania started to dwindle. In February 1988 Romania renounced the most-favoured-nation tariff treatment and found itself isolated both from the USA and from the Soviet Union and other Eastern Europe countries, where reform started spreading (1994: xi-xii, 13-14).

Historical contextualisation must, however, go hand in hand with the imagologist's awareness of the intertextual nature of images as tropes (Leerssen 2007: 28). Thus, a text like *Her Alibi* that focuses on the encounter of characters representative of cultures that fall on different sides of the West/East divide, like the American and Romanian ones, should be examined taking into account the conventions of national representation established by the use of film as an instrument of propaganda meant to win "the battle for the hearts and minds of the American public" (Upton 2014: 1) during the Cold War. According to Nicholas Reeves, "ever since the First World War the myth of the power of film propaganda has taught us to see the cinema as a very special weapon, uniquely capable of moulding and leading public opinion" (1993: 198). Its strength lies in the combination of positive, even idealised, images of domestic identity (self-images or auto-images) and negative images, sometimes gross caricatures, of the foreign Other that stands as the 'enemy' (hetero-images). This 'recipe' seems to have been largely preserved in many propaganda-ridden American film productions until the end of the Cold War in the early 1990s. "Cold War propaganda played up the notion of the U.S. as a liberating force and the leader of the forces of good in the world, while the USSR was evil and

attempting to subjugate the world" (Upton 2014: 8). These ideas came to grow strong roots in American mass opinion owing to the influence of American popular culture, in general, and of cinema, in particular, as "an extraordinary range of genres [comedy included – my note], many of which appeared innocently apolitical to most cinema-goers" (Shaw 2007: 5), developed upon them, more or less discreetly. In the 1980s, even if, after "the psychological crisis of the Vietnam War, the economic crisis of the early 1970s, and the spiritual crisis born of the long civil rights struggle of the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s", the Americans had started to see themselves in a different light, Reagan's more aggressive policies and stand in the Cold War, "designed to reassert America's position in the world", boosted American optimism and brought about "a rise in patriotic symbolism" in films (Upton 2014: 6, 12). Some films did actually begin "to reimagine the East versus West dichotomy", yet "the fear and anxiety that pervaded the Cold War era" endured and paranoia related to potential threats posed by some external – most likely communist – enemy continued to creep in Americans' minds, despite the successful meetings between Reagan and Gorbachev which suggested that there was "hope that the Cold War might come to a peaceful conclusion" (2014: 11-12). Against this background, Romanian characters in American films were rarely discerned from the 'grey' mass of Eastern spy faces threatening from behind the Iron Curtain (one of the relevant cases in this respect being *The Third Man*, 1949, produced in the first years of the Cold War). As *Her Alibi* shows, such characters re-emerge on screen as a source of paranoiac fear after the irremediable deterioration of American – Romanian relations in the late 1980s.

The beginning of Bruce Beresford's 1989 film projects abruptly a negative image of the foreign – yet unidentified – other when Lieutenant Frank Polito (James Farentino) is called to investigate the murder of a foreign student who had been stabbed to the heart with a pair of scissors. The hetero-images discernible in the dialogue between Polito and a police officer who had come earlier at the place of the murder clearly attach criminality to the representation of the other and differentiation is emphasised when the language the murderers spoke is described as "a weird language" (Beresford 1989) that the American neighbours who had heard them could not understand.

The second sequence puts exclusive stress on auto-images and introduces the main American characters, the novelist Phil Blackwood (Tom Selleck) and his publisher Sam (William Daniels). It recommends the film as a midlife crisis one, a genre that Bryn Upton (2014) considers

particularly fit for the exploration of the changes in American identity during the years of the Cold War. Phil Blackwood's midlife crisis stems from a failed relationship (his wife Susan had left him, ironically, for a critic), as well as from a writer's block which has been lasting for too long and which endangers his popularity as a bestseller writer and, implicitly, his collaboration with the publishing house, hence the potential loss of his financial security. Therefore, Phil is urged by Sam to take a first step to reclaiming his masculinity and inspiration by getting involved in a new relationship. Unfortunately, Phil is not ready to do that as his failure to convince a young and sexy American waitress to at least talk to him demonstrates. As for the quality of his writing, it seems to be so poor that, in a mock exchange with his Zenith laptop – an obvious sign of the technological advance in the American society of the late 1980s – Phil's decision to delete the document he had created is wittily greeted as "probably a wise decision" (Beresford 1989).

Thus, the next step that Phil takes to overcome his writer's block is to go to courtroom and hear some cases that might spark good ideas for his new novel. While in the company of "a quartet of old courtroom regulars [Oliver, FX, Millie and Rose] who greet [him] as one of them, cluing him in to the juicier cases in the building" (Benson 1989), Phil sees Nina Ionescu, a young beautiful Romanian introduced in the court as a murder suspect whose trial is, nonetheless, adjourned until a translator could facilitate an interview with her lawyer and allow the latter to construct the defence plea. This character that turns out to be the film's female protagonist, whose first name has rather Russian than Romanian overtones, is subtly cast in the stereotypical mould of the Oriental woman, mysterious, tempting, yet dangerous by her potential for cunningness and deceitful appearances (e.g. she speaks fluent English, yet, at the beginning of the film, she feigns complete incapacity to understand or communicate in the host culture's language). Such a hetero-image may be regarded as drawing on the pattern of supranational characterisation (Leerssen 2000 and 2007: 29) opposing the West to the East, perhaps less strictly along the lines of Cold War propaganda and rather in terms of the stereotyping, retraceable to nineteenth-century Western representations, of Romania as belonging to a picturesque, exotic, fascinating Orient, as well as in keeping with the 'traditional' Orientalist gendering of the West as masculine (here represented by Phil Blackwood) and of the East as feminine (here represented by Nina Ionescu). Not only is Phil instantly smitten with "drop-dead beautiful Nina" (Variety Staff 1988) but he describes her in his novel in relevant terms that project her image as that of a sexually

attractive, apparently innocent-looking woman: "She had the face of an angel, fragile, ethereal. He wondered what her breasts looked like" (Beresford 1989).

The mesmerising effect of the mysterious Romanian on Phil determines him to act foolishly, against his better judgment and the American law, and, disguised as a priest, he visits Nina while she is still in police custody in order to offer her an alibi. Phil's choice of a disguise reveals another stereotype deeply rooted in the Western collective thinking, namely that Romanians are deeply religious. Either because he does not know that the majority of Romanians are Orthodox Christians or because he expects Nina to belong to one of the religious groups more likely to be subject to restrictions and persecution by the communist regime, Phil dresses up as a Catholic priest, carries a cheap metal cross and a Romanian dictionary/ conversation guide instead of a Bible. Though obviously equipped with rather shallow knowledge of the Romanian culture, Phil proves to be aware of the importance of language as the "vehicle of a culture transfer" (Gavriliu 2002: 14), but he lamentably fails to communicate with Nina in broken Romanian, to her amusement:

> *Phil*: Bună dimineața. (wrong pronunciation) (English subtitles: Good morning)
> *Nina* (correcting him): Bună dimineața. (English subtitles: Good morning)
> *Phil* (repeats, this time pronouncing the words correctly): Bună dimineața. (English subtitles: Good morning.) (He continues to speak in barely understandable Romanian) Dumnezeu doreşte să ştii unde este toalet (English subtitles: God wants to know where the toilet is.) (Nina smiles.) Câinele meu s-a ... căsătoreşte astăzi. (English subtitles: My dog is getting married today.)
> *Nina* (still smiling): Felicitări. (English subtitles: Congratulations.)
> *Phil*: Să te ascult... (English subtitles: I'm here to listen to -)
> *Nina*: The word for confession, Father, is 'spovedanie'.
> *Phil*: Spovedania? Thank you. Mama mia este o caracatită. (Nina laughs.) What did I say?
> *Nina*: You just said your mother is an octopus. (Beresford 1989)

The scene is essential in sketching the profile of the characters as largely based on stereotypes and emphasising the distance between the two cultures. For instance, Nina's mistrust of her interlocutor, natural for someone who comes from a communist country where, as later on Rose (one of the courtroom regulars and Phil's friend) puts it, "you grow up not trusting anyone. Half the country informs on the other half." (Beresford

1989), lends certain verisimilitude to her character and may account for her initial denial of her faith: "You know, Father, I'm from a communist country. We have no religion" (Beresford 1989) [2]. Yet, the stereotype of the Romanian as a religious person is reinforced by Phil's revealing the well hidden pedant, a simple golden cross, which she is still wearing. Caught on 'the wrong foot', Nina accepts, still keeping her guard up, to talk to Phil. His attempts to help her find the right word when she is at a loss ("deceased", "destroyed", decapitated", whereas she means "despaired") and his questions about her sins ("You didn't cheat at cards? Steal anything? Do insider trading? Murder anybody?" – Beresford 1989) reveal not just his hope to find anything 'juicy' to give him an idea for his novel but also that he implicitly associates the Romanian other to crime and is, hence, prone to thinking the worst about Nina. It is actually Phil's confession that he is not a priest that alarms Nina, reminding of the fear of persecution and of being constantly spied on typical of totalitarian regimes like the Romanian one in the late 1980s. At the same time, Nina's lines – "Who do you work for? The police? (...) Who then? KGB?" (Beresford 1989) – draw attention to an inaccuracy, most likely reminiscent of the enduring tendency in the American collective mindset of perceiving all communist countries as subordinated to Soviet control (though Romania had repeatedly declared its independence from Soviet domination, on account of which it had been granted the MFN status since the 1970s) [3]. Even if Phil denies being there to spy on Nina and affirms his intention of providing her with an alibi after seeing her in court, she becomes defensive, even scornful, and voices clearly her awareness of being perceived, primarily, in negative stereotypical terms as a temptress and a whore: "What do you want in exchange? Sex?" (Beresford 1989). However, Phil's strong rejection of the idea that he might have such 'impure thoughts' ultimately makes her lend a more indulgent ear to his proposal.

As a matter of fact, Nina Ionescu's reserve and fear of surveillance by communist secret services is entirely justified by the recurrent appearance in the film of a small "band of spies" (Ebert 1989) made up of Troppa, 'Lucy' Comănescu and Avram (performed by the American actors Hurd Hatfield, Ronald Guttman and Victor Argo). Almost invariably dressed in grey suits and observing a well-established hierarchy, symbolic perhaps of the large-power distance (Hofstede et al. 2010: 61) characterising the Romanian totalitarian regime, they first make contact with Nina at the police station. Their interaction with the representatives of the American legal system – the assistant district attorney Craig Farrell (Bill Smitrovich), Lieutenant Frank Polito (James Farentino) from the Homicide Division and

the public defender Eugene Mason (David Chandler) – is civil yet obviously bearing the traces of mutual hostility: the communist agents require that Nina be released to the Romanian government, but their claim is instantly and sarcastically dismissed by the American hosts (Farrell: "Sorry, comrade. No can do. [...] The victim "made the mistake of being killed on US soil." – Beresford 1989). The short dialogue in poor Romanian between Nina, on the one hand, and Troppa and Comănescu, on the other, reinforces the stereotypical construction of the latter as 'messengers of terror' who put pressure on their victim to force her to tell them what they want to know and to cast a negative light on the ideological – American - enemy (Troppa: "Cum e să te culci cu temnicerii americani?/ English subtitles: "I hear sex with prison guards is very satisfying." [4]). However, having been for some time in the USA, Nina seems to have learnt to take advantage of the freedom of speech which is granted by the American democracy (a positive auto-image in the film). She defies her persecutors, verbally and physically (she slaps Troppa), implying that life, even in an American prison, would be better (since American prisons are "like Romanian hotels" – Beresford 1989). That shows the Romanian protagonist to be on the path to acculturation, adopting the values of the American host society.

Such behaviour does not discourage the Romanian *Securitate* agents from surveilling Nina from a distance. But, throughout the film, they evolve from threatening figures, whose 'long shadow' makes Nina still fearful, ready to accept Phil's alibi and to live, though initially unwillingly, in his Connecticut house, to silly foes, who will not be killed but ridiculed and laughed at. For instance, when they break into Phil's house looking for information about Nina, her family and her relationship with Phil, Avram chooses to use the spy camera to take pictures not of Phil's interview published in *Playboy* but of the magazine pages that arouse his senses by showing quasi-naked women. That reveals him secretly attracted to at least one aspect of the American popular culture, prone to breaking the rules and ultimately funnily hypocritical as he tries to save face in front of Troppa and Comănescu, turning quickly the pages of the magazine saying "Good interview!" (Beresford 1989). Moreover, the three agents become the protagonists of one of the comic moments of the film when they try to corner Nina in a shopping mall where she had come, on her own, to call her sister Laura from a public phone. The chase through galleries and shops ends in "slappy slapstick" (Minson 2000) as Nina, who proves to be an excellent acrobat, particularly skilled at bouncing from trampolines that

she conveniently finds in the mall, outsmarts them and makes them look clumsy and ridiculous.

Their caricature is rounded off by the scene of the accident that they have on the road while on their way to Phil's house to resume surveillance. In a hurry to take Phil to the hospital, after unintentionally shooting him with an arrow in his rump, Nina drives Phil's GMC tempestuously and in total disrespect of traffic rules – as she does in Romania (hence, another negative hetero-image) – and she forces the agents' car off the road and across a fir tree clump. More or less severely injured in this car accident, the 'bad guys' appear beaten, ready to give up the pursuit, though aware of the consequences that failure to fulfil their superiors' orders in the large-power distance socialist system might entail, i.e. imprisonment at Gherla. Their dialogue briefly alludes to Ceauşescu's personality cult as expressed through books meant to extol the 'excellence' of the communist leader (Comănescu: "Să citim operele complete ale iubitului conducător?"/ Should we read the beloved leader's complete works? – my translation). Yet, typical of American propaganda films, even the foreign agents would prefer American popular culture products – be they bad mystery novels – to the phoney praise of a communist dictator (Troppa: "Romanele lui Blackwood ar fi mai pe gustul meu."/ I'd rather read Blackwood's novels. – my translation) (Beresford 1989).

Surprisingly, the English subtitles in the consulted version of *Her Alibi* radically shift the meaning from caricature to the stereotypical Cold War propaganda representation of Eastern secret services as a source of violence and a threat to the security of their fellow countrymen (Nina, in this case) and especially of the American citizens:

Original Romanian dialogue (Beresford 1989)	**My translation**	**English subtitles (Beresford 1989)**
Avram: O urmărim degeaba. Nu-i vom găsi pe ceilalți.	*Avram*: We follow her in vain. We won't find the others.	*Avram*: She is not going to lead us to the others.
Troppa: Dacă nu-i găsim, ajungem la Gherla.	*Troppa*: If we don't, we go to jail. At Gherla.	*Troppa*: We must kill her. Then the others will give themselves up.

Comănescu: Să citim operele iubitului conducător?	*Comănescu*: Should we read the beloved leader's complete works?	*Comănescu*: But he is always near her. That tall writer.
Troppa: Romanele lui Blackwood ar fi mai pe gustul meu.	*Troppa*: I'd rather read Blackwood's novels.	*Troppa*: I'm not concerned with Blackwood. He is expandable.

Leaving aside the blatant disregard for the principle of equivalence in translation, the English subtitles prepare the viewer for the most obvious demonstration of the 'evil nature' of the Eastern enemy in *Her Alibi*. After Nina has finally let go of her fear of being used by the American other and accepted her blooming feelings of gratitude and love for Phil, offering him, first, a rose, then herself, the happiness and the security of the couple is endangered by an explosion in Phil's house for which the *Securitate* agents seem to be responsible (though Nina is again the prime suspect in the eyes of the American police).

Nevertheless, the film remains essentially centred on the relationship between Phil Blackwood and Nina Ionescu, and on the way in which their identity changes through cross-cultural interaction. For the white, middle-aged Phil Blackwood, who is "not very rich, but [does] ok" (Beresford 1989), the meeting with the young Nina is a chance to help the other, and especially to help himself. He hopes that the mysterious Romanian and her story could give him valuable clues to overcome a writer's block which endangers both his professional success in a competition-defined world (he is already regarded as a failure and mocked at by a fellow mystery novel writer) and his financial security (as his publishers have started losing patience after waiting for more than four years for a bestseller). With his big country house in Connecticut "which appears to have been furnished by Bloomingdale's" the day before he brings Nina there (Canby 1989), his big GMC car provided with a phone, kept in a garage with remote-controlled doors, or his Zenith laptop, Phil functions as a metonymic symbol of the prosperous American middle-class which enjoys the benefits of technological progress. By contrast, Nina Ionescu as a representative of the East evokes, in some of her questions and comments, the poverty and the technological backwardness attributed, stereotypically, to her home country. She asks if Phil's house is a hotel, is surprised to hear that he lives alone, and claims that Romanians "don't have phones in [their] houses", let alone in their cars. Moreover, her lack of

familiarity with how the garage remote control works and how well-equipped his car is generates a hilarious situation whose 'innocent' victim is Phil, "hurled onto his car with his face smooshed up against the windshield and the wipers on" (Benson 1989).

Phil and Nina's being very different is further emphasised in terms of their attachment to high or low culture: she is accustomed to reading "serious books" (Beresford 1989), like Proust's or Dostoyevsky's, whereas he writes mystery novels that his readers, including Nina, but also Sam and Frank Polito, find comfortably "predictable" (Beresford 1989).

Their relationship with their families reflects the rather individualist or collectivist nature (Hofstede et al. 2010: 91) of the cultures they belong to. Though he has a brother, Phil does not really keep in touch with him and joins his brother's (also well-off) family only occasionally, after his house is badly damaged by an explosion of unknown cause (Nina or the *Securitate* agents?). Phil's absent-mindedness and unusual silence at the barbecue cookout seem to draw the attention of his brother and sister-in-law who urge him to confide in them and to tell them what is on his mind. But their concern about Phil's state of mind and emotional problems turns out to be merely formal: while Phil finally starts speaking about his anxieties, his marital failure, the fear and doubt that still plague his relationship with Nina, his relatives and friends do not listen to him, preferring to discuss about such trifles as the best spice – paprika or parsley – to add in the salad and to joke about its effect on their sex life. On the other hand, Nina is very attached to her family, whose picture she cherishes and keeps on her all the time, she stays permanently in touch with her sister Laura, and is ready to sacrifice her freedom to save her family from the *Securitate* agents hunting them down.

Phil and Nina must learn to overcome their cultural differences for their relationship to become credible in the eyes of the rest of the American society and to bring them personal fulfilment as well. That seems like an achievable goal as long as Phil shows availability to see beyond appearances, to think of Nina in more than stereotypical terms and discover that she is more than "an exotic, sensual creature whose obvious passion (...) was barely contained beneath a cold facade" (Beresford 1989). It is true that most American men in the film seem irresistibly attracted to Nina and view her primarily as a sex object. For example, during the police interrogation when, convinced that the Romanian student, who has got a valid study visa, most likely obtained at a time when Romania still benefitted from the MFN agreement, cannot understand what she is told in English, the assistant district attorney Craig Farrell asks her if she would like to have his children. Sam, Phil's friend and publisher, is convinced that

she is "a tornado between the sheets" (Beresford 1989) and is surprised to find out that Phil has not had sex with her from the very beginning. Even Lieutenant Frank Polito, who is the most prejudiced against Nina and is convinced, up to the end, that she is a murderer, not because he has got enough conclusive evidence in this respect but simply because he mistrusts this foreigner who comes from the communist East, secretly desires her and envies Phil when he thinks he hears them, on the phone, making love: "She's an animal. She's tearing him apart. The lucky putz!" (Beresford 1989) (Actually, Nina is trying to help Phil pull out the arrow which accidentally injured him when the neighbours' dog distracted her attention causing her bow to misfire.) As time passes, Phil appears to become, unlike these men, more eager to believe in Nina's innocence and to look upon her as if she were "a lost child"; but his mind continues to be divided and "sometimes [he] think[s] she's hiding something" (Beresford 1989). Fear of the foreign other, especially if s/he comes from the communist East, a "familiar Cold War-era theme" in America (Upton 2014: 10), remains, hence, a dominant of the plot construction.

Indeed, Nina's reluctance to disclose personal life details (e.g. Phil: "Are you married?" Nina: "And Romania's 91,700 square miles." – Beresford 1989) – which contrasts with Phil's verbosity – together with her unusual and exceptional skills that Phil cannot understand as long as he knows little to nothing about her, deepen the 'mystery' that surrounds her. She hurls kitchen knives at the wall to kill bugs, is a reckless, though impressively calm driver, even when she risks causing an accident, as well as a skilled archer, rider and acrobat whose remarkable abilities turn out more than helpful in a crisis situation that could have ended tragically for Phil's nephew stuck on the barn roof; in brief, she "do[es] not fit in [Phil's] world" (Beresford 1989). Thus, her actions, even when well intended, are unfortunately misunderstood and enhance the influence of prejudiced, stereotype-ridden patterns of thinking about the Eastern other that dominate the 'software of the American mind' (Hofstede et al. 2010) and that Phil shares. Drawing Phil's attention to the fact that "her freedom would be practically guaranteed by [his] death" (Beresford 1989), Lieutenant Frank Polito, in particular, fuels from the beginning Phil's lingering fear of Nina and triggers his paranoiac behaviour. Not only does Phil lock the door of his bedroom thrice, but he pushes a heavy chest-of-drawers in front of the door to block Nina's access, in case she might try to attack him. (The explanation that he provides for his actions makes him look even more ridiculous: he is exercising!) He spies on Nina in a local shop when a shop assistant shows her a sharp kitchen knife and thinks that

she intends to use it to kill him (just as she killed the bug on the wall). He is afraid of a banal hair cut that Nina offers to help him with because the scissors might turn into a deadly weapon in her hands. The fact that he catches a glimpse of Nina, alone in her dark room, painting her face white in what he labels a "strange, exotic ritual" (Beresford 1989), gives him a nightmare filled with gothic images reminiscent of the Dracula myth and its representation in the Western mindset: on a stormy full-moon night, the bedroom door creaks open and Nina, with a whitened face and floating above the ground like some ghostly Dracula-bitten maid, approaches his bed and lifts up a knife/pair of scissors to kill him. Phil's persistent fear of and doubts about Nina's behaviour are transferred upon his fictional double, Peter Swift, who repeatedly wonders: "what if she was a killer?" (Beresford 1989).

Whereas Nina manages to overcome the culture shock stages of disorientation and even slight hostility (Hofstede et al. 2010: 384) to the American host environment (she makes several attempts to leave Phil but is always dissuaded from taking such action by the *Securitate* agents harassing her), Phil remains highly suspicious of her, though he would not admit it, and some accidents (the misfiring of the bow, the explosion in Phil's kitchen) that seem to cast doubt on Nina do not help, quite the contrary. That Nina "has slowly learned to function under the new conditions, has adopted some of the local values, finds increased self-confidence, and becomes integrated into a new social network" (Hofstede et al. 2010: 384-385) is proven by her feeling welcome among Phil's family members and friends to the point of cooking dinner for them. Her explanation for not joining them for dinner related to some Romanian custom on St Stanislaw's day, which is meant to reinforce her image as belonging to a profoundly superstitious Eastern culture [5], is hardly satisfactory for Phil and her story of St Stanislaw's martyrdom [6], by its gruesome details – "St Stanislaw went to convert [the heretics], but they captured him, cut his tongue out, hung him naked by the testicles and burned him alive." (Beresford 1989) – is likely to bring back stereotypical images of Romanians' savagery and violence. There is no wonder then that, when he discovers Beeswax, the cat, dead after having eaten from Nina's casserole, Phil, who has just confessed, to his family and friends' amusement, that he thought Nina responsible for all the accidents that happened, jumps to the conclusion that she has poisoned them all. In a black humour scene, the eight American characters try to save themselves from sure death by doing dry heaves, under the stolid gaze of the Mexican maid Consuela who does not understand the cause of all that fuss, and,

when they fail, they rush to the hospital to have their stomachs pumped and a casserole sample tested. The scene thus gives the viewers a full picture of the hysteria that is triggered by the fear of dying by the hand of a foreigner who is too beautiful and too good to be true and whom the American hosts should not have trusted. The irony is that, upon their return home from the hospital, they find out that the cat was accidentally electrocuted in the basement of a neighbour who 'solicitously' placed its body by the bowl where the casserole had been.

To Phil's misfortune, the grossest expression of his mistrust juxtaposes with Nina's greatest demonstration of trust. Though she plans to leave Phil in order to be with her family, she asks her sister Laura (Liliana Komorowska) to drive her back to the house to tell him the whole truth and explain her decision. With the whole party away to the hospital, Nina gets easy access to Phil's study where she discovers the electronic draft of his new novel. Reading it makes her realise that Phil's reasons for helping her were far from selfless, that he is still afraid of her and that he still suspects her of being a murderer. Phil's clumsy attempt to excuse himself – "Well, fear is part of any healthy relationship." (Beresford 1989) – triggers Nina's most explicit manifestation of independence and free will, values which, the film implies, she has acquired living among her American hosts: "I'm not a character in your book. You cannot tell me to stay or to go. And you didn't invent me. And you do not write my words. I do as I choose. And now I choose to go. Goodbye" (Beresford 1989).

This new major crisis that risks disrupting Phil's personal and professional life (because he does not know how his novel will end) finally determines the American protagonist to take action that confirms his being on the path of regaining his masculinity. The mystery generated by Nina's behaviour is cleared when, with the help of his courtroom friends, he finds out more about Nina's family. They are circus performers, famous acrobats who want to defect and had been hiding for a month with the help of American clowns, for the American authorities apparently would not get involved in such "political staff" (Beresford 1989). At this point, the film seems to temporarily leave aside subjectivity-defined textual tropes of otherness and to get better grounded in the historical reality of communist Romania in the late 1980s, when Romanian – American relations had deteriorated, the Romanian state's control over its citizens tightened to an almost unbearable level, everyday life was grievously affected by deprivation and lack of freedom and the only chance to reach the West in search for a better life was that of illegal migration. Naturally, as the film also mentions, the Romanian government did not want to lose such

"national treasures" as a family of highly-appreciated acrobats; "it would be bad PR for the comrades" (Beresford 1989). And, indeed, Romanian communist authorities feared that "asylum-seeking by a large number of Romanians would discredit the regime and threaten its legitimacy as a functioning political system, in the eyes of both foreign governments and remaining citizens" (Horváth 2007: 2). That is why, Nina, who had had the chance to obtain a valid study visa and live in the USA for a while, had to be very discreet in order to help her family and to protect them from the 'long arm' of the *Securitate*.

Interestingly, the film suggests that, in the American society of the late 1980s, despite some still lingering fear of the communist threat, there was greater sensitivity to and sympathy with the Romanian illegal migrants who struggled to be free and to become a part of the American dream. That can be best seen in the final sequence set at the annual clown meeting referred to as the *Funeral of Grimaldi*, where friends and foes, American and Romanian characters, ordinary people and state agents come together. Among the noisy clowns, national and cultural differences disappear, but ideological divisions endure. Phil takes the opportunity to save his 'damsel in distress', Nina, and rises to the mass American viewers' expectations when, like the macho heroes of the American Cold War cinema, he manages to triumph, barehanded, over the most aggressive of the Romanian agents, Comănescu; at the end of the fight, he is bruised and bleeding but the enemy is defeated. Furthermore, somewhat helped by the jolly clowns, Sam also regains his masculinity and lives his moment of glory after he manages to capture Avram. Nina's family is ultimately rescued from the most cunning and dangerous agent, Troppa, by the intervention of the police and of the federal authorities which, even if not acting openly against the Eastern threat, do not 'sleep in the dark' either. When Troppa is disarmed and invokes his diplomatic immunity, he is mocked at by a federal agent: "Yes, sir. Thank you for your information" (Beresford 1989). Polito brings the happy news that "the feds [had been] working on this defection deal", that the asylum request has been approved and that there are only some formalities to be completed at the State Department (Beresford 1989).

Still, even if all legal problems are solved and the Romanian immigrants enjoy the prospect of integrating in the American host society, the film's open ending is not that light-hearted and indicates that there are still good chances that cultural and ideological differences may not be fully overcome and that the 'ghost' of the fear of the Eastern other may continue to haunt the Western mind. Phil asks questions about Nina's involvement

in the death of the Romanian student at the beginning of the film and seems satisfied with her explanations until Nina hurls again, unexpectedly, a knife hidden under her pillow to kill a bug on the wall. After a moment of fright, Phil smiles and he and Nina kiss. Yet, the last sentences of Phil's novel announce that: "He felt he understood this woman completely. No part of her existed that he didn't know. Except, of course, what she didn't want him to know" (Beresford 1989). One may read that as indicative of the existence of a potentially dark side in this representative of the East, so the American hero should stay alert and ready to act to defend himself from any kind of attack.

To conclude, that most viewers have taken *Her Alibi* lightly, focusing rather on romance, comedy and performance than on the representation, in more or less plausible terms, of cultural and ideological differences seems to confirm Tony Shaw's remark that "in the battle for mass opinion (...), few weapons [are] more powerful than cinema", especially when propaganda is quite well 'camouflaged' in the filmic text (2007: 1). Beresford's film may be rooted in some historical realities enough to give a veneer of verisimilitude to the narrative. Otherwise, it draws extensively on mainly negative stereotypes in the construction of the Romanian other, combined sometimes with (linguistic and cultural) inaccuracies, and maintains "the East against the West trope" (Upton 2014: 20) as well as the theme of the fear of communism recurrent in Cold War American film propaganda. Therefore, even if not particularly well-made, *Her Alibi* is at least worth remembering as a film which foregrounds an interesting interplay of images of American identity and Romanian alterity as perceived towards the end of the twentieth century and of the Cold War, and which reveals something of how the marriage of ideology, propaganda and popular culture functions in order to influence and manipulate mass audiences.

Notes

[1] "England's great Freddie Francis (*The French Lieutenant's Woman*, *Dune*) was the cinematographer; France's Anne Goursaud (*One from the Heart*, *Ironweed*) was the editor; Wayne Fitzgerald designed the titles; the music is by Georges Delerue (*Jules and Jim*, *Silkwood*), and the splendid Ann Roth (*Klute*, *Day of the Locust*, *Working Girl*) did the costumes." (Benson 1989)

[2] Nina's remark about her coming from a communist country with no religion may also be interpreted as the verbalization of another stereotype that Cold War

propaganda had spread ever since the 1950s and 1960s, namely that the communist East, to which Romania belonged, is "godless and inhumane" (Upton 2014: 5).
[3] The same inaccurate reference to the spies as belonging to KGB instead of the Romanian *Securitate* occurs at the end of the film when Nina and her family are pursued by them at *The Funeral of Grimaldi*.
[4] Apart from an uninspired vocabulary choice – the archaic 'temnicer' for the English 'prison guard' – the dialogue between the communist agents and Nina is not entirely rendered in the English subtitles and its translation occasionally entails (as in the case of Troppa's quoted line) deviations from the meaning of the original Romanian dialogue.
[5] The reference to St Stanislaw's day, celebrated by the Catholic Church on the 11th of April, is probably meant to complete the image of Nina Ionescu as a Catholic (not Orthodox) Romanian.
[6] The story of St Stanislaw's death, apart from being set against a Polish medieval background, differs somewhat from that told by the character Nina Ionescu in *Her Alibi*: the Polish Catholic bishop was slain by King Bolesław while celebrating the mass in Skałka, outside Krakow; his body was then cut to pieces by the king's guards and scattered in the forest to be devoured by beasts (Wikipedia 2019). That may lead one to the conclusion that the gruesomeness of the story is purposely exaggerated by the script writer to sustain negative stereotypes of the Romanian other.

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Consciousness on Stream in *The Ambassadors* by Henry James

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Abstract

The purpose of the current paper is to analyse, in parallel, the works of two American brothers, William and Henry James, who influenced the psychological and literary standards of the twentieth century. William theorised the concept of consciousness and coined the term "stream of consciousness"; Henry pictured it in his novels by imitating the stream of consciousness of his characters. The wide variety of Thematic Progression and lexical repetition throughout the latter's novel, The Ambassadors*, is accompanied by numerous literary devices which attempt to reconstruct the movements of thought and the psychological processes related to it. In this regard, the paper aims to analyse Henry James's skilful use of the Theme and Rheme pattern in* The Ambassadors*, which seems intended to increase the complexity of the narrative thread, as well as the lexical repetition present throughout the novel, accompanied by numerous literary devices which, in turn, attempt to reconstruct the movements of thought and the psychological processes related to it.*

Key words: *thought, stream of consciousness, introspection, thematic progression, lexical repetition*

Although Henry James does not constantly use the stream of consciousness technique, his novels foreground the mind of his characters. This paper attempts to analyse the representation of the *stream of consciousness* in the novel *The Ambassadors*, which is considered a masterpiece of James's psychological novels.

The Ambassadors narrates the story of an American gentleman who travels to Europe. Throughout this travel he rediscovers himself. Lambert Strether, an ordinary man in America, when placed in a different environment and thrown into a non-standard situation, evidently begins to think and act differently. The same as William James, known as the first

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psychologist to found a psychological laboratory in America to study the origins of human behaviour, Henry James attempts to examine his character's mind by testing him on various life situations and observing his psychological unfolding. As James states in the preface to the novel with reference to Lambert Strether:

> He had come with a view that might have been figured by a clear green liquid, say, in a neat glass phial; and the liquid, once poured into the open cup of *application*, once exposed to the action of another air, had begun to turn from green to red, or whatever, and might, for all he knew, be on its way to purple, to black, to yellow. At the still wilder extremes represented perhaps, for all he could say to the contrary, by a variability so violent, he would at first, naturally, but have gazed in surprise and alarm; whereby the *situation* clearly would spring from the play of wildness and the development of extremes (1998: xxxvi).

The major character seems to be trapped in Henry James's laboratory of fiction, where he is eager to see what comes out of this experiment. James admits that he wants to question the "little old tradition […] that people's moral scheme *does* break down in Paris; […] that hundreds of thousands of more or less hypocritical or more or less cynical persons annually visit the place for the sake of the probable catastrophe" (James 1998: xxxvii). Apparently, he plans to watch "the revolution performed by Strether under the influence of the most interesting of great cities" and present everything through immersion in the world of the hero's consciousness (1998: xxxviii). Julie Wolkenstein writes that France lived in James's heart and in his novels, "England reassured him, Italy seduced him, but French history and habits remained unfamiliar to him" (Zacharias 2008: 417). It is, though, the country where he sends his 'ambassador' to scoop for knowledge.

Lambert Strether, a resident of the American town of Woollett, arrives in Paris to fulfil one specific assignment: he must bring home Chad, the son of a very well-known lady in Woollett. His mother, Mrs. Newsome, is waiting her son to take an excellent place in the family business and multiply their incomes. Lambert Strether, in turn, is also promised a reward – Mrs. Newsome's hand and heart. Thus, Strether comes to Paris. He expects to find Chad mired in vicious pleasures and captivated by some Parisian charmer. Surprisingly, he finds the idle and frivolous Chad Newsome completely transformed. The new Chad has manners, attitude and the talent to please people. Strether quickly realizes that behind these changes stands a woman. On the one hand, Lambert Strether faces a

dilemma: whether to bring Chad home or to let him live his own life. On the other hand, Paris captures Strether's heart too, so that Woollett somewhat loses its attractiveness and he himself does not want to return home. Stretcher experiences new acquaintances and new impressions. He seems to re-experience his youth and bathes in the waves of new feelings and emotions. James's loyalty to the chosen subjective perspective of narration permits the reader to follow all the transformations of Strether's consciousness.

Thus, to mirror the human mind, the narration has to consist of emotions, impressions and associations, which in *The Ambassadors* are the thoughts and feelings of the major character, Strether; he becomes the 'centre of consciousness' of the novel. In this case, it would be reasonable to use the first person narration, but Henry James states, in the preface to *The Ambassadors*, that this type of narration is "foredoomed to looseness" (1998: xli) and that he does not want to grant his hero the "double privilege of subject and object" (1998: xlii). James suggests that the introduction of one or two confidant characters would diminish "the discrimination" of the method and help the reader better understand the major character (1998: xliii). Therefore, in *The Ambassadors*, James uses a third person narration with a limited, subjective, shifting point of view, rarely intertwined with instances of dialogue. The novel is narrated from Strether's perspective, with the help of a *ficelle* character, Maria Gostrey. The *ficelle* or confidant character is extremely needed for the reader, indeed, as the plot of the novel is very complex and elaborate and there is nobody and nothing else to assist the comprehension of the plot. James contributes to the development of the stream of consciousness effect by using long, grammatically and lexically complex sentences to render Strether's thoughts, impressions, feelings and plans. This makes the reading of the novel very difficult because it demands undivided attention.

Due to the fact that (according to W. James) thoughts need words to form meaning, it is reasonable that linguistics or semantics be considered in analysing a narrative text written in the *stream of consciousness* style. The concept of the Theme-Rheme structure was introduced by Michael Halliday in *An Introduction to Functional Grammar*, 1985. He states that the coherence of a text is developed by means of specific thematic organisation, where Theme is "the point of departure of the message" which directs "the clause within its context" (2004: 64), and Rheme is the part which provides information about the Theme (2004: 65). Recently, seven types of possible Thematic Progression within a text have been advanced: *Parallel* or *Constant*

Theme Progression, *Zigzag* or *Linear Progression*, *Derived Theme Progression*, *Multiple-Rheme* or *Split-Rheme Progression*, *Crisscross Progression*, *Juxtaposition Thematic Progression* and *Centralised Progression* (Bloor 2004: 88-93; Eggins 2004: 325; Wang 2006: 9).

The following passage is an example of a skilful use of the Theme and Rheme pattern which seems intended to increase the complexity of the narrative line. In this single passage, one can trace the Thematic Progression (represented by the formulae) and the lexical repetition (represented by the words written in bold) which mirror the progression of thought:

> Two days later **he** T1 had **news** from Chad of a **communication** from **Woollett** in response to their determinant **telegram** R1, this **missive** T2R1 being **addressed** to Chad himself and announcing the immediate **departure** for France of **Sarah** and Jim and Mamie R2. **Strether** T3T1 had meanwhile on his own side **cabled** R3; **he** T4T1 had but delayed that **act** till after his **visit** to Miss Gostrey R4R3, an **interview** T5R4 by which, as so often before, **he** felt his sense of things cleared up and settled R5. **His message** to **Mrs. Newsome** T6R3, in **answer** to her own, had consisted of the **words**: 'Judge best to take another month, but with full appreciation of all re-enforcements.' R6 **He** T7T1 had added R7 that **he** T8T1 was **writing** R8, but **he** T9T1 was of course **always writing** R9R8; **it** T10R8 was a practice that **continued**, oddly enough, to relieve **him**, to make **him** come nearer than anything else to the consciousness of doing something R10: so that **he** T11T1 often wondered if he hadn't really, under his recent stress, acquired some hollow trick, one of the specious **arts of make-believe** R11. Wouldn't the **pages he** T12T1 still so freely dispatched by the **American post** have been worthy of a showy **journalist**, some master of the great new science of beating the **sense** out of **words**? R12R11 Wasn't **he** T13T1 **writing** against time, and mainly to show he was kind? R13R8 – since **it** T14R8 had become quite his habit not to like to read himself over R14. On **those lines he** T15T1 could still be liberal R15, yet **it** T16R8 was at best a sort of **whistling** in the **dark** R16. **It** T17R8 was unmistakeable moreover that the **sense** of being in the **dark** now pressed on him more sharply – creating thereby the need for a louder and livelier **whistle** R17R16. **He** T18T1 **whistled** long and hard after sending his **message** R18R16; **he** T19T1 **whistled** again and again in celebration of Chad's **news** R19R16; there was an interval of a fortnight in which this **exercise** T20R18 helped him R20 (James 1998: 237).

The alternation of Parallel / Constant and Linear / Zigzag Progressions prove Strether's continuity and progression of the stream of thought. From

the idea of the telegram received by Chad from Woollett to his own telegrams sent to America, his thought spreads to other family members of the Newsomes by means of associations in his consciousness. However, the fact that there are much more instances of Constant Thematic Pattern explains James's attempt to ensure the representation of selective attention. As W. James puts it: "[t]he mind selects [and] chooses certain of the situations to represent the thing most *truly*, and considers the rest as its appearances, modified by the conditions of the moment" (2006: 287). In the same manner, Strether's thoughts go back and forth in past and present being influenced by the sensations and the circumstances of the present moment, but still sticking to his concern about his present relation with the Newsome family. The lexical repetition adds to the effect of textual unity and continuity of thought. The related words which form the lexical repetition are revolving around the idea of writing letters and telegrams. It is Strether's constant sub-conscious object of thought throughout this passage.

The wide variety of Thematic Progression and lexical repetition throughout the novel is accompanied by numerous literary devices which attempt to reconstruct the movements of thought and the psychological processes related to it. The detached and parenthetical constructions help to include additional information to the present stream of thought, or sometimes signal the shift between the points of view. Anadiplosis and anaphora seem to aid the representation of thought continuity and concentration of attention. The parallel construction seems to support the flow and unity of the stream of consciousness while represented in written form. Asyndeton points to the abruptness in the stream of thought and transition to another one, while polysyndeton, on the contrary, to the flow and continuity of thought. A possible list is presented below:

- *detached construction*: "was exactly the kind of emotion – the emotion of bewilderment – that had proposed to himself from the first, whatever should occur, to show least" (James 1998: 96);
- *parallel construction*: "he waited for his fish, he drank of his wine, he wiped his long moustache, he leaned back in his chair, he took in the two English ladies" (1998: 71); "there had been simply a *lie* in the charming affair – a lie on which one could now, detached and deliberate, perfectly put one's finger. It was with the lie that they had eaten and drunk and talked and laughed, that they had waited for their *carriole* rather impatiently, and had then got into the vehicle and, sensibly subsiding, driven their three or four miles through the darkening summer night" (1998: 393).

- *parenthetical construction*: "than the 'terrible toughs' (Strether remembered the edifying discrimination) of the American bars and banks roundabout the Opera" (1998: 64);
- *anadiplosis*: "he was very young; young enough apparently to be amused at an elderly watcher" (1998: 69); "Strether had never smoked, and he felt as if he flaunted at his friend that this had been only for a reason. The reason […] that he had never had a lady to smoke with" (1998: 81);
- *anaphora*: "was exactly society, exactly the multiplication of shibboleths, exactly the discrimination of types and tones, exactly the wicked old Rows of Chester, rank with feudalism; exactly in short Europe" (1998: 28); "the sky was silver and turquoise and varnish; the village on the left was white and the church on the right was grey; it was all there, in short – it was what he wanted: it was Tremont Street, it was France, it was Lambinet" (1998: 381);
- *asyndeton*: "Strether's present highest flights were perhaps those in which this particular lapse figured to him as a symbol, a symbol of his long grind and his want of odd moments, his want moreover of money, of opportunity, of positive dignity. […] His conscience had been amusing itself for the forty-eight hours by forbidding him the purchase of a book; he held off from that, held off from everything; from the moment he didn't yet call on Chad he wouldn't for the world have taken any other step" (1998: 61);
- *polysyndeton*: "It consisted of little more than a platform, slightly raised, with a couple of benches and a table, a protecting rail and a projecting roof; but it raked the full grey-blue stream, which, taking a turn a short distance above, passed out of sight to reappear much higher up; and it was clearly in esteemed requisition for Sundays and other feasts" (1998: 387-388).

The multifariousness of stylistic devices that shape the structure of the clauses makes the narration of the novel to resemble the real stream of consciousness, where all the associated thoughts and ideas interconnect and overlap one another.

Moreover, the subtle gliding from one thought to another, or from the character's perspective to the narrator's seldom ironic or thorny observations reveals James's employment of the free indirect discourse, the fact which does not help the comprehensive reading but rather aggravate it by making it ambiguous and complex.

The most important devices used by Henry James in *The Ambassadors* to mirror the working of human consciousness seem to be Thematic Patterning and lexical cohesion. The instances of parallelism, detached construction, anadiplosis and anaphora have facilitated the

representation of the concentration of thoughts and processes of selective attention, just as it occurs inside the human mind. Besides, the frequent use of polysyndeton ensures the progression of thought and the creation of textual unity in the novel.

As in William James's theory, the stream of consciousness represented in the Jamesian novel is characterised by a continuous and changing aspect, but which is in constant progression. The use of complex and elaborate sentences demonstrates the character's collision of ideas, fleeting of thoughts, and richness of emotions; besides, they also point to the selective attention of the mind. The results of the stream of consciousness analysis in Henry James's novels indicate that, like his brother, William, he believed that consciousness never stops; on the contrary, its thoughts are like the atoms in a current of air which move continuously and one cannot say that they ended. 'The atoms' appear to be simply redirected in the stream of consciousness to other ideas, memories and objects of thought. Furthermore, the findings of this study suggest that James deliberately places his character in a new and unusual environment for him in order to examine his character's inner change and progression of thoughts, behaviour and ability to make decisions. This allows the reader to feel the state of the consciousness of the hero, to experience the situation through his perspective and to empathise with him.

James's novel, *The Ambassadors,* exemplifies many instances of mental states like reflection, pondering, planning, thinking or the simple condition of distraction. The main character, Lambert Strether, is shown from within, as he thinks and deliberates on the constantly difficult choices he has to make. Most importantly, one can clearly follow how James portrays the origination of thoughts in his characters' minds, which makes the reading of the novel fascinating and thought-provoking. Finally, the open ending and the incompleteness of James's novel are true evidence of the stream of consciousness representation. The constant afterthoughts and doubts which come along with the reading of James's novels represent the same 'figure in the carpet' that the narrator is confronted with in the homonymous short story.

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The Otherworlds of the Mind: Loci of Resistance in Ursula K. Le Guin's *The Word for World Is Forest* and *Voices* (Book II of the *Annals of the Western Shore*)

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Abstract

Space is of utmost importance in Ursula K. Le Guin's fantasy and science fiction works, in which it often functions as a metaphor for the mind. The heterotopic spaces in the novella The Word for World Is Forest *(one of the works in her* Hainish *cycle) and in the novel* Voices *(book II of the* Annals of the Western Shore *series) serve as loci of resistance: otherworlds mirroring the consciousness of entire cultures fighting for survival. This paper analyzes the way in which two drastically different forms of resistance, violent and peaceful, unfold in the mindspaces of their respective cultures.*

Key words: *Le Guin, resistance, space, heterotopia, heterochrony*

Introduction

Although known primarily as one of the 20th century's most prolific and influential science-fiction, fantasy, and speculative fiction writers – 'the SF writer most respected by the literary mainstream, the most studied academically,' as Ken MacLeod writes (2015: 3), Ursula K. Le Guin was also one of its preeminent political writers. Throughout her science fiction (and especially in her Hainish novels and short stories), but also in her fantasy series (*Earthsea* and *Annals of the Western Shore*) and other speculative fiction like *Orsinian Tales*, she explores the fine workings of autocratic and democratic systems, of capitalist and communist societies, of empires and merchant republics, as well as offering an astute dissection of utopian constructs and a hard, unflinching look at the cruelties and horrors of dystopian worlds not entirely dissimilar to our own.

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Among these, her preoccupation with political resistance, both violent and peaceful, and with 'the necessity and cost of resistance' (MacLeod 2015: 1) looms large. It is evident in a number of her works, from the relatively early *The Word for World Is Forest* novella, published in 1972, to the late *The Annals of the Western Shore* series, published between 2004 and 2007, towards the end of her long career. Resistance, before it can be exteriorized and translated into action, begins as a state of mind. In Le Guin's writings, the workings of the mind are intimately connected with the physical spaces, natural or constructed, which her characters occupy, and which serve as both backdrops for their journeys of self-discovery and transformation and as mirrors of their psyches. Therefore, certain spaces act as crucibles in which resistance is initially formulated and then manifested, and are just as important as the concept itself and its resulting acts.

In *The Word for World Is Forest*, Le Guin explores violent resistance to invasion and exploitation in the context of a double 'otherworld' – the alien world of Athshe and the strange mindspace which its inhabitants can access via 'the Dream,' a heterotopic mirror of the physical world in which time is synchronous, rather than linear, and which is populated by the ancestral heroes and archetypes of the Athshean culture.

By contrast, *Voices* (published in 2006), the second novel in the loosely connected fantasy series *Annals of the Western Shore*, documents primarily the formation and eventual success of a peaceful resistance movement in the also-occupied city of Ansul, in which two different types of heterotopic spaces – a network of minute sacred spaces (the god niches) and a secret ancient library – function as loci of resistance and as a connection to the city's pantheon, history, and culture. These three heterotopic spaces and the ways in which they operate as collective mindspaces and as cradles of different types of resistance represent the main focus of this analysis.

Michel Foucault, in 'Truth and Power,' describes power as 'a productive network which runs through the whole social body,' which 'traverses and produces things, it induces pleasure, forms knowledge, produces discourse' (1984: 61). In other words, as Zamalin points out, power circulates through language, law, and epistemic systems and 'it is often cultivated in unseen ways by those who are politically weak' (2017: 4). In response to power, however, resistance emerges and Foucault draws a close connection between the two. Of resistance, he says that '[i]t is coextensive with it [power] and absolutely its contemporary' (1990: 122) and adds that

> as soon as there is a power relation, there is a possibility of resistance. We can never be ensnared by power: we can always modify its grip in determinate conditions and according to a precise strategy (1990: 123).

Resistance, thus, is a force which keeps power in check and modifies (or at least attempts to modify) its constructions. It 'entails taking charge of one's life and refusing to accept the extant configurations of the way things are' (Zamalin 2017: 3). Zamalin classifies resistance as 'public or private, collective or individual, directed internally or externally, enacted by those who are powerful or those who are weak' or 'intellectual' (2017: 3), and defines it as 'the story of the downtrodden, the marginalized, those lacking political voice who seek emancipation' (2017: 4). As for its specific location in the hierarchy of societal changes, Burgos places it 'between reform, which implies small-scale changes to existing institutions and structures, and revolution," which he defines as 'the kind of event that in a short period of time succeeds in wiping away the existing structures of society, including its norms and its various articulations of meaning and purpose' (2017: 3).

In the context of occupied societies, like the planet Athshe and the city of Ansul, the 'productive' and pleasant type of power which Foucault describes is replaced with a narrower type of power – the repressive power which '[carries] the force of a prohibition' (1984: 61). This kind of power is dispensed not only through law, but through violence, and inspires resistance movements which do not fit neatly into Burgos' model. These movements manifest themselves through both small-scale changes where possible and through restorative revolutions, which seek to collapse the artificial configurations imposed by force by the invaders and re-establish the natural, harmonious ones which are native to the societies in question.

As mentioned above, my focus is on the spaces which nurture the emergence of these resistance movements and on mapping their relationships with the collective psyches of the societies engaged in the former. This connection rises from a statement Le Guin made in a 1995 interview, in which she claims that 'place' is enormously important in all of [her] work' (Reinking & Willingham 1995: 54). This is by no means a surprising assertion, considering the vast and wondrous variety of places, both natural and constructed, which populate the body of her work.

Her interest in natural places, and particularly in natural places which are distinctly and vibrantly alive, is evident in her science fiction and fantasy work: from the sentient forest in 'Vaster than Empires and More

Slow,' to the tree symbol in *The Telling*, which illustrates the interconnectedness of the world, to the tree rings in *The Eye of the Heron*, which offer shelter and acceptance, to the Immanent Grove on the Isle of Roke in the Earthsea series, a sacred place where magic patterns are woven, to the forest covering the entire world in *The Word for World Is Forest*, which serves as a connection to the Dream and without which the sanity of the native sentient species collapses.

The deeper intent behind this constant return to natural places, and especially to trees and forests, is revealed by Le Guin's acknowledgement of her interest in inner spaces. In the introduction to 'Vaster than Empires and More Slow,' she explains that her fascination lies not with physical actions, with literal happenings and adventures, but with 'what goes on inside. Inner space and all that. We all have forests in our minds. Forests unexplored, unending. Each of us gets lost in the forest, every night, alone' (Le Guin 2016: 1). This understanding of the forest as a metaphor for the mind serves to illuminate the profound importance and complexity of her natural places, and, to an extent this is reflected in the existence of early scholarly work on this topic (Watson 1975), as well as of continued critical interest in novels like *The Word for World Is Forest* and *The Telling*.

While the mind can be a forest, it can also be a labyrinth, an ancient school for wizards, or a vast realm functioning according to its own rules. Le Guin's constructed places also serve as a metaphor for the mind and for the journeys of the soul, and are present in even more significant numbers and more varied forms across her work: humble huts, slave quarters, ordinary farms, comfortable mansions, austere castles, and sprawling estates; tiny villages, floating communities, and living or abandoned cities; as well as sacred spaces, from minuscule god niches to subterraneous labyrinths and the entire realms of the Dry Land, of the Dream, and of the Other Wind.

Of these, the Dream world in *The Word for World Is Forest* (which we classify as a mind construct, rather than a physical one), the god niches in Ansul (*Voices*), and the library of the Waylord of Galvamand (also *Voices*), form the subject of this paper and have been previously referred to as 'heterotopic.' Foucault defines heterotopias as

> 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. Places of this kind are outside of all places, even though it may be possible to indicate their location in reality (1986: 24).

Among heterotopias, he includes mirrors, 'crisis' spaces (from boarding schools to the honeymoon trip), cemeteries, prisons, theaters, gardens, libraries, museums, brothels, colonies, and ships. Clearly, while some of Foucault's heterotopias are pleasant or inclusive spaces, others are grotesque inversions. As Elana Gomel points out, the understanding of heterotopias as a better version of utopias and as 'zones of fuzzy diversity and mutual acceptance' (2014: 20) is incorrect and ignores their occasionally unpleasant or abominable nature, or the fact that they function as 'black holes of the social imaginary where ordinary spacetime is stretched, manipulated or fractured' (2014: 21). However, the particular set we are concerned with does not fall into this category, but rather that of magic mirrors and repositories of knowledge.

Although Foucault does not specifically mention otherworlds, the Dream world fits neatly into his definition as a site which represents and modifies the site of the physical world – a colossal mirror of sorts in which time is simultaneous and the unseen manifests itself. The god niches, which in themselves can be understood with the help of Gaston Bachelard's theories on corners and miniature spaces explained in *The Poetics of Space* (Bachelard 1964), form a network which reconstructs an invisible version of the city of Ansul which otherwise no longer exists – a sacred city in which its ancestral gods still walk unseen and influence the lives of its denizens.

Lastly, the library of Galvamand, as a repository of the region's literature, philosophy, and history is a classic Foucauldian heterotopia, and yet more, since it also houses the mysterious Oracle, an ancient force or spirit which finds a vessel in every generation and through which it speaks the truth. All of these sites give rise to various forms of resistance by offering refuge (literally and/or metaphorically) and a connection to the past and future of their respective societies.

1. *The Word for World Is Forest:* Violent Resistance and the Perils of Translation

> Sometimes a god comes […] He brings a new way to do a thing, or a new thing to be done. A new kind of singing, or a new kind of death. He brings this across the bridge between the dream-time and the world-time. When he has done this, it is done. You cannot take things that exist in the world and try to drive them back into the dream, to hold them inside the dream with walls and pretenses. That is insanity. What is, is. There is no use pretending, now, that we do not know how to kill each other (Le Guin 2015b: 127).

Written in visceral reaction to the Vietnam war, Ursula K. Le Guin's 1972 novella *The Word for World Is Forest*, represents, according to Fredric Jameson, one of the major SF denunciations of the American genocide in Vietnam' (2005: 274). The novella, which takes place within Le Guin's Hainish universe, transposes Vietnam's traumas to the alien world of Athshe, whose humanoid inhabitants (categorized as "hilfs" – highly intelligent life forms) mount a desperate resistance to Terran colonists sent to harvest the planet's plentiful timber. In the process, the native Athsheans are subjected to atrocities such as deprivation of liberty, forced separation from their native sylvan environment (which causes insanity due to the inability to establish a link with the Dream world), forced labor, rape, senseless murder, and attempted genocide, and respond with a violence previously unknown and unthinkable in their society.

As MacLeod points out, the novella is 'a reflection on invasion, exploitation and oppression' (2015: 1), as well on the toll that violent resistance can take on a previously peaceful society. The cost of resistance proves to be immeasurably high, and as Jameson explains, the novella's 'last line extends the guilt of violence to even that war of national liberation of which it has just shown the triumph' – an unusual perspective which indicates that, in Le Guin's view, there is 'no righteous violence' (2005: 274).

Using the heterotopic and heterochronic dimension of the Dream, Le Guin explores the corrupting nature of resistance, an unsavory aspect which, as MacLeod points out, is often 'put out of mind' (2015: 3), hidden, left unexplored and undissected. As the introductory quote makes clear, once a potential act or scenario has come to pass and has been 'walked' from one world to another by a 'translator,' considered a god by his people, the two dimensions of reality (waking and dreaming) have been bridged and the act can neither be returned to mere potential nor quarantined in the physical world. While in the linear time of the waking world, the act could be conceivably forgotten, in the synchronous/simultaneous time of dreaming, it persists indefinitely. Thus, due to the dreaming time's function as a repository of both the species' memory and of its future potentialities, acts of violence and murder, however necessary at the time, will continue to linger in their collective (un)conscious like an infection, a dangerous seed, which will not dissipate even after the perpetrator's permanent passing into dream-time. The 'gift' bestowed by one civilization upon the other, the gift of killing, cannot be reversed even after the invaders depart and the world of Athshe heals back to its natural state; instead, it remains imprinted on the Athshean psyche, altering it forever.

Although the ethical complexities of resistance in this novella have been previously noted by other critics (see Barbour 1974, Watson 1987, R.M.P. & Baggesen 1987, Cummins 1993, Burns 2004, Cadden 2005, Baker-Cristales 2012, Lindow 2012), the consequences of violent resistance have not been explored in the context of a heterotopic and heterochronic dimension. Before pursuing this argument any further, however, it is important to review Le Guin's rather complicated relationship with this novella. Initially published in 1972 in the anthology *Again, Dangerous Visions*, edited by Harlan Ellison, *The Word for World Is Forest* is one of Le Guin's most successful works. It was nominated for Nebula and Locus awards and won a Hugo award for Best Novella in 1973. It was subsequently republished as a stand-alone volume several times, beginning with the 1976 Berkley Books edition and ending with the 2015 Gollancz edition.

Despite the novella's success and recognition, Le Guin states in the 'Afterword' to the first edition that writing it was 'like taking dictation from a boss with ulcers. What I wanted to write about was the forest and the dream […]. But the boss wanted to talk about the destruction of ecological balance and the rejection of emotional balance' (qtd. in Watson 1975: 231). Similarly, in the 'Author's Introduction' to the 2015 digital edition, she notes that she had never written 'a story more easily, fluently, surely – and with less pleasure' (Le Guin 2015c). While explaining the origins of the work, she expresses a certain dissatisfaction with having 'succumbed, in part, to the lure of the pulpit' while in pursuit of 'freedom and the dream' (Le Guin 2015c). The reason for this was her separation from the anti-Vietnam movement she had been part of in the United States, and which had represented 'a channel of action and expression for [her] ethical and political opinions totally separate from [her] writing' (Le Guin 2015c). By contrast, in 1968, when the novella was written, she was living in London for a year, feeling 'useless, foolish, and obstinate,' and therefore more inclined to vent her political views through her writing. 'I knew, because of the compulsive quality of the composition,' she remarks, 'that it was likely to become a preachment, and I struggled with this' (Le Guin 2015c).

In a previous conference paper (Debita 2018), we focused on political paranoia in the 'world' time and space of the novella, and particularly on Captain Davidson's imperialist mindset and on its associated anxieties. However, Le Guin's desire to primarily write about the forest and the Dream has always been manifest to me given her interest in otherworlds – worlds which belong entirely to the mind, which mirror the physical world in some aspects, and which require an initiation in order

to be accessed (being in Athshean with the ability to dream, in the case of the Dreaming world; being dead or a trained mage in the case of *Earthsea*'s Dry Land; and being a dragon in the case of *Earthsea*'s mysterious Other Wind). Therefore, writing about the inevitability and corruption of the Athshean resistance in the context of the Dream and of the act of 'translation' feels like a necessary undertaking.

Having established that the Dream is a mirror-like heterotopia, based on Foucault's classification, it is important to add that Foucault also considered the temporal dimensions of heterotopic sites:

> Heterotopias […] open onto what might be termed, for the sake of symmetry, heterochronies. The heterotopia begins to function at full capacity when men arrive at a sort of absolute break with their traditional time (Foucault 1986: 26).

Indeed, in all three of Le Guin's otherworlds mentioned above, time is not linear and could not be considered 'traditional time," at least according to human perceptions. The time of the Dream appears to be synchronic, as ancient archetypes manifest themselves at the same time as fragments of visions belonging to the future. Likewise, in the Dry Land time is different – frozen, immobile, as evidenced by the fixed stars and by its denizens' inability to either remember the past or dream about the future. Little is known of the Other Wind, but its time appears to be cyclical, a time of life, death, and rebirth.

If *Earthsea*'s Dry Land is a heterotopia of complete inversion, a prison/concentration camp, a cemetery, and a black mirror in which time is completely stationary and change becomes impossible, the current novella's Dream is a heterotopia and heterochrony populated by the gods and heroes of the Athsheans; a pleasant mindscape, prior to the Terrans' arrival, in which past, present, and future comingle to maintain the Athsheans' sanity and to help them understand and navigate the world better; a green mirror, as opposed to a black hole. Following the Terrans' invasion and violent exploitation of the world and its inhabitants, however, this dream dimension becomes veined with nightmare and produces, in Selver, its most terrible god to date.

It is important to note that this dimension is verbally referred as 'dream *time*' (emphasis my own), and yet described in spatial terms in Selver's chapters. Hence, it is difficult to settle on a correct term for it, as 'world' does not sufficiently capture the emphasis on what Foucault calls an 'absolute break with […] traditional time' (Foucault 1986: 26), while

'time' does not reflect the omnipresence of the forest and of its geography inside the dream. It is clear, however, that the forest's spatial presence is delicate, ambiguous, and fragmented in either dimension, to the point where a dreamer like Selver cannot always distinguish between dream-time and world-time. 'No way was clear, no light unbroken, in the forest' (Le Guin 2015b: 27), which belongs to 'the shadowy, the complex,' a complicated network of paths and branches 'devious as nerves' in which 'there was no seeing everything at once: no certainty' (Le Guin 2015b: 27). The ambiguity of this space is compounded by the synchronicity of its time, which makes it difficult to distinguish between memory, premonition, and memory of past premonitions.

The novella inverts the ways in which light and shadow normally function on a symbolic level, casting light as oppressive and shadow as protective. It is only under the forest's canopy, in its complicated obscurity and liminal space, that the Athsheans can cross into the Dream. By contrast, in the exposed spaces created by systematic deforestation, the connection is broken and the Dream becomes inaccessible, causing the Athsheans to become insane. The fact that the forest, the Dream, and the Athshean mind are inextricably linked is substantiated by the imagery of the forest paths as a complicated network, which immediately summons the picture of a neuron circuit, and by the explicit reference to 'nerves.' The forest, thus, as a physical presence, is the equivalent of the brain, while the Dream is the mind of this complex world.

It is in this realm that the old Athshean dream lord, Coro Mena, first sees the invaders: 'in the dream, the giants walked, heavy and dire,' with 'dry scaly limbs […] swathed in cloths,' eyes 'little and light, like tin beads,' followed by their iron machines which cut down the forest (Le Guin 2015b: 29). Humans cannot enter the Dream themselves, so their images are generated, in this world, from the perceptions and memories of the Athsheans who saw them in world-time, but also possibly from premonitions. Given the synchronicity of dream-time, it is not clear whether Coro Mena is reliving a recent memory others have brought into the Dream, watching a simultaneous image produced in real time, or seeing the immediate future.

The 'othering' of the humans is obvious in this passage and functions as a mirroring of the human othering of Athsheans. On the one hand, soulless giants with their machines of mass destruction; on the other, small furry green 'monkeys' whose complex civilization is invisible to those looking only for the signs of a technologically advanced society. The irony,

of course, is that the two species, both of which refer to themselves as 'men' and to the others as monsters or animals, are related via their common Hainish ancestor, and yet are incapable of seeing each other as kindred.

Recounting his dream to Selver, Coro Mena makes two statements which reveal foreknowledge: 'I took you for a god' (Le Guin 2015b: 28), he says to Selver, implying that Selver is not yet one at the time of the vision or of the utterance, although not long afterwards Coro Mena will acknowledge him as such. The other statement reveals a realization that even in a world in constant flux ('the world is always new […] however old its roots' (Le Guin 2015b: 32)), a fundamental change has taken place as a result of a chain of violent acts (the rape and murder of Selver's wife, followed by the latter's violent attack on the humans he held responsible):

> and all men's dreams […] will be changed. They will never be the same again. […] Before this day the thing we had to do was the right to do; the way we had to go was the right way and led us home. Where is our home now? For you've done what you had to do, and it was not right. You have killed men (Le Guin 2015b: 33).

Already, prior to the acts of violence which will lead to victory and the Terran exodus, Coro Mena knows that the culture of his people, for whom murdering one's own had been an illogical and insane act, has been fundamentally altered by the acts of one individual. The reason why Selver's actions reverberate so loudly inside both dreaming and waking time is because he is 'sha'ab,' a translator or interpreter, which are other words for 'god' in the Athshean tongue.

Interestingly, the semantics of 'sha'ab' are revealed to us in Lyubov's chapter, as the anthropologist is struggling to understand what Selver has become to his people. Perhaps his mediation was necessary, given that we, as human readers, have no experience of the dreaming world and of its rules and need to have them explained by someone who is himself an interpreter and capable of bridging cultures and ways of thinking. Lyubov comes to understand, on his own, that Selver's godhood is derived from his ability to

> 'speak about the perceptions of the subconscious. To 'speak' that tongue is to act. To do a new thing. To change or be changed, radically, from the root. For the root is the dream' (Le Guin 2015b: 84).

There is a lot to unpack in a statement like 'the root is the dream.' First of all, in the Athshean language, the words for 'root' and 'dream' are the same. Secondly, the word 'root' can be interpreted in two ways: literally, as the root of a tree, and metaphorically, as a foundation or point of origin. This ambiguity once again underlines the connection between the physical presence of the forest in the world-time and the mindspace of the Dream, as well as the fact that the forest is the foundation of the Dream.

As Coro-Mena had understood as well, Selver is not one of the archetypes of his people: the Pursuer, the faceless Friend, the Aspen-Leaf Woman, the Gatekeeper, the Snake, the Carver, or the Hunter, but something far more dangerous and powerful. He is someone who, via a new speech act, has managed to change reality, 'radically, from the root.' By leading 'so great a newcomer as Death across the bridge between worlds' (Le Guin 2015b: 85), Selver has created a new reality for his people, which includes the previously unthinkable concept of murder – for it is not mere natural death who is a newcomer, but violent death.

Aside from 'translating' this concept of godhood to us, the purpose of Lyubov's monologue is also to ask a fundamental question: had Selver's actions risen from 'his own dreams of outrage and bereavement' or from 'the undreamed – the actions of strangers'? (Le Guin 2015b: 85). Was Selver speaking his own language or Davidson's language? This is when Lyubov articulates the idea of 'an infection, a foreign plague, which would not make a new people of his race, but destroy them' (Le Guin 2015b: 85). The act of translating languages is clearly metaphorical here: in learning the language of the 'yumens,' Selver also learned the language of their psyches, the lack of regard for other lives and sometimes for their own lives, the 'kill or be killed' mentality of the savage, the disdain of the conqueror for the conquered. In translating their psyches, he found human solutions to Athshean problems. It could be argued that the click, the transfer from potentiality to actuality, takes place in the instant of translation, where the god is caught between worlds and becomes a conduit for new concepts.

Likewise, it is impossible to determine whether the pathogen was native or alien. Although Athshean society had never developed violent tendencies of its own, the fact that Athsheans and humans share a common ancestor suggests that perhaps the seed of violence had already been present, in a dormant state, and that it became activated when an act of desperate resistance was necessary.

Due to the way the dreaming world works, however, this act forever changes the nature of the Athsheans, and the fact that their violence

was necessary and justified does not appear to mitigate its unethical nature: 'Maybe after I die people will be as they were before I was born, and before you came. But I do not think they will' (Le Guin 2015b: 128), Selver says at the end of the novella. He has perfect awareness of the fact that due to the heterochronic quality of the dreaming world and to the fact that this dimension is, in fact, an image of his people's collective psyche, with all its parts, there is no turning back: the memory of his acts is already part not only of current Athshean minds, but likely of future ones as well. The consequences of violent resistance, therefore, are all the more severe given the complexity of the Athshean world and mind.

2. *Voices*: Loci of Peaceful Resistance

Annals of the Western Shore, Ursula K. Le Guin's last fantasy series, is a mature, highly introspective work which explores, in addition to the hero's journey, experiences of slavery and loss, of finding and of being found, of magic, and of art. In fact, it could be argued that the series represents Le Guin's fictional *ars poetica*, written in the twilight of a life dedicated to the literary arts, and that it devotes extensive space and attention to the matter of innate gifts, of found powers, and to the ability of poet and poetry to transform reality and bring hidden potential into actuality.

The series, which consists of three novels: *Gifts* (2004), *Voices* (2006), and *Powers* (2007), has undeservedly received minimal critical attention (see Lindow 2006, Oziewicz 2011, Anderson 2016) even as the already substantial body of criticism dedicated to the *Earthsea* series continues to grow. Although all three novels take place in the same world of the Western Shore, a universe with clear Greco-Roman influences, they are only loosely related, with each of them documenting a character's coming of age story, their struggles with a particular form of slavery (metaphorical or literal), and the triumph of finding one's true calling.

Voices, in particular, explores the possibility of peaceful resistance and of restorative justice. As Marek Oziewicz explains,

> [n]arrated by a rape-child, *Voices* is the story of an occupied city-state and of how the conquered and the conquerors negotiate a formula for peaceful coexistence. They do so by enacting a restorative justice script which is shown to be more practical than the alternative, retributive justice script (Oziewicz 2011: 34).

The novel tells the story of the conquered city of Ansul, previously known as 'The Wise and Beautiful' for its famous university, storied libraries, and elegant architecture. Fallen under the control of the Desert Alds, a nomadic, monotheistic people who worship the fire god Atth, Ansul becomes, in the words of Memer, the novel's protagonist, 'a broken city of ruins, hunger, and fear' (Le Guin 2015a: 6). As the Alds look for the Night Mouth, a passage to a dark realm belonging to the adversary of their god, they ransack Ansul and lay waste to its sacred niches and libraries. The occupation of the city comes to an unexpected, yet peaceful, end almost twenty years later, when a velvet revolution, aided by the presence of the famed poet Orrec (the main character of the first novel in the series), leads to the Alds' withdrawal.

During the nearly two decades of occupation, the people of Ansul continue to resist in quiet ways: by organizing secret meetings which, until Orrec's arrival, serve little practical purpose; by salvaging books, whenever possible, and bringing them to the lord of Galvamand for safekeeping; by continuing to acknowledge the presence and existence of their numerous gods; and by continuing to honor the gods even in the latter's physical absence, by making their signs and acknowledging the power of their now-empty god niches. The god niches, which are Ansul's answer to the traditional temple, permeate the city: once full of miniature statues, of flowers, and of offerings, they can be found in homes, at street corners and crossings, and at once-important landmarks, and allow the population to preserve their culture and customs even under extreme deprivation and duress. Together, they create a spiritual palimpsest of the city as it was once was, allowing it to persist no matter how the Alds choose to reshape and 'rewrite' it.

This novel is, more than anything, a rich and complicated tapestry of small, interwoven encounters, which begin quietly and in relative secret, and swell into an uprising which takes the city by storm and leads to its liberation. Although at no time do the gods manifest themselves physically, their presence is permanently felt due to the multitude of minute sacred places scattered throughout the city. There is a sense that it is these places which keep the gods in the city, as long as the native population continues to remember their purpose and acknowledge their importance, and that it is the sacred encounters these places facilitate which eventually lead to Ansul's liberation and the restoration of its ancient ways. In order to better understand the functions and power of the god niches, we will turn to Gaston Bachelard's theories on corners and miniature spaces explained in

The Poetics of Space, and to the close analysis of two particular encounters which may appear inconsequential at first, but which lead to an entire chain of events culminating in the city's liberation.

God niches are initially described as 'the thousand little marble temples of the street gods' (Le Guin 2015a: 6) and can be found in both private and public spaces. In homes, they are similar to the spaces dedicated to the *lares* and *penates* of Roman households, complete with altars where offerings can be made, with oil lamps which must be lit at certain times, or special places in the doorways. The house of Galvamand, for example, has enough niches and altars to make worship a day's job for young Memer, the novel's protagonist. Nevertheless, however tiresome the job, she finds comfort in the memory of her mother performing this sacred duty and in the thought that 'the Alds called our gods evil spirits, demons, and were afraid of them' (Le Guin 2015a: 25), which at this point is her own modest form of resistance. Interestingly, the library, a secret and sacred space in itself (not only as a repository of rare and beautiful books, but as the heart of the resistance following the Alds' prohibition of the written word, as a heterotopic space, and as the home of the Oracle spring) has a god niche of its own tucked between the book shelves.

In public spaces, they can be found at street corners and street crossings, in the markets, or may appear in different forms, such as Sill Stones: 'I went on, speaking to the Sill Stone, and touching the street god's niche as I passed the corner and turned left to the West Street' (Le Guin 2015a: 39); 'I passed by the market god, the round stone that represents the oldest god of the city: Lero' (Le Guin 2015a: 40); 'I left the penny in the hollow under Lero, where people leave god gifts and poorer people find them' (Le Guin 2015a: 48). The reason why the god niches and other small sacred spaces around the city have escaped complete destruction is because the Alds did not realize that their function was similar to that of a temple. Instead, they looked in vain for majestic buildings which would have fulfilled the same role as their own temples dedicated to Atth. One of the conversations between Memer and the Ald boy Simme fully illustrates this inability to see sacred spaces which do not fit an expected mold:

> 'How could people get inside a temple?'
> In Ansul, the word 'temple' usually means a shrine on the street or in front of a building or at a crossways – altars, places to worship at. Many of them are just god-niches like the ones inside houses. You touch the sill of the temple to say the blessing, or lay a flower as an offering. Many street temples were wonderful little buildings of marble, two or three feet high,

> carved and decorated, with gilt roofs. The Alds had knocked those all down. Some temples were hung up in trees, and the Alds left them, thinking they were birdhouses. […]
> I knew that to the Alds a temple meant a full-sized building. (Le Guin 2015a: 155-156

Gaston Bachelard's theories of corners and miniature spaces provide additional insight into the ways in which the god niches of Ansul function as loci of resistance for the native population. For example, Bachelard explains that a corner (relevant in our case because god niches can often be found at street corners):

> is a haven that ensures us one of the things we prize most highly – immobility. It is the sure place, the place next to my immobility. The corner is a sort of half-box, part walls, part door. It will serve as an illustration for the dialectics of inside and outside (Bachelard 1964: 137).

A corner is, thus, a space of solitude, of meditation, of self-containment, where the dreamer can occasionally retire away from the world. This is how the Waylord is able to survive his torture at the Alds' hands and not succumb to trauma and nightmare after his return to Galvamand. The immobility cited by Bachelard is also a marker, in our case, for stubborn resistance: the refusal to abandon one's sacred spaces, and therefore one's culture and customs. It is what allows Ansul to endure unchanged as a mental and psychological space, regardless of the Alds' destruction of some physical spaces.

Regarding miniatures, Bachelard notes that

> the minuscule, a narrow gate, opens up an entire world. The details of a thing can be the sign of a new world which, like all worlds, contains the attributes of greatness. Miniature is one of the refuges of greatness (Bachelard 1964: 155).

The world which the narrow gate leads to is that of the gods: Lero, Ennu, Deori, Luck, Sampa the Destroyer and Sampa the Shaper (who are, in fact, one), and many others. Additionally, there are guardians of the hearth and of the doorway, of the natural world, ancestors, room-spirits, and the gods protecting various parts of the city. Through the god niche, one enters a mindspace populated by miraculous beings, some of them protective, some mischievous, and some difficult to appease. Yet by allowing themselves to maintain a connection to this otherworld, Ansul residents like Memer open

themselves up to strange and wonderful coincidences, to random encounters which end up profoundly shaping the course of the story and the destiny of the city.

Miniaturization is also a form of possessing the world, according to Bachelard. In our case, this is particularly relevant because, at the beginning of the book, the natives of Ansul do not own anything anymore. They are considered slaves, although the Alds do not appear interested in enforcing this aspect. By compressing an entire mindscape populated by a thousand gods into small, unobtrusive spaces, they can continue to possess it to the extent that it can be possessed by mere human beings; more specifically, they continue to incorporate it to closely in their lives, that they cannot be effectively separated from it.

As mentioned before, the plot of the novel is woven out of a myriad small encounters, each of them important in its own way. Of these, we selected two, which we consider particularly interesting both due to their nature and due to the purpose they serve inside the narrative. Memer's first encounter with Gry, which leads Gry and Orrec to the Waylord, is touched by the sacred even though the sacred does not physically manifest itself. 'This is a day of Lero,' Memer tells herself even before encountering Gry and her lion, a day when everything goes right regardless of obstacles. It is also a day of Luck, the deaf god whose help cannot be invoked, but simply enjoyed when randomly bestowed. The fact that Gry is accompanied by a pet lion (and that the lion startles the horse Memer quiets) also indicate the presence of Ennu, which in other areas of the Western Shore is represented as a lioness. About Ennu, Memer tells us that she 'makes the way easy for the traveler, speeds the work, mends quarrels, and guides us into death' (Le Guin 2015a: 292). In Ansul, she is often carved in the form of a cat, and while we are never allowed to forget that Gry's companion is a lion, the playfulness of her feline nature is often emphasized (the hunger, the grumpiness, or the fondness for treats). In this case, Ennu working through Gry and Orrec certainly speeds the work of the resistance movement, which had been hoping for years to stir the people enough to rise against the Alds. To an extent, she also manages to mend quarrels, as the uprising (with the exception of the tent burning) is a largely peaceful event; by helping the Alds' leader, Ioratth, defeat his son's *coup d'état*, the representatives of Ansul manage to negotiate the Alds' departure. Thus, even though this episode involves a literal, fortuitous encounter between Memer and Gry, its other layers point to a brush with the sacred – Ennu's sleek form deftly navigating

realities and destinies, ensuring that those it touches, blesses, and guides can fulfill their roles in the grand scheme of things.

The second encounter is that between Orrec and the people of Ansul, when he decides to perform his poems for their benefit, rather than the Alds' entertainment. 'He raised his lyre, and as they began to quieten, he sang out the first line of his song 'Liberty': 'As in the dark of winter night …' And we sang it with him, thousands of voices' (Le Guin 2015a: 207). This encounter between poet and the crowd of oppressed men and women of Ansul allows us to see art reshaping reality. As the thousands of voices meet, those who had been afraid are no longer afraid, and Lero once again makes its presence felt:

> the tumult rose again, cheers and calls for more, but also shouts as of anger, and somewhere in the crowd a deep-voiced man called out 'Lero! Lero! Lero!' – and other voices took it up as a chant, with a fast beat on a mounting tune (Le Guin 2015a: 207).

The 'Lero!' chant, invoking the god whose name means 'justice,' will become the rallying cry of the revolution and will sound throughout the crowd scenes until the city's liberation. Of course, Orrec has a great gift as a storyteller, and it could be argued that being in his presence alone counts as an encounter with the sacred. However, given that his poem makes room for a religious invocation, it is more likely that his art serves as a conduit between the collective consciousness of the Ansul crowd and the god they have been carefully remembering all through the occupation and to whom they continued to dedicate dozens of small spaces around the city. Interestingly, once the crowd moves on, Memer sees people 'touching the space where Orrec had stood […], touching it for the blessing, and no one would walk across that spot for a while' (Le Guin 2015a: 208). Even though the poet's person is not sacred in itself, the space he occupies during an act of profound importance for the fate of Ansul becomes sacred, akin to the god niches: a source of immobility (clinging to one's roots) and of possession, but also impressed with the god's fleeting presence.

The other significant locus of resistance in the novel is the library at Galvamand. The Alds' invasion marked the end of Ansul's other libraries, due to the fact that, in Aldean culture, writing and books are forbidden, and those found to be harboring books or engaging in reading and writing are put to death (by drowning, as burning is a sacred act involving the power of their god). Thus, as a result of the occupation, Ansul is stripped not only of its material wealth, but also of its culture, traditions, and

history. Sulter Galva's ancient family library, however, endures because it is twice protected by magic – by the mysterious formula required to unlock its secret door and by the vow sworn by those aware of the place's existence.

Thus, the heart of the resistance lies deep in the House of Galvamand, the domain of Ansul's former Waylord. Tortured and physically broken by the Alds in an attempt to extract information regarding the Night Mouth, the Waylord maintains a quiet presence in the city even as his house becomes a secret meeting place for those citizens planning an uprising. His title can be interpreted in several ways: as someone who leads and shows the way, or as someone who preserves the ways of his people. Sulter Galva does both and is also the one who teaches the young girl Memer how to read both in her own language and the ancient language of Aritan.

The reason why the library represents the most important locus of resistance in the city is because it serves both as a physical storage place for the city's books (many of which are brought in secret to Galvamand after the invasion) and as a spiritual repository of its literature, history, and philosophy. As a space, it is also heterotopic and heterochronic. As Foucault writes:

> Museums and libraries have become heterotopias in which time never stops building up and topping its own summit, whereas in the seventeenth century, even at the end of the century, museums and libraries were the expression of an individual choice. By contrast, the idea of accumulating everything […] of constituting a place of all times that is itself outside of time and inaccessible to its ravages […] belongs to our modernity. The museum and the library are heterotopias that are proper to western culture of the nineteenth century (Foucault 1986: 26).

Here, I would suggest that Foucault ignores, for a reason which is difficult to fathom, the existence and purpose of ancient libraries – not the private ones, which indeed must have reflected the tastes and interests of their owners, but the public ones, which also sought to accumulate scrolls and artifacts from various parts of the world and different time periods. Ansul and its sister city-states were quite obviously modeled after the city-states of the Ancient World, although Galvamand resembles both a Roman villa and a Renaissance city manor. The library at Galvamand is initially a 17th-century type of repository, reflecting the tastes of its recent owners, but also, traditionally, the interests and preferences of the Waylords of

Galvamand. In a time of crisis like this, however, the purpose of the library expands to include books which are relevant to the culture and history of the city as a whole. The preservation of older slices of time is all the more critical in times when the city and its culture face a serious existential threat.

In addition, the library is housed in a hybrid space, both constructed and natural. Closest to the door are the table and tall shelves, but as one walks along this elongated space, the walls give way to natural rock and the room becomes a cave: the cave of the ancient Oracle, whose wisdom, channeled through a chosen one in every generation, has guided Ansulians for centuries. The intersection of natural magic and human learning and ingenuity turn this space into the secret umbilicus of the city – likely the place of its origin and the locus of its continuity as a civic and cultural entity.

As mentioned above, the library can only be accessed via a secret door, which opens only when certain letters are traced in the air. The association between writing and magic, or between magic and speech acts, is not new to this series; in fact, language forms the entire basis of Earthsea's magic, and it is evident that Le Guin has transported a similar kind of magic to the world of the *Western Shore*, where it quietly manifests at times. It is also unsurprising that when writing becomes the object of a great prohibition, the natural locus of resistance would be a library, that the Oracle's answers appear between the pages of a blank book, or that poetry becomes the driving force behind a velvet revolution. Coming back to the way in which the library is unlocked, we must note that the fact that access to the library is granted only once a ritual has been performed is congruent with Foucault's thoughts on the accessibility of heterotopic spaces:

> Heterotopias always presuppose a system of opening and closing that both isolates them and makes them penetrable. […] To get in one must have a certain permission and make certain gestures (Foucault 1986: 26).

For the girl Memer, who learned the magic formula from her long-dead mother, Decalo, the library is initially a protective space. She cannot read yet, so she makes a fort under the great table and looks inside the books, searching for the shapes she had learned to draw on the air. At this point, she does not know that the symbols are called 'letters' or that 'the words in writing are the same as the words in speaking, that writing and speaking are different ways of doing the same thing' (Le Guin 2015a: 15). She knows, however, that 'it's writing that opens the door' – 'only for the

door you do it in the air, in the special place' (Le Guin 2015a: 15). In this context, the door refers, on a literal level, to the library's door: a safe space, inaccessible to the invaders, and permeated by her mother's comforting presence; metaphorically, however, the door which is opened is one towards knowledge and beauty, towards poetry and histories, and, eventually, towards liberty.

Although Memer is the novel's protagonist, she is not the main force behind the events which culminate in the Alds' withdrawal and the city's liberation. Like the goddess Ennu or the fickle god Luck, and most likely guided by them, Memer appears to be in the right place at the right time, steadying a horse only to meet Gry, the lion trainer and the wife of the great poet Orrec Caspro, who had been invited to perform in front of the Ald leaders. With Orrec and Gry ensconced at Galvamand thanks to Memer, numerous little wheels are put into motion, and Memer is just one tiny force who does not appear to exert much influence. As the events of the novel unfold, as the revolution is planned, as the Alds are revealed to be split into factions themselves, with many disgusted by the occupation, as Orrec's poetry moves hearts on both sides of the conflict, as Desac's violent uprising fails disastrously and all its leaders are consumed by flames, as hope of liberation fades, the downtrodden people of Ansul rise and demand their freedom peacefully. Surprisingly, the Alds, who despite their autocratic ways and strange superstitions have a keen sense of justice, agree to withdraw for the time being. It is, of course, unclear whether or not the truce will hold, but for the time being, the conflict is resolved in a manner which pleases both sides.

And yet, although Memer remains in the shadows as Waylord and Gand and Poet play out their parts on the world stage, she is the one chosen by the Oracle to be its Speaker in this generation. She protests the fact that these unknown forces use her as a conduit, feeling scared of what she calls 'the darkness' and perhaps violated by the way she is possessed without consent. The Waylord encourages her to think of the voices as mothers and grandmothers, linking female presences with tradition, lineage, and history.

Memer, like Selver, is a translator, who walks concepts from one world into the other across a thin bridge of consciousness. Unlike Selver, she cannot walk the other world, the world of dreaming, populated by archetypes, by the heroes of her people, and by the grandmothers who spin the threads of fate, so the library serves as a place where the sacred and the mundane converge and she is imbued with the knowledge she must

dispense to the world. As the world around her rearranges itself in a more harmonious pattern, it is difficult to predict if the truce will indeed hold or if peace will once again dissolve into vicious conflict. We are to assume, however, that should another warlord bring Ansul to its knees, the old loci of resistance will light up once more, even though the cast of characters passing through them will inevitably change.

Conclusions

Ursula K. Le Guin's distinct preference for peaceful resistance is evident in the different outcomes of the novella *The Word for World Is Forest* and of the novel *Voices*. In the novella's case, violent resistance, although justified and perhaps inevitable, forever taints the collective consciousness of the Athshean people. As the concept of violent death crosses the bridge between their two worlds, 'translated' by the new god Selver, it can no longer be buried and forgotten, and has, therefore, permanently altered their culture for the worse. By contrast, Ansul's velvet revolution, nurtured by peaceful acts of religious and cultural resistance in the sacred ancient spaces of their city, takes place through poetry and song – an act of creation, of 'making,' and of restoration.

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Constructing Identity in Higher Education Prospectuses. Approach to the Rhetoric of *Excellence*

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Abstract

Taking a discursive approach to prospectuses of higher education institutions, this paper explores the way identity is constructed in this type of discourse envisaged as an instance of promotional discourse that displays a carefully weighed self-promotion strategy meant to build an image of academic excellence and professionalism for the institution. The study details the characteristics of this discourse genre using data from French, British, and American prospectuses. The findings shed light on the interactional, and argumentative devices which count as identity-building strategies meant to create and ensure the reception of the image intended by the institution. Means of referring, devices used to outline worth against competitors and argumentative practices employed to promote prestige and value of the institution are investigated.

Key words: *promotional discourse, prospectuses, identity, interactional devices, argumentative devices*

Introduction

In recent years, under the effect of globalisation, the higher education system has undergone a massive process of marketisation resulting into the adoption and implementation of strategies and policies based on competitiveness and competition. As a consequence, as Drori, Delmestri and Oberg (2013: 149) point out, higher education institutions mimic the promotional behaviour of companies to an unprecedented degree, as a result of the redefinition of the social role of the university and of higher education: universities are currently defined as organizations and higher education is defined as a product or commodity (Drori, Delmestri and Oberg 2013: 137). Functioning therefore according to the same fundamental marketing principles, higher education institutions will seek to promote their image and build up their reputation so as to enhance customers'

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confidence in the quality of the products and services advertised and to increase sales. Except that, in the case of higher education institutions, increasing sales revolves around "increasing knowledge for knowledge's sake" (2013: 149).

The marketisation process referred to above implies, among other things, the emergence of corporational communication practice that basically aims at promoting products and modifying consumers' dispositions and, consequently, behaviour. In other words, as Gaspard (2013: 54) states, communication in the higher education system has lately involved, besides the university personnel and current students (internal communication), the prospective students and their parents, the external partners, stakeholders, the alumni (external communication), which has contributed to branding the institution and enhancing its visibility. Therefore, the higher education discourse that used to address the few initiated ones has been lately meant to reach the wider public especially through the internet-related advertising means (Gaspard 2013: 54). In this context, building the identity of the higher education institution and preserving its profile on the market against competitors is a priority and, in this respect, universities are engaged in promotional campaigns including releasing personalized prints (brochures, flyers, leaflets, posters, roller ups, etc.), audio and video commercials, participation in university fairs, organisation of university open days. In the promotional process, discourse is a means to an end. Imbued with rhetorical strategies, the discourse that speaks about the university has a central role in the process of building identity.

1. The concept of identity

Starting from Ron Scollon's statement, according to which in discourse you are expected to be the person you present yourself to be (1996: 2), the present paper includes an analysis of the discourse strategies used in constructing identity in university prospectuses. The concept of identity is referred to here as an organisational concept. In the theory of the organisation, identity is viewed as the sum of those features of the organisation that are purposefully employed to project and portray the organization in a specific (desired) manner to various stakeholders, predominantly through planned and persuasive visual means (Van Tonder 2006: 13). In fewer words, albeit resuming the same idea, Bendixen and Abratt (2007: 69) consider that corporate identity can be defined as the way

in which a company makes itself known to the world. Identity appears therefore to refer to the entirety of the corporation's attributes, which are, according to Balmer and Wilson (1998), rooted in the behaviour of the corporation. For Stuart Albert and David Whetten (2003: 80), the attributes encapsulated in the notion of identity pertain to three categories: the claimed central character, the claimed distinctiveness, and the claimed temporal continuity. Therefore, the core central features of the corporation, the ones that offer distinctiveness as well as those ensuring continuity make up the entity that the corporation puts forward on the market.

Corporational identity is also viewed as a continuously evolving process taking place in concrete and specific interactional occasions (de Fina, Schiffrin and Bamberg 2006: 2). In the same way, Hall (1994: 392) considers that identity is not an "already accomplished fact, which the new cultural practices then represent", but should be thought of as "a production' which is never complete, always in process, and always constituted within, not outside, representation". Korver and van Ruler (2003) identify three most relevant indicators of identity, namely behaviour, communication and symbols. This emphasizes De Fina, Schiffrin and Bamberg's view referred to above since interaction arches behaviour, communication and symbols: the behaviour of the corporation may be seen as a form of communication with the public, and communication, either verbal or visual, is basic for interaction. The corporation's interactions may involve owners, shareholders, employees, partners, suppliers, customers, competitors. For each of them, the corporation projects a different image of itself since the context of interaction is different every time. This plurality is consistent with the concept of human multiple identity: an individual may have a different professional, cultural, ethnic, sexual identity and in different interactional contexts he/she will "put on" the suitable one.

In the context of the marketisation of higher education, university identity may be therefore assimilated to an organisational concept shaped within interactional contexts. In this paper, the higher education promotional communication, more precisely the university prospectuses, will be placed under the lens. Playing a central role in institution marketing, these prints are paramount to the shaping of identity since they speak about what is central, distinctive and persistent in the life of the institution and they do it through discourse. They set up a virtual interaction with internal and external addressees with a view to portraying a positive self-image to the targeted audience. The chapter below deals in detail with the discursive characteristics of higher education prospectuses.

2. Higher education prospectuses (HEP) - a discursive approach

HEP are documents produced by academic institutions, which give details about their life and activity. They are pervasively used in external communication in order to provide key facts about the institution that would help potential customers make an informed decision. In the case of HEP, making an informed decision means "purchasing" values and worth associated with academic education (knowledge, prestige, tradition, etc.), which can be achieved through attending academic programmes. Therefore, becoming a member of the academia as an undergraduate is the means to achieve the goal.

The basic format of HEP is the same. They usually commence with a welcome message from the chancellor or the president of the institution and provide information with respect to academic programmes, research activity, services and facilities offered for students (accommodation, campus, etc.), infrastructure, location, surroundings, job opportunities, rate of graduates' employability. In special rubrics, ample mention is made of the moral and ethical values that guide the university activity, and of its history. This mention fundamentally contributes to building legitimacy and strengthening credibility. Similarly, references to the graduates' achievements (prize winners, top jobs occupants, internationally recognized personalities who are graduates of the school) reinforce the positive image of the institution. Self-promotion is also framed in the pictures that come along with all this information, all meant to communicate the students' satisfaction, the outstanding quality of the infrastructure and of the equipment, the excellent location. The elements of identification are also prominent in HEP and, since acting as elements that singularise the institution, they are meant not only to map identity but also to enact the sense of belonging.

The scope of HEP is twofold: they are meant to inform in order to persuade (cf. Ganea, under press). The informative locution has priority in this type of writing. The plethora of information to be found within HEP concern all segments related to the academic activity and this with a view to informing and popularising the academic programmes in order to attract the largest number of potential customers. In order to achieve that goal, the discourse will wrap the informational content in a persuasive format that will help present the institution so as to resonate with the expectations of the audience. As any other organisations, each university will seek to bring

forward the element that makes the difference so as to set itself out on the market and to present itself as the worthiest, not only for future students, but also for parents, investors, partners, etc.

Temporal references cover the whole temporal paradigm in HEP: there are references made to the past in the sections referring to the history and tradition of the institutions, to the present in the description of the current activities, and to the future through making prospective projections for the graduates. The lexical choice operated to refer to the institution life and history pertains to the superlative tenor. The pervasive superlative tonality is also supported by figures and facts that act as watertight arguments in the rhetorical action. There are plenty of numerical references to the world-wide acknowledged prize winners and innovations, to the rate of employability as proof of the excellence of the academic programmes. There are also numerous personal accounts of the current and former students who speak about their unique experience as undergraduates. The following chapter will look closely into the discourse strategies used to build identity and reputation in HEP.

3. Method and corpus

Adopting a discursive approach, an empirical web-based research has been conducted on American, British and French university prospectuses and brochures with a view to investigating the discourse practices used in building identity in HEP. The choice of the corpus is motivated by the fact that analysing materials coming from different backgrounds is supposed to provide an accurate insight in the rhetoric of building identity in HEP.

According to De Fina (2003: 23), the linguistic elements involved in building identity pertain to three different levels:

- the lexical level, which refers to the use of specific words or expressions;
- the textual pragmatic level, which refers to textual logical and argumentative relationships both explicit and implicit
- the interactional level, which refers to the devices and strategies used by narrators to index their stances and attitudes both towards their own texts and other interlocutors.

Following De Fina's view, special focus has been laid on the analysis of three sets of elements that we consider relevant for the approach.

Firstly, the discourse means of presenting the self have been analysed and, at this level, the use of referring means has been studied. The interest lies in the fact that they contribute to mapping identity since they

are a means to position oneself towards the interlocutor in point of either distance or proximity. Secondly, the discourse means used to delineate the facts that distinguish I from the others have been analysed. Revolving again around the question of the relationship towards the other, this investigation has pointed to the techniques used to make prominent the institution distinctiveness against competitors and, therefore, all the means of contrasting with a view to self-promotion have been looked into. Finally, the types of arguments used in depicting oneself as the worthiest (outline of values, quality, prestige) have been studied and the various forms of expressing self-worth have been investigated. This analysis will also enable the identification of the lexical paradigm contributing to shaping identity and academic excellence in HEP. Previous studies (Touveron 2013: 121) have already pointed to the emergence of a rhetoric of excellence based on the extensive use of the word *excellence* and other lexical compounds using it in texts on the European academic system. This study will also delineate the most important lexical paradigms that are semantically overarched by the term *excellence*.

4. Findings

4.1 Presenting the self

The analysis of the referring means has led to the identification of two choices. The institution is designed using the whole denomination, e.g. *The Sussex University*. As alternatives, the generic noun *university* may occur or the name of the location, e.g. *Sussex* may be metonymically employed to designate the institution.

> (1) Choosing the right university is an important decision. Our prospectus describes the opportunities available and gives you an idea of what life is like at the *University of Sussex* [1]. (University of Sussex, Undergraduate Prospectus 2015)

The mention of the institution name may be often accompanied by modifiers which refer to professionalism, extraordinary achievements, recognition.

> (2) Join a research-led university with *award-winning teachers*. (University of Sussex, Undergraduate Prospectus 2015)

> (3) Sussex is an *internationally renowned research-led university, attracting significant levels of funding from industry, research organisations and Government agencies, and has strong links with business*. (University of Sussex, Undergraduate Prospectus 2015)

> (4) Over 90 per cent of Sussex research activity was rated as world leading, internationally excellent or internationally recognised, confirming Sussex as *one of the leading 30 research universities in the UK*. (University of Sussex, Undergraduate Prospectus 2015)

The modifiers are involved in constructing the professional identity of the institution, which positions itself as one of the top institutions. Besides the impersonal designators mentioned above, the inclusive pronoun *we* and the related forms (*us*, *our*) are highly used in HEP. They are meant to render the idea of collectivity and to communicate the idea of solidarity among all the university staff.

> (5) *We* are proud of our reputation for research across a broad range of disciplines, with many of *our* academic staff working at the cutting edge of their fields in both the arts and the sciences.
> (University of Sussex, Undergraduate Prospectus 2015)

The pronoun *we* also personalises the discourse by introducing a human instance as representative of the institution. The distance created by the use of the impersonal designators built around the term *university* is balanced by the use of the pronoun we which creates an effect of proximity.

4.2 Means used to delineate the facts that distinguish I from the others

The strategies used in order to make oneself distinctive rely on explicit or implicit comparisons to the other competitors. The discourse effect achieved suggests competitiveness and uniqueness of the institution. The strategies identified are mentioned below.

- use of the comparative degree with a superlative meaning, as in the example below, where the University of Manchester is singularised *among all the other universities in UK*

> (6) We have more Nobel laureates on our staff than any other UK university. (The University of Manchester, Undergraduate Prospectus 2015)

The following excerpt allows for a similar interpretation: although based on a comparative degree (*more than...*), Manchester's recruiting results are in fact contrasted against several renowned institutions. The advantage is that the apparent understatement has a reversed effect, given the multiple comparative instances reunited under the same *comparandum* (*any other UK university* in the excerpt above and *Oxford, Cambridge, University College London, Imperial College, and London School of Economics* in the excerpt below):

> (7) We recruit 400 new students from neighbourhoods with the UK's lowest participation in higher education – more than *Oxford, Cambridge, UCL, Imperial, and LSE combined*. (The University of Manchester, Undergraduate Prospectus 2015)

- use of ungradable adjectives expressing uniqueness: *first, only, unique, outstanding, the largest multidisciplinary, excellent*

> (8) College of Arts and Media
> *First of its kind* in the state, CAM focuses on the intersection of arts, technology and business, with programs in digital animation (including medical animation), performance, singer/songwriter, and recording arts. (University of Colorado Prospectus)

> (9) *One of America's largest colleges* of architecture and design, CAP [College of Architecture and Planning] offers a unique brand of integrative design with areas of prominence and distinction in emerging practices in design, sustainable urbanism, healthy environments, and cultural heritage. (University of Colorado Prospectus)

> (10) These include *outstanding sports facilities*, supported community volunteering, study abroad pathways, skills-development programmes, entoring and much more... (Manchester)

> (11) UPEC is *the largest multidisciplinary and professional university* in the Paris region. (University Paris-Est Créteil Val de Marne)

> (12) At SIUE, you will receive an *excellent* education in your chosen field. (Southern Illinois University, Undergraduate Catalog 2013-2014)

- mention of top positions the university holds in rankings

(13) We're on the way to becoming *one of the world's top 25 universities*… (University of Manchester, Undergraduate Prospectus 2015)

(14) *Over 90 per cent of Sussex research activity* was rated as world leading, internationally excellent or internationally recognised, confirming Sussex as *one of the leading 30 research universities in the UK*. (University of Sussex, Undergraduate Prospectus 2015)

As can be noticed, in presenting the top positions in rankings, mention is made of the level of classification (national, international) and of the instance that is responsible for the assessment and listing of universities based on criteria of quality and performance. This indication acts as an appeal to authority (cf. 4.3 below) and provides legitimacy to the claims made in HEP discourse.

(15) School of Education and Human Development
Ranked in the top 100 schools of education by U.S. News and World Report, SEHD prepares students... (University of Colorado Prospectus)

(16) *Listed for the third consecutive year as one of 46 "up-and-coming schools" by U. S. News & World Report*, SIUE (Southern Illinois University Edwardsville) has so much to offer — from quality faculty and academic programs to a wide variety of extracurricular activities and special events. (Southern Illinois University, Undergraduate Catalog 2013-2014)

(17) Also for the third straight year, *the University is listed on the President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll, in the Distinction category*, for giving back to the Southern Illinois region and the greater community. (Southern Illinois University, Undergraduate Catalog 2013-2014)

- mention of the outstanding breakthrough discoveries made by university researchers, which makes the institution incomparable to any other university

(18) We've been accomplishing feats of global significance for more than 180 years, *from inventing the modern computer to splitting the atom, from founding present-day economics to giving the world graphene – the two-dimensional wonder material that is one atom thick yet 200 times stronger than steel*. (The University of Manchester, Undergraduate Prospectus 2015)

- use of superlatives

> (19) Our ambitious plans are backed by *the biggest* investment programme *ever seen* in UK higher education... (The University of Manchester, Undergraduate Prospectus 2015)

In the example above, the superlative also serves as a means to express the university's commitment to accomplishing visionary targets.

> (20) At Manchester you'll find *the broadest range* of opportunities outside... (The University of Manchester, Undergraduate Prospectus 2015)

- mention of the investors' recognition of the quality and results of the university activity

> (21) In 2011-2012 the faculty received *more than $39 million in externally sponsored research and public service awards*. (The University of Manchester, Undergraduate Prospectus 2015)

- use of positive terms to evaluate the quality of the services the university offers

> (22) SIUE offers a broad range of quality educational experiences at affordable tuition rates, an architecturally distinguished campus, the tranquility of suburban life, and access to the excitement of a major American city. All these factors contribute to the quality of educational opportunities at SIUE and make student experiences here everything education should be. (Southern Illinois University, Undergraduate Catalog 2013-2014)

In (22), an accumulation of terms positively marked at the semantic level may be noticed: *quality, affordable, distinguished, tranquility, opportunities*.

- extensive use of numerical expressions meant to overstate the quality and diversity of the programmes, infrastructure, staff, research, etc.

> (23) Enter the University of Colorado Denver and become part of *a lively academic environment that has welcomed international students from 130 countries*. (University of Colorado Prospectus)

The numerical expressions may refer to the number of countries providing foreign incoming students as above, to the number of research projects carried out in the institutions, or the number of apprenticeships and lifelong learning programmes – as in the examples below. Any aspect

related to university activity that is suitable for hyperbolic presentation is exploited in the discourse of HEP and presented as an advantage that enables the institution to build an image of academic success.

> (24) Thanks to the high quality of the research carried out by UPEC, *it was involved in 125 projects in 2011, 34 of which were supported by the French National Research Agency, and 15 by the European Commission*. (University Paris-Est Créteil Val de Marne Prospectus)

> (25) One of the features that distinguishes UPEC is the high number of students carrying out apprenticeships or adults who have gone back to studying. This has long been a key aspect of the University and is more and more evidence every year; the number of people carrying out apprenticeships rose from 1165 in 2006-2007 to 1569 in 2010-2011, and the number of people registered on continuing education programmes leading to qualifications rose from 2430 to 2817 over the same period. (University Paris-Est Créteil Val de Marne Prospectus)

Another way of bolstering the image of the institution using numerical expressions consists in using them as evidence for the development strategy. This is the case of the following excerpt, where reference is made to the past and future infrastructure development of the University of Manchester:

> (26) ... we've already invested £750 million in buildings and facilities since 2004 and we're now putting another £1 billion into further teaching and student facilities. (The University of Manchester, Undergraduate Prospectus 2015)

- use of adjective modifiers which express affective evaluations related to the institution staff or assumingly produced by competitors

> (27) Our *enviable* reputation for research attracts outstanding academic staff and provides firm foundations for our teaching excellence. Add to this our *proud* history of innovative learning approaches and you have a recipe for outstanding success. (University of Sussex, Undergraduate Prospectus 2015)

In the excerpt above, *enviable* is competitor-oriented, while *proud* is self-oriented and expresses self-esteem and self-conceit.

4.3 Arguments used in promoting worth and prestige

At the argumentative level, two main types of arguments have been identified in the corpus: arguments built on the concept of value, and arguments based on facts. The first category comprises arguments which are meant to stress the value, prestige and worth of the institution in the eyes of the speaker, whose positive emotions are triggered. This type of argumentation is pervasive in HEP; incidentally, Burke states that pathos persuades more often than any other type of proof since it appears to be human nature to "process information 'mindlessly', peripherally, unthinkingly". (2014: 22)

These arguments basically contribute to building the positive image of the institution, which leads to a transfer of positive value on the consumer, the prospect student. Different elements can be put forward in the attempt at outlining the value of the institution: the outstanding results, the employability rate, the economic, social, cultural, historical and geographical background of the institution. Implicitly, becoming a student of the university implies taking advantage of its value, and contributing to preserving it. The following excerpt clearly states what the student might benefit from, once an undergraduate at Manchester University.

> (28) Are you a Manchester student?
> • You want to meet the world at the *UK's biggest and most diverse university community, mixing with students from 154 countries and making friends for life at a place that prides itself on nurturing responsible global citizens*.
> • You want to get to know and love *Manchester, a vibrant, friendly and creative place with an enduring energy for progress and change*. (The University of Manchester, Undergraduate Prospectus 2015)

The reasoning relies on an enthymemic pattern, where the major premise, assumed as accepted, is omitted: *A is B, therefore A is C, since it is generally accepted that B is C*. In the case of the following example

> (29) Study in Denver, Colorado, a thriving city centrally located in the United States. Home to one of the nation's best international airports and one of its strongest city economies, Denver is a great place to gain an exceptional education.
> (University of Colorado Prospectus)

the enthymemic schema is

> Any student wants to gain an exceptional education (suppressed major premise)
> Denver is a great place to gain an exceptional education (minor premise)
> Go to Denver to gain an exceptional education. (conclusion)

According to Burke (2014: 22), the ellipted main premise in an enthymeme is responsible for the persuasion act since "people infer what is not there and fill it in themselves". In Burkes's opinion, it is a case of self-persuasion since the act of providing the answer not only makes people feel good about themselves, but it also persuades them.

There are instances where, unlike the excerpt above, where the speaker is addressed directly by means of a generic you, the directive locution formulated in the enthymeme is addressee free, which gives a larger and impersonal scope to the argumentation:

> (30) The dynamic city of Valenciennes is home to several sporting associations as well as entertainment options (cinema, bowling, ice rink...). Its football team plays in France's top division. Its cultural hub includes a national fine arts museum, a multimedia library, a music conservatory and a national theatre. The main points of the city - including the university campus, the city centre and the railway station - are linked by a tramway. Hainaut-Cambrésis is known for its green belt, a regional natural park, national forests and water bodies. (The University of Valenciennes and Hainaut-Cambrésis Prospectus)

In (30), all the aspects mentioned, namely the sports life, the public transport network, the entertainment options, the natural environment act as incentives to the potential addressee to whom the implicit directive is addressed.

Reversely, the following excerpt does not refer openly to what the institution offers, but implicitly mentions its strengths by referring to what the client will become after having benefitted from the services offered by the institution. In a strongly personalised address due to the iterative use of *you*, the accumulation of terms referring to the skills the student will acquire (*excellent teaching, intellectual skills, sound research principles, analytical and enquiring mind, ability to reflect critically, identify challenging questions, solve intelectually difficult problems, intellectual skills*) is an indirect way of speaking about the strengths and opportunities offered by the institution:

> (31) Whatever your subject at Sussex, you will receive excellent teaching and acquire a range of intellectual skills based on sound research principles. You will develop an analytical and enquiring mind, and the ability to reflect critically on what you have learnt. You will learn to identify challenging questions and to solve intellectually difficult problems. These skills will prove invaluable in a job market that increasingly prizes the intellectual skills that are encouraged at a research-led university. A degree from Sussex will give you the edge. (University of Sussex, Undergraduate Prospectus 2015)

Another way of bolstering the worth of the institution is putting forward the notoriety of the product (cf. Ganea, under press).

> (32) We are recognised at a global level for the quality and volume of our pioneering research. In the last Research Assessment Exercise (RAE 2008) an impressive 65% of our research activity was rated 'world-leading' or 'internationally excellent', with most of the remainder judged to be of a quality that is 'recognised internationally in terms of originality, significance and rigour'. (The University of Manchester, Undergraduate Prospectus 2015)

In this case, the argumentation based on value makes use of the appeal to authority, citing the UK higher education funding councils' rankings as a means to establish the evidence of worth. The mention of the instance producing the assessment of research quality, namely the Research Assessment Exercise, acts as an authority instance which guarantees the truth of the claim *We are recognised at a global level for the quality and volume of our pioneering research*.

The arguments based on facts identified in the corpus take the form of inartistic appeals in Aristotle's terms (1991: 15), that is arguments based on 'hard evidence' like percentages, figures, rankings, statistics. The following excerpts illustrate the forms these arguments might take:

> (33) Facts and figures
> - 4 campuses in Valenciennes, Cambral and Maubege
> - More than 10,200 students, including 1,000 international students
> - spread across 55 hectares
> - University community of 1,300 members
> - Budget of 120 million euro
> - 80,000 alumni since its foundation
> - 190 doctorates
> - 8 faculties and 8 research laboratories

- 750 professional guest speakers
- 4 libraries
- 4 university restaurants
- sports facilities: 2 gymnasiums, 1 dance hall, 1 room for martial arts, 1 weights room, 1 stadium and 1 athletics track
- 20 student associations (The University of Valenciennes and Hainaut-Cambrésis Prospectus)

(34) Each year our careers fairs, workshops and presentations attract more than 600 exhibitors. Through our careers service you'll have access to more than 7,000 graduate recruiters, from major multinationals to small and medium-sized enterprises. 91% of our graduates go straight into employment or further study. (The University of Manchester, Undergraduate Prospectus 2015)

Using numbers as evidence is pervasive in HEP and is meant to create an effect of objectivity and produce an abstract, uncluttered, simplifying and reductive image of reality (cf. Bacot, Desmarchelier, Rémi-Giraud 2012: 7). However, against this apparent effect of objectivity, numbers cannot be dismissed in the category of logos appeal since they are involved in expressing value and worth of the institution. In the opinion of Bacot, Desmarchelier, Rémi-Giraud (2012: 7), numbers represent a first level semiotic transformation and they reconfigure the initial linguistic data and, in doing it, they evolve from expressing quantity to expressing value (2012: 10). It is in this respect that we treat this category of proof as belonging to pathos appeal, as it is sooner emotion that is addressed. On the other hand, numbers are also involved in building ethos since they reflect the speaker's rigour, seriousness, control of oneself and of the world (2012: 10). Acting as watertight evidence which can be verified at all times, the authority of the argument is transferred on the speaker, which enhances his/her ethos.

Another type of factual argument is the testimonial one, which takes the form of undergraduates' and graduates' accounts of their university experience. It is a frequently used technique, by means of which the students take the floor to speak about the strengths and the worth of the institution.

(35) Choosing an overseas university was far from easy. What appealed to me was the reputation of this institution and the wonderful platform it provided to combine statistical practice with public health and basic science research.
Kian LU, PhD studies, Biostatistics and Bioinformatics

(University of ColoradoProspectus)

(36) "I chose Manchester because it has one of the best RAE rankings and top-class facilities."
Ali Jahran, Biomedical Materials Science (The University of Manchester, Undergraduate Prospectus 2015)

The scope of this type of argument is complex. On the one hand, this argument triggers emotion as the prospect student identifies himself/herself with the author of the testimony and projects himself/herself in the undergraduate's or graduate's position. Moreover, the accounts act as real life examples and provide concreteness to the abstract and formal discourse about the institution. Last but not least, testimonies produce evidence for the truthfulness of the claims made about the institution in HEP, which also contributes to enhancing the ethos: the testimonies confirm the self-stated credibility, which will make the client grant confidence to the speaker.

The efficiency of these argumentative practices is strongly enhanced by the lexical choices made in HEP. Their examination is relevant for building identity, since they appear to play an important role as linguistic devices that intervene in the strategies meant to create the image of institutional worth and prestige. In trying to explore the lexical devices at work in promoting the university positive image, I have examined the semantic isotopies responsible for producing and strengthening this linguistic message. I have chosen to analyse isotopies since they are engaged in constituting meaning by creating a semantic weave of repetitive minimal meaning traits, which provides coherence and unity of meaning in a text, or, in Salvatore Attardo's words (1994: 69), a *totality of meaning*.

The analysis carried out on the prospectus of Sussex University enabled the identification of several pervasive isotopies:
a. the semantic isotopy referring to *excellence*: *prestigious, invaluable, enviable reputation, outstanding, innovative, success, renowned, work at the cutting edge, world leading, internationally excellent, leading research university, prestigious, Nobel Prize winners, academicians, Crafoord Prize, proud history of innovative learning approaches, world leading research*, etc.
b. the semantic isotopy referring to the *quality of services used or opportunities offered: comprehensive infrastructure, pastoral support, student representative scheme, exciting city, thriving music, flexible social and meeting place,* etc.

c. the semantic isotopy related to *knowledge and skills enhancing: awareness, stretch the mind, inspiring, identify challenging questions, solve intellectually difficult problems, intellectual skills, enhance and hone skills,* etc.
d. the semantic isotopy referring to *sentiments and personal development: passion, flourish, enthusiastic, comprehensive and unique experience, enhanced student experience, leadership, personal initiative, commercial awareness and team working, build your confidence, build academic study skills and employability, develop career awareness about entering professional and career pathways*

It is obvious that *a* and *b* are oriented towards ethos-building, while *c* and *d* are oriented towards the customer and belong to the pathos proofs. This list is far from being exhaustive; the point has only been to demonstrate the way words belonging to different grammatical categories coalesce in a contextual process of meaning-making and contribute to shaping identity.

Conclusion

The analysis of the prospectuses showed that identity construction is at the core of the promotional discourse in university prospectuses. Mimicking the strategies used in corporational promotion, the permanent goal in HEP has been revealed to be the construction of an image of academic excellence and professionalism for the institution. In investigating the discourse, the means used to build identity and communicate worthiness, as well as the interactional and argumentative strategies have been explored with a view to examining the way the institution positions itself against the competitor and outlines its worth and prestige and, equally, the way the meaning of *worth* and *prestige* shaped at the lexical level is engaged in realising these strategies. This study has allowed to point to the emergence of rhetoric associated to the marketisation of higher education and to demonstrate the extent to which the customer is taken into consideration in the promotion of higher education.

Note

[1] All italics in the examples are inserted by the author of this article.

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Essential Textual and Editorial Markers of the Editions of the Bible's Georgian Translations in the Pre-Soviet, Soviet and Post-Soviet Eras

Ketevan GIGASHVILI*

Abstract

The paper studies the editing history of the Bible's Georgian translations (BGTs), covering the pre-Soviet, Soviet and post-Soviet eras. The main goal of the article is to identify the essential textual and editorial markers of the editions carried out in these three different epochs. Actuality of the research is conditioned by the fact that in Georgian reality (and not only), the field of the Editorial Studies is still considered as an applied part of the Textual Scholarship, associated with publishing and the scientific boundaries between these two disciplines are not clearly delineated yet, despite the fact that the Georgian editors have always conducted editorial work alongside with the textual one since the early middle ages. This is especially obvious in the example of the editions of the BGTs, which appeared in the early years of Christianity (5th-6th cc.) and occupy one of the honourable places on the world cultural map alongside the Latin, Coptic, Gothic, Armenian, Arabic, and Aramaic translations. The Georgian textual criticism and editorial studies developed within the practice of: a) producing manuscripts of the BGTs (before invention of the printing press), b) editing them (in the print era) and c) making electronic editions (in the digital era). In the article, I do not deal with the issue of producing manuscripts, but only with the history of printed editions and with a few electronic editions. The research has shown that, despite ideological pressure in the Soviet era, thanks to the Georgian scientists, the editions of the BGTs spiritually and intellectually fed the Georgian national being and strengthened its national identity.

Key words: *Bible's Georgian Translations, Pre-Soviet Era, Soviet Era, Post-Soviet Era, Scholarly Edition*

Introduction

Georgian translations of the Bible have a nearly 15-century history, which, at the same time, is the history of Georgian writing itself. They start from the 5th-6th cc. palimpsest manuscripts and end with the 18th-century copies

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of handwritten books. Khanmeti fragments testify that translation of certain books of the Old Testament should have started at the beginning of the Georgian writing. According to Korneli Kekelidze (1980: 411-412), the Book of Psalms and the Gospel should have been translated the earliest. The translation of the Gospel should have been done in the 5th century, if not earlier. The English Kartvelologist David Leng (1961) expressed a similar opinion. The original literary-historical sources support this assumption: *Martyrdom of Shushanik* and the metaphrastic edition of *The Life of Shio and Evagre*.

Nearly 300 copies of Georgian translations of the Four Gospels have reached until today. About forty Codices preserve texts of the oldest version of the Gospel, which is especially important for restoring the Greek archetype. The four Gospels were created in the various historical or religious situations, in different spatial area, cultural centres or scriptoriums existing in Georgia or abroad by people possessing different knowledge, religious ideals and literary taste.

As in Europe, in Georgian churches of the medieval period, when the dominant media was manuscript tradition, the textual and editorial work was carried out by one person. A serious number of well-known Georgian editors worked in those centres, fulfilling a huge role in developing the Georgian textual and editorial fields. We can name Giorgi and Ekvtime Mtatsmindeli, Ephrem Mtsire and others. They deserve credit for the versions of the BGTs belonging today to the Golden Fund of Georgian cultural heritage.

Method

I studied all editions of the BGTs available in Georgia or abroad since 1705 until today. I observed the textual and editorial works presented in each edition, compared them with each other and singled out those editions which show remarkable textual and editorial practices.

Discussion

The main textual and editorial markers of the editions of the BGTs in the Pre-Soviet Era

Studies of Georgian versions of the Bible have a long history in Georgia and abroad. In Georgian reality, scientific grounds for Bible's textual criticism are already given in the testament of the 11th-century religious

figure, brilliant translator and editor, Giorgi Mtatsmindeli, enclosed to the text translated by him. From there, we find out that he conducted fundamental textual research: investigated various copies of the Greek text and compared the psalms' Georgian translations to them. Editions done by him, Ekvtime Mtatsmindeli and others prove their high professionalism and editorial preparation.

The Georgian writer, lexicographer, scientist and political figure Sulkhan-Saba Orbeliani (1658-1725) is considered the initiator of preparation of the Old Testament's first critical text. His notes on Biblical versions, alignment, laying the text out, corrections based on comparing various copies to each other constitute the critical apparatus that the textual scholars use today.

The necessity of textual research of the BGTs was set as an urgent issue in the 19th century by the famous historian, Dimitri Bakradze. In the article *Three old variants of the Georgian Gospel*, published in the journal "Iveria", we read:

> It is highly desirable all such kinds of manuscripts to be spread among Georgian monasteries and families, to be collected in Tbilisi, carefully compared with each other and the remarkable variants to be printed as one book (1883: #5-6).

This is nothing less than what we call a critical edition in modern textual scholarship. In the work *The old variants of the Georgian Four Gospels*, he, for the first time, considered the clarification of interrelations between Georgian translations and foreign versions (Greek, Armenian, and Syrian) as one of the most important research tasks.

Thus, philological research on the Gospel texts dates back to the 19th century, though until the 1940s, it lacks scientific depth. According to academician Akaki Shanidze (1945), the reason is the fact that the Georgian texts were not critically established and edited, and the history of foreign texts was not foreseen. Because of this, the problem was being solved not on the base of investigating the whole text thoroughly and discussing it critically, but with the help of comparing certain places in the text.

The history of editing BGTs starts in Russia, where King Archil, after his exile, started to take care of editing Georgian translation of Biblical texts thoroughly, and printed *The book of David's psalms* in the national printing house of Moscow in 1705. In 1709, in Georgia, it was printed under the name *Bible: the book of prophets and the Gospel* in the Georgian printing house established by King Vakhtang VI. Thus, the practice of editing

biblical texts takes its ground from printing products containing texts of both the Old and New Testament.

The edition of 1709 relied on Giorgi Mtatsmindeli's wording, and served ecclesiastical goals. Since then, the Gospel was edited several times in Tbilisi, as well as in Moscow and Petersburg. We can name the editions of 1779, 1876, 1879, 1883, 1895, 1896, 1898, 1900, 1904, 1909, etc. It was printed as separate chapters, as well as in the whole and together with the texts of the New Testament.

We have samples of the phototypographic edition too. In this format, for example, in 1817, *The Gospel according to Matthew* was edited; in 1883 – *The Gospel according to John*, *The Gospel according to Matthew* and *The Gospel according to Luk*e; in 1895 – *The Gospel according to Mark*; in 1900 – *The Gospel according to Luke*, etc.

All these editions, like the Gospel printed for the first time, were of ecclesiastical importance, and neither of them was scientific, which means that the printed texts are not reliable and authentic. Lack of textual investigation naturally implies lack of editorial research: neither an introduction, nor prefaces, literary essays, research, scientific apparatus was enclosed to these editions. Even the contents page was either absent or did not correspond with the title given in the title-page of the book. In certain cases, there was no year of editing indicated. Exactly such one is endowed with an explanatory dictionary, which does not have a printed form, looks like a manuscript, and is written in black Indian ink. There are no appropriate examples testified from the text. This is one of the early samples of the dictionary enclosed to the texts of the New Testament.

As Akaki Shanidze (1945) remarks in his first scholarly edition of the Four Gospels, in the second half of the 19th century and at the beginning of the 20th century, there were attempts to prepare scholarly editions of the Four Gospels, but no serious steps were taken. Only in 1908, the Russian Academy of Science started the practical implementation of this work and, in 1909, printed the chapter of Matthew and in 1911 – the chapter of Mark. The edition of 1909 is the first to include a short preface (by Vladimir Beneshevich in Georgian and Russian languages, in Mkhedruli script and presented into two columns), explaining which version the edition is based on and with which manuscripts it is compared. Consequently, the variant readings are presented in scholium. This indicates to textual investigation conducted by the editor, accompanied by editorial research fulfilled by him to some extent, namely: the variant readings are marked with appropriate letters, which is the first case in the edition practice of the Georgian Four

Gospels; the elucidations of abbreviations and symbols (inserting, omitting, etc.), used in the edition, are included. This publication is regarded as the first scientific edition of Georgian translations of the New Testament.

Beneshevich's edition had defective sides, of course. As Georgian scientist, Ivane Imnaishvili evaluates, "many mistakes were made, one could not find out where the first edition began from and where the second one finished" (1979: 5). However, the researcher considers this publication a scientific edition.

As for the Georgian translations of the Old Testament, a scientific approach is primarily noticed in the edition of A. Tsagareli (1886) – *Song of Solomon*, based on the Athos (Oshki) manuscript. The variant readings are given in the scholium from the Georgian as well as Slavic, Greek and Armenian manuscripts, labelled with letters.

After that, publications continued along the same unscientific lines of the previous editions. Indeed, there are editions containing separate scientific details, but this does not change the final picture. For example, in the edition of 1912, the chapters of Biblical books with the indications to sections, supposedly, where the texts find their analogues, are given in the footnote. In the end, it includes the rubric "principal mistakes."

The Gospel according to Matthew, printed in Georgia in 1914, is accompanied by a two-page introduction which presumably should be the first case in its editing practice. The edition of 1915 has a two-sheet preface. The Archaeological Society in Moscow in 1916 prepared the phototypographic edition of the oldest dated Georgian text of Four Gospels (Adishi, 897) with Ekvtime Takaishvili's preface.

Editorial work based on comparing Georgian texts to Slavic versions took place in the Georgian colony of Moscow. The result of this endeavour was *The Bible* printed by Bakar – the son of The King Vakhtang VI, in 1743.

In 1920, Korneli Kekelidze edited *The Ecclesiastes* according to four editions: the Athos version, the variant of Mtskheta, Moscow edition and Petritsonic edition. Each page presents two editions in two columns without footnotes.

Thus, in the pre-Soviet era, the editions are mainly characterized by an unscientific nature. In few cases, one can see scientific signs, but they are not systematic and complete. During that period, the standards of scholarly editing had not been established yet.

The main textual and editorial markers of the editions of the BGTs in the Soviet Era

The scholarly editions of the BGTs start in the Soviet era. In 1926 and 1929, American Kartvelologist, Professor of Harvard University, R. Blake published *The Book of Ezra Sutiel*, based on Jerusalem and Oshki manuscripts.

R. Blake printed Mark's chapter with variants from the manuscripts of Opiza and Tbeti and with Latin translation typographically in Paris, in 1928, based on the edition of the Russian Academy of Science. In 1933, he edited *The Gospel according to Matthew*. Later, in 1950, in collaboration with the French scientist, M. Brier – *The Gospel according to John*. After Blake's death, Brier did not stop this activity, and in 1955 edited the text of Luke from the Adishi Gospel.

In 1944, Akaki Shanidze published the phototypographical edition of *Khanmeti Lectionary*, the second unique and brilliant monument after the Adishi Gospel, as the scientist remarks. The edition contains prefaces in Russian and English. A symphony dictionary is also enclosed. Akaki Shanidze prepared the first scholarly edition of the Georgian Gospel as soon as World War II ended in 1945. In the preface, the researcher considers the fact of not having the critically established text of the Gospel an unfortunate reality. He outlines the first-rate objective of the Georgian philological science preparation of the editions of the Georgian Gospels separately, as monographs. The scientist formulates postulates of what should have been done with textual research of the Gospel:

> In the process of investigation of such issues, we should first consider what the Georgian text itself is, what kind of interrelations the variants of old manuscripts reveal, what editions we have got, etc. Only after fulfilling such preliminary tasks, historical-literary issues can be relevantly set up and solved appropriately (1945: 10).

The manuscripts presented in this edition are compared with other versions and appropriate analysis is presented. Codicological characterization of the manuscripts is also given. The text is printed in two columns, but, unlike many previous editions of the Bible, here different wordings are given in different columns and not one text in two columns. Practically, in previous editions, in most cases, the texts were not printed according to several versions. The footnotes contain variant readings of editions. The artistic decoration of manuscripts, front cover, testaments of

the translators and ascriptions on the margins are characterized. There is a detailed explanation about conditional signs and rules of using the text. The scientist explains several issues (including linguistic ones) and the principles that he used while establishing certain places of the text and what his attitude towards the text is, for example, how orthographical and other questions are solved in the edition, what is prioritized, when and what is taken into consideration, etc.

In the Soviet era, editing the Bible books encountered some obstacles due to the Soviet regime. In most cases, they were published with the hidden titles such as, for example, *Oshki Manuscript*, *Mtskheturi manuscript*, *Khanmeti Lectionary,* etc. This way, attention was paid to the scientific character of the text and not to the religious one. It is also interesting that, according to the resolution of the social-scientific department of Georgian Soviet Academy of Science, the series of *Old Georgian language monuments* was founded and the main goal of this department was to research and edit the old monuments of the Georgian language. This series was an editorial policy of the Georgian philological science to protect editions from Soviet ideological pressure.

Ivane Imnaishvili scientifically issued *The Revelation of St. John and its Interpretation*, in 1961. The publication involves six photo tables, though of low quality. The edition also contains a dictionary and an investigation clarifying the origin and essence of the published text. We should remark that the researcher considers miracles and ecstasies as nonsense. He writes:

> The era, which created ancient Christianity, represented in this book, was the time when miracles, ecstasies, visions, fortune-telling and other nonsenses had the leading roles. The atmosphere where the earlier Christianity originated was of this kind, moreover, it emerged among the people who acquired such fantasies about extra natural cases better than others did. (1961)

In order to consolidate his opinion, I. Imnaishvili verifies the references of Marx, Engels, and Lenin in the scholium of the first two pages of the investigation. However, from the scientific point of view, this edition meets the standards of a scholarly edition. Unfortunately, the scientists living in the Soviet period had to pay tribute to authority. This most likely can be said about other spheres of science than textual and editorial fields.

In spite of the examined example, similar cases cannot be found in other publications of the Bible edited in the Soviet period, when the established rule of scientific life was to analyse every scientific topic in the

light of Marxism-Leninism, in spite of the character of the work. Editing the Biblical texts was a kind of oasis where Georgian scientists could keep themselves away from pressure. In such rare cases as those mentioned, professional and honest researchers like I. Imnaishvili obeyed the Soviet ideology for the sake of the promotion of Georgian science. Their contribution to its development is great.

In the respective publication, the editor abided by the general principles of scholarly edition defined by Ak. Shanidze, according to which every possible form should be kept in the text and only impossible forms and vivid errors should be corrected.

In 1979, Ivane Imnaishvili edited *Two final editions of Georgian Four Gospels* with a full scientific apparatus. Since 1981, the Committee for Georgian historical sources existing within the Georgian Academy of Science started editing the books of the so-called *Mtskheturi Manuscript*, containing the texts of both Old and New Testament.

In 1989, *The Book of the Old Testament, part I, Genesis and Exodus* was critically edited. Researchers of this edition outline the general textual features of the publication: grouping manuscripts according to textual similarities, detecting relations among the groups, setting up and establishing the whole text, finding out the relationship of Georgian translations to the foreign (mainly towards Greek and Armenian) sources, clarifying time and extensional limits, nature of corrections, etc. Besides, the editors define some issues connected with the investigation of the Georgian versions of the Old Testament, indicating to requirements of scholarly editing in Georgia at this time. The publication is proof of the hard work conducted by Georgian scholar-editors.

Numerous books of the Old and New Testament were edited in this period. They were mainly prepared under Akaki Shanidze's editorship, who, in fact, defined the standards and editorial conception of scholarly edition in Georgia.

The main textual and editorial markers of the editions of the BGTs in the Post-Soviet Era

The scholarly editing of the BGTs continued in the Post-Soviet era. It was developed and refined, acquiring new scientific features. Once the Soviet ideological pressure disappeared, the way to the West, where the era of digital humanities had started long ago, opened. At the end of the 1990s, in the collaboration with Frankfurt Goethe-Institute, a group of Georgian and

foreign scientists, under the leadership of Zurab Sarjveladze and Jost Gippert, started to edit the BGTs in digital format (http://armazi.uni-frankfurt.de/framee. htm), though a lot of work is still to be done and electronic scholarly editing in Georgia is yet to be developed. This is a challenge the modern editorial field is facing today and it should be overcome in cooperation with foreign researchers again.

In 2010, scientist Elgudja Giunashvili prepared the printed edition of the *Four Gospels according to Sinai Manuscript* (978-979 years). The investigation of the Sinai wording of Georgian Gospel was initiated by the text-establishing scientific group set up by Zurab Sarjveladze in the 1990s. This text in the mentioned edition is published with a documentary dictionary and indexes. While establishing the critical text of Sinai wording, the scientific group was guided by the principle of "editing one edition ", meaning that the manuscripts' data is preserved intact (lapses, of course, are corrected). For example, if any form is given with different variants in different places of the text and each variant is admissible providing the language history, each of them is kept in its place (e.g. *ცხოვრება / ცხორება* (life)).

The edition attracts our attention with its editorial novelty; namely, it is endowed with indexes of textual peculiarities of the Sinai Four Gospels, containing the following units: additions, reductions, changes of word meaning or word order in a sentence, concurrent paradigms with other versions of the Four Gospels in the copies of the Sinai wording, followed by the indexes of anthroponyms, toponyms, numbers and measuring units, money, time, age (each verified by appropriate examples, indicating to the page and text line). In the end, an extensive dictionary is enclosed (verified by examples).

In 2010, Manana Machkhaneli edited *Anbandidi*, the 9th-century manuscript of the Four Gospels under Darejan Tvaltvadze's editorship, who emphasizes "an ambitious goal": to restore the part of Georgians' intellectual history and let others and ourselves know about how the Georgian scholars, brilliant translators or copyist-editors brought up today what Jesus said and taught us.

One of the editorial dignities of *Anbandidi* can be considered the fact that the editor, under the title "What do we know ", has given the information about what we know today about the interrelation of manuscripts containing the Georgian Four Gospels, what are the general results of textual research on Georgian Gospel.

Here, as well as in the edition of E. Giunaishvili, is the table of *Anbandidi* concurrent paradigms on the example of the Gospel according to

Luke and Matthew. The editorial strategy of the previous edition is also maintained. The editor remarks: "We deliberately have not restored the normative-grammatical forms in order not to lose the style of the scriber's spoken language and maintain a unique form of the manuscript". On pages 97-289, photocopies of manuscripts are given. A two-page English translation is also included. In the end, the list of Gospel's scholarly editions is also provided.

The editing of the Old Testament's Georgian translations, prepared in Korneli Kekelidze Georgian National Center of Manuscripts, was concluded in 2017, with two fundamental volumes, containing more than 4000 pages in total, summarizing the 30-year findings of textual researches on the BGTs. The edition is significant as far as the textual and editorial works are differentiated here: it is indicated who is the establisher of the critical text and who prepared it for editing.

Conclusions

Thus, the editing history of the BGTs starts in the pre-Soviet era. The editions of this time served the religious goals and did not have any ambition to scientific character, though separate editions had scientific signs, for example, pointing to variant readings and placing them in scholium, also presenting conditional signs and their explanations.

The first scientific edition of the Georgian translations of the Four Gospels dates back to the early 1910s (by V. Beneshevich (1909-1911)), and of the Old Testament books – to the end of the 19th century (by Al. Tsagareli (1886)).

As for the scholarly editions of the Gospel, the first one was fulfilled in 1945 by Akaki Shanidze, who drew the main textual and editorial vectors for scholarly editing and under whose editorship numerous books of the Old and New Testament were edited – studying the textual interrelations between the manuscripts, separating wordings and their copies, identifying the relations of the translations to the Armenian, Greek, and other sources, clarifying the origin of manuscripts and other important issues. This scientific character of the scholarly editing was kept in the course of time, although it was promoted and completed by succeeding researchers. They added, for example, concurrent paradigms, investigating the separate copies for their editorial completeness, identifying the main characters of corrections, clarifying the relative chronology of translations

reached up today, revealing the connections of readings preserved in the lectionaries of Biblical copies, etc.

In the Soviet era, due to the ideological pressure, the titles of the editions of the BGTs systematically contained such concepts as "manuscript", "wording", in order to emphasize the scientific task of the editions and not the religious nature. In spite of the Soviet regime, the Georgian scientists managed to edit Biblical books and bring them to the readers. Though they seldom had to pay tribute to the Soviet censorship, this did not damage the textual and editorial level of editions. Editing the Biblical texts seemed to be the most stable and sustainable field freed from Soviet ideological pressure. The BGTs in the Soviet era were among the few fields where the scientific issues were not discussed in the light of Soviet ideology and with reference to the Soviet leaders. Only after the Soviet era, in 2017, the scholarly edition of the Old Testament was titled "Bible". In this period, established collaborative relations with the West created appropriate conditions for establishing the new (digital) format of editing, which requires further development and strengthening.

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Private Letters as Visual Evidence for Disclosure of the Totalitarian Regime

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Abstract

The paper aims to prove the impact of the totalitarian regime on individuals, society and interpersonal relationships, reflected in personal letters, as well as the consequences of this impact. The research object includes the epistolary legacy of the 19th-century Georgian poet and public figure, the General of the Russian Army, Grigol Orbeliani, and that of the 20th-century Georgian historian, founder and Rector of Tbilisi State University, Ivane Javakhishvili. They both were members of the Georgian society, on extremely different sides, owing to their beliefs and worldviews: the former was an active participant in the creation of the totalitarian regime and represented the foothold of Russian authority in fulfilling the forcible policy in the Caucasus, and the latter was a victim of the totalitarian regime; by keeping the national values, worldviews, and personal freedom, he opposed authority. As a result, he became an object of persecution and insult. The comparative analysis of the two different epochs has once again revealed that Bolshevism was a logical extension of Tsarist Russia's imperial policy: in both epochs, the Russian sovereignty used similar methods to implement and maintain a totalitarian regime: obtaining the public confidence, dividing the society, encouraging people to denounce and doom each other in order to create successful careers and so on. By bringing the examples from modern life, the work shows that, despite the fact that communism has fallen, its influence on society is still evident.

Key words: *totalitarian regime, private letters, Grigol Orbeliani, Ivane Javakhishvili, Russian authority*

Introduction

There are different opinions in the scientific literature on the genesis of totalitarianism and on its research methodology, which were discussed in a number of works by scientists, among whom Friedrich and Brzezinski (1956), Popper (1945), Bonelli (1997).

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We consider wrong the opinion of some scholars, conditioned by subjective or objective factors (for example, the use of the adjective "totalitarian" in negative contexts to describe the one-party system formed in Italy in the early 1920s, and its establishment in the political lexicon by Benito Mussolini), that totalitarianism is an exclusively 20th-century phenomenon. Even without the in-depth analysis of the issue, it becomes clear as soon as we understand the basic essence of totalitarianism.

These scholars deem totalitarianism as authority, based on power, terror, a one-party system, and a comprehensive state ideology that controls the spheres of economic, social, cultural, and personal life (Khonelidze 1996: 3). To illustrate their points of view, slogans were presented by Benito Mussolini and Vladimir Lenin – "Everything within the state, nothing outside the state, nothing against the state" (Conquest 1990: 249) and "The party is the mind, *honour and* conscience of our epoch" (Epstein 1994: 19); these clearly show the nature of totalitarianism, but we may add sayings belonging to other eras, for example, the famous words that Louis XIV said in the 18th century: "I am the State", which is also considered to be a signpost of totalitarianism, which identifies the State with the government.

English historian Eduard Carrie views totalitarianism as a time-honoured experience of the universe. One group of Georgian historians rightly notes:

> There is nothing strange in totalitarianism that was not known to the historical development of mankind in various forms in the early eras. The 20th century brought all this together and developed into a form in countries where historical conditions were better prepared. Totalitarianism has preserved from all eras: a bit of slavery, a bit of absolutism, a bit of the Inquisition, a little bit of enthusiasm, a bit of fanaticism, and the synthesis of all these in different countries had gained the forms of either Stalinism, or Fascism, or Maoism, and sometimes even the form of Saddam Hussein's mediocre regime (Natmeladze et al, 2008: 3).

This is not surprising, since the figure establishing a totalitarian regime is always a human being. That is why, while discussing the causes of totalitarianism, one cannot avoid the psychoanalytic underpinnings of this event, which proves that man is authoritarian by his nature, and that the passion for conquest and violence is universal and has its biological basis (Gakharia 2008: 102). A famous Roman writer and public figure, Pliny the Younger, the founder of the epistolary genre, said: "Human nature is

falsified because it combines extreme spiritual misery with immense arrogance" (qtd. in Balanchivadze 2010: 29). A prominent physicist and mathematician, Blaise Pascal, uses two words to describe a person: a cane and thinking. The first one refers to the mankind's fluctuant nature. It is worth remembering here a well-known representative of ancient Georgian literature, Ioane Sabanisdze, who describes the behaviour of some of the nobles under the Arab reign as follows: "They were shaking like reeds by strong winds." According to Pascal (1981), the man's strength lies in his thinking. "It is just the thought that elevates us, and not time and space. So let us try to think with dignity. This is the cornerstone of morality", – he concludes.

The creators of the totalitarian systems of all times, first and foremost, were attacking human thinking for the sake of its complete subjugation, extinguishing individuality and personal origin. In addition, the main tool for solving this problem was coercion, terror.

Tsarist Russia, completing the process of conquest of the Caucasus in the 1860s, was such a state for centuries. In the 16th century, Ivan IV created the Kingdom of Russia through terror and mass-murder, based on despotism and unconditional obedience to the Head of State. The whole social vertical axis of the country was based on the principle of considering the inferior property of the superior. The same thing happened later, in the 20th century, when the governmental form created by Ivan IV became even worse. No other ideology and no other dictator except Stalin was welcomed by people. The social violence characteristic for Russia was the initial stage that prepared the ground for the political violence that the whole society was to experience in the following years.

Theory

When we examine the totalitarian regime of any state, one should consider that totalitarianism is not an absolute, but a relative category, which means that one should not speak of an ideal model of totalitarianism, but of totalitarian tendencies, signs, methods and forms, which more or less exist in these states and approach the ideal type of totalitarianism by their essence. What unifies them is the fact that the system is based on power, fear, obedience and the social background as the basis of its existence. It is within this framework that we shall further examine the research issue.

Method

We have studied some personal letters of Grigol Orbeliani and Ivane Javakhishvili, which allowed us to see clearly the role of the human being in the establishment and functioning of the totalitarian regime, as well as its brutality and injustice against humanity. The purpose of our research is to examine their personal letters in this context.

Discussion

Arsen Amartol (1897: 109), a well-known figure of the 13th century, wrote: "Every written monument speaks of its writer, to praise him or to condemn him forever". The same can be said about the private letters of both figures.

Grigol Orbeliani, a 19th-century Georgian nobleman, famous poet and prominent representative of Russia's army, was an active participant in the creation of the totalitarian regime, and represented the foothold of Russian authority in fulfilling the forcible policy in the Caucasus. We find a lot of information about these facts and events in his epistles addressing high or low-ranking officials of the Russian Empire, as well as his relatives and acquaintances.

Relying on his epistolary legacy, we see how this person serves the despotic regime that erased the freedom-loving peoples of the hyper-ethnic Caucasus from the face of the earth, depriving them of the right to live, turned independent states and political entities into the ordinal, underprivileged provinces of the Empire, changed the social structures and systems of these countries, the behaviour of people and interpersonal relations, replaced the national values by the imperial ones. In one of our previous articles, we note:

> In the process of wartime operations, immoral methods of the struggle always take place, but in state settings and bureaucracy of Russian empire, this is extremely fiercely revealed. They didn't avoid mass extermination of peaceful population or their exile, village destruction and their burning, making population quarrel among each other, mass deforestation (Gotsiridze and Gigashvili 2017: 342).

Russia's despotism and tyranny are perfectly characterized by the words of the commander-in-chief of the Russian troops in the Caucasus, Pavle Tsitsianov, who addressed the population of the Caucasus with: "I will

destroy all of you from the face of the earth, I will come with the flame and burn everything that I will not take up by the troops; I will cover the land of your region with your blood and it will turn red..." (Gotsiridze et al 2018: 34).

A letter sent to Mikhail Vorontsov on December 16, 1852, from Temirkhanshura, sets out the views and clarifies that Grigol Orbeliani is not only a mere supporter of this policy, but also a devotee of the system:

> The general benefit and glory of our weapons should be ahead of all other things, and in this respect, in my opinion, there is neither Dagestan nor Chechnya; there is only the enemy and the army of the Great Empire, by the force of which the great, bloody issue of the fate of the Caucasus should be decided. (Gigashvili and Ninidze 2013: 169).

In another letter, Gr. Orbeliani, right after the words "military cliques can still be heard from Abazehov, like the last moans of a dying giant of the Caucasus", one reads: "But with the help of God, peace will be established there" (Gigashvili and Ninidze 2017: 125). *God's help*, in this context, and in the language of the authors of this article, is nothing more than the annihilation, extermination, genocide of a whole ethnos, which is also characteristic for totalitarian regimes. As an example, suffice it to remember the tragic outcome of the Ubykhs, who were totally destroyed and annihilated by Tsarist Russia.

To the imperial thinking, it was completely unintelligible that someone else, except Russians, could live in the margins of the Caucasian Eden. General N. P. Sleptsov writes about the mountaineers:

> What a right do these savages have to live in such a beautiful land… Our Emperor ordered us to destroy their villages, all men capable of carrying weapons, destroy, burn crops, cut the bellies to pregnant women in order not to give birth to bandits (Gigashvili and Ninidze 2018: 35).

The practice of eviction of the population, characteristic of totalitarian regimes, was also actively used by Tsarism. In a letter sent to Mikhail Vorontsov on March 16, 1851, from Zakatala, Grigol Orbeliani urged the King's successor to evict peaceful civilians of Chari from the village of Tanachi and burn the village: "At the end of this month, the peaceful migration of the Charian people from Tanachi to their former residence takes place; Tanach will definitely be burned" (Gigashvili and Ninidze 2013: 7). Russian Tsarism defended the concept of settling the territory of the traditional residence of the highlanders by Cossack villages, while the indigenous mountaineers were evicted to the graves, or in the best case, to

Turkey. So, the genocide of the Caucasians and Mukhadzhirstvo – the mass migration of mountain people to Turkey, was pursued by the Russians almost as a sign of Russian philanthropy. The chief of the General Staff of the Caucasian Army, A. P. Kartsov (Ubysh), writes:

> The mountaineers who are confined in a narrow coastal strip will be put in the desperate position ... therefore, in the forms of philanthropy ... it is necessary to open them another way: resettlement to Turkey (Gigashvili and Ninidze 2018: 55).

In the arsenal of the struggle, the totalitarian system included incitement, denunciation, grassing on someone, and rewarding obedient ones with medals, money, support and promotion on the ladder of the hierarchy along with physical extermination of population.

All of these methods were successfully used by the Russian tsarism and its officials, including Grigol Orbeliani. "The Russians ... did not stop to encourage them (the Caucasians) to quarrel against each other to sow envy and enmity in them", – eyewitness – contemporary of that time, Bukurauli, writes (Gotsiridze et al 2018: 36). Grigol Orbeliani's letters show the author's complacency and sense of pride of that he had accomplished: the implementation of Russia's intentions and his active involvement in strengthening the totalitarian regime (Gigashvili and Ninidze 2018: 6).

The letters of Gr. Orbeliani, as literal reports of a high official, represent an archival diary of the one part of the totalitarian regime of the Tsarist Russia. If one Georgian – namely Grigol Orbeliani - was involved in strengthening the totalitarian regime, the other, Ivane Javakhishvili, was a victim of this system.

After the collapse of Tsarism and, afterwards, the forcible involvement of the independent states created on its ruins into the orbit of the new, modernized, Communist empire, nothing changed in the attitude of the government towards its population. Only Russian totalitarianism changed its form. It spread its wings and came even closer to its ideal look.

In this context, the opinion of Grigol Lortkipanidze – former member of independent Georgian government (1918-1921) – is very important. He compares Tsarist and Bolshevik Russia, and concludes that "Russian red imperialism served the same goals everywhere and in everything in Georgia and the Caucasus which were ruled by monarchic Russia" (1995: 242).

The 1920-1930s is one of the hardest periods in the history of Georgia. The country, which was violently reunited within the modernized

empire of the Soviet Union, suffered a number of hardships, including a campaign of moral and physical extermination of the most prominent part of the Georgian intelligentsia, which remains a shameful page in the history of the country.

It is known that the fight against thinkers, faithful professionals is characteristic of any totalitarian government, as such people always pose a serious threat to it. It is the historian's duty to reveal and evaluate these facts. A famous 20th-century American historian, Santayana, wrote: "Those who do not learn history are doomed to repeat it." (in Clairmont, 2013, internet) Thus, unveiling the campaign against the well-known representatives of the Georgian intellectuals in the 1920-1930s is not a mere statement of facts, but an attempt to warn the society not to repeat such events.

In this regard, it is important to study the epistolary legacy of prominent Georgian public figures, which enables us to better see the problem, its causes, to understand the essence of the socio-political life of the time, to deeply examine the author's personality, interests or psychological portrait. By the end of the 20th century, it became clear that the confrontation between the highest political leadership of the Soviet Union was ending with Stalin's victory. It was well understood by university-educated intelligentsia that the goal of both camps was to establish a totalitarian political regime after defeating the rival. Under these conditions, the intelligentsia would have to subdue to the new government and be physically rescued, or start fighting against it, which would most likely result in their physical destruction. Some opted for values. They could not tolerate the government whose motto was: "Who that is not with us is against us" (Javakhishvili 2004: 12).

So, the Soviet authorities began to persecute and harass Ivane Javakhishvili and many other Georgian intellectuals during the struggle against Kontratyevchina, which sought to expel "disobedient" scholars from educational institutions and isolate them from society.

The totalitarian regime mainly relies on hesitant, unprincipled, and most importantly, unprofessional people at all times and space. Their guilt may be far greater in the creation of such a system than that of the officials in the higher echelons of the system itself.

This was the case in the 1920-1930s, when Ivane Javakhishvili was forced to resign from the position of Rector of Tbilisi State University, founded by him. However, according to the leaders of the totalitarian regime, this was not enough: Ivane Javakhishvili had also to be confronted

with his colleagues and students, and his expulsion from the university had to be demanded.

It is difficult to disagree with Nino Kakulia, who writes:

> The facts of persecution of the Founder of the first Georgian University, and the ideologist of that time – Ivane Javakhishvili in 1930-1936s, are amazing, not only illogical… and we find logic in the political system of that period, during the reign of which the structure distorted people so that they could sacrifice others' talent, morality and high values to the slavish subordination to the authorities (2011: 3).

Of course, the government supported the people fighting against Ivane Javakhishvili in every way: Luka Tsikhistavi received the position of the Deputy Head of the Department of the History of Georgia, at Tbilisi State University "in exchange for a selfless battle" against Ivane Javakhishvili (Javakhishvili 2004: 10).

In 1928, the rector of the university, Ghlonti, stated that Ivane Javakhishvili and his associates had perished the Tbilisi University and now they had to recover their spoils (2004: 10).

Professors Merab Vachnadze and Vakhtang Guruli give the following assessment to the discussion against Ivane Javakhishvili at the State Pedagogical Institute of Georgia in December 1930:

> The discussion was disgusting in terms of the perception of our Georgian society, physiognomy. Even ten years have not passed since the establishment of the Bolshevik tyranny, but in this period the spiritual degradation of society has reached unimaginable levels (Vachnadze and Guruli 2004: 14).

Ivane Javakhishvili's personal letters have preserved many facts reflecting the totalitarian system. The letters to Simon Janashia and Varlam Topuria illustrate the complexity of the author's scientific work and how severely the current news affected him.

In the letter of April 12, 1936, sent to Varlam Topuria, Ivane Javakhishvili writes:

> The Rector K. Oragvelidze read a 3-hour report at the university, in which he tried to prove the impropriety of all my papers because they were not Marxist, which was not a new discovery for anyone. This fact was followed by a quarrel for four days, during which the Pro-rector Gr. Janelidze said many poisonous words, either … And some of my former

> disciples also showed themselves. … I decided that it was no longer possible to stay at the university, as it amounted to a complete disruption of my self-esteem, so I submitted a statement to the Education Commissioner that I stepped down TSU, I stopped publishing my papers and I was going to work on issues of a completely different specialty. Our folks are all well. But you will easily imagine my condition (in Dondua 1987: 168).

Ivane Javakhishvili's serious mental and physical condition is best conveyed by another letter sent to Varlam Topuria dated May 7, 1936:

> I was sick and it is two days since I have got up. I still feel very weak and I find it difficult to work, write. As expected, from this never-ending thrill (this year exactly ten years have passed since I resigned from the rector's position and this ruthless battle is being conducted), I had the strongest attack of heart disease with terrible dizziness and weakness. At present, I have survived death, but if it repeats, it is doubtful whether I will be able to survive (in Khoshtaria-Brosse 1996: 42-43).

The letter dated January 23, 1937 is not of less importance. Ivane Javakhishvili shares his emotions with Varlam Topuria:

> I could not imagine that it would be possible to abuse a man's selfless activity in such a way… It is easy to imagine how a person might feel after reading such an assessment of his work after 39-year scientific activity, furthermore, from the head of that organization, creation of which he has devoted all his energy and health! I immediately made a statement that I would give up delivering the lectures at the university from the next semester… It was difficult for me to write about this, but I could not stop saying anything, either. Even now, I forced myself to say a few words about it. Just to make my silence understandable to you, I have written this, otherwise, I do not talk about it to anyone here, and I silently suppress in my heart this hideous attempt to discredit my work (in Khoshtaria-Brosse 1996: 50-51).

It is clear from the letters that Ivane Javakhishvili practically did not talk to anyone about the campaign against him. He did not even pay attention to the authors of the infamous pasquinades and did not attend these meetings. He knew that the leaders of this disgraceful movement were beyond Tbilisi State University made the people, being inside the University, talk against him, slavishly obeying their orders. It is characteristic for the totalitarian regime to sow hatred, loathing and intolerance in society, which helps the government maintain its power.

On January 8, 1937, the scholar writes to Varlam Topuria:

> The fate has brought me many disappointments and, particularly, in the last ten years. The only consolation for me was the scientific research; in such cases, the anxiety would gradually subside and I would forget the bitterness of injustice towards me (in Khoshtaria-Brosse 1996: 55).

One interesting fact is noted in the epistolary legacy of Ivane Javakhishvili – the change of attitude towards him by the person standing at the top of the pyramid that completely changes the society's attitude towards him. Such feature is characteristic of a totalitarian state. In June 1941, George Orwell wrote:

> A totalitarian state creates dogmas that are not subject to discussion but are often changed according to the state's needs and expediency – totalitarianism requires dogmas for the absolute obedience of its subjects, though changes dictated by the necessity of violent policies are unavoidable and deliberate. The totalitarian state has completely rejected objective morality (Orwell 2016: 323).

In our view, the campaign launched against Javakhishvili by some governmental officials gained fierce support from careerists, from people of low-intellect seeking to win the authorities' benevolence by kicking Ivane Javakhishvili. As soon as the dictator's attitude towards him changed due to Stalin's position willing to show the world that he was not the son of a wild country but the son of a country with a rich history and culture, the attitude towards Javakhishvili changed completely. This is also a shameful character for a totalitarian system, when a large part of society is ready to give up their independence, self-respect and human dignity in order to simplify their life. Conformism as a characteristic phenomenon of public life manifesting in different forms in different eras, contributed a great deal to the strengthening of the totalitarian regime. Despite the change in attitude, the repressions against Ivane Javakhishvili left a huge impact on his health, which in fact led to his death (a heart attack).

Edward Carr writes in his famous book, *What is History?*:

> It is a presupposition of history that man is capable of profiting (not that he necessarily profits) by the experience of his predecessors, and that progress in history, unlike evolution in nature, rests on the transmission of acquired assets. These assets include both material possessions and the capacity to master, transform, and utilize one's environment (2001: 107).

Based on experience, society should be able to change the current environment to the best. In this context, the epistolary legacy of Grigol Orbeliani and Ivane Javakhishvili is still relevant nowadays, with a view to avoiding the mistakes and crimes of the past. Revealing progressive and reactionary events, evaluating and allocating them a place in the process of historical development is necessary for the present-day generation, because totalitarianism has not died out around us. It still exists as it existed centuries ago and represents, at least in our region, the continuation of Ivan the Terrible's "Russian way". The reason is that the essence of totalitarianism is in the manner of thinking which feeds it within eternity. We see its reflections in particular facts, like the events going on in Tbilisi on 20-21 June 2019, as well as in systemic events, like the slavish obedience to the boss (patron), which is exactly what has been for centuries, including the era of Grigol Orbeliani and Ivane Javakhishvil.

In this regard, it is worth mentioning the opinion of Merab Mamardashvili, a well-known Georgian philosopher, who views totalitarianism as a problem of consciousness, when the debauchery of thought and consciousness comes from inside – "The mental forces that made the 30s (The Great Terror- G.G.) are still working latently in our souls" – he said (in Gakharia 2008: 104). His statement testifies that, for example, Stalinism, as one form of totalitarianism, did not begin with Stalin, nor did it end after his death. More or less the same can be said of other types of totalitarian system. All our attempts to view totalitarianism as a problem born in one particular era will end in failure – as a "tale of an evil king", as the cinematographer George Gakharia has figuratively pointed out (2008: 104).

Conclusions

The comparative analysis of the three eras has once again shown that the essential sign of totalitarianism is violence on a person: beginning from physical violence, which certainly includes the terror, using weapons as the main instrument for influence, and ending with psychological violence, reflecting in different ways in different structural units, the state institutions or spheres of social life.

Grigol Orbeliani himself was a representative of that social layer the Russian Tsarist violent policy relied on while establishing the totalitarian regime, while Ivane Javakhishvili and other intelligent people of his time

fell victim of bolshevism with the help of said social layer. This layer still exists and serves the regime. Thus, the persons and their names change but totalitarian regime or its tendencies remain the same in many countries, especially in the post-soviet area. Bolshevism is an eternal problem not restricted to a concrete epoch. It only changes its name and performs in different forms in different epochs.

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"… the price we pay for peace": Luba Lukova's Poster Art

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Abstract

Placed at the crossroads of fine and applied arts, of advertising and reproduction, the poster is a hybrid visual medium which synthetises words and images to communicate its message through both semantic content and aesthetic features. Significantly, the poster's visual cues are arranged into patterns that are powerfully direct and focused, meant to act on and trigger responses from the potential audience, while, through its manipulation of cultural codes, generalised meanings and beliefs, they can construct or deconstruct contemporary 'myths,' the same as other multimodal texts, like film, may do. Hence, the aim of the paper is to offer a semiotic analysis of Luba Lukova's conceptual poster entitled War and Peace in order to demonstrate how, by means of a simple visual language, her work revisits and revises the myths of 'war heroics' and 'blissful peace,' imparting a strong social and political vision as poignantly and effectively as complex multimodal texts like Michael Cimino's 'The Deer Hunter', Hal Ashby's 'Coming Home', or Oliver Stone's 'Born on the Fourth of July' did on the screen.

Key words: *conceptual illustration, political poster, anti-war film, myth, semiotics, multimodality*

Luba Lukova is a Bulgarian-born illustrator and designer, who emigrated to the United States at the beginning of the 1990s, to achieve international recognition and fame as one of the most compelling image makers of the present day. Often compared to that of the German Expressionists and Picasso, her work is one of the best examples for the tradition of conceptual illustration which combines "strong, original and thought-provoking ideas with personal vision and imagination" (Wigan 2008: 66).

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One of the artist's often resorted to means of communicating her themes (which bear on important social and political issues of the day) is the poster, as a medium through which Lukova can advance seemingly plain and iconic images that, nevertheless, have the ability to conjure a rich metaphorical and symbolic texture in the viewers' minds. Either exhibited in museums, arts galleries and other venues, or published as portfolio collections like *Women of the Bible* (1999), *Social Justice* (2008) and *Graphic Guts* (2011), her posters condense ideas, emotions and meanings into indelible visuals that de-familiarise the ordinary or deconstruct the commonplace to challenge her viewers' thought and examination of essential issues "that include peace, war, ecology, immigration, and privacy" (Desmond 2011: 189).

War and Peace, a poster produced by Lukova to be used as a promotional material for a personal exhibition held in 2004 at Villa Julie College (now Stevenson University, Maryland) (in Foster 2008: 122) [1], is one such outstanding example. If one excludes the functional typographic text on the right-hand side of the image which details on the circumstances of the exhibition (missing in the same poster's version which was included in her 2017 exhibition held at Museum of Design Atlanta [2]) (Flusche 2017), the piece first strikes the viewer through its apparent simplicity: against a blue hue background, the central compositional structure is made up of a block of black and white shapes, which merge with the negative space through thin blue lines used to detail the outlines of a seemingly incongruous juxtaposition of forms and objects which pile along the vertical axis of the image. From top to bottom, one discerns an almost trapezial-like black form with slightly curved side and bottom flanks to which what looks like a bell-shaped birdcage placed upside-down is attached and fastened on the left-hand side with a key resembling a winder. Inside the cage a white bird, which occupies almost its entire volume, flutters its wings and spreads its claws against the black wire mesh. The cage itself ends not with a hook (as its reversed position might prompt us expect), but with a black foot mount which protrudes in the leg opening of a similarly black man's boot tightened with laces.

Beyond this first-order (or denotative) meaning triggered by the immediate impact of Lukova's poster, at closer inspection, the visual cues of the composition arrange into a pattern that structure differently its understanding. In this second-order (or connoted) meaning, the white bird becomes a dove (culturally understood as a symbol for peace) which is imprisoned in the cage made up of a prosthetic limb that replaces the severed leg of a man, most likely a soldier (a metonymic representation of war).

In the 2004 version of the poster, the vertically-aligned text on the right-hand side spelled with a white 'all caps' font replicates and anchors this implied meaning, while Lukova herself confessed that: "I wanted to convey a message about the price we pay for peace. The idea for this poster came after watching a film about handicapped U.S. soldiers returning from the battlefields" (q. in Foster 2008: 122).

Though not specifically mentioning its title, one cannot fail to think about a host of war movies (most of them appearing in the aftermath of the Vietnam conflict) which dismantle the high 'heroics' of war privileged by the "Patriotic Era" Hollywood productions of the Second World War and the decades immediately following it. Seminal among them are: Michael Cimino's *The Deer Hunter* (1978), which unashamedly displays the "brutal, arbitrary and essentially incomprehensible nature of war" (Cinephilia & Beyond 2017) through its sombre story of three returned steelworkers and Vietnam veterans suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder; Hal Ashby's *Coming Home* (1978), which highlights the plight of paraplegic war veterans, epitomised by its protagonist's attempts to overcome the agony, fury and frustration of having been turned into a cripple, confined to the wheelchair and adapt to the diminished circumstances of his new existence); or, Oliver Stone's *Born on the Fourth of July* (1989), which similarly strips off myths of a warrior's sacrificial glory through imaginatively re-creating the biography of a real "paralyzed antiwar veteran Ron Kovic" (Klavan 2008), whose physical and emotional journey from committed recruit to disenchanted peace militant has continued to ring true in the context of subsequent wars, be them in Iran, Afghanistan or Bosnia.

As such, the story that films as those mentioned above tell remains basically the same: "Young, idealistic men enter foreign wars for patriotic reasons, have their bodies destroyed, and return to a mixed response from the country that sent them — adulation in the form of widespread parades and incredibly lousy treatment in Veterans Affairs hospitals" (Marche 2014); or, in Lukova's words, "the price we pay for peace."

Even if both films and posters are multimodal texts, which integrate diverse methods of communication to convey meaning, the former are considered more complex, since they rely on a dynamic combination of "the semiotic systems of moving image, audio, spoken language, written language, space, and gesture (acting)" (Education and Training, VSG 2018) to deliver their message. Yet, though seemingly placed at a disadvantage by it being categorised as simple multimodal text, which resorts to fewer

communication modes – "still image, and spatial design" (Education and Training, VSG 2018), to which written language is sometimes added – the poster could be no less effective than the filmic text in getting its message across to the viewer.

To prove the above, a semiotic analysis of Lukova's *War and Peace* might further clarify how her work revisits and revises the same myth related to war heroics, which formed the thematic core of the three filmic texts mentioned above. As such, the key sign of the poster's image is the caged bird, foregrounded by occupying the mid-position within the main volume of the image, and brought into focus by the contrasting interplay of white and black against the mediating blue hue. Its signifier (the shape that the thin curved and decorative lines of a slightly warmer hue of blue delineate as that of a bird with white plumage, a small bill and a round delicate head above a larger and compact body with stretched out wings, tail and legs) refers us to a signified conceptualised not only as a species of birds known as 'the Columbidae', but as a specific variety within it, namely that of "the white domestic pigeon, the symbol known as the 'dove of peace'" (Raferty 2019). Hence, in Peircean terms, the relationship between the signifier and the signified is both iconic (there is a perceived resemblance between the visual shape and the bird known as a dove), and symbolic (since the association of 'dove' with 'peace' is "purely conventional", "agreed upon and learned" (Chandler 2007: 36) as a cultural code.

In addition, representing the dove with fluttering wings, fluffed tail and spread-out claws inside the cage turns it into an index of arrested movement, panic and pain, an 'un-natural' state for its inborn instinct to fly. The wired enclosure, in its turn, is both an icon of a cage and an index of captivity, limitation or oppression. Yet, by being shaped as a prosthetic leg, its value is modified, while the transfer of meanings from cage to prosthesis (working on the analogy between the bird's and the mutilated soldier's fate) turns it into a metaphor for human imprisonment in an 'un-natural' state, suffering and missed opportunities.

This meaning is reinforced by the spatial arrangement of the composition (with the unexpected anchoring of its visual structure along the top horizontal base line, and the negative space left between the boot and the bottom line of the poster) - symbolic of both instability and reversal, as well as by the functional contrasts established by the work: organic (curved and squiggly lines, the dove) /inanimate (straight lines and geometric forms, the cage/prosthesis); natural (bird, leg)/un-natural

(cage, prosthesis); light (white dove as peace) / darkness (black cage/prosthesis, black boot for army, war); life (peace) / death (war).

In conclusion, beyond the apparent simplicity and accessibility of Luba Lukova's *War and Peace*, its strong imagery pivoting around the central conceptual metaphor of peace arrested by the debris of war puts forth a strong social and political artistic vision, proving that "[i]t is a form of communication that can impart a direct or subtle message without the support of words" (Brazell & Davies 2014: 88), dismantling myths of heroic war and blissful peace as effectively as complex multimodal texts (such as its three filmic precursors) did. Yet, as distinct from film, Lukova's clear and concise, yet sophisticated and complex images create an aesthetic experience which is universal and international, transcending linguistic or cultural barriers, at the same time at which it compels the viewers to change perception and empathise with the humanity of her chosen subject, not least proof of the fact that "[p]osters bring a kind of humanness and emotion that the screen-based media can't provide yet" (Lukova in Foster 2008: 116).

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Notes

[1] Luba Lukova, *War and Peace*. Poster for 2004 Villa Julie College exhibition. 68.58 x 99.06 cm. Reproduced in Foster, J. (2008) *New Masters of Poster Design. Poster Design for the Next Century*. London: Rockport Publishers, p. 122.
[2] Luba Lukova, *War and Peace*. Poster for 2017 MODA [Museum of Design Atlanta] exhibition. 68.58 x 99.06 cm [online]. Available from: https://designobserver.com/feature/can-a-design-museum-change-the-world/39633. [Accessed: 20 March 2019].

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Narrative Strategies of the Representation of Consciousness in the Modern Georgian Novel: Post-Soviet Experience (Based on *Obole* by Aka Morchiladze)

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Abstract

The paper presents the outcomes of the research on the following topic: the formation of the national identity in the Post-Soviet/Post-Communist Georgian literary discourse. The material is taken from Obole *– a novel by a famous representative of post-modern Georgian literature Aka Morchiladze. The research methodology consists of cognitive narratology, namely, the narratological knowledge aimed at the study of the character's consciousness (Palmer 2004, Zunshine 2006). In order to identify the peculiarities of the act of remembering, the research uses various approaches to the research of memory (Neumann 2005, Birke 2008). The aim of the research is to define the role of values, aspirations and opinions (regarding the reality beyond "the iron curtain"), obligations, traumatic experience, action programs (stereotypes) (Antonio Damasio) formed in the Georgian society (on the individual and collective levels) during the Soviet regime in the functioning of the autobiographic self/identity of characters living in the Post-Soviet reality. The research attempts to study how the old model of identity meets human homeostatic and homeodynamic (Antonio Damasio) needs in the new reality of the Post-Communist period. The research also attempts to find out whether the act of remembering (Soviet experience) supports or hampers the formation of the new national identity. Based on the novel under analysis, the research identified the peculiarities of individual and social consciousness in the Post-Soviet reality. Implementation of the above-mentioned objectives clarified the cultural representation of Communism in the Post-Soviet States.*

Key words: *Soviet experience. National identity, cognitive narratology, Aka Morchiladze*

Contemporary Georgian literary discourse does not draw a uniform picture of the formation of the national identity; hence, we can talk about the identity of certain groups. Literary critics have assessed Aka Morchiladze's *Obole* as a representation of the dominant national discourse. The model of

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identity shown in the text creates a figure of identification for a major portion of the society: after gaining independence, the opening of borders yielded new possibilities for development. However, under the new social order, orientation towards the old model complicated decision-making and optimization of behavior. For many people, new possibilities formed grounds for an identity crisis. Such drama of functioning of consciousness is the main theme of *Obole*. The main challenge for the protagonist who lives in the post-Soviet reality is the controversy between his memories and the new reality. This creates the main homeostatic need (Antonio Damasio): "Your childhood habits cannot be overcome easily. It is hard to change what you have acquired in childhood..." (Morchiladze 2011: 22)

What forms narratological grounds for the study of the character's consciousness in the text under analysis? Consciousness is a complex phenomenon, the main function of which is to meet the evolutionary needs of a human being. All mental processes serve this function. The formation of *identity/autobiographic self* plays a key role in the correct functioning of consciousness (Damasio 2000). Identity is a dynamic construct that may be updated based on human needs. A human being optimizes his/her behavior, takes decisions and makes future plans based on the identity model (Damasio 2000).

In order to study the above-mentioned mental processes in a literary narrative, we should focus on several facts: above all, we should define whether recollection is one of the mental processes described or whether it forms the main part of the narration. In *Obole*, focus is laid on the description of the act of recollection. The novel is classified as a novel of Memory (Neumann 2005). From the narratological perspective, focus should be on such categories as focalization and reliability of narration. With this aim, we should observe how the narrator evaluates himself and other people (Zunshine 2006). When studying the act of recollection, we should bear in mind that recollection is a constructive process and not a reconstructive one (Schacter 1996). The character recalls facts based on the present needs of identity, i.e. homeostatic needs (Damasio 2000). When recalling one's past, if its effect is continued in the text, we should study the regulation of emotion (Palmer 2004). When observing the character's emotion, we should pay attention to such categories as the narrator's protocol (Palmer 2004) and the lexical units denoting the character's behavior. In order to study the identity crisis described in the novel, we should also take into account a category such as analepsis. Violation in the

sequence of narration, as a rule, points to the intensity of functioning of consciousness, i.e. tension. (Birke 2008)

The brief contents of the text under analysis are as follows: the main character, who lives in Tbilisi, receives a message from his brother, who lives in the USA. The brother has learnt from a relative that the roof of their village house has fallen. The main character decides to go to the village at once and repair the roof. But the main reason for this decision is that the village performs the function of the space of memory. Thus, his identity requires frequent visits to the village. As the main character notes, his brother's message was a pretext for satisfying his inner need. Otherwise, he could stay in Tbilisi and just send the money for the repair works. A visit to the village activates numerous memories, none of which are chaotic. Each of the memories is related to the narrator's identity crisis and homeostatic needs. Below, I will try to define the reasons for the character's identity crisis.

In the text under analysis, the main character shares the epistemological knowledge (Ryan 1991) widespread in the Georgian society: America is a country of great opportunities. This knowledge was acquired by the narrator back in his childhood: "Once, in my childhood, I went as a tourist to Dubrovnik, Yugoslavia. A taxi driver told my mother and me: 'Yugoslavia is a small America' (Morchiladze 2011: 5). The narrator's childhood embraces the 90s, i.e. the period when the Soviet Union was disintegrated and the national societies strove for self-identification. The narrator's idea of the West is supported by the fact that his brother has made a fortune in the USA. According to the analyzed text, America is a model of the West.

Despite the above-mentioned, the reader sees that the main character is not actively involved in social life. Moreover, he is skeptical about the new perspectives (America). This is due to his memory, which is the basis for his identity.

It is well known that recollection forms grounds for the normal functioning of human identity. However, the same mental process may turn into an obstacle (Birke 2008). This is exactly the case in the given text. The narrator semanticizes his past. The childhood events that he recalls are characterized by narrative coherence. However, in the same narrative, part of identity is formed by a mysterious value/obligation that used to mobilize his attention back in his childhood (human relationships and stories related to ancestors). Mobilization of attention, in its turn, formed a longstanding memory of the experiencing autobiographer (Löschnigg 2006), an inalienable part of his autobiographic narrative. The identity formed on the basis of the

above-mentioned mysterious values is incompatible with the new model of the society. What are these values based on and how does the character see current reality and Western values?

These questions can be briefly answered as follows: the mysterious values which formed part of the main character's personal development are based on tenderness, subtlety and depth of human relationships. For the main character, the past is important because it consists of stories about such relationships. In the present, he attaches significance only to the facts related to his past. Sadness and melancholy are parts of the above-mentioned values, and the narrator often refers to them as romanticism. The symbol of this mysterious component of consciousness is a gun called Obole. This old gun is preserved at the main character's home. It was once gifted to his ancestor. As the narrator notes, the gun has never shot, but it has saved people from death. For these reasons, the gun is associated with tenderness and dignity:

> A long, thin, flint gun, ornamented with nacre… It resembled Princess Diana… Once I watched Diana on TV. She was walking in the street, blushing with modesty. She reminded me of our gun. She was exactly like it, if a gun can be compared to a woman... In the past, guns were like women… These were the times when dignity mattered. (Morchiladze 2011: 45)

It should be noted that tenderness is not a passive state for the narrator. It is active. The word Obole means 'orphan'. The narrator's uncle gave this name to the gun. Although the narrator cannot explain the reasons, he thinks that the name denotes the values which are no longer important in the contemporary Western-oriented reality.

The narrator thinks that the Western lifestyle is superficial and restricted to the present. A symbol of this lifestyle is Burger King (Morchiladze 2011: 48). Thus, this lifestyle is more carefree and joyful: "I think people abroad do not understand Georgians because we start talking from a distant past... They are confused and scared by such talks. Who cares about the past? It is always now and today, like a menu" (Morchiladze 2011: 48). There is an unsurmountable gap between the Western values/lifestyle and the narrator's identity. Therefore, the narrator does not try to update the model of his identity. Instead, he prefers to replace actual reality with his past memories. When tired of his daily routine, he finds shelter in these memories ("the village is the place where you belong. You can breathe freely now", - says the narrator's wife when talking to him on the phone (Morchiladze 2011: 120). Special attention

should be paid to the fact that this attitude to current reality is expressed by a person (narrator) with high social competence who is internally active: "I would not lie still. I managed to do my secret things and spend happy lonely hours wondering in the distant corners of the yard" (Morchiladze 2011: 45). The narrator is not depressed. His identity crisis is revealed only in his attitude to the contemporary social context. Yet, the identity is not broken and the narrator is not disorientated. His pain is his conscious choice. However, at times, the narrator finds it difficult to stick to his choice, because this choice is periodically affected by his daily life, his brother's success in the USA, the fallen roof and the new cottage built with his brother's American money, his wife's viewpoints etc.: "I cannot arrive frequently. If I do arrive, I want to leave soon. Yet, there is nothing I enjoy so much." (Morchiladze 2011: 41)

The above-given peculiarity of functioning of the narrator's consciousness forms the present perspective of the narrator autobiographer, which semantically unifies the stories he recalls. His identity was entirely formed in the Soviet reality, namely, in the 90s. Therefore, we should find out the role of communism in the consciousness of the narrator autobiographer and the autobiographic narrative. Communism as a period is often mentioned and marked. It seems that the narrator autobiographer has frequently heard stories about the Soviet reality. These stories form the empirical time markers in his consciousness. However, in the psychological time (personal development of the narrator) (Perry 1979), they did not turn into benchmarks. The narrator's idea of the Soviet period is as follows: it was a time of violence, repressions and oppression, although the repressions did not affect the narrator's identity because he was not born at the time. The reason for recalling the Soviet period is as follows: the narrator's disposition and values are greatly influenced by his grandfather Timothy. The narrator recalls the Soviet period in order to draw grandfather's portrait. As the narrator notes, his ancestors were tortured (by Bolsheviks), but Timothy endured the Bolshevik pressure with great dignity.

According to the text under analysis, the identity of the 90s generation is not affected by communism as social order, since communism no longer creates homeostatic needs. However, communism is indirectly related to the identity crisis of the new generation. Due to the years passed behind closed borders (in the text, this phenomenon is marked by the word "abroad"), people find it difficult to adjust traditional cultural values to the new lifestyle, and this leads to an identity crisis. One more detail should be underlined: the stories heard by the narrator in his childhood (the violence

of Bolsheviks, the victim of which was his grandfather), have caused his strong suspicion, which is subconsciously involved in the perception of the present reality and defines the daily rhythm of functioning of the character's consciousness: "I have realized that the past is still here, and those joyful days and peaceful nights are just a speck in the pool of blood which overwhelms you" (Morchiladze 2011: 181-182). The main character does not trust the peace and welfare that are based on the superficial lifestyle of the West (America). In the main character's opinion, this reality is not based on deep human values, and this is a road that leads to a humanitarian catastrophe.

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The Complete Works of Shakespeare in Ukrainian: A Breakthrough or a Slowdown?

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Abstract

During the times of the USSR, only four of its states managed to publish complete works of Shakespeare in their local languages. The first edition to include 37 plays of the Great Bard appeared in Russian SFSR in 1937 – 1945. Among other Soviet nations, Estonia was the first to publish the complete works of Shakespeare in its native language (its seven volumes were released from 1957 to 1975); in the 70s Georgia followed. The Ukrainians were the last to join the "elite" club, with their six-volume edition published from 1984 to 1986. The publication was a remarkable feat of a team of translators, editors and literary scholars and is widely regarded as a cornerstone of the Ukrainian Shakespeareana.

The paper focuses on the history of the multi-volume editions of Shakespeare in Ukrainian, showing the wide cultural and political context that led to the appearance of the complete works of the Bard in the Ukrainian SSR. The author shows the directions of critical re-evaluation of this edition that in the independent Ukraine has acquired the critical immunity which resulted in the shift of this set to the periphery of readers and literati's interest. The reconsiderations of the translations and critical apparatus of the complete Ukrainian Shakespeare would intensify the creation of new Ukrainian versions of Shakespeare's plays and undermine the well-established image of the Bard as an antiquated and pretentious playwright.

Key words: *Shakespeare, complete works, multi-volume edition, accuracy, performance-oriented translations*

Among the cultural mythologems of the Soviet Union, one is particularly long-standing. It is the widely publicized myth that the USSR was the country whose people read the most in the world. It has long been established that these statistics were based solely on quantitative data – the print-run figures that, as a rule, were enormous. Among the highly sought-after items at the times of the "Soviet book boom" (which started in the late

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1970 and lasted for almost a decade) were multi-volume editions of the complete works of classical authors of the past. And the most coveted of them were collections of foreign writers. These sets were valued not just for the artistic virtues of the pieces the books comprised; quite frequently, they were treasured for the classy look in the bookcases that had become the essential part of Soviet omnipresent wall furniture units. The complete works in the USSR oftentimes came with a complex critical apparatus: prolegomena, notes and appendices. All these elements bear interest for literati, but not for the majority of readers; they were, however, deemed necessary for raising the status of these editions (equalling scholarly editions to high quality editions), in turn elevating the social standing of their owners. The vast majority of complete works of foreign writers appeared in Russian, and on very rare occasions such sets were published in national languages of the Soviet republics. Only once in the Soviet Ukraine all the known works of a foreign author were presented in Ukrainian, and it was William Shakespeare who was honoured with this edition of complete works. The set has six volumes and was published from 1984 to 1986 as a subscription edition (which posed an "in for a penny, in for a pound" situation – one could only order the full set and wait for each separate volume to be released).

Today, it is not difficult to come across a virtually untouched set of dark crimson hardbacks entitled Complete Works of Shakespeare in Ukrainian for bargain prices (approximately 30 US dollars for 6 volumes). But it is quite a daunting task to find at least some information about the history of compiling, editing and publishing of what happened to be the last Complete Works of Shakespeare in the Soviet Union (but for one review from 1988 and the interview of the editor-in-chief from 1987). Now, as 32 years have passed since the last part of this six-book set was brought out, some important questions remain unanswered. How adequate is the image of Shakespeare it creates? Do these translations resonate with readers and theatre-goers in modern-day Ukraine? Should it be revered or criticized, reissued with the new cover and illustrations or superseded by a set of contemporary translations? All these trick questions should be answered regarding the broader perspective of the complete Shakespeare's plays in Ukrainian which might have appeared even before the Ukrainian SSR was established.

It should be noted that the pursuit of the complete works of Shakespeare in Ukrainian started in 1882 – a century and two years before the first volume of the Soviet Ukrainian set was brought out. In that year,

the famous Ukrainian author Panteleimon Kulish made a commitment to translate 27 plays of the Bard and publish them in 9 volumes. Through this project Kulish intended

1) to create the elevated style of the Ukrainian language, which in the last decades of the 19th century was practically inexistent;

2) to enrich the language by coining new words or borrowing and adopting lexemes from Polish and Old Church Slavonic.

3) However, his main goal was quite an idealistic one – to steer Ukrainians towards European values and lifestyle through their exposure to Shakespeare's masterpieces. Already since the 1880s, Shakespeare earned the reputation of the nation's guide to the Western world, away from the Asian savagery (perhaps implying the legacy of much revered Ukrainian Cossacks). In his poem "To My Countrymen Giving Them the Ukrainian Translation of Shakespeare Works" Kulish unequivocally demands:

> Look in the global mirror
> Realize that you are just a poor Asian,
> Do not be proud of your plundering
> Forget the awful predatory ways
> And return to the family of cultured people (Kulish 1989: 189).

Further in the text, he even resorts to calling his compatriots "the nation without way, without honour and respect" (Kulish 1989: 189).

In his earlier verse, entitled "To Shakespeare, Having Started the Translation of His Works", Kulish calls the English playwright "our father, native to all nations, the lantern of creativity, Homer of the new world" and begs him, "Take us into your care" (Kulish 1989: 187).

Kulish grand intentions failed – he managed to translate 13 plays, three of them were lost in the fire that destroyed his house. The surviving works were released posthumously, being almost rewritten by another Ukrainian intellectual colossus, Ivan Franko. In the preface to the six-volume set of the 1980s, Kulish is mentioned once, and his translations are labelled as obsolete and only appropriate for studies of the history of literature (Zatonskyi, 1984: 42). But even if you are a scholar, it is not easy to find the unedited versions that still have not been published and are preserved as manuscripts in the National Library of Ukraine (as if in revenge for the severe criticism Kulish levelled at the Ukrainian readers of the 1890s).

However, this unfinished project did not go unnoticed. It helped the translators of the 20th century to gather momentum, which culminated in the six-volume edition of complete works.

In Soviet literary studies before the 1930s Shakespeare's works were considered to have "aristocratic tendency"; moreover, it was believed that their author "despised common people and held reactionary feudal views" (Normington 2013: 209). But the state of affairs changed in the early 30s. It is the time when the simplicity of modernism in architecture, literature and music started to give way to grandiose art of monumentalism. The artists of the vast communist empire started to develop a flair for pretentious music, bombastic eulogies and elaborate Renaissance-style decorations on gigantic and menacing buildings showing the imperial strength and drawing ties with the great empires of the past.

So, it is not accidental that the cultural emblem of the young and burgeoning British Empire – William Shakespeare – was swiftly included in the Soviet pantheon of the great artists of the past. In a monumentalist vein, the English playwright quickly became omniscient and God-like figure, "comrade Shakespeare" – in the critical writing of that time he was hailed as "the first realist", "the fighter for humanistic values", "the herald of the social revolution" etc. This appropriation of Shakespeare deprived him of his first name – the foreign sounding "William" almost never appears on the cover, drawing an analogy with Lenin, Stalin, Marx, Engels, Cervantes, and Goethe, whose given names were mostly omitted.

But Shakespeare in the Soviet perception was two-faced. His second identity may be called "Shakespeare as your comrade" (or as the Polish theoretician Jan Kott much later put it "Shakespeare as our contemporary" (Kott 1966: 5)). This angle suggested that Shakespeare's works are not only ever modern and topical but also potentially appealing to the wider readership.

As Russian was the lingua franca of the Soviet state, Shakespeare's complete works were deemed necessary only in that language. However, during the Stalin's reign in 1950 and 1952, a two-volume edition of the selected Ukrainian translations appeared in print. It comprised 11 plays that were mostly translated specially for this edition. It is worth noting that the only history it included was *Richard III,* focusing more on comedies and tragedies from the core of the Shakespearean canon. The preface to the edition was translated in Ukrainian from the article written by the Russian scholar, Alexander Smirnov. Instead, they might have used the article on Shakespeare by the Ukrainian scholar Sehyi Rodzevych which opened the

collective *William Shakespeare* monograph published in 1939. The destiny of this book is disastrous but typical for the late 1930s – shortly after its publication, all the print-run was destroyed. Fortunately, one book remained in the Kharkiv library. It is still kept there, waiting for digitalization and re-entering the Ukrainian scientific discourse of Shakespeare studies.

The three volume set of selected Shakespeare's works in Ukrainian was brought out in 1964 to commemorate the 400th anniversary of the Bard. Once again, the histories were conspicuously omitted and it added only one play to the list of 11 translations that that had been published in the early 1950s. This was *The Tempest*, in a brilliant version of a gifted poet Mykola Bazhan. Another welcome addition was the preface this time provided by Ukrainian Shakespeare scholar Nataliya Modestova.

The *Complete Shakespeare* edition in Estonian was published from 1959 to 1975 in seven volumes. In the seventies, *Complete Shakespeare* appeared in Georgia. In 1976, Mykola Bazhan, giving a speech at the congress of men of letters in Moscow, voiced a concern that two Soviet nations already had the complete works, whereas the Ukrainians – the second nation in terms of number of people – had not managed to produce one (Bilous 2012: 296). But, in general, for two decades – from 1964 to 1984 – not much was happening in terms of the Ukrainian Shakespeareana but for some translations ordered by theatres and articles of Ukrainian scholars appearing in journals.

For the study, I interviewed Natalia Zhluktenko – a well-known Ukrainian literary scholar who worked on *Complete Shakespeare* in Ukrainian. According to her notes, this edition appeared in the project-planning schedule of Dnipro Publishing for 1984, 1985, 1986. So, the team of the project had to grab this opportunity – order the translations of new plays, write critical commentaries, provide prefaces, and supply each volume with illustrations. More than twenty plays had not been translated by 1984; however, it was necessary to stick to the tight schedule – any backlog might have proved to be disastrous. In the Soviet system, one had to meet the deadlines or, otherwise, the funding for the project would not have been given. Therefore, all the work was done in a rush but with a great attention to detail. It took a great effort to make the overall quality of translations and print immaculate, and the project team managed to provide the highest standards, despite the haste and novelty of the experience.

The publication of *Complete Shakespeare* in Ukrainian should be rightly regarded as a remarkable achievement. To quote the Ukrainian scholar Maksym Strikha, in 1986 "we have finally joined the family of nations that have their complete Shakespeare – the undisputable measure of maturity for any national culture" (2003: 105) At long last, it gave a sense of closure, having fulfilled the dreams that Ukrainian intellectuals had been harbouring since the times of Kulish's endeavour. More than 20 pieces had to be newly translated for the edition (almost all histories and later-period plays, as well as poems). So, the three-year period from 1984 to 1986 was the most fruitful in terms of Shakespeare translation productivity in Ukraine. To attain this ambitious goal, an impressive team of translators was set up. What strikes is the versatility of its members, including the renowned Ukrainian poets (Dmytro Pavlychko, Ivan Drach), a theatre director who turned out to be a skilled translator (Les' Taniuk), and a theorist of translation studies who applied his special expertise (Viktor Koptilov) to name but a few.

The publication of *Complete Shakespeare* in Ukrainian may also be regarded as a bold political gesture. First of all, since Kulish's times, the works of the Bard have been widely regarded as the "cultural gate" to Western values. Secondly, *Complete Shakespeare* appears before Perestroika and Glasnost, at a time when more than the half of political prisoners of the agonizing Soviet regime were Ukrainians. On the 4th of September 1985 (4 volumes of *Complete Works* had been released by that time) one of the Ukrainian foremost poets, Vasyl Stus, died in Perm-36 – a Soviet forced labour camp for political prisoners – after having declared a hunger strike. So, in that unfavourable political environment it was a matter of moral courage, tremendous perseverance and genuine commitment to complete the Shakespearean publishing project.

Each play in the edition comes with commentary notes that deal with the critical, theatrical and historical contexts. Today, the comprehensive apparatus prepared by the most prominent Ukrainian literary scholars of the time reveals its ideological limitations. For instance, in the preface, Professor Dmytro Zatonskiy quotes Russian, English and German Marxist Shakespeare scholars 17 times, never quoting any Ukrainian ones (Zatonskyi 1984: 5-43). However, in the mid-80s, the critical apparatus was tangible proof that Ukrainian Shakespeare scholars were able to come up with accessible, trustworthy and ideologically non-extreme notes. According to Natalia Zhluktenko, the team of literary scholars involved in the project used English, German and French editions to

provide quality notes on texts, making them more elaborate than in the Russian-language set of the Bard's complete works.

Thus, despite all the imperfections and drawbacks, *Complete Shakespeare* in Ukrainian still holds appeal as a significant milestone and massive undertaking. However, after more than three decades since its publication the edition has largely been enshrined and currently seems to have become a sacred cow – something beyond criticism and of little interest not only to readers but also to the literati and theatre practitioners. The translations (written in the time span from the 1930s to 1985) call for critical audit from the theoretical standpoint of the contemporary literature and translation studies. It is absolutely vital to check these versions for accuracy (especially when word-for-word translations were used as a source for the final text) and to determine how performance-oriented these texts are (it should be noted that most of the translations in the Ukrainian *Complete Shakespeare* were produced not with the stage but with the page in mind).

Furthermore, the Ukrainian language has changed dramatically in the past thirty years – since the 1980s, it has distanced from Russian due to numerous alternations in grammar, spelling and vocabulary (a lot of words have been borrowed or revived). Lexis that in the 1980s could have been considered as "bourgeois nationalist words", or as unnecessary borrowings used just for the purpose of being different, these days has become the core of inherently Ukrainian vocabulary. This critical re-evaluation should also be based on modern critical editions which at present are much more readily accessible.

Eventually, there might appear the idea of revisiting the *Complete Shakespeare*. The first and foremost reason for that is the recent reshaping of the Shakespearean Canon, which now includes *Two Noble Kinsmen* by Shakespeare and Fletcher, *Edward III*, fragments from Sir Thomas More and an epitaph all attributed to the Bard. *Edward III* was translated by Maria Hablevytch but has not been published yet, whereas the rest of the aforementioned pieces still wait for their translators.

Moreover, one must admit that the six-volume set was produced in a different country – the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic – so it should be viewed as a product of its time. The Soviet translators had to compromise on the style of their versions, avoiding lexical experimentation, softening bawdy jokes and using elevated language instead, thus establishing Shakespeare's image as an antiquated and pretentious playwright.

In the new Ukrainian reality, there is a need for contemporary Ukrainian renditions of the Bard. As for the strategy and "poetics" of the future translations, we can take the example of the newest *Complete Shakespeare* in Romanian – the project headed by the translator and scholar, George Volceanov. This edition is characterized by "the use of modern vocabulary, that is accessible to present-day readers and theatre-goers; the recuperation of previously self-censored political, social and religious terms; the de-bowdlerization of Shakespeare's text; the creation of performance-oriented versions" (Volceanov 2016: 39). This Romanian edition also became a reality due to "the complaints by people working with theatres about the dusty, outdated translations, which are not of much use in bringing to stage a play by the Bard" (Volceanov 2014: 214).

This connection once worked in Ukraine in the 21st century – translations of *Hamlet* and *Romeo and Juliet* by a well-known Ukrainian postmodernist author, Yu. Andrukhovych, were made for the stage, and only 8 years after that, published in beautiful and ornate editions which have become best-sellers. Andrukhovych modernizes and domesticates these texts, boldly filling them with recognizable political and cultural allusions, offensive language and youth slang. His translation style, however scandalous, paves the way and becomes a viable template for future Shakespeare's translations in Ukraine. Still, this recipe might work only for the plays from the core of the canon, as Andrukhovych's translation of *The Twelfth Night* is kept as a manuscript, perhaps due to little awareness of Ukrainian readers with Shakespearean comedies. In the competitive book market, this fact might eventually not let this edition pay off all the expenses. To understand the causes of this poor awareness, we have to return to the six-volume edition that stopped to have resonance, shifting to the periphery of reading and theatre practice. Therefore, retaining its status of a historic breakthrough in the current situation, it has caused a regrettable slowdown. Nevertheless, when treated not as an object of veneration but as an area for unbiased research and criticism, the *Complete Shakespeare* in Ukrainian can still arouse interest, generate discussions and provide inspiration.

Before Shakespeare is interpreted by the voices of the present-day Ukraine, we do need to hear all the voices of the past. That is why it is crucial to create an open-access database containing all the existing Shakespearean translations in Ukrainian. It may also include the Ukrainian scientific discourse on the Bard, as well as media materials about Shakespeare productions at Ukrainian theatres. Hopingly, the ability of

quick reference to the past of Ukrainian Shakespeare will secure its future. And having been cleansed of the Soviet cliché of a dead white classic, the Bard's works will come alive sharing the wisdom of the old times by the language of today for the people who make the future happen.

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The Mock-Shakespeare by Les Podervianskyi: Overcoming Soviet Experience

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Abstract

Shakespeare's presence in the Soviet and early post-Soviet culture was ensured not only by translations, productions and general official appraisal, but also by travesty and mockery, which were typical of the underground cultural space. The paper considers the specificity of the Soviet Shakespeare appropriation with a special focus on its burlesque type. The case of the Ukrainian artist and playwright Les Podervianskyi, who employed Shakespeare's plots and characters to mock Communist ideological clichés and stereotypes, is under study. The author aims at tracing the ways in which irony, mockery and burlesque remakes of the eternal classic literature undermine a range of destructive political and social discourses at various levels. Through the analysis of Shakespeare-based plays by Les Podervianskyi – Hamlet, or The Phenomenon of the Danish Katsapism *and* King Liter *– the article highlights one of the main tendencies of the Soviet underground literature (that of mocking the gruesome reality) and specifies Podervianskyi's unique attitude which was both anti-Soviet and anti-Russian.*

Key words: *William Shakespeare, Les Podervіankyi, travesty, burlesque, totalitarian discourse*

Ideology, as a cornerstone of totalitarianism, permanently seeks for support, legitimation and approval from arts and cultural practices. The so-called 'cultural front' had always been one of the primary concerns of the Soviet ideological machine, due to its high propaganda potential. The synchrony of shifts in political, ideological and cultural spheres of a revolutionary society is emphasized by Robert Tucker:

> Every successful communist revolution has been attended by a sustained and strenuous effort of the newly established regime to transform the way of life of the population; and where the revolutionary takeover process has

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> been protracted […] the transformation of culture has begun in the course of the revolution (1973: 185).

Having emerged as a vibrant avant-garde experiment of the Proletariat in the 1920s, the Soviet culture made a dramatic transition to conservative imperial-like aesthetics in the 1930s, when the official cultural policies were introduced, and the socialist realism became the leading style in all the spheres of the so-called progressive people's art. The institutionalization of the ideologically-biased cultural discourse secured the establishment of the cultural hierarchy, atop of which there were those loyal artists who promoted Soviet ideology and glorified Soviet lifestyle.

However, the urge to prove the superiority of the Communist culture to the bourgeois one made the Soviet ideologues admit the necessity to make it valid in the global space. This required, among other measures, to integrate the world classical literature into the development of that new cultural model. Such approach was theorized in the works of the top Communist leaders, including V. Lenin, who acknowledged that "the most valuable achievements of the bourgeois epoch" (1965: 316) are not to be rejected, but rather assimilated and refashioned according to the ideology of the revolutionary proletariat.

A theoretician of proletarian aesthetics, A. Lunacharskyi, was one of the most passionate supporters of the idea that classic authors sincerely sympathized with the working class and Communist ideas. He emphasised that it is only proletariat that can judge their literary legacies on merits and that the most representative men of letters were visionaries who had foreseen the future proletarian revolution:

> By juxtaposing our proletarian culture to the old bourgeois one, I am far from believing that the works of geniuses are to be considered bourgeois, too. The works by geniuses, often contrary to their will, had a painful imprint of… a black seal of the market to which they had to adjust. However, even under these conditions, geniuses tried to unfold their wings, and all of them had a dream of true creative freedom which could help them to find the right direction and heal all their deformities… From this point of view, those geniuses are not yours, dear bourgeoisie, they are ours, and they do not need bows and slavish imitation, they are just our comrades and suffering brothers, who create life like we do (Lunacharskyi 1919) (*my translation*).

Thus, the Soviet ideological and cultural machine factually employed a range of classics as harbingers of the progressive Communist

ideas. It is worth noting that, at some point, Soviet ideologues gave preference to those canonical figures that were the so-called 'dead white men' (in terms of Harold Bloom's canon theory (Bloom 1995)), since active literary figures of the time could be quite unreliable in terms of Communism support (to mention just the cases of André Gide and Lois Aragon).

One of the most actively appropriated figures of this artistic pantheon was William Shakespeare, who was proclaimed 'the people's classic', and whose dramatic legacy was viewed as a true reflection of the class conflict of the Elizabethan society. As culturologist Irina Lagutina points out,

> Shakespeare was a very appropriate classic. He was both international and 'native'. It also turned out that his texts were full of progressive ideas such as humanism, and socialism was considered its higher mode. Besides, they discovered craving for changes, interest to common people's life and love for freedom in Shakespeare's works. Renaissance comedies and Falstaffian laughter did not contradict the official joy of mass culture and were almost corresponding to famous Stalin's formula "Life has become better. Life has become more cheerful" (Лагутина).

Soviet cultural establishment employed various practices to pay homage to the Great Bard – they included jubilee celebrations, scientific conferences, new translations and editions, theatrical productions and screen versions of his dramas. Such massive promotion of the 'official' Shakespeare resulted in his iconization and monumentalization. However, this façade of bronze encouraged the emergence of Shakespearean burlesque and mockery in the underground art sphere.

During the Era of Stagnation and Perestroika, sharp contrast between optimistic slogans and Communist leaders' reports to the gruesome reality triggered general scepticism and ironic attitude in certain layers of the society, particularly among intellectuals and artists. This resulted in creating a number of artworks and texts that reconsidered and parodied Soviet discourse, i.e. rituals, leaders, routine, fears, etc. [1] In Ukraine, where the disbelief in the Soviet grand narrative and mythology intermingled with striving for cultural independence, this tendency acquired especially absurdist colouring, represented in the writings by Yuri Pokalchuk, members of the BU-BA-BU artistic group (Yury Andrukhovych, Viktor Neborak and Oleksandr Irvanets) and Les Podervіansky.

The latter is considered a true *enfant terrible* of the Ukrainian culture. Having paved his artistic path as a painter, he is still much more famous for his short plays in which absurd and pornographic plots are conveyed in foul language. Podervianskyi's dramatic method involves remaking "staple 'numbers' of the Soviet cultural repertoire" (Romanets 2019: 168) into a sort of gonzo-dramas. Maryna Romanets describes his creative technique as follows:

> While reworking, synthesizing, orchestrating, fabricating, hybridizing, recombining, and representing pre-existing mythologies, narratives, figures, images, and phrases from the thrift shop of socialist realist literature, Poderviansky ruthlessly pornographizes them in his disturbingly violent oeuvre. Crammed with unmotivated murders, gluttony, alcoholism, defecation, fights, indiscriminate and unrestricted screwing, his plays strip socialist realist creations to their bare bones, proving that social realism *is* pornography (Romanets 2019: 170).

However, it was not only Soviet cultural repertoire that Les Podervianskyi drew his inspiration from. His dramatic canon comprises two Shakespeare-based plays – *King Liter* and *Hamlet, or the Phenomenon of the Danish Katsapism*. They both have brightly burlesque nature in the American meaning of this word – i.e. "variety show with a heavy emphasis upon sex". It is worth noting that in these plays it is not Shakespeare and his genuine plots to be mocked over, but rather the image of the Bard and his characters recreated by the Soviet appropriation. The choice of the pretexts does not seem occasional – *Hamlet* and *King Lear* were, perhaps, the most famous staged and quoted plays in the USSR, not least because of their celebrated screen versions directed by Grigoriy Kozintsev. In Podervianskyi's versions, licentious homosexual Claudius is smashed by a constantly drunk Hamlet, and incestuous promiscuous King Liter is involved into political intrigues against Yorick, who turns from a joker into a political leader of the English nation.

Poderviansky's plays are grounded not only on usual parodic techniques such as rewriting the well-known stories in a stylistically different manner or travestying the plotline and dramatis personae. In fact, he employs only key characters and conflicts as a framework which he fills with new meanings that mock Soviet reality. This way, the author flags and discloses the problematic issues of the Communist society both on the official and common level.

One of the major targets of Podervіansky mockery is Communist totalitarian discourse, with its party conferences, antisemitism, criminalized homosexuality, etc. At the same time, he discloses its hypocritical and double-faced nature. For instance, in *Hamlet* the Ghost, seemingly a very conservative homophobe, is revealed as a perverter of his younger brother.

> Ghost. … I've hated homos since I was a child, and sent them to chemical plants to work for the glory of the Motherland. O, poor Denmark, its time is out of joint. (Podervianskyi).

> Hamlet. Why did you have to force your own brother, in weaker health than you, to s*** your d***? So no wonder he has gone bonkers (Podetvianskyi).

Besides, Podervіansky ironically represents one of the most popular ideologemes of the Soviet society – that of peoples' friendship which was in fact purely declarative, since other republics acted mainly as Russian colonies. Instead of friendship, there was ethnical opposition and conflict, accompanied by xenophobia and hate speech. Thus, as a Ukrainian, Les Podervіansky could not but feel a true attitude to his and other nations from the Big Russian Brother.

> Hamlet. I've told you that I cannot avenge because all the people on earth are brothers, except for the Jews, Tatars, Freemasons, Negroes and Belarusians whose guts I hate (Podervianskyi).

In this context, another target of Podervisankyi's mockery is the so-called Russian national idea that comprises religious, philosophical, and vernacular concepts promoting 'exclusiveness' of the Russian nation among other peoples and famous Russian great-state chauvinism. This mockery is evident in the very name of the play: its latter part is *The Phenomenon of Danish Katsapism* which is an offensive word for Russian way of living. Besides, Hamlet in Act 1 claims to be a humanist and peace loving Tolstoyan, but in the course of action he and Claudius open up as nationalists with a complex of superiority:

> Hamlet. You may not avenge. We must love all c***suckers, bastards and murderers. For each of them is one of the peoples, and all of them are God-bearers (Podervianskyi).

> Hamlet**.** No, I don't eat meat out of principle. I just like to drink from time to time, for we are a nation famed for hospitality and generosity and can outdrink any foreigners, especially Jews and Turks (Podervianskyi).

> Claudius. My Ghost, we are doing everything all right. We feel anger and hatred for all the Jews and Freemasons and every day perform the national anthem on the balalaika in a choir. The Jews and Turks fear us, the national prestige grows stronger, and every day the percentage of fats in butter increases (Podervianskyi).

The concept of the Russian nation as a God-Bearer (народ-богоносец) was introduced by Russian philosopher, Nikolay Berdiayev, and was extensively used in many mystical and Slavophilic theories to emphasize the special mission of the Russians in the world.

Besides, in *Hamlet*, Podervianskyi's openly ridicules Russian patriotic symbols. The opening stage direction of Act 2 includes the following:

> In the middle of the stage there is a Russian (Katsap) armchair bereft of artistic pretensions. Above it, the national coat of arms is hung. The coat of arms depicts a bear. In one hand the bear holds a hammer, and in the other a balalaika. This symbolizes the beast's industrious and fun-loving nature (Podervianskyi).

Indeed, the bear is very common in Russian heraldry: for example, a bear with a spear is a part of the Yaroslavl coat-of-arms. However, in this invented coat-of-arms, the bear with a balalaika is a quintessence of all popular Russia-related stereotypes.

Another patriotic concept to be parodied in these plays is the one of Soviet heroism. The Communist mythology included a lot of stories of unprecedented heroic behaviour demonstrated by ordinary people at war, at great construction projects of Communism, and in everyday life. Moreover, the highest Soviet distinction was named Hero of the Soviet Union. But in King Liter's interpretation, the notion of 'hero', being associated with taboo words, becomes totally desacralized and devalued:

> King Liter… For I, a respected man and a patriarch, the progenitor, the founder of the city and the country, am the national hero! As it is well known, heroes do not f*** and do not shit! Needless to say that none of them had wanked as a child (Подерв'янський 2011: 207) (*my translation*).

Both gonzo-plays contain various references to the Soviet cultural repertoire. In *Hamlet*, which is more anti-Russian than anti-Soviet, well-known Russian tunes "Little Mosquitos" ("Комарики") and "Little Apple" ("Яблочко") are mentioned. The latter one has certain symbolic meaning in the play. "Yablochko" is a Russian song and dance which is traditionally presented as sailors' dance. The final stage direction of the play says:

> Quiet music plays, and a pleasant voice sings a Russian sailors' song "Yablochko". Sigmund Freud approaches Hamlet, sticks a syringe in his ass, and takes him away to the insane asylum. Seven sailors in scary black overcoats appear on the stage. The sailors' song "Yablochko" grows louder. The sailors are tap-dancing to its cheerful sounds (Podervianskyi).

Here one can unmistakably see direct parallelism between end of monarchy in Les Podervianskyi's Denmark and in the 1917 revolutionary Russia, as in both countries sailors were the main propelling force of monarchy overthrow.

In *King Liter*, there is an interesting combination of mock quotations from the official Soviet poetry and from urban chanson pieces. For instance, Ghost cautions King Liter and his allies about forthcoming revolutionary changes:

> Tremble, you assholes, with horrible predictions! You all are f***** up! No matter if you eat pineapples, or, just as well, stuff yourself with grouse! (Подерв'янський 2011: 213) (*my translation*).

One can easily recognize here a direct quotation from a famous couplet by the Russian revolutionary poet Vladimir Mayakovskyi ("Eat your pineapples, chew your grouse, / Your last day draws near, you bourgeois louse!"). Podervianskyi employs these lines to convey the same apocalyptical senses as the Russian futurist did.

Edgar, while telling about the unprecedented burst of democracy in England, finishes his soliloquy with the line "It's freedom, damn, it's freedom, damn, it's freedom!" ("Свобода, бля, свобода, бля, свобода!") which is a direct quotation from a popular rogue song "Kokteblya", where humoristic effect is achieved with the help of a pun based on the Russian swear word "blya" ("damn") and the name of the Crimean town Koktebel.

Besides making fun of the official Communist discourse and its cultural components, Podervianskyi saturated his Shakespeare-based plays with elements of gruesome Soviet reality. This imposes some elements of

the so-called 'chernukha' [2], making these plays realistic to an absurd extreme. This includes total alcoholism which is typical of all the protagonists and is quite ambiguous in meaning. For protagonists, alcohol consumption is the only way to cope with the horrible reality:

> Hamlet**.** F***ing daddy is driving me f***ing nuts. Let me go drink champagne at the bar, for my throat feels like cat's piss and I feel the unconscious desire to lick hot teeth with a rough tongue… (Podervianskyi).

> Hamlet…. Death and ruins lie everywhere. I will drink no more, although what reasonable alternative is there? Poor Denmark! To hell go enterprises of great pitch and moment (Podervianskyi).

> King Liter. Look, my dear son! There a hundred alcoholics present united front! In their eyes, courageous red colours are fulgurant, and their blue arms dance as Chinese dancers in Shanghai brothels!" (Подерв'янський 2011: 212)

whereas for antagonists, alcohol addiction is described as a source of danger and violence:

> Hamlet. Altogether I am a humanist, unlike you, daddy. All you want is to drink vodka and f*** poor mama on the oven so hard that balls are on the wall. And then taste tea and throw an axe at paralyzed grandma, kick the toilet with your boots, and other stupid things I've noticed about you (Podervianskyi).

Les Podervianskyi's *Hamlet, or the Phenomenon of the Danish Katsapism* and *King Liter* stand out of the long-lasting tradition of travestying Shakespeare's plays and poems. The Ukrainian playwright refers to the Bard's dramatic canon not for the sake of pure entertainment, but in order to flag the most painful points of the Soviet society and to overcome this traumatizing experience with the help of rough but effective tools – pornography, brutality, lavatorial humour, and foul language which proved to be powerful underminers of the official totalitarian narrative.

Notes

[1] Among such texts there are "Moscow – Petushki" and "Notes of the Insane" by Venedikt Yerofeyev, short stories by Yuz Aleshkovskiy, "The Life and Adventures of Ivan Chonkin, the Soldier" by Vladimir Voynovich, etc.

[2] Volha Isakava defines this term as "a trend in Russian cinema (primarily) and literature that came into being in the late 1980s – early 1990s during the Glasnost era and addressed the negative aspects of Soviet (or early post-Soviet) society and history" (Isakava 2012: 2).

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Intertextual Ever Afters: Fictionalised Biography and Compensatory Adaptation in *Shakespeare in Love* and *Becoming Jane*

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Abstract

The paper aims to explore the fusion of intertextual borrowings and imaginative historical recreation in John Madden's 1998 Shakespeare in Love *and Julian Jarrold's 2007* Becoming Jane *in an attempt to establish the full extent of the similarity between the strategies employed in their scripts and the relevance of the insights they provide into issues concerning literary authorship and a wider cultural landscape. This will entail both a comparative assessment of the two cinematic endeavours and a side-by-side analysis of each film script and the literary work whose plot it mirrors (*Romeo and Juliet *and* Pride and Prejudice *respectively). Particular attention will be paid to the ways in which isolated lines or entire episodes from William Shakespeare's tragedy and Jane Austen's novel are subtly adapted or simply pilfered to fill in gaps in two similarly elusive biographies and to account for the inspiration behind two of literature's most enduring couples, whilst also somehow compensating for the missing element of romance in the real lives of their creators. In focusing on the complex fusion of literary biography and adaptation to be discovered under the surface of apparently facile (albeit bittersweet) romantic comedy, this exploration will ultimately try to assess each film's relevance in the context of the constantly escalating interest in William Shakespeare and Jane Austen and the daunting intertextual (and multimedial) universes radiating from these two centres of the western and universal canon.*

Key words: *adaptation, authorship, biopic, intertextuality, reception*

Introduction

While the public's fascination with "celebrated lives and the privileged insight that the screen seems to promise" via "the snappily titled 'biopic'" (Hand 2016: xi) is, by no means, a recent phenomenon, the popularity of

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dramatizations focusing on the lives of literary figures only dates back to the early 1990s, having since then escalated into a considerable and still growing trend (Shachar 2016: 199). Likewise, the academic establishment has only lately started to consider all the ramifications of cinematic engagements with "literature, literary culture and literary readerships as audiences" (Higson 2011: 103) and to explore the potential of this "unappreciated genre […] of low repute" (Bingham 2010: ix-3) that initially tended to command almost "as much critical derision as industrial visibility" (Vidal 2014: 2). Primarily disparaged for its frequently "cavalier […] handling of historical fact," the biographical picture has also found some staunch defenders among those who argue that capturing "the essence of a life" (Vidal 2014: 1-2) does not necessarily entail a mere "recounting of the facts" of someone's existence and can rely on a number of unconventional approaches in its "attempt to discover biographical truth" (Bingham 2010: 7), simultaneously reconstructing and deconstructing the "life, repute and legacy of […] its renowned subjects" (Hand 2016: xi).

Regarded by some scholars as "one of the most intriguing and ubiquitous examples within the field and practice of adaptation" (Hand 2016: xi) and by others as a related but distinct subgenre whose appeal relies mostly in its ability to provide "an engagement with respectable literary culture that goes beyond the adaptation itself" (Higson 2011: 103-104), the biopic is an essentially fluid and eclectic cinematic form. Its narrative weaves "the partly factual, partly fictional story of a real person's life or a significant portion of that life" and often "combines melodrama, history, psychological drama, biography, and documentary" (Hollinger 2012: 158). While the need to "'complete' history" by filling in "what didn't happen with what a viewer might wish to see happen" (Bingham 2010: 8) is a common feature of numerous categories of films, this endeavour acquires a particularly interesting dimension in the case of literary biopics. The latter are frequently characterised not only by a "romantic vision of key moments in the life of a writer" purporting to "throw light on the creative process or the source of the writer's fiction" (Higson 2011: 103-104) but also by an intricate fusion of biography and fiction. To give but two examples, biopics such as *Shakespeare in Love* (1998) and *Becoming Jane* (2007), the two cinematic productions analysed in this paper, engage in acts of reverse autobiography, working on the assumption that texts such as *The Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet* and *Pride and Prejudice* respectively might have drawn inspiration from real incidents and relationships from the lives of their

creators. Therefore, they use details and protagonist profiles lifted from the literary sources to fill in biographical gaps, embellishing an otherwise fragmentary and dry personal narrative with unlikely yet appealing elements of adventure and romance.

Shakespeare in and out of *Love*

John Madden's *Shakespeare in Love* opens, like almost every biopic (Custen 1992: 51), with title cards that firmly anchor the cinematic narrative in the historical London of 1593 and the "glory days of the Elizabethan theatre" (Madden 1998), whilst simultaneously invoking the two "households, both alike in dignity" (Shakespeare [1597] 1994, I.1: 1) of *Romeo and Juliet* via the image of rival playhouses "fighting it out for writers and audiences" (Madden 1998). The film then goes on to desacralize the legendary Bard of Avon into "a starving hack with a bad case of writer's block" and to bootleg literary episodes into a "pseudo-biography of Shakespeare's life" by means of a "star-crossed romance between Will and heiress Viola De Lesseps" which "both mirrors and intertwines" (Rothwell 2004: 248) in rather transparent fashion with *The Most Excellent and Lamentable Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet*. In addition to Will and Viola as the alleged real-life inspirations behind Romeo and Juliet – doomed not by "ancient grudge" (Shakespeare [1597] 1994, I.1: 3) but by the equally insurmountable barriers of class and prior commitment – the various members of the Capulet household and entourage are recognizable in Viola's highly pragmatic father, largely absent mother, devoted nurse and noble yet essentially unappealing suitor.

At some level yet another adaptation of the most frequently screened "play, Shakespearean or otherwise" (Brode 2000: 42), the film also represents an act of "appropriation in that it fabricates a biographical story of the dramatist's early theatrical career" (Wray 2011: 513) by suggesting that Will's personal experience of true love transforms into the well-known tragedy of "star-crossed lovers" (Shakespeare [1597] 1994, I.1: 6) by means of "an unmediated, transparent act of composition" whereby "Will appears to write his 'original' love story as he lives it" (Lehman and Starks 2002: 11). The almost magical transformation, "as if by alchemy" (Anderegg 2004: 48), of words spoken spontaneously by the various characters into the familiar lines of the play is mediated quite convincingly by a script which not only edits "together moments from rehearsals and a performance of *Romeo and Juliet* with the amorous and entrepreneurial adventures of the film's own

characters" (Anderegg 2004: 41) but also features humorous intertextual nods to contemporary culture: "Henslowe: The show must... you know... Will: Go on." (Madden 1998) It moreover combines the finality of the lovers' separation with the hopefulness of the open ending generated by the seamless transition from the tragic denouement of *Romeo and Juliet* to the (rewritten) opening lines of *Twelfth Night*.

As an interesting detail of this fusion between reality and fiction, the triple occurrence of the same words from *Romeo and Juliet* – "Oh, I am fortune's fool!" (Shakespeare [1597] 1994, II.4: 136) – in a variety of contexts posits art and life in a continuum, highlighting, in equal measure, the Aristotelian concept of art and Wilde's "reverse mimesis" (Burwick 2001: 161) whereby "Life imitates Art far more than Art imitates Life" (Wilde 2004: 26). First, the line is uttered by the besotted playwright as he prepares to attempt a risky ascent to Viola's balcony: "Oh, I am fortune's fool, I will be punished for this!" (Madden 1998). It then emerges during the first public performance of the play, featuring – after Viola's banishment from the theatre – Will in the role of Romeo, only to be followed within minutes by a whispered reiteration in the course of Will and Viola's painful reunion: "Oh, I am fortune's fool. You are married?" (Madden 1998). Occupying an equally prominent place at the centre of two crucial scenes that not only blur the boundaries between reality and fiction but also mark the beginning and ending of Will and Viola's short-lived romance, this leitmotif helps create a sense of circularity. It moreover provides a smooth passage from off-stage despair to flawless performance in which the two actors simultaneously deliver their respective lines and convey a very personal message, rendered considerably more poignant by the fact that Viola is given the chance to play the lead heroine. Her emergency appearance in the role of "the Capulet commodity Juliet" rather than that of "the young wayfarer" she had auditioned for and rehearsed has been interpreted as a reminder of the fact "that she 'wears the pants' only in fiction – not in the real performance where money is on the line" (Lehman 2002: 139). Yet, it is quite interesting to point out that Will's address occasions another blurring of gender roles the moment he adapts one of Juliet's lines to allude to Viola's new civil status – "If you be married, my grave is like to be my wedding bed." (Madden 1998) – much in the same way in which, in an earlier dialogue, he had used Ophelia's words from a yet unwritten play to voice his disappointment: "I was the more deceived." (Madden 1998) The back and forth movement "from gender role to gender role" and from "bed to stage" in which Romeo and Juliet's lines "become exchangeable,

interchangeable" (Coursen 2003: 85), echoing the gender-swaps familiar from other plays by Shakespeare, may not save Viola from a life of "domestic slavery on a Virginia tobacco plantation" (Lehman 2002: 139) but reinforces the impression that, throughout her brief romantic involvement with Will, her position is that of an equal partner rather than a subordinate.

As far as the presence in the film of actual historical figures from Shakespeare's artistic entourage is concerned, far from serving a merely comedic purpose, the numerous instances in which Will is the reluctant recipient of enthusiastic praise of his chief rival's genius also act as reminders of the fact that, while posterity has bestowed upon Shakespeare the undisputed status of "Center of the Canon" (Bloom 1994: vii), in the 1593 London captured in the film nobody would have "compared him to the brilliant Christopher Marlowe" (Brode 2000: 41). Voiced by fans ranging from random boatmen – "I had that Christopher Marlowe in my boat once!" (Madden 1998) – to the unfeeling Mr. Fennyman – "Of course, it was mighty writing. There is no one like Marlowe." (Madden 1998) – these expressions of unadulterated admiration culminate in the memorable scene in which almost all the aspiring actors auditioning for *Romeo and Ethel* regale Shakespeare with the same lines from *Doctor Faustus*:

> Second actor: I would like to give you something from *Faustus* by Christopher Marlowe.
> Henslowe: How refreshing!
> Second actor: "Was this the face that launched a thousand ships, and burnt the topless towers of Ilium?" (Madden 1998)

While the informal eulogy shared with Viola – "Marlowe's touch was in my *Titus Andronicus* and my *Henry VI* was a house built on his foundations." (Madden 1998) – merely echoes the critical opinion whereby early Shakespearean drama is likely to have benefitted from the influence of a then more illustrious contemporary, the cinematic narrative takes this indebtedness considerably further:

> Marlowe: Romeo is... Italian. Always in and out of love.
> Will: Yes, that's good. Until he meets...
> Marlowe: Ethel. [...] The daughter of his enemy. [...] His best friend is killed in a duel by Ethel's brother or something. His name is Mercutio.
> Will: Mercutio… good name. (Madden 1998)

Marlowe's actual input on plot development is as much of a joke as the idea that a play the action and characters of which were borrowed from *The*

Tragical Historye of Romeus and Juliet, a 1562 poem "based on earlier versions of the same well-known and popular story", could "have been named anything very different from what it is" (Anderegg 2004: 42). Nevertheless, scenes like the one above serve as reminders of the initial "joint ownership" (Aaron 2005: 17) of plays later on attributed to a sole genius, illustrating the tradition of "collaborative authorship or division of labour" (Vedi 2012: 9), an equally common practice in Elizabethan theatrical production and the contemporary film business. Likewise, far from conveying the impression of shameless plagiarism, Shakespeare's portrayal as "a literary magpie, hearing many of the lines he will eventually write spoken first by other characters" (Purcell 2009: 160) highlights his ability to respond "to every mood, every position and disposition" (Bate 1998: 152), as well as to often unlikely sources of inspiration.

Written by a team combining the literary expertise behind "the most celebrated (post)modern combination of veneration for Shakespeare with irreverent pastiche" (French 2006: 138) and an insight into the mechanisms of Hollywood production, the script represents a relatively safe fusion of homage and irreverence, yet it has been the target of considerable criticism for its ostensibly "'lowbrow' treatment of Shakespeare and the Shakespearean text" (Anderegg 2004: 43). The decision to rebrand Will Shakespeare as a romantic hero, a lover rather than an intellectual, thereby "granting him humanity" (French 2006: 153), might be indeed dismissed by somewhat inflexible scholars as a rather gratuitous move aimed to attract a wider audience and condemning the film to the questionable status of romantic comedy. However, it is perhaps more important to observe how much information about the Elizabethan theatre industry and drama in general the film nevertheless delivers, simultaneously providing "a popular and welcome counterweight to modern scholarly edited texts, which tend to 'freeze' Shakespeare's plays in a way that would amaze the dramatist" (Halio 2003: 58), were he still alive and able to see them.

Most positive reviews have also chosen to point out the considerable, if largely inconspicuous, skill behind a product that somehow manages to simultaneously function as an art film and a highly commercial blockbuster, much like the mistaken identity "crowd tickler" (Madden 1998) that Philip Henslowe enthuses over in the opening scene, allowing the cultural elite to "share in-jokes denied to hoi polloi" (Rothwell 2004: 248) yet pleasing both categories in almost equal measure:

> [T]he film is in general ingeniously designed to appeal to a variety of audiences, to both flatter the susceptibility of those for whom 'art' is pretty

> much a bore as well as the more or less 'academic' or 'educated' audience, the teachers and students who can recognize the allusions to Elizabethan theatre and sixteenth-century culture. (Anderegg 2004: 42)

Written in the "layered style" (Thompson 1999: 1) advocated by David Lodge, the script combines a series of sophisticated allusions clearly "aimed at Shakespeare scholars" with jokes that "anyone who has survived the ninth grade in the US can enjoy" (Desmet 2002: 11). While not all viewers are likely to distinguish accurate historical facts from blatant inaccuracies, even those unfamiliar with the actual canon can appreciate the ways in which the fictitious transformations undergone by the ludicrously titled *Romeo and Ethel, the Pirate's Daughter* manipulate "the mystique of Shakespearean authorship" by redefining "Shakespearean drama as a labor of love" (Lehman and Starks 2002: 10) and outline the stages of the apparently fluid metamorphosis of a creative idea into a compelling spectacle.

Losing Darcy, Finding Jane

Prompted to a large extent by the enthusiastic public and critical response to *Shakespeare in Love*, *Becoming Jane* displays the same tendency to romanticize "authorship by depicting real life inspiration, insisting on the link between author and heroine" (Cartmell 2012: 29), and relies on similar intertextual strategies to fill in biographical gaps by means of details, character profiles and episodes lifted from a familiar work of fiction. While this has resulted in parallels that are conspicuous enough to prompt "accusations of being dangerously derivative" (Cartmell 2012: 29), it should be noted that the latter biopic does not merely replicate its more prestigious cinematic precursor but engages in a complex fusion of biography, fiction and adaptation that blends together embellished historical details, elements from Austen's text and nods to recent films. Based on Jon Hunter Spence's 2003 semi-biographical *Becoming Jane Austen*, the almost homonymous 2007 British-Irish romantic drama directed by Julian Jerrold constitutes "a logical extension of previous adaptations' tendencies to unite the central character with the author" (Cartmell 2010: 114) in an endeavour to compensate for the fact that the limited insight contemporary scholarship has into Austen's life appears "too dull or uneventful to make it likely cinematographic material" (Gómez-Galisteo 2011: 235).

The efforts made to reincarnate the various protagonists of *Pride and Prejudice* as members of Austen's household and its relatively wide

network of acquaintances surpass the similar endeavours made in *Shakespeare in Love* in both scope and subtlety. Thus, even the least enthusiastic Austenite among its viewers can notice the numerous parallels between the intelligent and independent Elizabeth Bennet and her creator, as well as between Mr. and Mrs. Bennet and their considerably less irresponsible and improper historical avatars. More dedicated readers can also recognize Jane Bennet's endearing combination of optimism and diffidence in Cassandra's timid musings, Mr. Bingley's amiable character in Robert Fowle's good-natured behaviour, Mary's misguided attempts to entertain others and Lydia's flirtatiousness in Lucy Lefroy's appalling musical performance and dubious amorous overtures, and Mr. Collins' efforts to ingratiate himself with all in John Warren's obsequious interventions. What is, however, even more interesting to observe is the fact that, far from merely featuring the ostensible historical original behind each individual character, the film script actually appears to both merge distinct novel identities into cinematic conglomerates and divide the features of certain fictional protagonists between several on-screen personas; thus it not only pre-empts the naive tendency to draw overly-simplistic parallels between reality and fiction but also highlights the intricate fusion of different sources of inspiration behind each of Austen's complex creations.

The viewer's first glimpse of the extensive grounds and elegant mansion in the vicinity of the modest Austen estate, as well as the overbearing and controlling personality of its owner in conjunction with her affectionate introduction of her nephew – "Wisley is indispensable to my happiness." (Jarrold 2007) – are likely to prompt an immediate analogy between Lady Gresham and Lady Catherine de Bourgh, somewhat clouded by the realization that Mr. Wisley does not quite share the masculine appeal of the various cinematic incarnations of Mr. Darcy. Notwithstanding his tall person, social awkwardness and considerable wealth, Mr. Wisley is a less convincing candidate for the enviable status of real-life Darcy than the penniless Thomas Lefroy. The latter's good looks, sophisticated London airs and, above all, blatant disregard for the feelings of others single him out as the likely historical inspiration behind Austen's most eligible bachelor, even before his casual dismissal of Austen's literary efforts – "well, accomplished enough, perhaps, but a metropolitan mind may be less susceptible to extended, juvenile self-regard." (Jarrold 2007) – echoes Darcy's equally cavalier response to Elizabeth's physical charms: "'She is tolerable; but not handsome enough to tempt me; and I am in no

humour at present to give consequence to young ladies who are slighted by other men.'" (Austen 2006: 12) This impression is further augmented by Austen's irritated reaction to his behaviour in the course of a gathering where, in yet another echo of Chapter III in *Pride and Prejudice*, the "scarcity of gentlemen" (Austen 2006: 11) puts a damper on the festivities: "Well, I call it very high indeed, refusing to dance when there are so few gentlemen." (Jarrold 2007) The fact that, in this particular instance, it is Lefroy who overhears Austen's rude remark results in the same gender reversal already discussed in reference to *Shakespeare in Love* and reinforces the idea that the fatal flaws of pride and prejudice equally apply to the male and female protagonists.

The same combination of straightforward parallels and intricate fusions characterises the rest of the text, with certain scenes – Mr. Austen's insistence that "Jane should have not the man who offers the best price but the man she wants" (Jarrold 2007) or Mrs. Austen's outburst upon becoming aware of her daughter's refusal to marry Mr. Wisley – unambiguously echoing familiar literary episodes. Other analogies are considerably more fluid. Thus, Lady Gresham's righteous indignation in the face of Jane's rejection of Wisley – "My nephew, Miss Austen, condescends far indeed in offering to the daughter of an obscure and impecunious clergyman…" (Jarrold 2007) – might strike viewers as the closest cinematic equivalent to Lady Catherine's unwelcome intervention until Judge Langlois's condescending behaviour and refusal to sanction his nephew's union with Jane provide an even more appalling example of narrow-mindedness, arrogance and interference in the lives of others. Likewise, the clear echo of Darcy's sentiments in Mr. Wisley's dignified decision to curtail his pursuit of Jane – "I am vain enough to want to be loved for myself rather than my money." (Jarrold 2007) – reinforces the idea that, for all of Lefroy's appeal, Lady Gresham's unassuming nephew is a closer match for the protagonist that emerges from the novel. Indeed, for some viewers it might also serve as a confirmation of the fact that the current view of Darcy as the heart-throb of British fiction owes less to Austen's original description than to the irresistibly handsome actors invariably cast to play him.

While *Shakespeare in Love* expands its intertextual scope to engage other texts than *Romeo and Juliet* in its playful dialogue with canonical literature and popular culture alike, *Becoming Jane* mostly widens its horizons by means of nods to the 2005 adaptation of Austen's novel *Pride and Prejudice*, even though the more dedicated admirers of the 1995 BBC

mini-series might prefer to engage in comparisons between Lefroy's glamorous attire – "Green velvet coat, vastly fashionable." (Jarrold 2007) – and the garment repeatedly favoured by Colin Firth's Darcy – "No, no, the green one." (Langton 1995) – for momentous encounters with Elizabeth. Not only do the costumes created for *Becoming Jane* and the 2005 *Pride and Prejudice* reveal the endeavour to simultaneously satisfy historical accuracy and contemporary fashion, but the same strategies are employed to constantly direct the viewer's gaze towards the central female protagonist. Even more conspicuously, the same skilful combination of camerawork and choreography is employed to convey the growing attraction between Tom and Jane, with dancing scenes used as the background of their escalating romance: in Wright's 2005 adaptation, the brief illusion of Darcy and Elizabeth dancing alone emphasises the extent to which, in a room full of people, they are oblivious of anyone else; likewise, in the corresponding scene in the biopic, the two are equally incapable of toning down their gestures of affection, tearing their gaze away from each other or indeed realizing that their feelings are painfully visible to everyone else with a vested interest in their movements.

The ending entails a reversal of these circumstances, in the sense that the very formal and public setting of the protagonists' last encounter only allows for the delivery of a personal message through de agency of literature, in a scene highly reminiscent of Will and Viola's tearful on-stage farewell. Notwithstanding the relatively large crowd in attendance, Jane's *Pride and Prejudice* reading functions as an extremely intimate confession meant to be decoded by a single member of her audience, all other listeners being blissfully unaware of the fact that Elizabeth's sobering realization mirrors the perfect compatibility between two people whose 'happily ever after' remained unfulfilled:

> She began now to comprehend that he was exactly the man, who, in disposition and talents, would most suit her. His understanding and temper, though unlike her own, would have answered all her wishes. It was a union that must have been to the advantage of both; [...] But no such happy marriage could now teach the admiring multitude what connubial felicity really was. (Austen 2006: 344/Jarrold 2007)

Conclusions

Produced by the same studio and based on a similar endeavour to depict "the lives of prominent writers" whilst "focusing in some way on the

process of writing" (Higson 2011: 103) and revisiting familiar texts in search of "clues to help imagine the lives of their creators" (Hwang 2014: 93), *Shakespeare in Love* and *Becoming Jane* share an impressive number of features. Common denominators range from their focus on "a visionary with a pure, one of a kind talent or idea who must overcome opposition" (Bingham 2010: 7) to the limited time span only covering a brief episode in the dim and distant youth of a canonical writer and the premise of an impossible relationship as the inspiration behind a timeless literary couple. The decision to use details gleaned from a work of fiction to fill the gaps in a largely unknown personal history, simultaneously transforming a not particularly eventful biography into a quite sensational narrative and compensating for the somewhat unfair lack of (documented) romance in the real lives of famous writers is part of a relatively widespread phenomenon, largely championed by fans determined to enrich the love lives of their cultural idols with "embellished or invented" (Schuessler 2016: 1) amorous interludes.

As elaborated on by the curators of the 2016 "Will & Jane: Shakespeare, Austen and the Cult of Celebrity", an exhibition featuring artefacts as diverse as historical documents and questionable popular culture tributes, the list of similarities between the two writers comprises elements that go "beyond sheer literary genius" and range from "their scantily recorded intimate lives, which leave tantalizing holes to fill" (Schuessler 2016: 1) to a current "celebrity status [...] created through repetition and reproduction" (Rea 2016: 1). While this last parallel might be quite easy to dismiss as a natural side-effect of the contemporary tendency to recycle and re-commodify the culture of the past, it is quite interesting to observe that the intrinsic similarities between the Shakespearean and Austenean spirit had been pointed out almost a century earlier by a writer whose own ratio of literary success to personal happiness seemed at least as unfortunate:

> [W]riting without hate, without bitterness, without fear, without protest, without preaching. That was how Shakespeare wrote, I thought ... and when people compare Shakespeare and Jane Austen, they may mean that the minds of both had consumed all impediments; and for that reason we do not know Jane Austen and we do not know Shakespeare, and for that reason Jane Austen pervades every word that she wrote, and so does Shakespeare. (Woolf 1992: 73-74)

While the impact of the "parallel cultural afterlives" accompanying their gradual and inexorable metamorphosis into "icons, beloved almost as much for their imagined personalities and our feelings of intimacy with them as for anything they wrote" (Schuessler 2016: 1) has dispelled most of the aura of mystery surrounding their biographies and innermost thoughts, there is no denying the illusory nature of this familiarity: "Like with Shakespeare, it's hard to read Austen and know what her opinions really were about much of anything" (Fowler 2005: 285). One can only hope that the fascination cinematic productions such as *Shakespeare in Love* and *Becoming Jane* might exert over a largely uninformed public can help add romantic appeal to literary history without simultaneously transforming its texts into forgettable consumerist items, keeping its authors alive in collective memory and drawing new generations of viewers turned readers to the texts whose plots and characters they revisit and reshape.

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The Main Father-Daughter Relationship in Julia Kavanagh's *Rachel Gray* Between Reality and Fictionality

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Abstract

The present paper carries out a contrastive analysis between the paternal and filial images that form the main parent-child relationship depicted in Julia Kavanagh's Rachel Gray *in order to invalidate the assumption that Victorian realist writers sought to hold a mirror to reality even in the cases when their novels were founded on fact. This analysis will show that there is a significant divergence between the literary and socio-historical constructs of the family roles of mid-Victorian working classes, in spite of the fact that some of the elements used in the creation of fictional characters were borrowed from real-life experiences. Moreover, the article will indicate that the paternal figure it deals with deviates from its prototypical counterpart by approximating one of the most powerful stereotypes revolving around working-class Victorian men, namely the stereotype of the absent father.*

Key words: *mid-Victorian working classes, father-daughter relationship, devoted filial love, paternal indifference, socio-historical prototype*

The most important relationship depicted in *Rachel Gray* is that between the eponymous heroine and her father, Thomas Gray. In truth, it is difficult to say that there is a relationship between them, because the latter shows no interest in his abandoned child and refuses to accept her as his daughter. However, the novel heavily focuses on Rachel's deep, self-sacrificing desire to obtain her father's love. This desire is the only element that joins the two characters, besides their blood ties, and that testifies to the existence of a parent-child connection between them, though a unilateral one. The aforementioned longing of the protagonist also provides valuable insight into her image as a daughter, which departs from the socio-historical prototype of mid-Victorian working-class daughters on account of her

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inexplicable love and concern for her father and her religious piety. At the opposite extreme of familial emotional involvement is Thomas Gray's total indifference to Rachel, which, coupled with his paternal absenteeism, makes his fatherhood distinctive from the most common parental experiences of working-class men of the mid-nineteenth century. In other respects, being constructed in terms of absence, the paternal figure represented by Thomas Gray reinforces the stereotype of the absent father, although there is no close similarity between the fictional and stereotypical images. The novel's depiction of family roles through these characters will be consecutively examined in the present article in the order resulting from their involvement in the parent-child relationship between them.

Rachel Gray's image as a daughter has many features in common with the typical historical portrait of the mid-Victorian working-class girl. Like most mid-Victorian working-class girls, Rachel fulfils the class-specific expectations about the family responsibilities assigned to daughters. One of these responsibilities was to take care of younger siblings (Frost 2009: 17; Steinbach 2012: 143). An external objective analepsis reaching back more than twenty years offers revealing glimpses of the protagonist's childhood and provides a detailed account of how, at only five years old, Rachel acted as a mother to her baby sister, Jane. All the actions Rachel performed for Jane, such as washing, combing, dressing, working, carrying, singing, and playing (*RG*: 27) [1] are exhaustively enumerated, indicating that she was wholly responsible for looking after her sister, which is otherwise directly communicated through the narratorial statement that "the baby [...] was [...] confined to [Rachel's] care (*RG*: 26-27). Besides taking care of their younger siblings, working-class Victorian daughters were expected to do help with the housework (Burnett 1994: 226; Frost 2009: 17; Steinbach 2012: 143). Although it is not straightforwardly mentioned that Rachel carried out domestic chores during her childhood, this can be inferred from the presence of the verb 'to work' among the numerous verbs denoting her helping Jane listed above. In contrast to the lack of clear textual evidence regarding Rachel's household chores, the novel is quite explicit about the fact that she had to end her schooling and to begin working for pay in her early teens (*RG*: 46), thus sharing the experience of most nineteenth-century working-class girls, who met the requirements set for them (Andrew 2014: 23; Nelson 2007: 94; Frost 2009: 18; Shoemaker 2013: 132).

Regardless of the similarities between the fictional and socio-historical constructs of the mid-Victorian working-class girl concerning the fulfilment of filial responsibilities, the devoutness with which the former is

endowed marks a significant deviation from the latter. The external narrator reports that Rachel "was reared religiously, and hers was a deeply religious nature" (*RG*: 46). She is not described as a churchgoer, but her piety is manifested in regular prayer and particularly, in meditation. "Thought and Prayer" are designated as the protagonist's "two fair sisters" between which "she [goes] on through life" (*RG*: 50). Moreover, Rachel is called the only [...] real thinker" (*RG*: 51) in one of many passages characterized by maximal narratorial intrusiveness (Toolan 2001: 69), through which the external narrator intervenes at the level of the narrative text to talk directly to the reader in the first person plural and to ostensibly direct him/her towards a specific assessment of the novel's characters and events (Leech and Short 2007: 215). In that passage, as well as in another argumentative part of the text, the external narrator posits that a real thinker is not the person who has a keen and brilliant intellect and whose heart is cold, but the person who thinks with his/her heart (*RG*: 49-51). Thus, the ideological orientation of most characters of the novel, who, being secular, do not appreciate Rachel's devoutness and consider her "a fool" (*RG*: 45) because of her ignorance and weak intellect, is implicitly criticised for departing from the main ideology of the novel.

It is not only the protagonist's religious habits, but also her high moral integrity that stem from her piety and faith in God. Rachel is depicted as a righteous young woman, who fights against bad feelings and evil tendencies, trying not to compromise her moral principles even in the most difficult circumstances. The way Rachel reacts when her stepmother overwhelms her with bitter reproaches is a case in point. She does not show any signs of resistance or anger in such situations. Instead, she is calm, patient and submissive, speaking gently to her stepmother and often pleasantly smiling at her. Various textual examples can be provided in support of this portrayal of Rachel's amiable response to Mrs. Gray's oppressive behaviour, like: "Rachel held her peace" (*RG*: 63); "gently observed Rachel" (*RG*: 158); "Rachel looked up in her mother's face, and smiled so pleasantly" (*RG*: 110) etc. Rachel has a similar humble and peaceful attitude towards Mrs. Brown, Mrs. Gray's cousin who mercilessly tyrannizes her. However, Mrs. Brown is so cruel that, at one moment, Rachel's patience is nearly exhausted, and anger rises in her heart. But she is triumphant in this time of trial, as she succeeds in suppressing that anger and in forgiving her tormentor, remaining faithful to her strong moral principles (*RG*: 263-268).

As Rachel's reaction to Mrs. Gray's and Mrs. Brown's mistreatment of her suggests, her image as a character, including her image as a daughter, is mainly created based on the wide range of moral qualities attributed to pious people. She displays these qualities in her relationship with other characters of the novel as well. The conversations Rachel holds with Mary and Jane, her apprentices in dressmaking, and Richard Jones, Mary's father, disclose that she is patient, kind and honest with everyone with whom she interacts. Despite the fact that she speaks little, since she is very shy (*RG*: 16, 45, 46, 97) and her stepmother does not allow her to express her opinion, every time she says something, her tone of voice is gentle and pleasant, as the clauses framing her direct speech clearly show. Furthermore, Rachel's language is different from that of the other characters of the novel because her words reflect her high moral character, and also because her vocabulary is devoid of working-class colloquialism and vulgarism. There are apparently two reasons for this 'dialect suppression' (Leech and Short 2007: 137). Firstly, Rachel's more refined language is part and parcel of her description as a pious person in comparison to the secular people surrounding her. Secondly, the discrepancy of language between the protagonist and other characters can be explained in linguistic terms. Geoffrey Leech and Mick Short observe that "it could scarcely be allowed for a nineteenth-century heroine to speak dialect" because "non-standard language often implies remoteness from the author's own language, and hence from the central standards of judgment in a novel" (2007: 137). This reason seems to be perfectly valid regarding *Rachel Gray* since the main character's ideology is consistent with the dominating norm of the novel, and any kind of distance between the two is undesirable. Being the only character with the same world-view as that of the external narrator, Rachel acts as the sole agent through whom the leading ideology of the novel is spread to other characters by means of both words, as previously demonstrated, and actions, which also reveal her good intentions towards the others, her willingness to help them as much as she can and all her positive qualities deriving from her piety.

Described as a religiously devout and morally upright young woman, who does not speak the class-specific dialect, Rachel is not representative of the urban respectable poor of the late 1840s. Victorian working classes were generally secular (Parsons 1988: 76-77), and most characters of the novel are portrayed accordingly, typifying the respectable part of the mid-nineteenth-century working classes to which they belong. However, the protagonist is constructed differently, as she is not secular.

Consequently, her image departs from the socio-historical prototype of working-class Victorians and, more precisely, of mid-nineteenth-century dressmakers, as she is a dressmaker by profession. Referring to the extent to which the protagonist of *Rachel Gray* represents her social class, George Eliot declares that Rachel's "piety [does not give] the reader any true idea of piety as it exists in any possible dressmaker" (1856 qtd. in Fauset 2009: 92). On the other hand, she accepts that the novel is 'founded on fact', as indicated on its title-page and in its preface, and finds it praiseworthy for its "undertak[ing] to impress [the mid-Victorian middle-class reader] with the everyday sorrows of [his/her] commonplace fellow men" by "tell[ing] the trials of a dressmaker who *could* get work" (1856 qtd. in Fauset 2009: 91, original emphasis). The apparent contradiction of Eliot's assessment of the novel's authenticity is resolved by considering that she makes her evaluations based on different aspects defining Rachel's image. Hence, and according to the analysis carried out so far, the depiction of Rachel Gray incorporates elements that were common among respectable working classes of the late 1840s (the socio-economic problems besetting their lives, childhood conditions for girls) and elements that were atypical of these classes and seemingly uncharacteristic of any mid-nineteenth-century dressmaker (religious piety and all the qualities and traits stemming from it). Therefore, while the heroine of *Rachel Gray* is not created in one-to-one correspondence with the prototypical image of the respectable working classes of the mid-Victorian era, there is nonetheless a certain sense of realism in her representation as a member of her class.

A similar combination of typical and atypical elements is used to portray Rachel as a working-class daughter. Like most working-class Victorian girls (Burnett 1994: 227-228; Frost 2009: 16-17, 20), Rachel is a submissive and dutiful child who fulfils her responsibilities towards her parents. But at the same time, she is characterised by a filial devotion to her parents that could hardly describe any nineteenth-century working-class daughter. Rachel's devotion to her stepmother is displayed through her constant positive attitude and friendly behaviour, which remain unchanged even when Mrs. Gray is highly unfair and oppressive to her. Although the external narrator reveals that the protagonist loves her stepmother, it seems that Rachel's good conduct towards Mrs. Gray stems from her religious piety, which impels her to respect and love her parents regardless of how good or bad they are, rather than from great fondness. The plausibility of this assumption is supported, among other things, by the fact that Rachel accepts Mrs. Gray's mistreatment of her and does not

try to win her approval and affection. In contrast, the heroine's devotion to her father does not derive from her obedience to God's commandments or from any other source than from a deep, innate feeling, which kindles a burning desire in her heart for reciprocity on the part of her father:

> Was it not enough that she could not win the affection she most longed for? She was devoted to her step-mother; she had fondly loved her younger sister; but earlier born in her heart than these two loves, deeper, and more solemn, was the love Rachel felt for her father. That instinct of nature, which in him was silent, in her spoke strongly. That share of love which he denied her, she silently added to her own, and united both in one fervent offering. Harshness and indifference had no power to quench a feeling, to which love and kindness had not given birth. She loved because it was her destiny; because, as she once said herself [...]: "A daughter's heart clings to her father with boundless charity" (*RG*: 31-32).

This descriptive fragment outlines various features of Rachel's affection for her father. The external narrator explicitly states that the most intense longing of the main character is for her father to return her filial love, which, according to the second sentence of the excerpt, is superior in terms of depth and solemnity to her feelings towards other family members. The third sentence discloses that the affection Rachel feels for Thomas Gray arises from within, from a strong natural tendency, which her father does not have, thus indicating the unrequited nature of the protagonist's most powerful feeling. The last idea is also communicated in the following sentence, being reinforced through the partial syntactic parallelism of the third and fourth sentences. The rest of the excerpt highlights other two important aspects of Rachel's fondness for her father, namely that it is unconditional and unchangeable, as nothing and no one can prevent her from loving him.

The narratorial portrayal of Rachel's great love for her father examined above is in total consistency with the more detailed portrayal drawn from implicit qualifications. The protagonist's thoughts and actions are successively the dominant means through which her affection for her father is revealed during the two stages of their parent-child relationship. The first stage refers to the period when there is almost no connection between them, as Thomas Gray, who, abandoning his family, lives separately and shows no interest in his daughter. Accordingly, this is the time when Rachel's love for her father is presented through her thoughts more than through her words and actions. Having unlimited access to her

mind, the external narrator-focalizer divulges all her thoughts. She often contemplates Thomas Gray's indifference towards her, asking herself why he does not love her (*RG*: 24-25), comparing his coldness and lack of concern for her with the tender paternal affection and care Mr. Jones displays towards his daughter (*RG*: 68) and expressing her profound desire to win his affection (*RG*: 97-98). In all these cases, Rachel thinks of her father with intense pain conveyed through her inner cry: "Oh! my father, my father!", which is reiterated throughout the novel (*RG*: 24, 68, 97, 222). Her pain, however, is not accompanied by a feeling of despair. Instead, in spite of knowing very well that there is no place for her in Thomas Gray's heart, she secretly entertains the hope that someday she will be dear to him (*RG*: 97).

While during the first stage of their parent-child relationship the heroine's overwhelming love towards her father is mainly rendered through her thoughts, it is also disclosed in other ways. A clear demonstration of Rachel's attachment to her father is the fact that she often walks many miles only to pass by his house, until one day, when "the repeated sight of Richard Jones's devoted love for his child, inspire[s] her with involuntary hope" (*RG*: 97) and she decides to speak to her father. As Rachel finds "nothing but cold, hard, rooted indifference" (*RG*: 119) in his countenance and speech during their first conversation, she tries again after her stepmother's death. But this time, she implores her father to let her live with him, attempting to persuade him that he may need her help in the future:

> Father, […] may I come and live with you? […] pray let me. I know you do not care much for me. I dare say you are right, that I am not worth much; but still I might be useful to you. A burden I certainly should not be; and in sickness, in age, I think, I hope, father, you would like to have your daughter near you. I am now your only child, […] the only living thing of your blood, not one relative have I in this wide world; and you, father, you too are alone. Let me come to live with you. Pray let me (*RG*: 182-183)!

Through these words, Rachel externalizes her deep longing for a parent-child relationship with her father in speech for the first and only time. She does not tell Thomas Gray that she loves him, but the earnest and pleading manner with which she speaks to him and articulates her selfless desire to be useful to him serves as a good indicator of her strong affection and firm determination to convince her father to accept her. The latter two are even more noticeable when considering her unexpected talkativeness. Rachel's usual shyness and her preference for being silent or for speaking little contrast with the verbosity displayed in her second conversation with her

father and suggested through enumeration ("in sickness, in age"; "I think, I hope"), repetition ("pray let me" and "come to live with you" mentioned twice) and the use of phrases expressing similar ideas (for instance, "your only child" and "the only living thing of your blood" referring to the same person). Despite all her efforts, Thomas Gray is not moved by her emotional plea and declines any help from her. Nevertheless, Rachel does not give up and some hours later she goes to his house again to make a last attempt. But finding her father insensible and almost completely paralysed, she understands that "her dream [is] over – that never, never upon earth, should she win that long hoped-for treasure – her father's love" (*RG*: 212).

Thomas Gray's sudden change in health marks the end of the first stage of Rachel's relationship with him and the beginning of the second. During this period, the protagonist primarily shows her affection for her father through her actions. The shift in the ways in which Rachel's filial love is communicated is not ascribable to the fact that, having her father near her, she thinks less of him than before, as she often reflects on their relationship. Instead, it is ascribable to the fact that, refusing to send him to the workhouse and taking him to live with her, she has the opportunity to prove her love by caring for him without expecting anything in return. In spite of the difficulties encountered, for which the external narrator sympathises with her [2], Rachel does not miss such an opportunity and looks after her helpless parent with devotion and self-sacrifice, being tender and patient with him. Thus, she spends her grey life, also hinted at by her surname, selflessly taking care of her father and thinking about "the unfulfilled desire of her heart" (*RG*: 269). Although the paternal love of Thomas Gray is not granted to Rachel, her filial devotion is rewarded in his faint flicker of recognition of her, which is nothing else than "a travesty" (Forsyth 1999: 156) of what she longs for, but which slightly brightens her dull existence. While Rachel's poor and monotonous life seems to reflect "the grim realities of existence endured by many in mid-nineteenth-century London" (Fauset 2009: 96), her totally self-sacrificial behaviour towards her father and her inexplicable, genuine love for him are unrepresentative of mid-Victorian working-class daughters, despite their general obedience to their parents, and unlikely to characterise the daughterly experience of any nineteenth-century woman (Burnett 1994: 234-235; Frost 2009: 16, 20, 24; Shoemaker 2013: 133).

Whatever the means through which the protagonist's affection for her father is revealed during these two distinct stages of their relationship, they contribute to the construction of her image as a devoted, loving

daughter. Moreover, they emphasise Thomas Gray's role as object-actant and his non-involvement in the development of a parent-child relationship with his daughter, indirectly sketching his portrait as an absent, detached father. The novel also foregrounds these two defining features of Thomas Gray's paternity through other, more explicit, ways. The external narrator illuminates the past of this character through a far-reaching external analepsis by saying that, when Rachel was still a child, her father went to America, coldly abandoning his family, and that he returned to England after three years and settled in the same city as before his departure, without going back to his family or showing any interest in his wife or children. Consequently, for a great part of his life, Thomas Gray is described as a physically and psychologically remote father, who completely abdicates all his parental responsibilities, except the responsibility to support his family with the amount of money established by the law. Even during the periods of time when he is not literally absent – namely the years before abandonment and those after he sinks into unconsciousness and paralysis strikes him –, his father image is not presented in a favourable light on account of the psychological remoteness that characterises his entire paternal experience.

Since in the course of the last stage of his life, Thomas Gray is mentally absent as a result of uncontrollable factors, it is his blank indifference to Rachel expressed while in good physical and psychological health that contributes most to his depiction as a father. The novel pays great attention to this feature of Thomas Gray's fatherhood, analeptically disclosing that he has an emotionally distant and uncaring attitude and corresponding behaviour towards his daughter from her early childhood, when he still lived with his family:

> almost from her birth she had been to him as though she did not exist – as a being who, uncalled for and unwanted, had come athwart his life. Never had he, to her knowledge, taken her in his arms, or on his knee; never had he kissed or caressed her; never addressed to her one word of fondness, or even of common kindness. Neither, it is true, had he ill-used nor ill-treated her; he felt no unnatural aversion for his own flesh and blood, nothing beyond a deep and incurable indifference (*RG*: 25-26).

In the first sentence and the last part of the third sentence of the quotation above, the external narrator-focalizer views the character from within and reports his attitude and feelings towards Rachel. It is directly stated that her existence brought Thomas Gray no joy, and that, at the same time, he

did not feel dislike or repulsion for his own child, being instead totally indifferent to her. In the second sentence, the noun phrase *to her knowledge* indicates that the narrative perspective narrows and the external narrator-focalizer "looks over the shoulder" (Bal 2009: 163) of the protagonist to show how her father's cold indifference was displayed to her through his behaviour. Thus, the focus is placed on the actions Rachel expected from her father, as proof of his parental love – which she never actually received from him –, as communicated through the absolute negation, rendered linguistically by the use of the adverb 'never', of a wide range of verbs denoting actions that convey affection (take someone in one's arms, kiss, caress, etc.) and emphasised through the use of syntactic parallelism.

After his abandonment, Thomas Gray has the same aloof attitude towards his daughter, clearly exhibited during her visits to his place. Although Rachel does not look for a concrete manifestation of her father's love anymore, hoping nonetheless to find a "shadow of kindness, [or something] which might one day become affection" (*RG*: 119), she easily understands from his facial expression and words that he is utterly indifferent to her. The accuracy of Rachel's assessment of her father's attitude towards her is confirmed during their next conversation, when he firmly rejects her request to live with him and refuses to accept any help from her. The external narrator gives no explanation for Thomas Gray's behaviour and does not enter his consciousness to reveal the reasons determining his complete lack of interest in his daughter. Therefore, the only valuable clue in this respect is provided by the character's own words. He directly tells Rachel that he has abandoned them to be alone and that he does not need to be visited, as he is perfectly healthy. Qualified as a self-absorbed and self-reliant man, Thomas Gray illustrates the self-help ideology, "a myth that *Rachel Gray* undermines and refutes" (Kestner 1985: 187-188) through his paralysis, which is "a living metaphor of dependency and, in a sense, the antithesis of 'self-help', [and] the agency through which he is forced to accept his daughter's love" (Fauset 2009: 94).

Depicting Thomas Gray as an almost completely absent father, who is utterly indifferent to his child, the novel creates a paternal image that sustains the stereotype of the absent working-class father, but that does not faithfully reproduce the socio-historical paradigm of absent fatherhood, which was one of the usual types of fatherhood among the working-class Victorian men. The stereotype of the absent father was relatively justified in the case of many working-class fathers, as parental absenteeism was frequent among the nineteenth-century lower classes (Abrams 1999: 221).

However, absent fathers were not the majority, since actual fathering behaviour was highly varied and it could not be contained within any stereotypical or prototypical image (Thompson 1988: 128-133; Strange 2015: 2). The fact that there were several common patterns of fatherhood is a good reason for considering Thomas Gray's father figure as unrepresentative of the social class to which he belongs. Another reason is that his paternal experience deviates even from absent working-class fatherhood, the type of parenting with which it has some affinity. Although absent fathers of the nineteenth-century working classes daily spent long hours away from home, they were concerned, to a greater or a lesser extent, with their children (Booth 1889 in Fried and Elman 1968: 292; Frost 2009: 14; Thompson 1988: 132, 134). In contrast, Thomas Gray is totally indifferent to his daughter and refuses to have any relationship with her. Moreover, the physical remoteness of the fictional father is determined by his abandonment of his family, which marks a significant departure from the typical parental absence of mid-Victorian working-class men, but which is a feature shared in common with the few nineteenth-century working-class men who "absconded" and were literally absent from the lives of their children (Strange 2015: 20). Still, Thomas Gray's fathering behaviour is quite particular and seemingly unlikely to represent the parental experience of any mid-nineteenth-century working-class father.

Despite the improbability that the absent paternal figure of the novel reflects the fatherhood of working-class men living during the late 1840s, it has some factual foundation in the circumstances of the writer's own life. As argued by Michael Forsyth (1999: 140-152) the actual counterpart of Thomas Gray is Morgan Kavanagh, Julia Kavanagh's father. The most important elements borrowed in *Rachel Gray* from Morgan's fatherhood are the abandonment of his family and the lack of a close relationship with his daughter. The autobiographical dimension of the parent-child relationship between Rachel and Thomas Gray is further evidenced in the similarities between Rachel and Julia Kavanagh herself. The former, like the latter, is a plain, unmarried and pious young woman, who financially supports the parent with whom she lives and who resides "in a part of London that seems very close to the milieu in which [...] Kavanagh [lived during a certain period of her life]" (Forsyth 1999: 147). It seems that these aspects drawn from the author's life, as well as the aspects which qualifies the protagonist as representative of her social class and which probably are drawn from the real-life experience of a dressmaker with whom Julia Kavanagh appears to have been closely acquainted

(Fauset 2009: 92), confirm the writer's assertion in the preface to the novel that "nothing [is invented] in the character of Rachel Gray" (*RG*: v). Nevertheless, it is particularly this combination of working-class elements and personal features of the writer, who belonged to the middle classes of Victorian society, that being used at the construction of Rachel's image as a mid-nineteenth century working-class daughter determines its departure from the corresponding socio-historical prototype.

Incorporating two atypical images of mid-Victorian working-class family roles, the parent-child relationship between Rachel and Thomas Gray is not a conventional one. Besides the fact that father-daughter connections were less frequent among the nineteenth-century working classes than the connections between parents and children of the same gender and even than those between sons and their mothers (Burnett 1994: 234-235; Frost 1999: 16; Shoemaker 2013: 133), the relationship between the novel's protagonist and her father is unusual because of its sheer lack of reciprocity, which was hardly part of the parental and filial experience of mid-nineteenth-century working-class fathers and, respectively, daughters. On one side of this relationship, there is a pious daughter, who goes beyond class-specific expectations for girls and differs from mid-Victorian working-class girls by showing selfless devotion to her parents, especially to her father, whom she dearly loves and whose affection she aspires to win. On the other side stands a coldly indifferent father, who rejects his daughter's love and whose physical, psychological and emotional remoteness, in spite of reinforcing the absent father stereotype, surpasses the stereotypical and typical parental absenteeism of nineteenth-century working-class men.

As the above contrastive analysis shows, the two fictional characters under focus, despite being "vigorously sketched, and [having] a life-like reality about them" (Jewsbury 1856: 40), do not mimetically reproduce the typical images of mid-Victorian working-class fathers and daughters. Hence, Julia Kavanagh, like other realist writers of the nineteenth century, did not aim at replicating the socio-historical paradigms of parents and children and their relationships while creating her characters and the family connections between them.

Notes

[1] All future references are made to the 1856 edition of *Rachel Gray*, digitized by Forgotten Books and available at:
<http://www.forgottenbooks.com/readbook/Rachel_Gray_1000288134>,
therefore, henceforward only the abbreviated title (*RG*) and page numbers will be given.
[2] Narratorial sympathy with the protagonist is openly expressed through the exclamation "poor girl!", repeatedly employed with reference to her (*RG* 66, 93, 117, 130), and through the frequent use of the adjective 'poor' before her name (*RG* 16, 103, 185, 214, 263).

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The Art and Politics of Rewriting. Margaret Atwood's *Historical Notes on The Handmaid's Tale*

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Abstract

Among the many frameworks of interpretation that Margaret Atwood's dystopia (or ustopia, as she calls it) The Handmaid's Tale *allows, a particularly challenging one is its reading in/as palimpsest. Choosing not to favour an attempt at hierarchizing the narrative construction and the fabula contained in Offred's spoken tale – transcribed from audiocassettes two centuries after the deployment of the Christian fundamentalist coup d'état that turned the United States into a horrifying inferno for women –, and also leaving on the sidelines the seductive, yet rather facile feminist evaluation that the novel invites, this paper focuses on metafiction and the rewriting of "herstory", in an analysis of the 'Historical Notes' that conclude the novel, going backwards rather than forwards in tracing its art and politics.*

Key words: *metafiction, rewriting, authenticity, intertextuality, canon*

Introduction

Probably the most famous novel written to date by Canadian author Margaret Atwood, *The Handmaid's Tale* (1985) has enjoyed wide critical attention since its publication, having been inscribed in the category of the 20th-century most accomplished dystopian works, next to Huxley's *Brave New World* or Orwell's *1984*. Its recent adaptation into a successful TV series, and the announcement of a sequel in 2019, *The Testaments*, which will supposedly answer some of the questions left unanswered by not one but two open-endings, alongside an increased concern with what is

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currently going on in the United States in terms of state policies and the political stance assumed by the author in the media, have brought the novel back into the limelight three decades after its publication. In this context, it is futile to insist on plot development, all the more so as its disrupted chronology and back-and-forth vacillation on the temporal axis make it rather difficult to resume. Much more interesting seems at this point, when postmodernism appears to have been replaced with 'something else', that some call post-postmodernism for lack of a better term, to try and reconstruct the subversive, postmodern deconstruction of the canon at work in this novel, from the dual perspective of the art and politics of rewriting, as the title of this presentation announces. The plot will only be outlined, contending that it might turn useful for an analysis of the metafictional practices employed throughout the text. The focus is laid on tracing these practices backwards, setting out from the addendum that concludes the novel, *Historical Notes*, which constitutes the core part of the study.

Gilead penitentiary

The Handmaid's Tale, whose title is a direct reference to the stories in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, as acknowledged in the novel (Atwood 2010: 313, henceforth *HT*), is a speculative narrative of a *possible* world taken over by religious fundamentalism. A political novel, Atwood's writing focuses on the domestic sphere which is, nevertheless, easy to extrapolate to the entire social milieu under the regime in force. "The family is 'an interior' in crisis like all other interiors" (Deleuze 1992: 4), and the Gileadean family is a space of confinement of a "carceral texture" that "allows the body to be captured and observed" (Foucault 1995: 304). By extension, the entire country is a prison, and not one that "thinking makes it so" (*Hamlet* II, 2) but a very actual one.

Though not specifically determined, *The Handmaid's Tale* is set in the near future (judging by its being written in the 1980s, it could be happening, scarily so, right about now), in what was left of the United States of America after a violent overthrow of the democratic regime and the coming to power of a group of Christian radical insurgents, known as the Sons of Jacob. The country is renamed Gilead, a name of Old Testament resonance (*Genesis* 31: 21), and its laws follow closely – and literally – precepts inspired from the same source. Women are gradually stripped of all rights – the reader finds out, in numerous flashbacks that crisscross the

narrative of the 'present' – that they have lost their bank accounts, then their jobs, their right to read, etc., prior to the current state of affairs, which has divided them into several categories: Wives, Aunts, Handmaids, Marthas, Econowives, Jezebels and Unwomen. Central to the story is the handmaids' institution, which turns fertile women with a history of unruly behaviour, according to the power in force (divorcees, women in second marriages, lesbians, etc.), into reproductive domestic assets in the houses of the potentates of the regime. The larger political and social framework is an alarmingly falling birth rate, whose apparent cause is men's infertility produced by environmental abuse. Of course, in the official narrative, there is no such thing as men's infertility: only women can be `barren'. Women find themselves in the position of being consensually raped (the oxymoron is intended) in order to breed, to give birth to children that will not be theirs. They are given a choice, as the narrator, a handmaid, stresses: "nothing is going on here that I haven't signed up for. There wasn't a lot of choice but there was some and this is what I chose" (*HT* 105). The other choices are death, deportation to 'Colonies' – a place where they would clean radioactive waste – or, as later revealed, prostitution in brothels designed for the same potentates, as "everyone's human, after all" (248). Not a lot of choice, indeed, but it still questions the ethics of the handmaids who accept, oxymoronically again, to be 'privileged sex-slaves'. The mating ritual, stripped of sexuality, yet, technically speaking, still a *ménage a trois*, is inspired from the *Book of Genesis*, as alluded to in the very first motto to the novel:

> And when Rachel saw that she bare Jacob no children, Rachel envied her sister; and said unto Jacob, Give me children, or else I die. And Jacob's anger was kindled against Rachel; and he said, Am I in God's stead, who hath withheld thee the fruit of the womb? And she said, Behold my maid Bilhah, go unto her; and she shall bear upon my knees, that I may also have children by her. (*Genesis*, 30: 1-3)

The narrator is a woman whose real name is never given, her identity being restricted to her being the property of the Commander: Offred (objectified as 'of Fred'). The text actually provides, metatextually, the explanation for this name:

> It was a patronymic, composed of the possessive preposition and the first name of the gentleman in question. Such names were taken by these women upon their entry into a connection with the household of a specific Commander, and relinquished by them upon leaving it (*HT* 318).

Her story is told in a diaristic manner, a first person narrative which focuses on the domestic aspects of life under a Christian dictatorship, which has attracted both criticism and praise for Atwood for having created a piece of *écriture féminine*, a contention that she refutes, claiming that the novel is solely about power. Aside from the 'Ceremony', the reader is fed with conversations on the weather – the only topic without subversive qualities – between women shopping and participating in celebrations together – the Prayvaganza, the Salvaging, and the birth of the children of the handmaids fortunate enough to become pregnant and go through the nine months of pregnancy. Language is constantly sterile and formulaic, limited to religious set-phrases (*Blessed be the fruit! - May the Lord open!*), but what is more interesting is that the narrator's thoughts become, at times, aligned with the doctrine, which may be surprising for someone who has not lived in totalitarianism. Though absurd, life in Gilead and the surveillance of its citizens bear strong resemblance to the 'societies of control' (Deleuze 1990) exerted by communist dictatorships, which comes to enforce Atwood's claim that everything "that happens in her novels is possible and may even have already happened" (*The Guardian* 2011).

The storyline, slow-paced and, as mentioned, often interrupted by inroads into a past mediated by memory, which serves to construct the historical framework of the events that have led to the respective state of affairs, is complemented by several intertwined subplots which seem to work together towards Offred's fleeing from the yokes that keep her and other women in this absurd religion-driven bondage. The first is an illicit love-story between Offred and Nick, the family driver and, seemingly, an agent of the regime, an Eye. Their relationship is prompted by the Commander's Wife, Serena Joy, a former televangelist who used to promote patriarchy and women's subservient role in it, and who secretly believes that her husband is unable to impregnate the handmaid. She desperately wants Offred to have a child, by whomever possible, perhaps, at least in part, to be excused herself from playing her assigned role as the biblical Rachel in the 'Ceremony'. Another one is the attempt to recruit Offred for the resistance movement known as Mayday by a fellow handmaid, Offglen, who, at some point, disappears without a trace, in a manner reminding of NKVD/KGB practices. There is also the equally illicit relationship between Offred and the Commander, which culminates with him taking her to Jezebel's, the brothel, where she meets her friend from the past, Moira, an escapee from the Red Centre for handmaids' training.

The last 'tableau' involves Offred's being arrested for "violation of state secrets" (*HT* 306), and Nick's whispering to her that the agents are actually members of the resistance come to her rescue. The closing lines play on binary opposites (end/beginning, darkness/light), advancing multiple questions and ambiguous answers rather than a dénouement proper:

> Whether this is my end or a new beginning I have no way of knowing: I have given myself over into the hands of strangers, because it can't be helped. And so I step up, into the darkness within; or else the light (307).

The Handmaid's Tale is, from the mottos page, a genuine sample of applied postmodern literary theory, which can be used as a textbook, for reasons that will be further argued. However, hardly can any part of it be more effective in subverting the canon and, implicitly, patriarchy, than the last chapter, which encourages the re-evaluation of the first 300 pages: the overt metafictional paratext *Historical Notes*, whose construction (as art of fiction) and function (as politics of fiction) will be outlined in the following section.

The art and politics of fiction in *Historical Notes*

If, while reading *The Handmaid's Tale*, one has felt that Offred's presumed interior monologue suffers from artificiality and inconsistency, pinning it to a stylistic maladroitness comparable to that of Orwell's *1984*, once reaching the *Historical Notes,* one definitely ought to reconsider. The framing narrative which concludes the novel is not meant to clarify anything, as one would expect from a postface. That would be very *un*-postmodernist of a writer so fond of transtextualities that she plays with the readers' expectations starting from the Chaucerian title and all along the novel, only to leave them wondering at the end. It is in a deconstructionist manner that she chooses to discredit the narrative that has just been delivered, all the while giving it the appearance of authenticity, vouched for by historians and by the 'omniscient' academia, as structures of power and authority.

The meta- dimension covered by prefaces and postfaces, fashionably in vogue today, has been frequently under scrutiny by literary scholars. In 1981, for instance, Derrida was asking "what do prefaces actually do?" (2004: 7), a question that he had actually responded to even before formulating it: "a preface would retrace and presage a general theory of deconstruction […], would announce in the future tense ('this is what you are going to read') the conceptual concept or significance" (6). Genette furthered the notion of authority, responding to the

deconstructionist philosopher's question by averring that prefaces were used "to ensure that the text [was] read properly" (1997: 197). But *Historical Notes on The Handmaid's Tale* is not a preface, in other words, it does not direct the reading towards a predetermined understanding of the text; quite the contrary, it entails re-reading and textual reassessment, which would, theoretically, draw it near the function of a postface. In fact, *Historical Notes* is an apocryphal, pseudo-allograph paratext similar in intention with Borges's epilogue to his *Complete Works* – "a bogus 'Borges' article in an encyclopaedia of the twenty-first century with its inevitable share of errors, both factual and judgemental" (Genette 1997: 238). It is neither a postface, nor an epilogue intended to supplement the information already delivered by the fictional text; it is, in fact, a fictional text in itself, which emphasises the fictionality of Offred's narrative and undermines the already shaken credibility of the narrator.

In essence, *Historical Notes* is "a partial transcript of the proceedings of the Twelfth Symposium on Gileadean Studies held as part of the International Historical Association Convention, which took place at the University of Denay, Nunavit, on June 25, 2195" (*HT* 311). This 'paratext of the paratext' creates the premises for mocking more than one authority – firstly history, as alleged keeper of the truth about the past, and then the academia, a patriarchal enclave, a Gilead in its own right, with its own 'laws' and claims to truth. It is unclear whether Dunay, Nunavit is, as speculated, a pun on 'deny none of it', or whether it is only intended as a mapping instrument (with Nunavut, in the Canadian Arctic Archipelago coming to mind); the wordplay would definitely add to "putting into question the authority of any act of writing by locating the discourses of both history and fiction within an ever-expanding intertextual network that mocks any notion of either single origin or simple causality" (Hutcheon 2004: 129). Is *the handmaid's tale* presented history or fiction? The conference is one of anthropology and history: convenors deliver papers on military tactic and elements of eclecticism in the state religion of Gilead. It would appear, from the first lines of this so-called transcript, that the reader should have read Offred's non-linear, disrupted account as history, and consequently, 'deny none of it', even though the text disregarded "the workings of the Gileadean empire" (*HT* 322), focusing instead on domestic life during the fundamentalist dictatorship. This New Historicist approach of looking into "private papers, newspaper clippings" (Greenblatt 2005: 27), regarding personal accounts (diaries, for instance) as representative for the wider cultural context of their production, as history, is immediately

subverted by an authoritative voice which comes to question the truth, genuineness, authenticity of the narrative discourse and, at the same time, the authority of the author/narrator of the 'source text' under the lens.

The keynote speaker, Professor James Darcy Pieixoto, is Director of "twentieth and twenty-first century archives, Cambridge University, England" (311), therefore, a respectable authority judging by his position and affiliation (as well as gender, one could add), but his presentation implies 'Problems of Authentication in Reference to *The Handmaid's Tale*' (312). In other words, the text deconstructs its own authenticity, subverting the readers' newly-found conviction that what they have read borders reality, by signalling and stressing again that it is, in fact, fiction.

As Gilead used to "discourage adverse publicity in foreign countries" (323) and destroyed the official records of the early meeting of the Sons of Jacob, the reconstruction of a past that is, as any other past, "a great darkness and filled with echoes" (324) is a problematic task for historians who are supposed to grasp history "in the clearer light of our own day" (324). Pieixoto and his colleague, Wade, are thus trying to make sense of the greater history of Gilead relying on Offred's story, which, as the former explains, turning upside down the readers' previous construing of the narrative, was rendered neither as an interior monologue 'uttered' shortly after the events narrated, nor as a piece of feminine writing (a diary), as 'the author', as he keeps calling Offred (implying construction, fictionalism, alteration of reality) did not have access to writing instruments. It was spoken discourse, uttered and tape-recorded after her escape from the Commander's house. Owing to distancing in both time and space from the events narrated, the testimony is mediated by memory and re-creation. Atwood chooses to address the eventual concerns with textual inconsistency through the voice of her secondary 'narrator', who points out, in the manner of a literary critic, that "there is a certain reflective quality about the narrative that would rule out synchronicity. It has a whiff of emotion recollected, if not in tranquillity, at least *post facto*" (315). Therefore, the text is, in the narrator's view, both subjective and uncreditable.

The fact that the historical text, "the *soi-dissant* manuscript" (312) is authored by a woman who chose to focus on her private existence instead of gathering evidence for future historians is not fortunate either, according to the authoritative, omniscient male speaker. The discourse is misogynistic. On the one hand, it abounds in sexual double-entendres (to 'enjoy' a woman, the pun on *tale/tail*, as per the latter's usage in Old and

Early Modern English, the allusion to the secondary, sexual meaning of the noun *bone* in the idiom *bone of contention*, etc.). On the other hand, the document is dismissively regarded as "crumbs" (322), pointing to the irrelevance of a woman's story on the scale of his(s)tory.

The speech is constructed along the lines of a canonicity of historical texts proper, of which Offred's account is not and cannot be a part – hence the need for 'authentication'. This term refers to the action taken by historians for proving the genuineness of a piece of historical data, so the intertextual relation established between the text and the scientific language of the field seems, at a glance, sufficient to render this re-narration more reliable than the former. Appealing to authority is also present in the speech, when experts are mentioned to have vouched for the authenticity of the recordings and medium used – the cassette (audiotape), whose use was discontinued in the 1990s, to be replaced by the compact-disk. However, this creates another (intentional, no doubt) chronological inconsistency. The tapes have been discovered in a footlocker belonging to US Army, dating from around 1955. Pieixoto grants no significance to this object, despite the fact that, being army goods, it may point, yet again, to authority and control.

More interesting, in the context of this discovery, is the music recorded on the tapes, which can recreate the cultural context of the age – the fictional pre-Gilead era, which overlaps the 1980s, i.e. the time when the novel was written. Aside from folk and classical music, there is Elvis Presley, whose sexy attitude on stage was widely criticised by conservatives, Boy George, who delivered a transsexual image and, most importantly, Twisted Sisters. The latter were a porn-rock band with a shocking image, extremely successful in 1984-1985, who were subject to an investigation in the Senate, prompted by PMRC (Parents Music Resource Center), led at that time by Tipper Gore, Al Gore's wife. The hearing was followed by the introduction of the 'parental advisory' stickers on media presumably containing indecent music, and it is considered an act of censorship of cultural products, although it is in force even nowadays. Although the hearing was held in September 1985, a date by which Atwood had already finished the novel for three months, according to her notes – "On 10 June there is a cryptic entry: Finished editing *Handmaid's Tale* last week." (*The Guardian* 2012), it is beyond doubt that the scandal around the band, alongside the rise of the Christian Right at the end of the 1970s, with their condemnation of the moral decline of America, should be read as (cultural) intertexts, as extra-textual hypotexts for the narrative of the

Gileadean era as a whole. By mentioning Twisted Sisters, the literary text goes beyond the democratisation of the novel as a product of high culture through reference to popular culture, which is common with postmodern literature: it actually metafictionally discusses its sources (and it is high time we mentioned that such a practice is not at all singular, as similar allusions also crowd the core part of the novel).

Similarly, mentioning the real, historical case of Romania, which "had anticipated Gilead in the eighties by banning all forms of birth control, imposing compulsory pregnancy tests on the female population, and linking promotion and wage increases to fertility" (*HT* 317), alongside the polygamy practised by the inhabitants of Utah in the nineteenth century, and some references to Communism and Nazism, the text points to its sources and to the intertextuality of history:

> As we know from the study of history, no new system can impose itself upon a previous one without incorporating many of the elements to be found in the latter, as witness the pagan elements in mediaeval Christianity and the evolution of the Russian KGB from the Czarist secret service that preceded it (317).

In this respect, *Historical Notes on The Handmaid's Tale* would probably allow a line-by-line analysis meant to unveil all intertextual sources, all hypotexts that support the narrative in the former part, and constitute an important device for the art of *meta*fiction employed in the latter. However, such endeavour serves no other purpose than that of an inventory, as the point has already been made, and it may be more interesting to displace the accent from art, moving it more towards politics, although the two are hard to separate in the novel architecture.

Political engagement dominates *Historical Notes on The Handmaid's Tale*. It is observable in the 'stature' of the condescending main character, in the academic rhetoric of Pieixoto's speech, in the post-truth context outlined. The professor, an 'authority' in his field, seems to start from the premise that he is bringing civilisation to the wilderness of the Arctic, which entitles him to be rude to his host, the female academic from Nunavit (Nunavut) who presides the session and gratefully introduces him: "Thank you. I am sure we all enjoyed our charming Arctic Char last night at dinner, and now we are enjoying an equally charming Arctic Chair. I use the word "enjoy" in two distinct senses, precluding, of course, the obsolete third. (*Laughter*)" (312).

It also emerges from the not-so-subtle references to "The Underground Frailroad" (313), the "whiff of emotion recollected" (315), "hypothetical occupants" (315) in view of highlighting the unreliability of the female narrator recording a voice otherwise denied her, and accordingly outlining gender politics. Likewise, the question of race is alluded to in the sections dedicated to "the age of plummeting Caucasian birth rates" (316) in Gilead as elsewhere at the time, and to the extreme measures implemented to preserve this master population. Caucasian eugenics and racial purging are mentioned in connection with the sources of inspiration for Gileadean Particicution and Salvaging politics. Ethnicity is yet another issue tackled in the passages related to the Second World War era, as well as in the comments on anti-Semitism or the horrors of "the Jewish repatriation scheme" (319) preceding the formation of Gilead. Lastly, education policies are noted – "Our big mistake was teaching them to read. We won't do that again." (320) – and totalitarianism is defined – "As the architects of Gilead knew, to institute an effective totalitarian system […] you must offer some benefits and freedoms, at least to a privileged few, in return for those you remove." (320)

The ustopia announced by Atwood (2011) and mapped in *Historical Notes on The Handmaid's Tale* thus results from the marriage of opposites, where the imagined perfect society is Gilead and its dysfunctional other is the US – historiographically represented as fiction potentially influencing reality.

Concluding lines

Though oblique, the politics advanced by Atwood is clear, as is her criticism: history is practically his story, overlooking hers; the academia is a structure of authority and control, shaping the grand narrative of who we are, in disrespect of the 'petites histoires' which go into its making; if writing is used for propaganda, re-writing works as further manipulation. *Historical Notes on The Handmaid's Tale* – the disclaimer interrogating the very nature of fact vs. fiction – brings literary art to cover political ground via Pieixoto's authenticating endeavour, which focuses on 'the commander' (Judd, Waterford – male characters based on real, documented people), not on Offred – female undocumented narrator, therefore unreal. The post-truth situation which allows multi-media discourses to construct memorable images and impose biased viewpoints by appealing to emotion rather than intellect is deliberately brought forth in association with the

notions of femininity and masculinity emphasised and personified by the characters populating the novel's universe, and in support of the subversion of the mainstream, patriarchal ideology / literary canon. In short, the typically Canadian story of survival and its protagonist – victim of accelerated Americanisation in *The Handmaid's Tale* hides a political core accessible only by pealing the successive layers of literary artifice, beginning with the ending, i.e. *Historical Notes*.

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**** *The Old Testament*, Genesis, 30-31.

The Azerbaijan Carpet Museum: A Symbol of National Identity and Heritage in a Post-Soviet Era

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Abstract

This article outlines the history and overview of the modern Azerbaijan Carpet Museum located in Baku. It explores the museum's efforts to document and educate the public about the art and cultural heritage of carpet weaving in Azerbaijan from fiber production to finished product, providing innovative approaches to curation, such has having live carpet weavers as part of the museum display. Furthermore, the article examines the role of the museum as not simply a repository for artefacts, but as a symbol for building a national identity and shared heritage among Azeri nationals in a post-Soviet Azerbaijan.

Key words: *Museums, Cultural Heritage, Post-Soviet National Identity*

The stand-alone building for the Azerbaijan Carpet Museum was inaugurated in 2014. The new building for the museum was sponsored by the Heydar Aliyev Foundation, The Ministry of Culture and Tourism of Azerbaijan and UNESCO. The shape of the building is styled like a rolled carpet and was designed by Austrian architect, Franz Jantz (Heydar Aliyev Foundation 2019).

The construction of a new building of this magnitude and intricacy marks the importance of the museum as a cultural and national symbol, further located in the heart of Baku by the Caspian Sea. With the construction of this new building, the government prioritized highlighting the cultural significance of carpet weaving for Azerbaijan, but also made a conscious choice to use this museum as a symbolic cornerstone for fostering a shared national identity and heritage centered around the tradition of Azerbaijani carpet production. The carpet styles of Azerbaijan are unique and distinct within its borders, making the carpet the perfect national symbol of common Azeri heritage and identity, standing in contrast to previously imposed notions of standardized Soviet identity

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pushed by Moscow during the years of the Soviet Union. The building of the museum itself reiterates this very statement in its shape of a carpet overlooking the Caspian Sea for all ships entering to catch a glimpse of upon approaching the shore. On the topic of modern architecture in the former Soviet states, Grant (2014: 502) writes: "Across the former USSR, one of the strongest visual indexes of all that has been wrought over the past twenty years—since socialism came to an end, and fifteen internal Soviet republics began new incarnations as independent states—has come in the dramatic transformation of urban landscapes." The Azerbaijan Carpet Museum is an example of the urban landscape transformation Grant describes and celebrates a uniquely Azeri heritage, separate of Soviet-imposed influences. Furthermore, museums are particularly positioned in a way to help promote national identity as described by Macdonald (2003: 3). She states, "Museums, already established as sites for the bringing together of significant 'culture objects', were readily appropriated as 'national' expressions of identity, and of the linked idea of 'having a history' – the collective equivalent of personal memory." Therefore, in addition to simply changing the urban landscapes that Grant describes in the countries of the former USSR, Macdonald gives an insight into the particular power museums might have within this context. They are perfectly suited to not only house "culture objects" as she states, but to draw upon and curate the idea of shared identity and history among citizens. This is important to countries that are rebuilding and redefining their own national identities in a post-Soviet era. To further stress how museums have this ability to shape national identity, Duncan (1991: 94) writes: "In all this, the work of art, now displayed as public property, becomes the means through which the relationship between the individual as citizen and the state as benefactor is enacted."

To again reuse a term from Macdonald, the carpet is the perfect "culture object" to assist in the rebuilding and redefinition of national identity and heritage in Azerbaijan within a museum. This is because, the skill and talent of Azerbaijan's carpet weavers has been documented within the literary works of Azerbaijan for centuries according to Tagiyeva (1999: 616). In particular, the beauty of Azerbaijani carpets also appears in the works of the famous writers Nizami and Khagani, further documented by Tagiyeva (1999: 617). She also continues to state that the time period of the 11th and 12th centuries during which Nizami and Khagani lived, was considered a time of an "Azerbaijan Renaissance" in relation to culture and economics (1999: 617). It is no wonder then that a culture object so highly

praised and documented from what could be seen as a country's own "Renaissance" would then be the perfect item to represent the country's re-established national identity after the years of the Soviet Union. Moreover, despite the demand for Azerbaijani carpets on the world market during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Ibrahimov writes that the generic name "Caucasian carpet" was being used to market Azerbaijani carpets, due to the fact the term "Azerbaijani" did not yet exist in the vocabulary of foreign languages and instead people from Azerbaijan were simply referred to as "Tatar" or "Muslim" by outsiders (2017: 3). Therefore, it is logical that after Azerbaijan regained its independence it would want to highlight and take credit for an item with such beauty and demand that was previously not appropriately credited to the culture and country of Azerbaijan. Ibrahimov (2017: 3) says: "[The] Carpet is a traditional ethno-cultural phenomenon and without determining its ethnic origin, it loses its phenomenon of traditional identity, historical and material value."

The Azerbaijani government clearly understood this concept when it created and opened the new building for the Azerbaijan Carpet Museum. The museum has a beautiful exterior design in the shape of a carpet and open-air interior design. The museum documents the early history of carpet weaving in Azerbaijan and its evolution to modern times. The museum also carefully identifies the signature elements that can be used to identify if a carpet is from Azerbaijan and more specifically from which region. The curation of the museum is both scientific and accessible to the general public at the same time. The museum displays its collection with Azeri and English descriptions and incorporates both analogue and digital information into explaining the exhibits, to educate both a local and foreign population visiting the museum. The museum also includes an exhibit on the production of materials for carpet weaving, which includes the raising of sheep, wool collection and plants used for dyeing the wool. This part of the museum in particular accurately educates visitors on the complete process it takes to make a genuine Azerbaijani carpet and highlights the local production of even the materials used to complete a carpet, making it a truly signature object of Azerbaijan that cannot be replicated elsewhere. Perhaps the most interesting part of the museum is the live weavers that are themselves a living part of the exhibit. Visitors can watch trained weavers in the process of making a carpet right in the museum. This particular curation choice highlights both the tangible and intangible cultural heritage that is connected to the Azerbaijani carpet and the modern cultural symbolism of carpets in contemporary Azerbaijan. Carpets are not

simply a symbol of Azerbaijan's past to be preserved, but are rather a symbol of Azerbaijan's unique and independent cultural identity that should be honored in the past, present and future.

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(De)Constructing Leadership through Ritualised Discourse

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Abstract

This study deals with the notion of leadership, envisaged broadly as the quality of a head of state to lead his people towards a common goal while conveying the image of a role-model by both his actions and statements. During his presidential term, a head of state is confronted with many institutionalised contexts where he is expected to issue an official speech. From the numerous official speeches that a president is likely to deliver, I have chosen to dwell on one of the most ritualised discursive sequences, namely the presidential greetings on New Year's Eve, in order to highlight how the presidential ethos is built through discursive and extra-discursive elements. In this context, I have taken into account the greetings of the Romanian ex-President, Traian Băsescu, from the period 2004-2013 (he was elected twice) with a view to analysing both the purely discursive devices (speech acts, appellatives, semantic content emphasized) and the extra-linguistic elements (place where the discourse is delivered, communication channel). The analysis aims at answering the following questions: Can we consider the presidential greetings and the choices made within and outside the discourse itself as indirect evidence of the diminution of the public support that the president had benefited from? Do the greetings emphasize the president's effort to adapt to his audience while maintaining the tradition of a well-established ritual?

Key words: *presidential address, discourse analysis, epideictic rhetoric, ethos*

Introduction

The present study starts with a contextualisation of presidential greetings within the category of ceremonial speeches and within the broader area of presidential rhetoric research. It also focuses on the way leadership is built through this type of presidential address. The second part provides a brief account of Traian Băsescu's evolution on the Romanian political and social scene. This part mainly deals with an analytical approach of the series of

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speeches delivered by the president on the same occasion (New Year's Eve) between 2004 and 2013 in order to highlight, in keeping with the diachronic perspective, how rhetoric is put to good use so as to "exercise power" (Windt 1986: 106) but also to adapt to the audience's expectations and beliefs.

In this paper, I am not taking any stance, nor am I expressing any judgemental point of view regarding Traian Băsescu's political office; I dwell on his ceremonial speeches from a rhetorical and linguistic perspective; the hypothesis being that the changes performed over the years in the presidential greetings in terms of both intra and extra discursive features represent a form of adapting his rhetoric to the audience, who gradually loses its confidence in the leader.

1. Constructing leadership through ceremonial speeches

According to Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, ceremonial speeches are placed within the realm of epideictic rhetoric, which generally deals with virtue and vice, and aims at praising or more rarely at criticising a person or ideas (cf. Robrieux 2012: 25). In this paper, I adopt the perspective on the epideictic rhetoric provided by Perelman and Tyteca (1992: 67), according to which the epideictic discourse is meant to increase the commitment to certain values. Drawing on Perelman and Tyteca's argumentative function of the epideictic discourse, one may state that ceremonial speeches are bound to raise and enhance the audience's commitment to a set of values that the speaker has already committed to (or presents himself as someone who has adopted them).

From awards presentations and speeches of acceptance to speeches of tribute and eulogies, ceremonial speeches are deeply rooted in the very occasion that generated the speech act, and conform, according to each and every type, to a series of constraints related to the content and its organisation, including types of speech acts to be accomplished or linguistic stereotypes to be used, duration, moment of speech.

Presidential epideictic rhetoric becomes manifest in speeches brought about by: the country's national day, opening ceremonies, commemorative events, etc. Although the primary goal of such speeches is to bring to the fore fundamental values and virtues, the president more often than not uses them "in the service of his individual image (re)construction." (Parry-Gilles & Parry-Gilles, 2000: 432) In other words, he puts to good use the entire arsenal of the epideictic rhetoric (topoi,

pathos-oriented sequences, symbols of collective identity) to craft his image as a leader who aims at binding people together due to these generally shared principles and in opposition to the well-known proverb *Divide et impera*. Successful leaders are those who allow for the enforcement of positive changes for the community, by seizing all opportunities likely to occur in society and to favour these changes. We therefore agree with George C. Edwards III (2016) who states that

> To succeed, Presidents have to evaluate the opportunities for change in their environments carefully and orchestrate existing and potential support skilfully. Successful leadership requires that the President have the commitment, resolution, resiliency, and adaptability to take full advantage of opportunities that arise (George C. Edwards III, 2016).

Presidential greetings on New Year's Eve can be ranked among the most ritualised ceremonial speeches, in the sense that their repetitive nature and identical context (the idea of a time of counting one's achievements and of settling future goals does not change, despite different social and political contexts) ensure their quasi-standardised form. This is a particular form of presidential address that the president willingly assumes as part of his duties towards the people he leads.

In the general context of the retrospective view over the year that is about to end, the president usually presents under a favourable light the accomplishments made possible due to the steady collaboration between the presidential office and the citizens. Thus, he forges the ethos of a competent and skilful leader and aims at instilling this image into people's mind by taking advantage of this festive moment when everybody is more prone to forget about negative aspects of life and focus on (future) positive matters.

By taking into account a series of greetings delivered by the American presidents George W. Bush (GB) and Barack Obama (BO), and the French presidents Jacques Chirac (JC) and Nicolas Sarkozy (NS), I am able to retrace a general model of presidential address in terms of linguistic content and its organisation, as well as in relation to the pattern of communication chosen by the speaker. The choice of dwelling upon both American and European presidential speeches is motivated, on the one hand, by the need to ground our model on representative political offices and, on the other hand, by the fact that Romania shares strategic goals (as part of both NATO and EU) with the above mentioned countries.

In this context, presidential greetings can be considered "institutional actions" which are granted symbolic value (much like decorating an official or inaugurating a building); they are largely publicised and afterwards are "valorised by means of the iconic representations of the event" (Krieg-Planque 2012: 23). Photos of the president delivering his speech (usually sitting down in front of the desk and having the national flag in the background) together with the most memorable excerpts of his discourse are published and/or commented upon in both digital and print media.

The general model of the President's New Year's Day message could be the following:

- *the salutation*: it can take the form of a standard appellative (for instance, in the French discourse the phrase "mes chers compatriotes" is frequently used) or the form of the traditional new year's greeting "happy new year";
- *the contextualisation of the speech act*: it is made either by means of a metalinguistic comment meant to explicitly highlight the type of act ("Je suis heureux d'être avec vous ce soir pour vous *souhaiter*…") or by chronologically placing the speech act ("L'année 2012 s'achève"; "At a time when we turn the page and look to the future").

Although the speech addresses the entire audience, more often than not presidents choose to particularise certain categories within the large public, whom his greetings are mainly directed to: people suffering from the loss of their dear ones in attacks, natural disasters or accidents, solders fighting to defend one country's values, as well as their families – who have to cope with the separation, people who lost their jobs or were victims of injustice.

- *the overall assessment of the year* that is about to end: it is usually made from a negative perspective (the year has been difficult, rough, witnessed the economic depression) in order to enhance the value of the government's achievements, which prove to be even more outstanding since they were performed in rough circumstances;
- *the more or less detailed presentation of the government's achievements*: this part is strategically organised so as to touch the various needs of the different categories of population - from foreign affairs aiming at the general well-being of a country (the closure of nuclear weapon programmes or the increased involvement of France in the EU policies) to social issues (marriage equality or increasing graduation rates) and to the fulfilment of basic needs (creation of jobs, investments in the health

care system). All aspects are thoughtfully approached in the speech, usually under the form of an enumeration dictated by the temporal boundaries of the speech. These accomplishments are depicted as the result of "hard work, tough choices and resilience" (GB); "je me bats pour chaque Français" (JC); "j'ai agi, c'était mon devoir" (NS), "je me suis toujours battu pour la protection de notre industrie" (NS).

- *the announcements of the objectives set for the new year*: at this point, a lot of care is given to the choice of the objectives put forward so as to make sure that the audience is sensitive to those aspects (professional training for people who need requalification, continuing reforms in the medical or the educational systems);
- *the act of thanking the citizens* for their commitment to the country's ideals and values: "thank you for making America stronger for these past eight years" (BO); "je salue les efforts des Français pour relancer la croissance économique" (NS);
- *the reiteration of the commitment* of the presidential office, of the entire government, as well as of each and every citizen to the values of the nation: equality of chances, seeking peace while protecting human rights, solidarity, secularity, "helping people around the world achieve peace and freedom" (GB);
- *the traditional final wish*: it stems from either the president himself, in the case of the French ("Du fond du cœur, je présente à chacun d'entre vous mes meilleurs vœux pour 2009" (NS); "J'adresse du fond du cœur, à chacune et à chacun d'entre vous mes vœux les plus chaleureux" (JC)), while the Americans tend to formulate the greeting on their behalf, but also on behalf of their families ("From the Obama family to yours, have a happy and blessed 2017"; "Laura joins me in sending our best wishes for a Happy New Year" (GB)).
- the speech could end with *another standardised formula*, the slogan which ensures the specificity of the nation, becoming a mark of its identity: "Vive la République! Vive la France!"; "May God bless you, and may God continue to bless the United States". (GB)

The model identified is relatively predictable in terms of content. It can vary as far as its organisation is concerned and some parts can be absent (for instance, in one of BO's speeches, there is no use of the slogan "God bless America"). Before elections, the president could take the opportunity to make a reference to the upcoming process and therefore to the audience's ability to make pertinent choices and to vote for already acknowledged candidates. For instance, in his greetings for 2011, president

N. Sarkozy drops a hint regarding the future elections of 2012, stating that France cannot afford the luxury of a year of pre-electoral stagnation and immobility. In the second part of the study, I will refer back to this general, yet not so set, model of presidential New Year's Day address in order to approach the Romanian president's speeches.

Through all their speeches and actions, presidents attempt to show themselves in a favourable light as competent leaders and role-models. Although classified as epidictic discourses, the new year's day messages cannot be envisaged apart from their indirectly persuasive effect: leaving aside the traditional greeting (whose role in binding a community together is to be considered), the discourses focus on promoting the image of a skilful leader who:

- in an overall difficult situation, takes action and performs great achievements;
- acknowledges the support of the citizens in achieving his goals;
- sympathises with people in need and strives to find solutions for them;
- in all his actions, is governed by the country's values and principles.

In the following part, I will firstly provide a brief account of Traian Băsescu's evolution on the political scene and secondly I will embark upon analysing his New Year's Day messages [1] in order to highlight the construction of the presidential ethos. We argue that these speeches, through their content and their communication context, are a form of adaptation to the audience, who had gradually lost confidence in his leadership skills.

2. Romanian President's New Year's Day speech: a rhetorical approach

Traian Băsescu was the president of Romania between 2004-2009 and 2009-2014. Prior to being elected president, he was the general mayor of the capital city, Bucharest, on behalf of the Democratic Party. Both his presidential terms were rather turbulent as he faced the risk of impeachment and suspension twice:

- the first time, in 2007, the members of the Social-Democratic Party, which was the opposition party, accused Băsescu of unconstitutional conduct and proposed him for impeachment. Although the Constitutional Court of Romania found no breach of the constitution in the president's behaviour, later that year the Parliament voted in favour

of the impeachment, which was enforced in April 2007. His temporary suspension ended in May 2007 through a national Referendum.

- the second time, in 2012, the Parliament voted for the President's suspension based on accusations such as his frequent involvement in the government's decisions or the pressure exerted on magistrates. The new national Referendum was invalidated by the Constitutional Court based on the lack of the necessary quorum (although the majority of the people who voted in the referendum, about 87%, were in favour of the suspension).

Being in turn a ship's captain, minister, party leader, mayor, Traian Băsescu became president breaking with the constitutionally enforced tradition of the president as a political mediator and inaugurating the era of the president as a player – as he proudly called himself in the attempt to forge the ethos of a president who gets involved into and even influences the decisions affecting the nation, the one who openly rejects the role of a spectator. In terms of Maingueneau's terminology (2014), we are dealing here with 'l'ethos dit' (in contrast with 'l'ethos montré'), namely what the speaker states about himself and, subsequently, what he aims at convincing the audience about. The phrase of the president-player has received a large media coverage, to the point that it became a label stuck on the president, used by opponents as a criticism, by the supporters as an essential quality in a president, and it has triggered a series of satires and parodies in Romanian entertainment programmes. The self-designation of 'president-player' also functioned as a counter-attack to his opponents who contemptibly called him 'the sailor' referring to his career before entering the political world.

> Băsescu has rarely shied away from controversy during his time in public life. His background in the merchant navy and his grasp of populist rhetoric have helped to set him apart from contemporaries who had pursued more overtly political careers under the former regime, although he has never hidden the fact that he was a Communist Party member. (Referendum Briefing No.15)

The following part will point out how the presidential ethos is built through linguistic and extralinguistic devices, and how the power of rhetoric is used to "bring messages of hope and new beginnings" (Kroes, 2012) according to the general pattern of such ceremonial addresses.

Between 2004 and 2009, Traian Băsescu chose to deliver his New Year's Day Message in front of people celebrating the event in public

squares: he deliberately left the official residence to be among the average people. The end of the speech was usually marked with the symbolic gesture of spraying champagne on the audience. The choice of this location is ethos-oriented:

- *the president = the player* who gets involved in every event that marks the national identity;
- *the president = the tradition breaker* who puts aside the largely enrooted presidential habit of addressing the nation from his official residence;
- *the president = the confident leader* who is aware of his popularity which is meant to be reinforced by the new location.

On the eve of 2005, as a newly elected president, Băsescu's speech had a mainly prospective view, focusing on the commitment to the values of the nation and setting general objectives for the future. The speech had the following overall structure:

- *the salutation*: "Happy New Year, Romania! Happy New Year, Bucharest! Happy New Year, dear folks!" The addressee is highly connected to the speech moment and the referential sphere is gradually restricted from the entire country to the city and, finally, to the people present there;
- *the contextualisation of the speech act*: "Every time, on the magical night of the New Year, a wish occurs in our thoughts";
- *the wish made to the country*:

> My wish is that of a successful Romania, a Romania where each and every child, woman and man leads a better life, a Romania where we all should be close together, solidary, strong. On New Year's Eve, I wish you health, strength, confidence in yourselves, I wish you the confidence that at the helm of the country there is a man, a President who loves you because he has the same origin as you. I want you to know that you have a strong President, a president capable of representing you, a President who loves the 22 million Romanians, plus the 6 million who are everywhere abroad. (Băsescu, 2004-2005)

It should be noticed how the discourse evolves from a wish addressed to the Romanian people (it is a rather general wish that can be applied to any nation and be pronounced by any president because of its language based on clichés) to an attempt to impose on the audience his positive individual image. The president takes advantage of this festive moment for his own rhetorical needs as he envisages himself (and we are again dealing with a spoken type of ethos, not just a discursive one) under a very favourable light.

- *the presentation of the objectives*:

> We are a strong nation, a proud nation, a nation that needs to be respected. In the years to come, together, we will make history; together, we will take the steps to join the selective club of the countries which are members of the European Union. And I want you to know that they do not do us any favour. It is our right, the right of the Romanian people, to be part of modern Europe, part of civilised Europe. (Băsescu, 2004-2005)

The strategy of putting forward the qualities of the collective identity (strong, proud, worthy of respect) is persuasive in the direction of making the audience adopt the idea that, due to the above-mentioned qualities, Romania has the right to be a member of the EU. This part adds to the prior personal image, that the president has discursively forged for himself, the image of the president as the history maker, through semantically charged words meant to help him "craft his place in the national memory" (Kiewe, 2004).

- *the ending formula*: "Happy New Year, Romania! God bless Romania! May you live well!" The last part is the slogan used during his entire campaign while running for president, a trademark which ensured Băsescu's further success in the elections.

During his first presidential term, Traian Băsescu used to prefer the context of 'mingling with the mainstream' while in office. On a stage, in front of hundreds of people, he aimed at projecting at a larger scale the familiar scenario of drinking champagne, hugging and kissing his family at midnight, constantly reminding thus that he stems from the average people. Even when celebrating, on January 1st 2017, Romania's entering the EU, the president was in University Square to celebrate the event and to make people aware that he had kept his promise. At the end of 2007, the president kept the newly installed tradition of delivering his speech in front of the crowd: he only changed the location in Bucharest, from University Square, he moved to Constitution Square. At the end of 2008, Băsescu left the capital for another famous Romanian city, Braşov, where, again in front of a large audience, he reiterated, through commissive speech acts, his faith in the country's institutions: "I can assure you that the country's institutions have the ability to make 2009 a year when we will live better", an echo of the famous slogan "May you live well!"

On December 6th 2009, Traian Băsescu was re-elected president with a percentage of a little over 50%, a first strong sign of the decrease in popularity. Later that year, Băsescu changed the location of his speech

again: his last New Year's Day speech was delivered from a famous Romanian mountain resort, Sinaia. The entire context is therefore totally different: the audience is no longer the enthusiastic crowd for whom Băsescu's presence among them was reassurance that life will definitely get better; this case shows:

- a limited physical audience (the tourists spending the winter holidays in the resort and the locals) who were pushed more by curiosity than by commitment to attend the event;
- a shadowing of the presidential status, which came as a consequence of both the president's attitude (he acted as a director of the event, by placing his wife and other members of his staff to his right on the stage and by giving himself the signal to start) and the audience's behaviour (familiar questions addressed to the president "Are you cold, Mr. President?" or unusual requests "Have a paparazzi photo taken with me!");

All of the above point not only to the violation of the official nature of the event, but also to the quasi annulment of the social function that New Year's Day Message is supposed to have. It should normally be a factor of social cohesion, as it binds people together around fully acknowledged values through people's and government's joint effort to accomplish something and to overcome difficulties.

The little concern for his individual image seems to be transparent in the discourse itself, too: no spoken ethos can be traced and the discourse is rather schematic:

- the Romanians are thanked for their implication in the elections;
- the year is assessed as a difficult one in order to highlight Romania's ability to survive tough times: "2009 has been a difficult year, a year when Romania lived the global crisis, which affected us, but did not bring us to our knees".
- the objective set for the new year, taking into account all the natural prerequisites that Romania is endowed with: "We begin a new year, a year that has to be devoted to reforming the state. We have to take advantage of all the strengths that God gave us. We have the conditions for top-performing agriculture and for successful tourism".
- the traditional greeting: "Happy New Year, dear country!"

The year 2010 marks a transition between two opposite types of approach regarding the act of delivering this ceremonial address: if, during the first term, the speeches were expected and even encouraged by a large physical audience, during the second term, the president addresses only

"target constituencies", namely those "who see the speech on television and/or the media that reports the speech." (Windt 1986: 105) The president opts for the site provided by the Presidential Administration to convey the traditional (and this time written) message to the people. When asked by the journalists why he no longer spent the New Year outside, in squares with the people, the president justified his attitude by the fact that he had no longer been invited by a city mayor. Moreover, the president added that he refused to deliver the speech from "between the flags", discrediting this type of frame as it originates from the communist tradition which was taken over by former Romanian presidents whom he again aims at distancing himself from, not only in terms of policies, but also in as far as behavioural patterns are concerned. In the following part, I dwell upon three speeches posted on the site of the Presidential Administration between 2011 and 2014. A comparative approach of the three discourses discloses the fact that the president starts his speeches with *a contextualisation of the speech act* and *the expression of the wish itself*:

> Dear Romanians, we celebrate the New Year together, and on this occasion of joy and hope I wish you health and confidence in the future. (Băsescu, 2011-2012)
> Dear Romanians, on the occasion of the New Year, I wish you health, prosperity and joy for you and your loved ones. (Băsescu, 2012-2013)
> Dear Romanians, we are welcoming a New Year, an occasion for joy and, at the same time, reflection on the time that went by. (Băsescu, 2013-2014)

- *the assessment of the year that has passed* and *the appreciation of the collective effort*; this appreciation becomes manifest at the lexical level (by the use of phrases such as 'national effort', 'overcome difficulties'), in terms of deixis (the use of the inclusive pronoun 'we'), in terms of speech acts ('I would like to thank you for'):

> Now, at the turn of the year, we can be proud that through a vast national effort we have overcome together the difficulties of 2011. (Băsescu, 2011-2012)
> It has been a year marked by political challenges, social tensions, economic difficulties. I want to thank you, first of all, for the way you knew how to remain, even during hard times, a community. This proves that our identity rises above the momentary disputes. (Băsescu, 2013-2014)

- *the particularisation of specific categories of population* among the whole nation: Romanians living abroad are mentioned in the context of the

elections won due to their votes, soldiers on duty to defend peace are brought to the fore in the frame of the consolidation of NATO alliances:

> May the New Year renew in the hearts of all the Romanians living in the country or in the communities of the diaspora, the joy, the hope and the courage to assume and fulfil the destiny of a nation meant to prosper and succeed through work in everything they have in mind. (Băsescu, 2011-2012)
> At the turn of the year, my thoughts, my gratitude go to the Romanians who live and work outside the borders, but also to the soldiers on duty in the theatres of operations. (Băsescu, 2013-2014)

- *the objectives for the new year* are presented as realistic because they stem from people's strengths and positive features:

> Romania's most important value is its people, and Romanians need, now more than ever, to know and believe that by their own strength they can create a modern and performing Romania… (Băsescu, 2011-2012)
> I have the confidence that, on this strong identity of the Romanians, we will keep on building a national project in which modernization and economic development are priorities that underpin our political actions. […] I hope that we will welcome the New Year motivated by the goals we are setting and by the strengthening of our country's status within the European Union and the North Atlantic Alliance. (Băsescu, 2013-2014)

The main impression is that the discourses are so general and ritualised that, if we take out the nouns Romania and Romanians, they can apply to any other Eastern-European country. There are only two situations which overtly disclose Băsescu's policies and politics:

- his position regarding the neighbouring country, the Republic of Moldova, as he was a fervent supporter for the latter's joining the EU:

> I also wish to congratulate the citizens of the Republic of Moldova on the important step they have taken on the path to European integration. Both Romania and Moldova belong to the European space through the language, culture and history that unite us, but also through the values and aspirations we share. (Băsescu, 2013-2014)

- his position regarding NATO (he is famous for creating, in 2005, the Bucharest-London-Washington axis aiming at strengthening the partnership with the aforementioned countries, thus stating his pro-

American stance (http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/europe/ro-foreign-relations-us.htm):

> I hope that we will welcome the New Year motivated by the goals we are setting and by the strengthening of our country's status within the European Union and the North Atlantic Alliance. (Băsescu, 2013-2014)

Conclusions

This paper has taken into account the presidential message as a particular type of ceremonial address and, therefore, inscribed within the framework of the epideictic rhetorical genre. I have firstly identified a general pattern of this message based on several discourses delivered by French and American presidents.

As far as the Romanian president's speeches are concerned, I could notice a big gap between the discourses delivered during the first term and the ones from the second term. In the first term, Traian Băsescu uses the power of rhetoric to provide an individual image of a president stemming from the people and caring for his people; the discursive ethos is enhanced by the extra discursive ethos as the president used to break with what he labelled 'communist heritage' (delivering the speech from an office having flags in the background) and celebrated New Year's Eve with the masses. The speeches of the second term no longer put emphasis on the spoken ethos, being closer to the epideictic discourses which reinforce values and the speaker's, as well as the audience's, commitment to these values. The discourses became more official (posted on the Presidential Administration) and displayed a more general scope.

The change of the communication channel triggered the change of the type of audience, from the physical audience present in the square to the audience informed via the media. The first-hand message turned into second-hand information. The change in location and content occurred mainly when a descending trend was pointed as far as the confidence of the Romanians in the president and presidential office is concerned. Facing a decrease in popularity, Băsescu preferred not to get exposed to uncomfortable moments and fall into a quasi-conventionalism that usually characterises epideictic discourses. From the rhetorical point of view, the discourses in the second term were an adaptation, in both content and situation of communication, to the audience who was gradually losing faith in the president and, at the same time, an act of self-protection: he kept on doing his duty while avoiding any contact (including the televised one) with the audience.

Note

[1] All the speeches are translated from Romanian into English by the author of this study.

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On Book to Movie Adaptations

Steluta STAN*

Abstract

Adapting full-length novels, short stories or novellas to movies has become a very frequent endeavour. Filmmakers choose (potentially) iconic literary works and adapt them for the screen so that they become accessible to very large audiences, which is to be quite expected in the digital era. This study aims to take a look at the symbiotic relationship between books and movies.

Key words: *literary text, filmic adaptation, reader, audience*

Introduction

The relationship between film and literature has existed since the beginning of cinematography, literature becoming a source of inspiration, perspective and ideas. (Corrigan 1999: 28)

A very necessary step in studying the relationship that develops between film and literature is to construe it as a historical pact that has modified throughout history. Dudley Andrew says: "the study of adaptation is tantamount to the study of the cinema as the whole". (Corrigan 1999: 7)

Debates about the mutual relationship between film and literature are still dynamic and there are many publications and intense disputes among the general public.

The value of a novel is governed by the talent of its writer, yet when the idea of a film is debated, many more factors come into play. Not only must the adaptation be managed by a competent director, a skilled script writer and talented ensemble cast, but it is also necessary to guarantee a movie's success. With that in mind, some voices claim that the film adaptation of a novel can only ever be as good as its source material. (*The Guardian,* 2011)

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Despite the fact that the financial motivations for both filmmakers and novelists are very large when we have to consider turning book to movie adaptations, one must remember that it is not always the best books that make the best films. (*The Guardian,* 2011)

A brief look into adapting novels to movies

According to American film theorist and professor Robert Stam, this kind of adaptation is a dialogic process, where various approaches coexist and are comparatively existential and relativistic in their interaction, and which stands in contrast to a dialectic process which describes the interaction and resolution between multiple paradigms or ideologies, leading to one putative solution establishing primacy over the others. (G. W. F. Hegel, internet)

In most techniques used in film adaptations, filmmakers invent new characters; key scenes are interpolated or create new stories that were not present in the source material at all. For instance, because the film studio anticipated a female audience for the film and had a famous actress for the role, her character became a significant part of the film. However, characters are also sometimes invented to provide the narrative voice. (Stam 2000)

Writer, actor and film theorist Béla Balázs wrote in his collection of essays, "Theory of the Film: Character and Growth of a New Art" what is an impressive conceptualization: "The screenplay has the capacity to approach the formal design and thematic of the literary model and represent it with a viewpoint incorporating a new aesthetic design and technology, creating thus a new artistic version." (1952: 246-247)

Moreover, he argues that film scripts are an entirely new specific literary "art form", a new entity, a different expression of artistic imagination. (1952: 252) The novel should therefore be considered as a potential base material to be fashionably remodeled by the writer of the screenplay at his will, based on an excellent knowledge of techniques and principles of this type of artistic metamorphosis.

Between 1920 and 1930, the theories of Béla Balázs proved to be of great importance to a historical perspective of the novel-to-film adaptation mechanism. It is also claimed that the literary foundation of the new art, new script, is just as much specific, independent literary form as the written stage play. (McFarlane 1996)

Consequently, even though an adaptation is built around the subject of another work, it is an entirely new creation and, despite being a new work of art, bears an obligation to some kernel of truth, similar to Eisenstein's concept of "initial general image". (Eisenstein 1957: 31)

Again in "Theory of the Film", Balázs asserts furthermore that "a film script writer adapting the play may use the existing work of art merely as raw material, regard it from the specific angle of his own art form as it were raw reality, and pay no attention to the form once already given to the material." (1952: 263) May this imply that the adaptation is a separate work, a provocation which is neither inferior to its source, nor less worthy than the original work? It may be also considered that "the crucial process of adaptation from a literary source occurs not only in the filming but also in the designing of the screenplay." (1952: 177)

A little over two decades later (1957), *Novels into Film* is published in the U.S.A., as an important and impressive critical analysis that goes a good deal beyond the limited and scholarly study suggested by its title. George Bluestone, its author and an American born film writer, offers an excellent reflection on a radical analysis of the limitations, techniques and potentialities of both novel and film by applying the useful touchstone of the changes made when the former is translated into the terms of the latter. (in Rushton and Bettinson 2010: 13)

This work of film theory analyzes the process by which novels are transformed into films. In addition to an extended theoretical analysis, he brings some kind of specific originality and examines in detail the metamorphosis of six novels into film, as follows: *The Informer* (based on Roslund & Hellström's novel, *Three Seconds*, 2009), Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*, John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*, Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, Walter Van Tilburg Clark's *The Ox-Bow Incident* (a 1943 American western film), which are excellent novels resulting in fantastic films, and finally the sixth one, Flaubert's *Madame Bovary*, a classic novel that was slaughtered in adaptation, according to analysts. The main analysis technique is the focus on the additions, deletions and other changes made by filmmakers in adapting the source material for the screen.

Bluestone draws attention upon the similarity of the remarks at the start of his study titled "The Two Ways of Seeing", suggesting that "between the percept of the visual image and the concept of the mental image lies the root difference between the two media." (1961: 1) In this way he admits the strong connection of "seeing" in his use of the word "image". In the same time, he outlines the fundamental difference between the way images are

produced in the two media and how they are perceived. Moreover, he acknowledges that "conceptual images evoked by verbal stimuli can barely be distinguished in the end from those evoked by non-verbal stimuli' and, in this respect, he shares common ground with several other writers concerned to establish links between the two media." (1961: 47)

In Bluestone's opinion, a successful screenwriter in adaptation must fully understand the limitation of the film medium and make a serious adjustment to a set of different and other conflicting conventions that have historically distinguished literature from the autonomous entities. (1961: 55) An adaptation, therefore, is a type of raw material that paraphrases thematic content and must link these conflicting conventions. (1961: 31) It would be misconstruing this conflict, however, to say that it is entirely external, a battle of opposing forces. The conflict is also strong inside the head of the average consumer. This is because the basic act of adaptation has a dilemma at its heart. If an adaptation can maintain fidelity to the original, it will be criticized for being unoriginal. If, conversely, it attempts to interpret the earlier work or provide a new twist, it will be criticized for violating the integrity of the original. (Hollands 2002: 2)

Important elements, such as new characters, key incidents, interpolation of scenes and thematic representative aspects, become essential qualities for the film bringing authenticity. In the language of fidelity, literature and film are never equal; texts are always judged differently and in a fewer extent in comparison to other art forms, particularly in films, and only the adaptation is capable of being "unfaithful" to the text. (Stam 2000: 205)

An extraordinary concept was raised when Bluestone concludes with a premise that "the adapter thus becomes a true author, not a mere translator of someone else's work." (1961: 62) The film adaptation will inevitably become a different artistic entity from the novel which it is based on. Consequently, to a thoroughly documented work based on both in-depth research into film archives and libraries and on interviews with the screenwriters, directors and producers who worked on these films as well, the *Novels into Film* conclude that because the novel lends itself to states of consciousness and the film to the observed reality, the adaptation of one from the another produces a new and complete autonomous art form. (1961: 6)

The epicentre of Bluestone's central thesis is that the adapter "looks not to the organic novel whose language is inseparable from its theme, but to characters and incidents which somehow have detached themselves from language, and like the heroes of folk legends have assumed a

mythical life of their own." (1961: 61) He goes even a little beyond the ordinary frame work in saying much more as a figure of speech that a novel cannot be compared as much of the same critical level to the film into which it was made, for the transformation of a great novel is not particularly excused by the differences in media. (1961: 59)

The modern novel characteristically deals with time and the complexities of interior motivation; the film, on the other hand, basically unequipped to render these effectively, finds its forte in rendering motion and action. Both its external quality and the unfortunate compression rate required by a maximum viewing time, determine the limit of the film.

A novel, for instance, can easily take around forty hours to be read and can indulge in the luxury of leisurely expression, whereas the movie is at the mercy of the speeding celluloid that cannot turn back, replaced or diverge. The novel can give pages to the description of minutes and skip over years in a sentence, while a film can dismiss time and it cannot expand it or hold it back to examine it in many facets.

Perhaps the most important part of the book is the highly compact and difficult to understand discussion of the nature of time in the two media and the difference between "psychological" and "chronological" time.

The foundation of formal difference is that literature and film have different signifying systems. Novels deal with words, films with images. Nevertheless, films are also limited: for one thing, there are no time constraints on a novel, while a film usually must compress events into two hours or so. This is the second formal difference between novel and film. While pictures greatly condense descriptions, a paragraph of sequential events can take several minutes to portray on screen. For instance, the 2002 adaptation of *David Copperfield* compresses a novel of 800 pages into just 180 minutes of feature-length film. On the other hand, the meaning of a novel is controlled by only one person, the author, while the meaning we get from a film is the result of a collaborative effort of many people. Film also does not let us the same freedom a novel does - to connect with the plot or characters by imagining them in our minds, which, for many film consumers can be very frustrating. Also, the film has a certain unity of expression that the discrete quality of language – subject, verb, and object – denies to the novel. Finally, the non-verbal experience cannot be conveyed by language. There are times when "a picture is worth more than a thousand words" (Flanders 1911: 18), without wearing subtitling or any other description.

Obviously, adapting a novel into a screenplay is not just a matter of extracting dialogue from the pages of a book. Maybe, the major difference between films and books is that visual images stimulate our perceptions directly, while written words can do this indirectly. Reading the word *chair* requires a kind of mental "translation" that viewing a picture of a chair does not. Film is a more direct sensorial experience than reading-besides verbal language, there is also colour, movement, expression and sound.

Consequently, the film script is a completed art form, which is exactly what Béla Balázs suggested in "Theory of the film." (1952: 253) One author writes the book and one reader reads the book one at a time. If it is an excellent book, many people, even millions will read that book with so much eagerness. While each reader will see the story through their own imagination and personal interpretation, the printed words will never change. Very few people will ever read the original screenplay. The screenplay will enhance with input from collaborations between the director and the creative team, from pre- to post-production. The screenplay is a fluid and continuously improving referencing document.

Movies based on books. A form of authentic-to-text or successful transformation?

We know already that writing a screenplay is not like writing a book. This transformation involves many challenges. If we start with a definition of screenplay, a screenplay, or script, is a written work by screenwriters for a film in our case. These screenplays can be original works or adaptations from existing novels. A screenplay for a film is an instrument or blueprint by which words are transformed, by a collaborative effort, into images and sound in film. (English 2002)

While the writer of the screenplay and the creators of the film analyze the changes made to adapt a novel, it is quite clear that they are in a big dilemma. On the one hand they certainly want their film to be as authentic to the novel as possible, but at the same time everyone wants the movie to be successful.

It is therefore not easy to engineer the screenplay to meet both criteria, and the final result of the filmmakers is not very well balanced out. It shows that the wish for success dominates the authenticity to a certain degree. This can be seen in the many changes that have only been made to the appearance of characters, the look of landscapes, and the use of new special effects. In many cases, however, the conversions are justified, for

they do not basically interfere with the action of the novel. Screenplays hardly run longer than 120 pages. Figuring one page of a screenplay is equivalent to one minute of film, a 120-page screenplay translates into a two-hour motion picture. If the source material has 400 pages to tell the story, how could it be possible to tell the same story in 110 pages, the ideal length for a screenplay by today's industry standards?

Some screenwriters look to capture the substance and spirit of the story while others do not. Some determine the through-line and major sub-plot of the story and then viciously cut everything else. 'Through-line' here means WHO (protagonist) wants WHAT (goal), and WHO (antagonist) or WHAT (some other force) opposes him or her?

No one can blame a director or a producer for the wish for some beautiful-looking scenes in their movie. Their goal is to excerpt the most memorable parts of the novel. The goal of these transformations is clear as well: The public is to be emotionally implicated in the same way they can enjoy the many extraordinary - looking scenes.

Music, on the other hand, has a great power in the success of the film. The founder of the Moondance International Film Festival and competition, Elizabeth English, explains that it needs 30 to 40 minutes of music, one of the most important elements in a film, which can be artfully used to arouse, to manipulate, to frighten, or to soothe and calm, to aid in transitions, to punctuate, to comment, to move plot along, to focus, to add sense of continuity, to add information, to heighten tempo, add dramatic tension, to change mood, to add character and to define, as well as to add dimension and give the film new or different meaning. All those elements that make the world of the film believable to the audience: set design, lighting, sound, special FX, continuity, locations, props, extras, stunts, costumes, hair and makeup, music. Most screenwriters and filmmakers are just trying to keep one step ahead of whatever it is they think the audience is going to pay to see. (English 2002)

Finally, it cannot be said in all honesty that films are better than the books they are based on; they can often both evoke quite similar emotions and experiences but go about doing so with much different executions. In fact, movies often inspire viewers to seek out their source materials. William Goldman replies in the three words that ultimately define Hollywood: "Nobody... knows... anything!" (English 2002)

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The Rhetoric of Geopolitical Fiction in Churchill's Iron Curtain Speech

Florian Andrei VLAD*

Abstract

An examination of the power of words, of the realm shared by fiction, poetry and political discourse, brings us to one of the most important common points linking the language of literature and its rhetoric, on the one hand, and the rhetoric of political discourse on the other: the consistent use of figurative language to appeal to the feelings of audiences. Most people would think, whether rightly or wrongly, of politics as relatively impure and manipulative and of literary language as elevated and enlightening. The emphasis in this text, a reconsideration of Churchill's famous "Iron Curtain Speech," is not on the evaluation of the quality of the literary and political discourses, but on the devices used in the public space that heavily rely on what one usually calls fictional, literary, even poetical devices to create "extra-literary" effects.

Key words: *rhetoric, geopolitics, the Cold War, the special relationship, the Iron Curtain*

From the very title, this paper appears to mix up apparently unrelated fields. Only apparently. *The Rhetoric of Fiction* by Wayne C. Booth is one of those "oldies but goldies" that scholars considered to have remained behind the times might still remember with nostalgia. Others might still find its relevance today in more ways than one. In his 1961 volume (referred to in the current text in its 2nd edition, 1983), Wayne C. Booth adopts an attitude which still carries a lot of weight today. Literary studies involve much more than the mere, relatively context-free reading and interpretation of essentially "literary" texts, having to do with a network of relations, voices and rhetorical dimensions in a very broad sense. The rhetorical dimension of literary studies has also been long acknowledged and is still to be reckoned with.

The first connection, and if it had been the only one, hardly convincing, is that between geopolitics and literary studies as far from "pure" fields of investigation. They are both "tainted" by power and

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ideological confrontations. O Tuathail stresses the "lack of innocence" of geopolitics: "Often assumed to be innocent, the geography of the world is not a product of nature but a product of histories of struggle between competing authorities over the power to organize, occupy, and administer space" (O Tuathail 2005: 1). Although Booth had most likely not intended it as political, his rhetoric involves a variety of competing narrative voices, more or less reliable, struggling to convince, to persuade, to occupy and administer fictional space in order to create powerful effects on readers, themselves part and parcel of the complex process of literary communication and negotiation. In addition, Booth also questions, from the title of the first section of his volume [1], the purity of the realm he is charting with a very lucid mind, but also mindful of the power of words to create special effects as mediated by a variety of more or less deeply involved narrative voices. He is also aware that one can hardly draw a line between fictional and poetic language, both using similar devices to address their audience. And so, as it will become apparent, does (geo) political language, in which metaphorical language and repetitive devices work to create special effects on its target audience.

Discussions of the power of words, of the ground shared by fiction, poetry and political discourse, bring us to one of the most important common points linking the language of literature and its rhetoric on the one hand and the rhetoric of political discourse on the other: the consistent use of figurative language to appeal to the feelings of audiences. Some people, especially lovers of literature, might disapprove of such a connection. Most mortals would think, whether rightly or wrongly, of politics as relatively impure and manipulative and of literary language as elevated and enlightening. The emphasis in this text is not on the evaluation of the quality of the literary and political discourses, but on the devices used in the public space that heavily rely on what one usually calls fictional, literary, even poetical devices. Several other important common points will be invoked in what is to follow.

The text under study in this paper is the speech delivered by Sir Winston Churchill on March 5th, 1946, while on a visit to the United States. Churchill is no longer Britain's PM, but only a member of the Tory opposition to the then Labour government. However, Churchill is still an immensely influential figure, both at home and in America. The speech is known under two different names, both of them heavily dependent on metaphoric language. In addition to the one mentioned in the title of this paper, "The Iron Curtain Speech," the other one, "The Sinews of Peace,"

deserves special consideration. The two will be dealt with in the complex framework provided by the "rhetoric of geopolitical fiction" as it will unfold in the subsequent sections of this paper.

Some might think that the title must be tackled first, as it sheds light on the text proper, sometimes describing it in earnest, sometimes ironically. In this rhetorical approach to the language of Sir Winston Churchill, the context is just as important as any other part of the complex pattern. In the language of fiction, the concept of setting refers to the space, time, and cultural coordinates of a narrative, thus proving the necessary frame in which the horizons of expectations of the various subjects involved in understanding, interpretation and communication tend to overlap or even coincide. Something similar happens in geopolitics, where both the "literature context", the cartographic mapping of the world, and the specific time and space coordinates of one particular speech are to be considered.

By the so-called "literature context" that was mentioned above one may refer to the immediate environment of geopolitical material that had come to prominence before the text under study here, in its turn, emerged in the public sphere. The most significant "geopolitical literature" of the immediate context was George Kennan's February 1946 "Long Telegram," also known under the title of "The Sources of Soviet Conduct." It will soon be seen as supplying a basis for America's new foreign policy. From his experience as diplomat stationed at the American Embassy since 1944, Kennan writes the text that would first spell out the metaphorical term defining his country's geopolitical attitude and behavior toward Soviet Russia: *containment*. Considering the circumstances of what would soon be called the Cold War, Kennan advises the State Department that "the main element of any United States policy toward the Soviet Union must be that of a long-term, patient but firm and vigilant containment of Russian expansive tendencies" (Kennan 2003: 63). Those who are familiar with geopolitical developments of the Cold War may take the term containment for granted, but initially it has to be seen with its strong metaphorical load: Communism is a dangerous contagious disease, very much like the non-metaphorical plague, which may spread and contaminate whole areas of the world. The politics of containment will thus try to contain the disease by a series of *cordons sanitaires* rather than facing Communism in direct military confrontations, the unwise way to go about it in a post-war age where the whole world wants to sigh more than a sigh of relief for at least one generation.

The "extra-literature context" was becoming obvious for the American side, especially after the realization that the important Eastern ally was busy working, expanding its sphere of influence by far from orthodox means. The realization that what was doing a former ally in Eastern Europe and elsewhere in the world looked like a contagious disease was gradually coming home to roost, so to speak. This is the geopolitical context in which Churchill's historic speech is to be placed.

The more concrete, physical geographical context in which the "Iron Curtain Speech" is to be considered and interpreted is March 5th, 1946, Fulton, Missouri. Significantly enough, the American university at Fulton, Missouri, where the former British prime minister is to be awarded an honorary degree, is called Westminster College. In his *Rhetoric of Fiction*, Booth critically engages with a number of statements made about literary communication. One of them features prominently in the fourth section of Part One, "True Art Ignores the Audience" (Booth 1983: 89-118). Booth is aware that literary art and its rhetoric do not ignore the audience, on the contrary, it imagines it and addresses it. So does an orator like Churchill in his famous speech. He successfully establishes contact and closeness with his audience: both himself, a British individual, and the American academics and students listening to him have a connection with "Westminster." One "Westminster" is linked to the Houses of Parliament, where Churchill worked as a prominent MP and then as prime minister. The other "Westminster" is Churchill's audience's site of learning. They have a lot in common: not only the same language, but also a place bearing the same name. The closeness is enhanced by a sense of humor which is bound to reduce distance even further:

> The name "Westminster" somehow or other seems familiar to me. I feel as if I'd heard of it before. Indeed, now that I come to think of it, it was at Westminster that I received a very large part of my education in politics, dialectic, rhetoric, and one or two other things. So in fact we have both been educated at the same, or similar, or, at any rate, kindred establishments (Churchill 2018: 1).

Captatio benevolentiae by a seasoned orator like Churchill also involves almost exaggerated modesty. The speaker defines himself as a private visitor. In one particular sense he is to be seen as such. At that particular moment, Churchill, at the venerable age of 80, is at the end of a remarkable political career. His rise to fame was linked to him realizing, among a minority of British politicians, the Nazi threat in the 1930s. His

"finest hour" had been his heroic stance against Hitler's *Festung Europa* during World War II. After the war, his party had lost the elections. His "private visitor" status goes with his less prominent public position: he is the head of the Tory opposition in the British Parliament. His more than private visitor status is, however, far more prominent: he stands for history as History, representing the last heroic episode in the story of the British Empire. In Fulton, he acknowledges being introduced to a distinguished academic audience by the President of the United States himself. What is more, he stresses the fact that the US president has allowed him to express himself freely "in anxious and baffling times." Once again, the baffling times have already been dealt with in Kennan's previously mentioned "Long Telegram." Churchill uses it as a steppingstone for his own historic and historical account of those special times, in which he represents his own state entity, still an empire, as a partner worth listening to in the above-mentioned "anxious and baffling times." The new hegemon has a very special ally, one featured in the special relationship.

It is interesting to note that major geopolitical theorists, such as Immanuel Wallerstein and George Modelski, as Colin Flint notes (2006: 39), see World War I and World War II as one episode in a confrontation that decides the next hegemon (Wallerstein) or the next world leader (Modelski). However, this dramatic change is not represented in the special relationship narrative as a competition between the old leader (the British Empire) and the new leader/superpower (the US). On the contrary, unlike in Modelski's model, the challengers are, in quick succession, the enemy in World War II, and then the previous ally, Stalin's Russia, in George Kennan's and Churchill's geopolitical representations and statements. Since representations, not only realities, play an important part in geopolitics, Churchill's text as major representation shares a lot with other representations, such as major fictional texts, following a similar rhetoric (hence, once again, the title of this article). Like in Wayne C. Booth rhetoric of fiction, the narrative voice in the geopolitical text (one can see Churchill here as both author and narrator) has to convey "the intensity of realistic illusion"(see Booth 1983: 40-49), giving the impression of "objectivity"(Booth 1983: 67-80), while at the same time resorting to figurative language to combine intensity and vividness, in order to persuade the audience, thus "manipulating mood"(Booth 1983: 200-204), while giving the impression that reason is appealed to.

Coming back to the figurative load of the two titles of Churchill's piece of geopolitical oratory, "The Iron Curtain Speech" and "The Sinews

of Peace Speech," one can easily see two apparently distinct ways of representing the geopolitical model and its components. The first metaphorical representation features an arresting geopolitical combination of images. The first image associated with the iron curtain will appear later in the speech. It is the shadow which has just fallen over the world (basically, in a naturally Eurocentric view on the part of the speaker) over a large section of Europe. The shadow prevents the West from seeing what is going on in that shady area controlled by Soviet Russia:

> A shadow has fallen upon the scenes so lately lighted by the Allied victory. Nobody knows what Soviet Russia and its Communist international organisation intends to do in the immediate future, or what are the limits, if any, to their expansive and proselytising tendencies (Churchill 2018: 13).

There follows a second image, evoking the rise of the dramatic division between the free West and the totalitarian, Communist East: not a light, usually semi-transparent curtain, easy to draw aside in order to look out of the window, but a heavy, oppressive, impenetrable "iron curtain." Behind it lies the newly established Soviet sphere of influence in a new geopolitical configuration in which the former ally is the challenger, the antagonist, possibly the enemy in foreseeable confrontations, hot or cold. The representation is, again, highly dramatic and ominous, after the previous figurative foreshadowing (another important term usually referring to literary narratives) of terrible villains in the metaphorical, allegorical shape of "two marauders, war and tyranny" (2018: 8), threatening the "temple of peace" (2018: 9). And then, after the fall of the shadow, after the impending threats posed by the allegorical figures of war and tyranny as War and Tyranny to the Temple of Peace, Churchill adds the most often invoked sequence of his iron curtain speech:

> From Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic, an iron curtain has descended across the Continent. Behind that line lie all the capitals of the ancient states of Central and Eastern Europe. Warsaw, Berlin, Prague, Vienna, Budapest, Belgrade, Bucharest and Sofia, all these famous cities and the populations around them lie in what I must call the Soviet sphere, and all are subject in one form or another, not only to Soviet influence but to a very high and, in many cases, increasing measure of control from Moscow (Churchill 2018: 13-14).

The second title of the speech, an equally metaphorical representation, featuring "the sinews of peace," is a much nicer way to

rephrase American President Theodore Roosevelt's famous words, "speak softly and carry a big stick." Allegorical representations of peace may consist of white doves or vestals dressed in white, long flowing dresses. Even in Churchill's speech, something similar, the image of the above-mentioned Temple of Peace occurs more than once. However, the "sinews" here announce that the global context urges the new geopolitical leader, the US, and its ally, seen as a friend in a special relationship, to be able to flex their military muscles in the new age of containment, which will soon be called the Cold War.

What is more, even "our Russian friends and Allies during the war" seem to admire the show of power, rather than expressions of weakness, thus inviting their former allies, the Americans and the Brits, to prove that they are strong. In other words, Churchill seems to be saying that "The Russians are asking for it": "From what I have seen of our Russian friends and Allies during the war, I am convinced that there is nothing they admire so much as strength, and there is nothing for which they have less respect than for weakness, especially military weakness." (16) Again, Churchill appears to use an attitude examined by Wayne C. Booth in his *Rhetoric of Fiction* in order to heighten the significance of events in a narrative. He notes that "Commentary about the moral and intellectual qualities of characters always affects our view of the events in which those characters act." (Booth 1983: 196)

Apparently praising "our Russian friends," who appear to admire strength, and despise weakness, Churchill stresses the importance of a show of strength for both allies and potential opponents. He thus heightens the realization of the significance of his proposal. As a result of that realization, Churchill thinks that "the old doctrine of a balance of power is unsound. We cannot afford, if we can help it, to work on narrow margins, offering temptations to a trial of strength" (2018: 16). In other words, if America had played its pre-World War I geopolitical game in terms of the traditional balance of power that European countries had played previously, in the new post-World War II configuration Britain's partner in the special relationship was urged to play its overwhelming hegemonic role. America was invited to do it in strict alliance with the Western world under the overall authority of the new United Nations Organization.

Soviet Russia, like Nazi Germany previously, should not be tempted to challenge the new unipolar world order. In order to achieve this, Churchill urges the new hegemon to assume its world order

responsibilities in the company of the democratic, peace-loving forces standing firmly west of the newly erected Iron Curtain. They have to flex their military muscles and show their strength, so that everyone can see, especially the rival great power, "the sinews of peace," thus avoiding a hot war military confrontation. In this new geopolitical axis (Churchill does not use that word, as it has negative connotations after the war), Churchill claims that the pivotal positions should be assumed by the English-speaking peoples. By that he implies that America should rely on Britain and the British Commonwealth more than on any other freedom-loving, democratic country not sharing the common Anglo-Saxon culture. The special relationship includes two great powers, America and the still standing British Empire as the new hegemon's most reliable partner, the two being seen by Churchill as the sole guarantors of the world's postwar security:

> Neither the sure prevention of war, nor the continuous rise of world organization will be gained without what I have called the fraternal association of the English-speaking peoples. This means a special relationship between the British Commonwealth and Empire and the United States of America (Churchill 2018: 11).

In support of a geopolitical move based on an English-speaking fraternal association, Churchill significantly mentions that the US has already made a Permanent Defense Agreement with Britain's Dominion of Canada. Canada is us, the British Empire, Churchill seems to imply. It is a country which is, he chooses to explicitly claim, "devotedly attached to the British Commonwealth and Empire" (Churchill 2018: 12). In the early stages of the still problematic, post-American War of Independence (from 1783 onwards), Canada, still under the sovereign rule of the British monarch, had been a security threat for the new American state. In traditional geopolitical vision, an emerging power must avoid the neighbourhood of competing powers. Canada is thus a link, rather than a threat, and the still vast British Commonwealth and Empire (it is 1946) constitutes a special partner a special geopolitical relationship, the message clearly states.

As if to remind the Americans that seapower had been a defining feature in history, and that Britain still controls the world's oceans and counts as a world power, Churchill mentions both its centuries-old, still unbroken pact with the oldest European seapower, Portugal [2] (dating back to 1384) and, very significantly, the Treaty of Collaboration and

Mutual Assistance with Soviet Russia, almost fifteen years old. To please his "Russian friends" but also to show the Americans Britain's international role, Churchill reassuringly adds that the British – Soviet treaty of alliance "might well be a fifty years' Treaty so far as we are concerned" (Churchill 2018: 7).

"Heightening the significance of events," the previously-mentioned strategy Booth discusses in his *Rhetoric of Fiction*, stressing the moral and intellectual traits of characters to create stronger, special effects is consistently used by Churchill. The main aim is not to praise the various "friends," but to show the Americans how important Britain is in the "special relationship" which he is defining in this speech, both "literary" and geopolitical. This strategy is used by Churchill, while praising France, to settle his accounts with General de Gaulle and to draw attention to France as a weak link in the emerging Western alliance, in contrast to Britain, a reliable partner. First he praises de Gaulle, the most important rival within the Western alliance, then he goes on to say:

> All my public life I have worked for a strong France and I never lost faith in her destiny, even in the darkest hours. I will not lose faith now. However, in a great number of countries, far from the Russian frontiers and throughout the world, Communist fifth columns are established and work in complete unity and absolute obedience to the directions they receive from the Communist center (Churchill 2018: 10).

What is the connection between the first sentence in the quote above and the following "However, in a great number of countries, far from the Russian frontiers…"? Obviously, France is one of them, which, like Italy or Greece, appears to be vulnerable to Soviet influence, and in which the Communists will be very influential for several decades. Which only goes on to stress the importance of the special relationship as the new geopolitical axis, around which more vulnerable countries should rally. As a matter of fact, de Gaulle's special position in the following years would affect the problematic geopolitical configurations in which French-British and French-American relations would be very important.

The main aim of Churchill's speech appears to highlight the strategic special relationship between a previous hegemon and the emerging one, linked by the English language and by strong cultural bonds. However, this special relationship, he does not miss to stress at the end of his speech, is meant to serve to pave, as the best expression of International Relations liberalism/idealism, "the high roads of the future"

for what he believes to be the general welfare and security of the world within the broader framework of the United Nations. If this succeeds,

> … there will be an overwhelming assurance of security. If we adhere faithfully to the Charter of the United Nations and walk forward in sedate and sober strength seeking no one's land or treasure, seeking to lay no arbitrary control upon the thoughts of men; if all British moral and material forces and convictions are joined with your own in fraternal association, the high- roads of the future will be clear, not only for us but for all, not only for our time, but for a century to come (Churchill 2018: 17).

Churchill's rhetoric as convincingly expressed in this classic geopolitical speech is a remarkable illustration of the combined effect of the discourse of International Relations liberalism (his remarkable oratorical skills evoke values and ideals, the strict adherence to the principles of the United Nations Charter) and of International Relations realism as a lucid, rational understanding of the geopolitical needs and self-interests of emerging empires and of the means of checking challengers and adversaries by a show of force. An understanding of how the text as rhetoric works obviously involves the whole array of voices, geopolitical actors, more or less friendly, regional and global contexts. It is what Wayne C. Booth, with no apparent interest in geopolitics, advocates for the understanding of the literary text in its complexity at a time "when too much criticism, pursuing 'autonomy,' floats off into the Great Inane, with never a reference to anything but its own concept-spinning" (xii). The importance of context, as well of rhetoric in all its senses, both in Aristotle's and in Booth's sense, is what Churchill appears to be aware of in his highly "literary" geopolitical speech. It is hardly surprising that 6 years later he would be awarded the Nobel Prize for… literature.

Notes

[1] Artistic Purity and the Rhetoric of Fiction.
[2] Referring to the four world seapowers since 1494 (Portugal, the Netherlands, Great Britain and the US), Modelski considers the first of them the most controversial one (Modelski 1988: 186). However, in Churchill's geopolitical narrative, Portugal is the one which initiates the centuries-old geopolitical pattern based on seapower supremacy.

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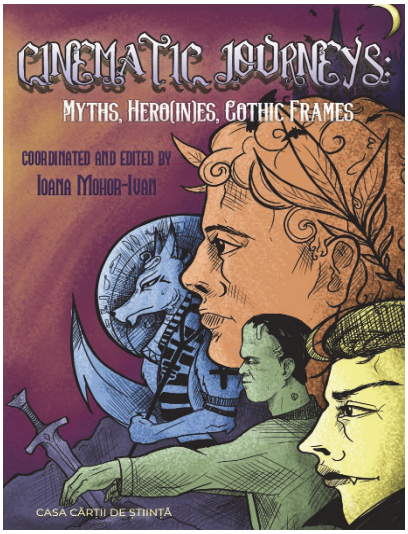

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In an era when teaching and scholarship are increasingly interdisciplinary, the subject of film studies has come to be recognized as a field in its own right; more than that, it expands and thrives, attracting fresh ideas and research. Although the Film & Literature Studies has been a part of MA curriculum in the Faculty of Letters, Dunarea de Jos University, Galati, Romania, for a little more than two years, a handful of postgraduate students have already come up with a collection of essays under the supervision of Professor Ioana Mohor-Ivan.

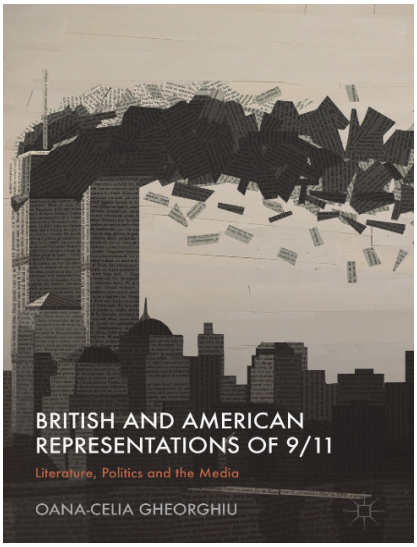
The first part of the volume features essays on representations of ancient (Egyptian, Roman-Greek), medieval (Irish, English), and 19th century myths; contributors then examine various heroes and heroines in older or more recent films, some of them with an interdisciplinary approach, analyzing the "journeys" from page to screen; the third part focuses on the influence Gothic fiction has had on contemporary cinema; the volume closes with two essays discussing the opportunities and challenges presented by film posters.

While essay-writing can be intimidating or frustrating, it can be both interesting and achievable, particularly when students are free to choose their topics. The essays in this volume are a case in point. Using elements taken from the humanities (religion, philosophy, history) and the social sciences (sociology, psychology, anthropology), the authors move

casually within rhetorical and literary analyses, building their arguments on secondary and primary source research, ultimately proving they are careful and conscientious readers of other texts. They do go beyond summary and become agents of interpretation, with a good command of inductive and deductive reasoning, which is expected from an academic discourse, alongside proficiency in organization and a proper tone.

For students, essay-writing is an opportunity to grow, to stretch their minds, to develop their original ideas, and to find out what other researchers have written about a topic. Thus, they can see that academic inquiry never stands still and that they can move the boundaries of knowledge in any imaginable direction once they have become active participants in their chosen fields. Above all, the goal of essay-writing is to turn students into better readers, writers and communicators in real-life situations which can be academic, professional, or personal.

Good writing is more a consequence of hard work than genius, and this collection of essays is a solid example of what hard work and enthusiasm from both students and professors can do.



Oana-Celia Gheorghiu. 2018. *British and American Representations of 9/11. Literature, Politics and the Media*. Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, ISBN 978-3-319-75250-1, 269 pp.

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> *"I contend that the events of 9/11, whose traumatic implications cannot be denied, are relevant for the United States' historical self-assessment. Their displacement from the streets of Manhattan to* ***Fiction Avenue*** *is bound to provide the critic with an array of evaluation tools more relevant to the political "ways of the world", instead of settling for psychological insights into the thoughts and sensations experienced by immediate witnesses of the catastrophe" (Gheorghiu 2018: 4).*

Oana-Celia Gheorghiu is a Lecturer PhD at "Dunărea de Jos" University of Galaţi, where she teaches translation courses, British Culture and Civilisation and Cultural Representations in the Anglophone Space. Oana-Celia Gheorghiu holds a doctorate degree in English and American Literature (2016) and an M.A. diploma in Translation Studies (2013). Author of more than 20 translations (especially of contemporary fiction), Oana-Celia Gheorghiu proposes, through her book published with the renowned Palgrave Macmillan, a transposition in Anglo-American literature of the event that not only did mark the history of the United States of America, but also the history of the world after 2001: the attacks on the World Trade Center.

The titles that the author tackles from different perspectives, but which are bound by the same real story (or fictionalized reality, as she puts

it) belong to American (Don DeLillo and Amy Waldman) and British writers (Iain Banks, Ian McEwan, Martin Amis and David Hare). A special case is that of Mohsin Hamid, a Pakistani author who lived in both the US and UK and holds British citizenship. The book is based on the author's doctoral dissertation, and the volumes, selected with a view to tackling the representations of what history filed under 9/11, were published between 2002 and 2011.

Built as an inroad in what had triggered the attack on the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center, in the zeitgeist of the age, the volume opens more Pandora boxes, which seem, at times, unfathomable and impossible to superimpose. They remain different from each other, while still completing a yet unfinished picture of social-psycho-political history.

The theoretical frameworks approached allow the author to highlight the way in which the political, economic, historical, and physical blow on humanity was transposed in the journalistic-political realism of English-language writing. On the border between realism and fiction, just as the volumes that it scientifically dissects, operating with scientific concepts and methods of analysis, but also with official reports (*9/11 Commission Report*, 2015) and the media (*The New York Times, CNN, The Guardian*), the book brings forth authors who borrowed discursive styles from their professions (journalists) and transposed them in the literary area (in novels, short stories or plays).

The neo-realist fiction of the novelists under focus - Martin Amis, Iain Banks, Don DeLillo, Mohsin Hamid, Ian McEwan and Amy Waldman – takes shape around topic of global politics, ideological controversies, trauma (emerging from the tragedy of those left to mourn their family and friends lost in the 9/11 attacks).

The volume *British and American Representations of 9/11. Literature, Politics and the Media* is structured into two parts: the former, "Encoding 9/11 in the Media and the Literary Text" is a preamble for the latter, through the all-encompassing and theoretically grounded definition that Oana-Celia Gheorghiu constructs for the phenomenon that shocked the world, 9/11, and for the way in which it was perceived by the media, political and literary worlds in the early years of the 21st century. An initial frame of 'real facts', as they were seen on TV and in the written media, "encodings" as a synonym of interpretation, which made up the literature, as synonym of the entire popular culture born from an event catalogued as a terrorist act, with extremely serious consequences. (Beyond its consequences, a terrorist act is still a terrorist act, anyway).

The latter half lays emphasis on the way in which literature 'translated' the event, taking over its gravity, implications, and consequences (death, alienation, fear verging on terror, psychological rupture, etc.). This part is dedicated to the intertwinement of identity and the ideological reconfigurations in themes customarily employed in literary pieces selected for this study: the shattered Self of the West, and the *extreme* Other – identified with the East (and with its often associations with terrorism).

The worlds in the texts analysed may seem fictional, but the elements identified by the author of the study are in close relation to the images that arrested all television screens in the world on the day of September 11, 2001. The resemblance to film scripts like *Independence Day* is also abundant, but the metaphors and symbols employed suggest moments of horror and the end of the world for those who lived them: "(…) novelists, such as Don DeLillo or Ian McEwan, described the events by starting with their unreality, their eerie resemblance to a feature film, and their metaphorical and symbolic nature. It seemed reasonable, then, that an event so surrounded by an aura of fictionality and yet so very real, and with such serious consequences at the level of global geopolitics could draw the attention of the creators of fiction, while also remaining a major topic for politicians and journalists" (1-2).

Literature becomes a means of representing the unrepresentable, as the author claims, assigning it this role precisely to motivate, somehow, the ampleness of the topic (with its multiple unsuspected socio-political and especially emotional implications) and the temporal limitation of the titles considered in the thorough discussion on the representations of the 9/11 phenomenon. The sentiment of trauma (as both experience and loss) is brought to the fore by narratological means used as adjuvant in the treatment required for subsequent survival: "Trauma is an important component of these writings, which justifies the niche of 9/11 fiction criticism being occupied, for the largest part, by analyses inspired by trauma studies" (6). Fiction is, nonetheless, just a faithful follower of the cultural and political worlds in which it is built, and the journalistic, political and literary discourses that the author analyses are not necessarily mirrors of reality, but rather representations of the worlds that they describe/ reconstruct.

The first chapter is, in fact, an introduction to the theme and an outline of the concepts operational throughout the book (representation, discourse, fiction, realism and neorealism, postmodernism and post-

postmodernism), but also an informed literature review of the critical works on literary discourses inspired by the terrorist act (Ann Keniston, Jeanne Follansbee Quinn – *Literature after 9/11*, Martin Randall - *9/11 and the Literature of Terror*, Richard Gray- *After the Fall: America Literature since 9/11*). It is also here that the author points out the way in which she has envisaged her entire work so as to highlight "the marks of the political and media discourses [that] can be traced at the level of fiction, with the attempt to prove that their imprint is manifest through context and text" (7).

The second chapter, although integrated into a first part distinct from the first chapter, is a natural follow-up to this one, outlining the historical context of the attacks on September 11. This contextualisation is mostly based on the *9/11 Commission Report*, the document of greatest official strength known to the general public. Adding to this are selections of television news (CNN, live broadcasts from the location of the event, but also televised interventions of the President in office, George W. Bush). Then, the author also tackles the news, analyses and other materials published by the written press in the following days (*The Guardian, The New York Times*). It is, basically, an analysis of the 'hot', 'breaking news' material delivered to the public space with regard to the shock-event of the beginning of the 21st century: "September 2001 does not prove particularly rewarding in providing commentaries and analyses on the facts – the media are simply content to quote official statements , and supply news on the developments of war strategy", "the following day, 12 September 2001, belongs to newspapers: the written media around the world provide detailed coverage of the events of the previous day" (36).

After making reference to some literary titles that reproduce fragments initially published in media articles by their authors (*The Last Days of Muhammad Atta* and *Saturday*, by Martin Amis and, respectively, Ian McEwan), Chapter III brings to limelight the literary rewritings of history (of the event in question) and politics after 9/11. Two novels written by British authors – Scottish Iain Banks's *Dead Air* (2002), and *Saturday* (2005) by Ian McEwan, and the play *Stuff Happens* (2004) by David Hare are the starting points for highlighting the way in which politics and the news have become topics of contemporary fiction. 'Political novels' are, in fact, fictions that share elements of politics and history, as pretexts for a realistic imaginary or, at least, one as closest as possible to what could be true: "While the novel [*Dead Air*] may not be the best commercial thriller in the market despite ticking the boxes of being easy to read, fun and adrenaline-fueled (…), it constitutes a rewarding reassessment of contemporary

politics and of the role of the media, in their fictional rewriting, reinterpretation or representation" (56-57). The preliminary conclusion at this point is that all three literary texts present a constant of bidirectionality: on the one hand, reality itself can contain elements of fiction, while fiction may be used to reveal some truths.

The second part (made up of two chapters, *The Shattered Self of the West* and *Extreme Otherness*: '*The Muslim Menace*', which actually subsume the most consistent development of the book) debuts with a Chapter IV in which the concept of identity is processed through the help of ideological reconfigurations. Fiction and, at the same time, non-fiction in the texts brought under the lens, influence, in the author's opinion, the idea of identity and collective unconscious through ideology. The two chapters are mirrors of the Self/Other (East/West) dichotomy. A world's collapse, represented by the fall of the Twin Towers, also marks the collapse of personality, manifest through trauma, melancholy and social unease. The idea that this chapter underlines is that "while the West is regarded as the antagonist Other by the Islamic fundamentalist, the attacks on the WTC being an attack on the entire Western civilisation, and not just an attack on America, a (tense) relationship between selves is also apparent at an inner level" (94). The disaster at the WTC is an attack to one's self, too. But, for the British authors, the event remains at certain distance, not only geographical, but also emotional, as it happened to someone else. The two novels written by American authors - Don DeLillo's *Falling Man* (2007) and Amy Waldman's *The Submission* (2011), but also *Dead Air* (2002) by Iain Banks, are analysed through a constant toing and froing between Americanism and anti-Americanism, between the America as seen by Americans and America as seen by the Brits – another America, one that brought Americanisation in the British culture and that contaminated the English language. In one word – a blamed Americanisation. East and West, although apparently shaking hands to (re)kindle solidarity and safety, appear now split into Islamophobic reactions to Occidentalism. The East/West rupture is also obvious in literature, and the American hegemony is one reason, as David Hare seems to imply (*Stuff Happens*), while the other is an East seen as terrorist.

Chapter V brings clarifications on the concept of representations, used antithetically with the support of two theories: Orientalism and Occidentalism (the latter, as a reaction to Edward Said's 1978 Orientalist theory). The two spaces become two worlds, represented through statements of leaders (e.g. Muslim fundamentalist thinkers) or capital

events – portraits of normal people become murderers as a result of their political and religious indoctrination. Stereotyping is ever present in the literary constructions under focus. The texts analysed in this chapter are: *The Last Day of Muhammad Atta* (2006) by Martin Amis, *Falling Man* (2007) by Don DeLillo, *Submission* by Amy Waldman and *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* by Mohsin Hamid. The plots are not entirely fictional, says the author, as there are multiple real elements from where the storytelling thread starts to spin. Every Other, a Muslim Other, is reconstructed through the eyes of the Self as an image/representation: "(…) a certain Other is perceived as significantly different and, in many cases, more dangerous than other Others" (161). The syntagm 'The Muslim Menace' used by the author as title for her last chapter (and borrowed from the preface to the third edition of Edward Said's *Orientalism – 2013)* "is intended to point to a constructed image/ representation of the Muslim Other, whose identification in contemporary pieces of British and American literature is the primary objective of this undertaken" (161). Thus, the East is constructed through the Westerners' eyes, as Said, cited by the author, claims (162), while the West is an Eastern construct, thus creating stereotypical images, oftentimes distorted, on both sides (177).

Terrorism is also debated at an ideological level in DeLillo's novel, *Falling Man*. Here too, *us* (with reference to the Americans) becomes the opposite of *them*: "The axis of time DeLillo imagines accentuates the difference between us (the Americans in his particular case, but standing for the entire Western civilisation) and *them*: neither we nor they are living in the present; contemporaneity could not be more relative" (198).

Cultural memory is recreated through representations, and these representations themselves are art. Also art is what Oana-Celia Gheorghiu has created by publishing her book on an epochal event of the beginning of the 21st century with a prestigious publishing house. The scientific effort is remarkable, the depth of analyses is undeniable, and the topicality of the topic makes the book an interesting read not only for academics, but also for people interested in the history of the superpowers of the present-day world.