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**REVISTA DE LA ASOCIACIÓN ESPAÑOLA
DE ESTUDIOS ANGLO-NORTEAMERICANOS**

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ARTÍCULOS

Ladylikeness and Sociolinguistic Submission in Late Medieval English Society: Gender-based Use of Negation in John Paston I and Margaret Paston

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As is widely known, Historical Sociolinguistics studies the evolution of languages in their social, historical and cultural context. During the last forty years, the study of the relationships between language and gender has been one of the most important and best publicised areas of sociolinguistic research. Such research, carried out both synchronically and diachronically, has shown differences in gender-based patterns of sociolinguistic behaviour between current and past societies. The aim of this paper is to show the results and conclusions from a historical sociolinguistic study correlating the factor of gender with linguistic features such as mood and polarity in a married couple of the Paston family (John Paston I and Margaret Paston), from one of the most important linguistic corpora of late medieval English (the *Paston Letters*). Although their statistical validity and representativeness cannot lead to generalisation, the analysis does allow us to detect some tentative differences in the sociolinguistic behaviour of men and women in late English medieval society that might be reflected in interpersonal epistolary communication. Both social and linguistic extrapolations are inevitable, implying the ways in which language may reflect and help to maintain social attitudes towards women and men.

Keywords: historical sociolinguistics; language and gender; submissiveness; uniformitarian principle; statistical validity; representativeness

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Propiedades de una dama y sumisión sociolingüística en la sociedad del inglés medieval tardío: uso de la negación condicionado por género en John Paston I y Margaret Paston

La sociolingüística histórica estudia la evolución de las lenguas en su contexto socio-histórico y cultural. Por su parte, el estudio de las relaciones entre la lengua y el género ha sido una de las áreas más tratadas en la investigación sociolingüística durante los últimos cuarenta años. La investigación en lenguaje y género, sincrónica y diacrónica, ha demostrado la existencia de distintos patrones de comportamiento sociolingüístico condicionados por el género del hablante

tanto en la sociedad actual como en la antigua. El presente trabajo muestra los resultados y conclusiones alcanzados sobre un estudio sociohistórico en el que se correlaciona el factor género con los rasgos lingüísticos de modo (indicativo-subjuntivo) y polaridad (afirmativa-negativa) en un matrimonio de la familia Paston (John Paston I y Margaret Paston), de uno de los corpus lingüísticos más relevantes del inglés medieval tardío (las *Paston Letters*). Si bien carece de validez estadística y representatividad, el análisis nos permite detectar tímidamente algunas diferencias en el comportamiento sociolingüístico de los hombres y mujeres de la sociedad medieval inglesa que podrían reflejarse en la comunicación epistolar interpersonal. Resultan inevitables las interpretaciones y extrapolaciones tanto sociales como lingüísticas, sugiriendo la forma en que la lengua refleja, y ayuda a mantener, actitudes sociales diferentes ante hombres y mujeres.

Palabras clave: sociolingüística histórica; lenguaje y género; sumisión; principio de uniformidad; validez estadística; representatividad

1. INTRODUCTION: HISTORICAL SOCIOLINGUISTICS AND LANGUAGE AND GENDER
 Since its proposal by Romaine (1982), Historical Sociolinguistics studies the relationships between language and society in its socio-historical context. As Figure 1 shows, it is a multidisciplinary subfield emanating from Historical Linguistics and Sociolinguistics, which “focuses on trajectories of changes completed at early stages of the language, and employs variationist methods to investigate these changes” (Milroy and Gordon 2003: 176). It is an increasingly important field (see Ammon, Mattheier and Nelde 1999; Jahr 1999; Kastovsky and Mettinger 2000; Bergs 2005; Conde-Silvestre 2007; or Hernández-Campoy and Conde-Silvestre 2012, among others), despite the widely-recognised difficulties concerning representativeness and statistical validity (see Hernández-Campoy and Schilling 2012). In theoretical terms, its main objective is “to investigate and provide an account of the forms and uses in which variation may manifest itself in a given speech community over time, and of how particular functions, uses and kinds of variation develop within particular languages, speech communities, social groups, networks and individuals” (Romaine 1988: 1453). Methodologically, “the main task of socio-historical linguistics is to develop a set of procedures for the reconstruction of language in its social context, and to use the findings of sociolinguistics as controls on the process of reconstruction and as a means of informing theories of change” (Romaine 1988: 1453), based on analyses/ methodologies largely developed by Nevalainen and Raumolin-Brunberg (1996, 1998, 2003). The development of electronic corpora, with the contributions of Corpus Linguistics and Social History has conferred ‘empirical’ ease and ‘historical’ confidence to the discipline.

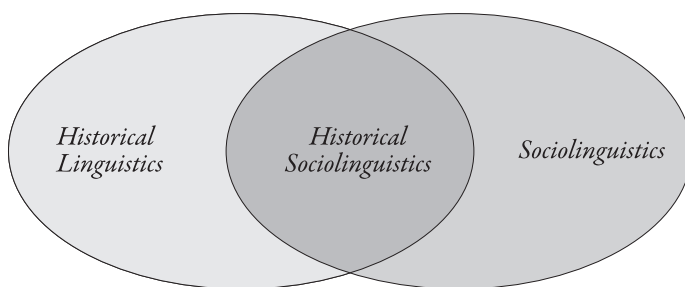


Figure 1. Scope of Historical Sociolinguistics

Furthermore, the study of the relationships between language and gender has been one of the most important and best publicised areas of sociolinguistic research during the last forty years or so. Since the 1970s, descriptions of gender-related issues in languages with very different structural foundations and socio-cultural backgrounds have been carried out (see Lakoff 1973; Vetterling-Braggin 1981; Cameron 1985, 1995, 2008; Smith 1985; Coates 1986, 1996, 1998; Coates and Cameron 1988; Philips, Steele and Tanz 1987; Graddol and Swann 1989; Swann 1992; Tannen 1993; Holmes 1995; Johnson and Meinhof 1997; Bing and Bergvall 1998; Hellinger and Bußmann 2001; Kielkiewicz-Janowiak 2002;

Holmes and Meyerhoff 2003; Holmes and Stubbe 2003; García-Mouton 2003; Okulska 2006; Mullany 2007; and many others). As Klann-Delius states,

The basic assumptions of all these studies are genuine sociolinguistic ones, claiming that a) with respect to its structural properties and rule-governed uses, language has to be conceived of as a product of cooperation between (historically specific) socialized subjects as members of (historically specific) societies, which in turn influences the way people think about themselves and the world; b) membership of society as well as socialization differs for men and women because of the differences in the organization of labor and the different interpretations societies have developed for the biological difference of the sexes. (2005: 1564)

Generally speaking, the relationships between gender, linguistic structure, lexicon, language use, language acquisition, and dialect as well as accent have usually been explored. Many of these studies have highlighted sex-differentiated varieties of language, i.e., sex differences in the use of particular linguistic features. Others have focussed on investigating the way in which language reflects and helps to maintain stereotyped images of the sexes and social attitudes towards women and men, and sex differences in the use of conversational strategies, as well as sexism in language. Admittedly, as Klann-Delius points out, “many studies do not take into account the obvious interrelation of gender as an independent variable such as social class, ethnicity, race, age, education, type of situation” (2005: 1573).

Like any other research dealing with social change, this sociolinguistic area of research, as a consistent field of study, has been subject to controversy as a result of the inherent susceptibilities of its provocative concerns:

[M]uch of the increase of interest in the subject has been related to the contemporary growth of the feminist movement, and a corresponding growing awareness of phenomena such as sexism and sex-role stereotyping. The study of language and sex has focused on a number of different issues, including sexism in language, but also including differences in the use of language and conversational strategies on the part of men and women, as well as dialect and accent differences of a mainly quantitative sort. (Trudgill 1985: ix)

2. OBJECTIVES

The disappearance of mood in English took place during the Middle English (ME) period,¹ when the levelling of final unstressed vowels to /-ə/ or Ø and the unstable quality of inflectional /-n/ affected the conjugation of ME verbs: the synthetic expression of tense, person and number was reduced and even led eventually to the gradual loss of certain

¹ See Pyles and Algeo (1964), Millward (1989), Blake (1992, 1996), Nevalainen (2006a), or Hernández-Campoy (2012).

moods (see Nevalainen 2006a, 2006b). If the effects of analogy were felt in the ME verbal system, the evolution from a synthetic to an analytic system was strengthened during the Early Modern English (EModE) period.²

The preservation of written correspondence collections from the period prior to the attrition of mood in English medieval times enables us to carry out correlations of extralinguistic factors (such as gender) with linguistic features (such as mood and negation). Aprioristically, the interpretations of these results would seem to be merely concerned with sex as an independent social parameter—in addition to social status, style, age or ethnicity—in the correlation of sociolinguistic variables, which would be linguistic in intent. However, social as well as linguistic extrapolations suggest ways in which language may reflect and help to maintain social attitudes towards women and men.

The purpose of this paper is to show the results and conclusions from a historical sociolinguistic study correlating the factor of gender with linguistic features such as mood and polarity in the correspondence of a married couple of the Paston family, from one of the most important linguistic corpora of late medieval English (the *Paston Letters*). The study aimed to detect whether there was any gender-based sociolinguistic behaviour in men and women of English medieval society that might be reflected in interpersonal epistolary communication through the use of the subjunctive mood and negation in the language of the Middle English period.

Analyses cross tabulating different linguistic and extralinguistic factors in the *Paston Letters* have shown patterns of co-variation of standardness, social class and social networks (Gómez-Solín 1997; Hernández-Campoy and Conde-Silvestre 1999; Conde-Silvestre and Hernández-Campoy 2004; Bergs 2005), the end of the inflectional subjunctive (Hernández-Campoy 2012), composite predicates and phrasal verbs (Tanabe 1999; Schäfer 1996), along with the effects of covert prestige and the standard ideology (Hernández-Campoy 2008), word-order and stylistic distortion (Escribano 1982), rhetoric (Escribano 1985; Watt 1993), as well as critical discourse analysis (Wood 2007).

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Linguistic Variables

One of the achievements of Sociolinguistics has been the identification of the fact that linguistic variation is not normally free, but rather is constrained by social and/or contextual factors, where the *linguistic variable* is “a linguistic unit with two or more

² In current English, most of the functions of the old subjunctive have been assumed by auxiliary verbs like *may* and *should*, and the subjunctive survives only in very limited situations, such as formulaic expressions (*God help him, be that as it may, come what may, and suffice it to say*), *that*-clauses (*I insist that she do the job properly*), in concession and purpose clauses (*Even though he be opposed to the plan, we must try to implement it; They are rewriting the proposal so that it does not contradict new zoning laws*), in some conditional clauses (*Whether he be opposed to the plan or not, we must seek his opinion*), or in a few other constructions expressing hypothetical conditions (*If I were rich..., If he were rich..., If they were rich...; I wish you were here*) (see Harsh 1968; Khlebnikova 1976; James 1986; Övergaard 1995; or Peters 1998).

variants involved in covariation with other social and/or linguistic variables” (Chambers and Trudgill 1998: 60). Those linguistic features whose variants denote a social and/or stylistic meaning are then *sociolinguistic variables*; i.e., sets of alternative ways of saying the same thing, although the alternatives have social significance.

Linguistic variables can be segmental —phonetic-phonological, grammatical, semantic, lexical, and even orthographic— or suprasegmental, depending on the nature of the linguistic feature selected (see Milroy and Gordon 2003). In the case of the present study, the linguistic variable used is the verb *to be*. In any given tense, person or number form (*to be, am, is, are, was, were, being, been*, and contracted *’m, ’s and ’re*), this is the most frequently used verb in both written and oral English. A quick look at its presence in Mark Davies’ *Variation in English Words and Phrases* (VIEW, <<http://view.byu.edu/>>), based on the 100 million word *British National Corpus* (BNC, <<http://www.natcorp.ox.ac.uk/>>), and his *Corpus of Historical English* (CHE, <<http://view.byu.edu/che/>>), based on the material in the *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED, <<http://www.oed.com/>>) with 37 million words of texts from Old English to Present-Day English, would allow us to quantify its use both synchronically and diachronically throughout the history of written English, estimating it to be between 3% and 4.22% of all words in these corpora.

To simplify somewhat, the development of verb morphology from Old English to Middle English is, as has been stated earlier, determined by the levelling of final unstressed vowels to /-ə/ and -Ø and by the unstable quality of the inflectional /-n/ (see Table 1).

Table 1. *To Be* in Middle English

		SOUTH/MIDLANDS	NORTH
Pret. Indic.	1 st sg.	<i>was</i>	<i>was, wes</i>
	2 nd sg.	<i>we(o)re</i>	<i>was, wes</i>
	3 rd sg.	<i>was</i>	<i>was, wes</i>
	plural	<i>we(o)re(n)</i>	<i>war(e), wes</i>
Pret. Subj	sing.	<i>were</i>	<i>war(e)</i>
	plural	<i>were(n)</i>	<i>war(e)</i>

In the British Isles, the study of past *be* is not recent at all, dating back to the work of traditional dialectologists. At a macro-level, Ellis (1889), for example, reported on: i) levelling to *were* detected in different areas of England —such as Bedford in the East Midlands, Pakenham in Suffolk, Chapel-en-le-Frith in Derbyshire or Skipton in Yorkshire; ii) levelling to *was* in Enfield in the South-East, West Somerset, Norwich in Norfolk or Southwold in Suffolk; and iii) their variable use, especially in negative polarity, such as *weren’t* in the contexts of standard *wasn’t* (see Britain 2002: 20-21; and Figure 2).

More recently, Cheshire, Edwards and Whittle (1989) were able to evidence and measure the geographically heterogeneous nature of the past *be* forms across the regions of Great Britain using an indirect method (a postal questionnaire sent to schools): 80% of the informants were users of the non-standard *was* (levelling to *was*), except in the urban northern areas of England and in Glasgow. Non-standard *were* (levelling to *were*) was

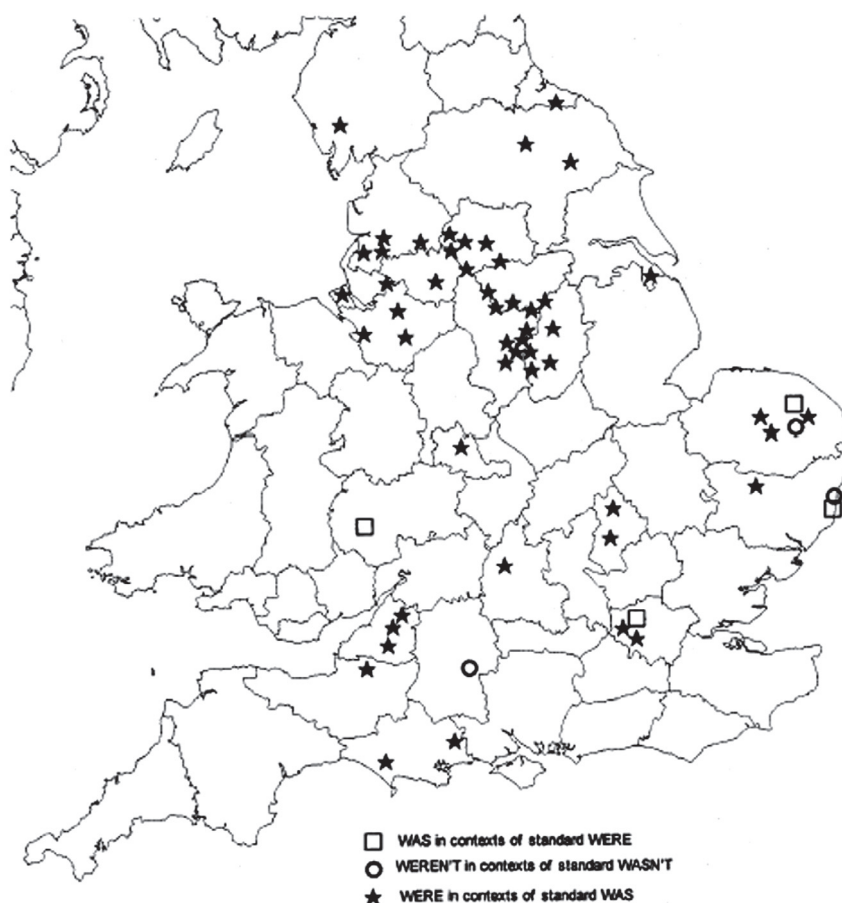


Figure 2. Comments on past *be* in Ellis (1889), from Britain (2002: 21).

more frequently present in the North West, Yorkshire and in the Midlands, and less so in the South.

Given the continuing existence of mood differentiation (albeit in the process of extinction) in Middle English, and considering that our corpus belongs to the very end of this period, indicative and subjunctive uses in our past *be* forms were quantified. The subjunctive mood in past *be* used to be *were* for both singular and plural, requiring both the syntax and semantics of the sentence to be analysed in order to differentiate between them.³ If Indicative represents a thing as a fact, or inquires about some fact, contrarily, Subjunctive expresses condition, hypothesis, contingency, possibility, wishes, commands, emotion, judgement, necessity, and statements that are contrary to fact at present in

³ The contracted forms *wasn't* and *weren't* were not considered in this study given that they did not begin to appear in writing until the seventeenth century (see Pyles and Algeo 1982: 204).

subordinate clauses, implying some kind of indirectness (see Harsh 1968; Khlebnikova 1976; James 1986; or Övergaard 1995). Cases of subjunctive with past *be* forms have been found with sentence connectors such as *as son(e) as*, *till/tyll*, *in cas(e)*, *if/yf*, *before that*, *as ever*, *in as much as*, *so that*, *for (if)*, *after that*, *as*, *so*, *that soone aftyr that they*, *whether*, *I pray* + clause, *I wish/wold* + past, etc.

- *After that*: “...and he tolde my modyr and me wanne he was comme hom þat he cargeyt yow to bey it **aftyr þat** he **were** come ovte of London” (Margaret Paston, letter addressed to John Paston I 1441, 12, 14).
- *In cas(e)*: “If þer myt ben purveyd any mene þat it myt ben dasched **in cas were** þat it xuld passe azens 3owr moder it were a good sport...” (Margaret Paston, letter addressed to John Paston I, 1449).
- *I wish/wold* + past: “I wold she **war** her in Norffolk as well at es as evyr I sy hyr, and as lytyll rewlyd be hyr son as evyr she was” (Margaret Paston, letter addressed to John Paston III 1475, 01, 28).
- *So*: “... but thys she promyseid, to be helpyng **so** it **wer** fyrst meuyd by the consayll” (John Paston III, letter addressed to John Paston II 1472, 09, 21).
- *Till/Tyll*: “So God help me, ye maye alegge a pleyne excuse, I reke not who knoweith it, that thees dyrk werrys haue so hyndyrd me that hyr lyuelode and myne bothe shold be to lytyll to leue at oure ease **tyll I wer** ferther befor the hand than I kowde be thys two yer, and she fownd aftyr hyr honoure and my poore apetytt” (John Paston III, letter addressed to John Paston II 1473, 03, 08).

Each token of past *be* form from the Paston Letters collection was analysed and coded for subject type: 1st, 2nd, 3rd person singular and plural, 3rd person singular and plural Noun Phrase, and 3rd person singular and plural Existential, and Polarity (see Table 2). Two distinctions were specified: i) levelling to *was/were* in contexts of Indicative Mood, and ii) levelling to *was/were* in contexts of Subjunctive Mood.

Table 2. Subject Type

SINGULAR SUBJECT	PLURAL SUBJECT
First	First
<i>I was</i>	<i>We was</i>
<i>I were</i>	<i>We were</i>
	Second
	<i>You was</i>
	<i>You were</i>
Third NP	Third NP
<i>The farm was</i>	<i>The farms was</i>
<i>The farm were</i>	<i>The farms were</i>
Third Pronoun	Third Pronoun
<i>It was</i>	<i>They was</i>
<i>It were</i>	<i>They were</i>
Third Existential	Third Existential
<i>There was a farm</i>	<i>There was farms</i>
<i>There were a farm</i>	<i>There were farms</i>

The authors’ experience with cases of variability in spelling in previous studies of the writings of this family (see Hernández-Campoy and Conde-Silvestre 1999, and Conde-Silvestre and Hernández-Campoy 2004) made us also take into consideration other possible orthographic forms for both *was*, such as *waz*, *wos*, *woz*, *wos*, *wus*, or *wuz*, that were not present in the corpus, and *were*, such as *wer*, *werre*, *weere*, *weer*, *war* or *ware*. We also had to be cautious with misspelling phenomena such as *were* instead of the conjunction or the relative adverb *where*, occasionally.

In order to facilitate the detection and quantification of the different possibilities for each variable in each possible syntactic combination, we used the Concordance Package *MonoConc Pro* (ver. 2.0, Build 228, by Michael Barlow).

Our sample consisted of 151 samples from 2 informants (husband and wife), which yielded 848 tokens of the linguistic variables under study: 243 for the male informant and 605 for the female one, comprising 490 instances of *was*, and 358 of *were* (see Table 3).

Table 3. Typology of Informants

Groups	Type of informant	Number of informants	Number of samples	Number of words	Tokens
Group 1	Male	1	44	33,198	243
Group 2	Female	1	107	67,847	605
Total		2	151	101,045	848

3.2. Informants and Instrument

The informants used for the present study were two members of the Pastons, who are the most well-documented gentry family of late medieval England: John Paston I and his wife Margaret Paston.⁴ The Pastons were not nobility but *nouveau riche* landowners (Wood 2007: 52; Caston 2004: 73). The family fortunes had improved with William Paston I (1378-1444), who, after training as a lawyer in the Inns of Court in London, acted as counsel for the city of Norwich from 1412, and in 1415 became steward to the Duke of Norfolk, whence he began a successful career at the royal court and gained a good local reputation. He married Agnes Berry in 1420, and became Justice of the Common Bench in 1429. After his death, the family became involved in lawsuits, intrigues, and conflicts, at times violent, about land and legal rights.

John Paston I (1421-1466), our male informant, was educated at Trinity Hall and Peterhouse, Cambridge, and the Inner Temple in London. As he was the eldest son, he took over the family estates and wealth on the death of his father, William Paston I. In 1440 he married Margaret Mautby and they had four sons and two daughters: John II, John III, Edmund II, Margery, Anne, Walter and William III (see also Fitzmaurice

⁴ Further information on the Paston Family can be found in Davis (1971), Richmond (1990, 1996), Barber (1993), Bennett (1995), Gies and Gies (1998), Coss (1999), Castor (2004), or Bergs (2005).

2002 and Wood 2007). As far as his career is concerned, he tried to follow in his father's footsteps, becoming JP for Norfolk (1447, 1456-1457 and 1460-1466), knight of the shire (1455), and MP for Norfolk (1460-1462).

Margaret Mautby (1420?-1484), our female informant and daughter and heiress of John Mautby of Mautby, was a 'businesswoman' in charge of the management of the households and manors. She occupied a powerful position within her family and the community: "Margaret, as will be seen, takes an active role, or even a lead, in state management and is a shrewd businesswoman and negotiator, pulling in support from dukes and bishops when it suits her purpose" (Wood 2007: 53). She lived mostly at Norwich. Along with personal subjects, her letters also deal with family matters and lawsuits and provide us with linguistically important documents which were possibly written by a woman who had barely stepped outside the locale of her country manor. It is quite likely, however, that Margaret did not write the letters herself, but rather the family clerk and chaplain —James Glowys. Bergs' (2005: 79-80) analysis of her letters suggests this scenario would affect phonological or graphological variables, but not morpho-syntactic ones.

The body of letters used for the present study was taken from the Middle English Collection of the Internet electronic edition of the *Paston Letters* (First Part) from the Virginia University Electronic Text Center (<<http://lib.virginia.edu/digital/collections/>>). The *Paston Letters* is the name given to a collection of 422 authored documents (letters and notes) with roughly 246,353 words, written by 15 members of different generations of this Norfolk family, mainly during the fifteenth century (from 1425 to 1503).

4. RESULTS, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Linguistic factors (past *be* forms, mood, and polarity) were correlated with the independent socio-demographic parameter gender of the informant. The results obtained for the use of *was* and *were* in positive and negative polarity and mood according to the gender of the informants in the married couple John Paston I and Margaret Paston are shown in Table 4 and Figures 3-4.

Table 4. Correlation per Gender, Mood and Polarity

Contexts			Group 1: John Paston I		Group 2: Margaret Paston	
Polarity		Form	Raw Data (#)	Percentages (%)	Raw Data (#)	Percentages (%)
Positive Polarity	Indicative Mood	<i>was/were</i>	171/243	70%	413/605	68%
	Subjunctive Mood	<i>was/were</i>	60/243	25%	160/605	27%
Negative Polarity	Indicative Mood	<i>was not / were not</i>	12/243	5%	27/605	4%
	Subjunctive Mood	<i>was not / were not</i>	0/243	0%	5/605	1%

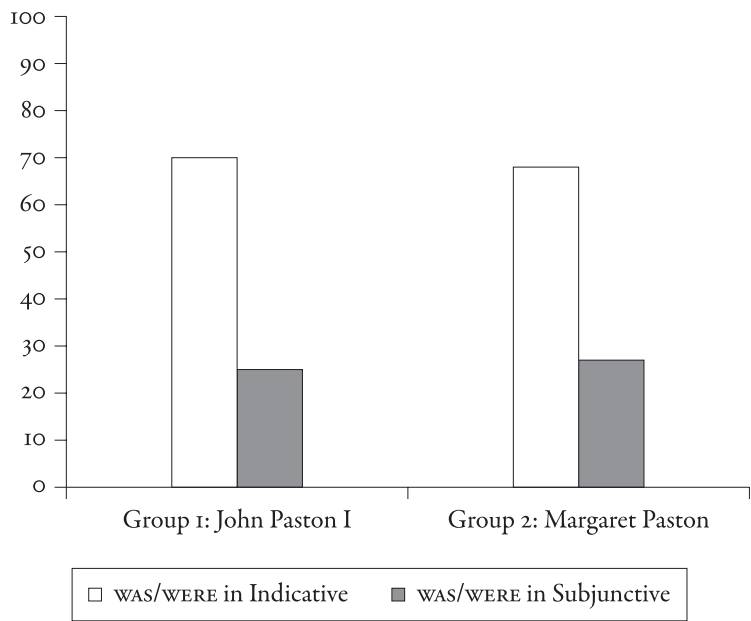


Figure 3. Correlation of past *be* forms with gender and mood

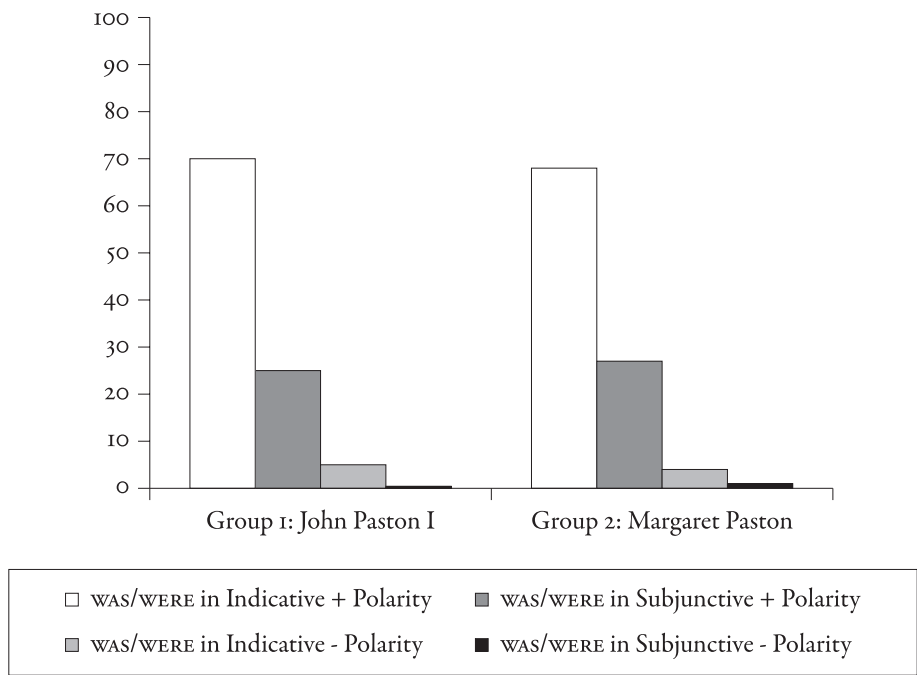


Figure 4. Correlation of past *be* forms with gender, mood, and polarity

Table 5 and Figure 5 specifically show results of the correlation of gender, polarity and mood with *was* and *were* levelling cases:

Table 5. Correlation per Gender, Mood and Polarity: Levelling to <i>was/were</i>						
Contexts		Group 1: John Paston I		Group 2: Margaret Paston		
Polarity	Form	Raw Data (#)	Percentages (%)	Raw Data (#)	Percentages (%)	
Positive Polarity	Indicative Mood	Levelled was	0/31	0%	0/104	0%
		Levelled were	1/140	1.42%	27/309	8.7%
		Total	1/171	0.58%	27/413	6.5%
	Subjunctive Mood	Levelled was	0/19	0%	0/40	0%
		Levelled were	35/41	85.3%	96/120	80%
		Total	35/60	58.3%	96/160	60%
Negative Polarity	Indicative Mood	Levelled was not	0/2	0%	0/7	0%
		Levelled were not	4/10	40%	0/20	0%
		Total	4/12	33.3%	0/27	0%
	Subjunctive Mood	Levelled was not	0/0	0%	0/2	0%
		Levelled were not	0/0	0%	3/3	100%
		Total	0/0	0%	3/5	60%

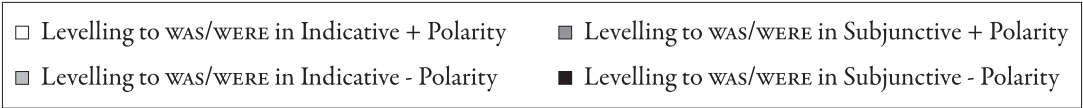
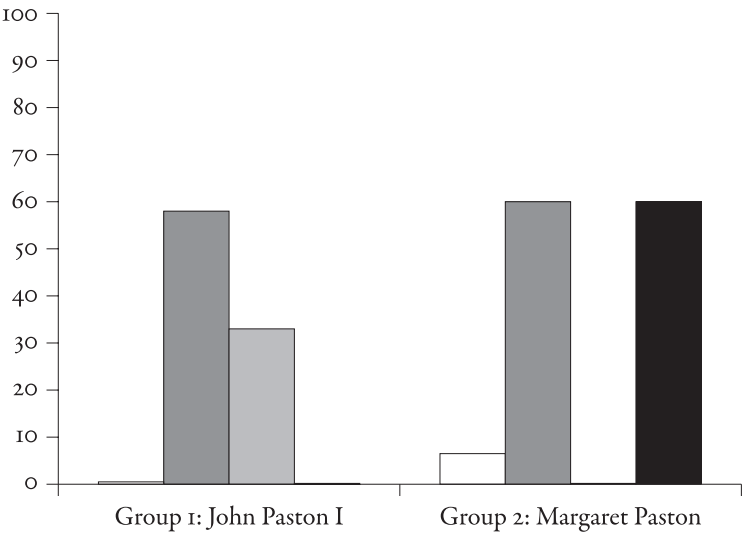


Figure 5. Correlation of levelling to *was/were* with gender, mood, and polarity

Overall, Figure 3 shows a slightly higher use of the Indicative mood by John Paston I (75%: Ind. 183/243 and Subj. 60/243) than his wife, Margaret (73%: Ind. 440/605 and Subj. 165/605), in their respective letters. In addition, Margaret (27%) exhibits higher use of the Subjunctive mood than her husband (25%). More specifically, according to Table 4 and Figure 4 the male informant shows higher frequencies of past *Be* forms in Indicative mood, with both positive (70%) and negative (5%) polarity than the female one (68% and 4%). Meanwhile in Subjunctive mood, Margaret Paston has higher use of these forms, with both positive (27%) and negative (1%) polarity higher than John Paston I (25% and 0%): hence the female informant shows higher frequencies of the linguistic forms in negative Subjunctive than the male. These patterns are also similarly found in the case of levelling to *was/were* in Table 5 and Figure 5, where in both female and male informants there are much higher levels of levelling to *were* than to *was*, particularly in the contexts of negative polarity, and with more emphasis specifically in Subjunctive mood, which was still most often associated with the subjunctive grammatical contexts, obviously, and thus cannot be regarded as levelling.⁵ Yet, the data point to a gender-based pattern of sociolinguistic behaviour, which, as we can see in Table 4 and Figure 4, is the presence of negative constructions and Indicative mood in the male group (Group 1: 33.3%), and its absence in the female (Group 2: 0%). However, the pattern is reversed in the negative polarity context of the Subjunctive mood, where Margaret (Group 2) exhibits 60% of levelling (*were not* levelling particularly: 100%) and it is absent for John I (Group 1: 0%), though this is not statistically significant due to the small number of tokens (G1: 0/0 and although G2: 3/5), i.e., insufficient and/or unrepresentative data.⁶

John I, John II, John III and Margaret Mautby were the most central or important family members, with the rest gravitating towards them (they wrote 74.4% of the documents preserved), followed by Edmond II and Agnes; Walter, William I, William III and William IV seem to have occupied rather marginal roles (see Bergs 2005: 69-71).

As Table 6 shows, Margaret has the highest presence in the corpus of the *Paston Letters* (25.36% of letters written: 107 out of 422). This seemingly indicates she was a strong woman of considerable influence and consequence in the family, as stated in 3.2. However, her control of the family does not extend to decision-making but rather only the reporting of decisions. Despite her knowledgeable and authoritative administration and influential

⁵ In contemporary English, most non-standard varieties have regularised the past tense irregularity by having the same form for all persons and both numbers. In this way, generally speaking, at a macro-level, different non-standard dialects i) either have *were* in all persons and both numbers (*we were, he were*); ii) or they have *was* in all persons and both numbers (*we was, he was*); iii) or they have *was* in all persons and both numbers in the affirmative but *were* in all persons and both numbers in the negative (*I was, you was, but I weren't, you weren't*) (see Britain 2002 and Trudgill 2008).

⁶ Schneider (2002) and Bauer (2002) highlight the potential and problems (pros and cons) of relying on written sources and public corpora (large collections of naturally occurring language data, including those that are computer-readable/searchable) as linguistic data for variationist analysis. The most important disadvantage of datasets of historical documents is that they very often lack *representativeness* and possibly also *validity*, since, as noted above, the historical record is incomplete, and written materials may or may not be reflective of the spoken language of the time period under study.

Table 6. Informants and Letters

Informants	Letters	Words	% Letters Written
William Paston I	12	8,160	2.84%
Agnes Paston	22	7,865	5.21%
John Paston I	44	33,198	10.43%
Edmond Paston	2	502	0.47%
William Paston II	33	15,418	7.82%
Clement Paston II	7	3,303	1.66%
Elizabeth Poynings	4	3,969	0.95%
Margaret Paston	107	67,847	25.36%
John Paston II	86	49,551	20.38%
John Paston III	77	43,993	18.25%
Edmond Paston II	8	3,856	1.90%
Walter Paston	4	1,327	0.95%
William Paston III	9	4,569	2.13%
Margery Paston	6	2,658	1.42%
William Paston IV	1	137	0.24%
TOTAL	422	246,353	100%

social agency in managing household and estate-related business, her letters —particularly in the case of her use of negation and mood— suggest a woman who adopts a mere reporting role in relation to these events, clearly revealing her position in the social hierarchy of the medieval English household and her community (see also Archer 1992; Watt 1993; Gies and Gies 1998; Coss 1999). This characterisation as a chronicler, according to Barratt (1992: 12–16), has traditionally been identified as a strategy of submission used by women to attach themselves to a man’s authority in order to participate in his activities. As Creelman points out, in adopting this role, she exhibits a “subordinate position as a wife obligated to provide her husband with frequent written reports in governing estate business in his absence” (2004: 112).

Therefore, though this is undoubtedly not conclusive enough given the small number of tokens and thus the lack of statistical validity, according to these data and results with this particular linguistic variable, we might surmise that in medieval English society,

- i) men make higher use of affirmative constructions in indicative than women;
- ii) men make higher use of negative constructions in indicative than women;
- iii) women make higher use of affirmative constructions in subjunctive than men
- iv) women make higher use of negative constructions in subjunctive than men;

This points to the fact that it was more typical and acceptable for ME male speakers to use direct negation than for females, whose negative polarity statements had to be expressed more indirectly and remotely through subjunctive. This sociolinguistic behaviour might be understood as a feature of a gender-affiliated pattern, a fact that clearly relates to issues in language and gender studies, such as language use, dialect/accent use or directness. Although both sexes do use the same language system, there is certainly evidence to imply that certain

words are sex-exclusive, i.e., feature in only men's or only women's verbal repertoires, or that some structures and/or uses are more prototypically gender-based. There is a common widespread belief, bolstered by stereotypes, that women's language is more polite and refined (more 'ladylike'). The distinction between language use differences in male and female speech needs to be considered here: the use of certain hesitation markers, syntactic devices, such as ellipsis and tag-questions, as well as particular communicative and conversational strategies in men *versus* women (see Tannen 1993; Aries 1996; James 1996; Kothoff and Wodak 1996; Palander-Collin 1999; Hollway 2001). Dialect and accent differences in male versus female speech (the use of prestigious/non-prestigious linguistic forms) need to be investigated as well. Whereas at the level of language use, women and men may try to achieve different things, through dialect and accent variants women and men employ socially different, but linguistically equivalent, ways of saying the same thing (Trudgill 1972, 1985). The fact that the male informant shows less reliance on hesitation markers and more use of levelling to *were* in negative polarity in Indicative mood than the female, and the reverse in Subjunctive contexts (conditional and potential), indicates the more prominent role of men in medieval society: a society where women were excluded from politics and public office and received less education than men (see Goldberg 1992 and Wood 2007).⁷ According to Robin Lakoff (1973), women traditionally have had certain unfavourable connotations because of the lower status they typically held in society: until very recently, women were conceived of as being responsible for the integrity of the domestic sphere of life, whereas men are conceived of as having more social power, and therefore as being active participants in the sphere of public debate and political decision-making.

Lakoff (1973) in her study on contemporary industrialised Western-world societies claimed that women use certain grammar structures more frequently (e.g., tag-questions) or supra-segmental elements (e.g., the use of question-intonation in statements) in their conversational interactions with men. These features, in Lakoff's view, carry the social meanings of insecurity, hesitancy, or uncertainty. Yet, many subsequent empirical studies have failed to corroborate Lakoff's claims (see Dubois and Crouch 1975; Edelsky 1979; Baumann 1979, etc.): nor is it certain that tag-questions always function as indicators of hesitancy or uncertainty (see also Holmes 1986), or that the use of question-intonation in statements is more characteristic of female than male speakers.

Preisler (1986), for example, carried out a most detailed and thorough study of women's and men's use of indicators of tentativeness. He analysed the correlations between the speech of 48 speakers from Lancaster, in the North West of England and their age and

⁷ "However, Archer (1992) suggests that although there is little evidence of formal education of women, wives of estate owners were perhaps more prepared for their roles than historical documents suggest. Also, although by law married women's lands and legal status were controlled by their husbands, Archer suggests looking beyond the law. She argues that women were often left as the sole representatives of their absentee husbands and that, whatever the law might dictate, in actual practice, all married women of property took on responsibility for estate management even though, since legal documents are in the man's name, the evidence is lacking. The historical record is fuller when it comes to widows as they received one third of their husband's property over which they exercised full control" (Wood 2007: 53).

socioeconomic status. After setting up controlled conversation situations with groups of four informants of the same age and employment status, participants were given conversational topics to discuss and asked, if possible, to reach some kind of agreement. He found out which speaker was more dominant in each group (i.e., introducing new topics, taking a particular line of reasoning, making suggestions, using more imperatives and less interrogatives, etc.). In his study, dominant speakers made less use of tentativeness markers (tag-questions, use of modal verbs, and other markers such as *maybe*, *perhaps*, *certainly*, etc.) than the less dominant speakers, who were, in general, females. Not only did women tend to use tentativeness signals more often than men in mixed-sex groups, but also in single-sex groups. Bent Preisler explained his results by suggesting that women and men have developed certain “sex-specific speech patterns” (1986: 288): since usages in single-sex groups do not differ from those in mixed-sex groups they cannot depend on the submission of women to male domination as such but rather on the probable institutionalised reflection of women’s ‘historical social insecurity’. These aspects, in historical context of power and politeness relations, have also been investigated by Tiisala (2007) and Nevala (2007).

Another interesting observation in male-female interaction has been verbal aggressiveness in relation to interruptions. Zimmerman and West (1975), for example, were successful in measuring patterns of turn-taking, pausing, and interruptions in male-female conversations, and found that, while women are more cooperative, men are more competitive: men, overwhelmingly, interrupted more than women did in conversational interactions.

Labov’s (2001: 261-93) ‘gender paradox’ emphasises women’s tendency to conform to sociolinguistic norms —usually being more in contact with the standard— and their role in language change (see Nevalainen 2006c), since they have traditionally been attached to the domestic sphere and assigned a predominant function in the education of children and the transmission of culture and societal values: “women conform more closely than men to sociolinguistic norms that are overtly prescribed but conform less than men when they are not” (Labov 2001: 293). This ideology of femininity, as Kielkiewicz-Janowiak states, is also expanded to socialisation patterns:

In the case of women, a major source of social pressure on women was encoded in the ideology of femininity. For centuries it had been deemed desirable for a woman to be unimposing and considerate to others. This precept, at the level of linguistic behavior, involved listening rather than speaking, understanding rather than arguing. However, when invited to speak, women were expected to display the virtue of ‘sympathy’. (2012: 327)

This stereotype of submission and prudence, as characteristics of femininity and ladylikeness, is evidenced here with the much lower use of negation in Indicative (direct assertion), and much higher use of negation in Subjunctive (indirect assertion) by the female member of a late fourteenth-century married couple belonging to the Paston family of medieval England, as shown in their vernacular written correspondence.

CONCLUSION

As an independent sociolinguistic parameter, with this historical sociolinguistic study on a past society, gender-based differences have been observed, detected, and quantified. The correlation of gender and linguistic features is reached irrespective of whether they belong to a stereotypical dichotomous pattern or not, but very relatedly here in connection with Labov's (1972) *Uniformitarian Principle* for the behaviour of men and women in the course of its historical development along past and present societies,⁸ and in this case here with its historical reconstruction in its socio-cultural context.

Obviously, these results are not conclusive given the small number of tokens, and thus the lack of statistical validity, and universalisation is not feasible due to insufficient representativeness; further research contrasting results from other variables and preferably more informants would be needed. Admittedly, this is an exercise in socio-historical reconstruction, where the non-existence of evidence does not allow for conclusions about the existence or non-existence of individual facts. But, despite its limitations, and trying to make the best use of bad data, as Labov (1972: 98; 1994: 11) suggests, some patterns may be perceived on the sociolinguistic behaviour of English medieval society through the analysis of epistolary compositions.⁹

Language use differs for women and men, because gender, culturally and stereotypically, has been demonstrated to aggregately determine use of language, other things being equal. These gender-specific differences in the sociolinguistic behaviour of men and women are therefore manifested in the structural properties of languages, where they have become incorporated in the course of its historical development (Klann-Delius 2005: 1564). We must admit, however, that the establishment of gender as a binary construct where dichotomies are separated by unequivocal boundaries, and thus as a pervasively influential factor of language use, is as controversial as the topic itself (see Bing and Bergval 1998 and Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 1998). As a matter of fact, as Kielkiewicz-Janowiak (2012: 329) points out, gendered stereotypes “perpetuate and magnify the gender effect in our perception, so that a relatively small gender difference is believed to bring about a true contrast”. Also, gender roles can be said to have been more strictly imposed on women than they are today.

⁸ If Historical Sociolinguistics reconstructs the history of languages in its socio-cultural context, the *Uniformitarian Principle* leads us to believe that the linguistic behaviour of ancient sociolinguistic communities may perfectly have been determined, to some extent, by patterns of sociolinguistic behaviour which are similar to the contemporary ones observed by Sociolinguistics (see Labov 1972: 275). Admittedly, as Rankin (2003: 186) points out, reconstruction in Historical Linguistics would not be possible without the assumption of uniformitarianism (see Lass 1997 or Janda and Joseph 2003). But in socially-conditioned language variation and change this principle is not fully convincing due to its limitations (see Labov 1994: 21-25; and Bergs 2012).

⁹ As stated in Hernández-Campoy and Schilling (2012), the sociolinguistic study of historical language forms must rely on linguistic records from previous periods —most of which will be incomplete or non-representative in some way— as well as on knowledge and understanding of past sociocultural situations that can only be reconstructed rather than directly observed or experienced by the researcher. As Labov aptly notes, “[t]exts are produced by a series of historical accidents; amateurs may complain about this predicament, but the sophisticated historian is grateful that anything has survived at all. The great art of the historical linguist is to make the best of this bad data, ‘bad’ in the sense that it may be fragmentary, corrupted, or many times removed from the actual productions of native speakers” (1972: 98).

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On *That*-omission and its Absence in the Written Production of Bilingual Spanish/Catalan L2-learners of English

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Following recent minimalist accounts of the English so-called *that*-omission construction (as in *I think this book is interesting*), this article analyses the written production of bilingual Spanish/Catalan L2 learners of English and reveals L1 interference in the acquisition of this construction. The first part of this article shows how the phenomenon of complementiser omission is different in English with respect to Catalan and Spanish, and summarises a selection of recent proposals. The second part of the article is devoted to the analysis of the data of a group of L2-learners of English at different levels of development. We conclude at the end of the article that the L2 production of these students suggests that the *that*-insertion rule responsible for the presence of *that* in specific syntactic environments in English has not been learned.

Keywords: complementiser omission; comparative syntax; L2 acquisition

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Sobre la omisión del *that* y su ausencia en la producción escrita de aprendices de inglés bilingües catalán/español

Siguiendo propuestas minimistas recientes sobre la construcción conocida como *that*-omission (como en *I think this book is interesting*, Creo que este libro es interesante), este artículo analiza la producción escrita de estudiantes de inglés bilingües español/catalán y pone de manifiesto la interferencia de la L1 en la adquisición de esta construcción. En la primera parte de este artículo se muestra cómo el fenómeno de la supresión del complementante es diferente en inglés con respecto al catalán y el español, y se resume una selección de propuestas recientes. La segunda parte del artículo está dedicado al análisis de los datos de un grupo de estudiantes de L2 inglés en diferentes niveles de desarrollo. Concluimos el artículo afirmando que la producción de estos estudiantes sugiere que la regla de inserción responsable de la presencia del *that* en ciertas construcciones del inglés no se ha aprendido.

Palabras clave: omisión del complementante; sintaxis comparada; adquisición de segundas lenguas

1. INTRODUCTION

The so-called *that*-omission phenomenon is a characteristic construction of the English language which native speakers are almost unaware of. The presence or absence of the complementiser in an embedded clause such as (1) often goes unnoticed and seems not to have any semantic or syntactic consequences.¹

- (1) a. She thinks that students enjoy the subject
- b. She thinks students enjoy the subject

Clauses (1) a and b are considered to be semantically and syntactically identical as they share the same meaning and structure (an embedded finite clause). The fact that the complementiser can be absent, as in (1)b, is not a general property of the language, as there are constructions where *that* cannot be absent:

- (2) a. The students that passed the exam are happy
- b. *The students passed the exam are happy
- (3) a. That students enjoy the subject is clear
- b. * Students enjoy the subject is clear

Constructions (2) and (3) indicate that the complementiser is necessary and compulsory in certain contexts, as in subject relative clauses (2) and in finite subject clauses (3).

That is usually considered to be equivalent to the Spanish complementiser *que*, as it is the element that introduces finite embedded clauses after verbs like *think*, *say* or *know*, each taking a *que* in Spanish that cannot be omitted as illustrated in (4) below:

- (4) a. Cree que a los estudiantes les gusta la asignatura
- b. * Cree a los estudiantes les gusta la asignatura

The same behaviour is observed in Catalan (see 5), the other language spoken by the students whose production will be studied in this article.

- (5) a. Creu que als estudiants els agrada l'assignatura
- b. * Creu als estudiants els agrada l'assignatura

This contrasting behaviour of an apparently equivalent item in English, Spanish and Catalan has not received much attention (but see Llinas-Grau and Fernández-Sánchez (2011; forthcoming). We believe that the syntactic behaviour of these two elements, *that*

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and *que*, is best captured if they are considered as different elements (see section 2.3). In the following sections we will see that several proposals have been posited to explain *that*-omission in English but little attention has been devoted to the fact that languages like Spanish do not allow it in the same contexts —an important exception to this is Gallego (2007). Of the different proposals accounting for the phenomenon we have chosen one, Franks (2005), which seems to go hand in hand with the pragmatics and prosodic factors involved in *that*-omission (see section 2.4). Franks' proposal inverts the traditional view of *omission* and postulates instead an *insertion* process. English facts fare better with this proposal but Spanish and Catalan facts do not. For Spanish and Catalan the structure of (4) and (5) is an embedded CP but for English, we believe a proper CP is not present. We follow Franks (2005) in claiming that English embedded clauses of a specific type of verb (see section 2.2) are finite TPs.

In section 2.1 the basic proposals for the English construction are summarised and it will become clear that a proper CP is not part of the structure of any of these special embedded finite clauses. Absence of *that* has been interpreted by some authors as presence of a null element in C but, more recently, explanations have put this view aside and taken different directions. The complementiser has been reanalysed as a tense element in the account provided by Pesetsky and Torrego (2000), and as a truncated, simplified structure in the view adopted by Rizzi and Shlonsky (2007). As mentioned, a complete inversion of the logic underlying omission accounts is found in Franks (2005), who claims that the absence of *that* is the unmarked choice, its presence being the result of an insertion rule.

In view of all of these considerations, and others that will be shown to be relevant in the following sections, we believe that the English so-called *that*-omission is an interesting construction to consider in the L2 context. Our aim in this paper is to analyse L2 production data assuming that the constructions in (1) and (4)-(5) are not equivalent. We analyse written essays of L2 English learners who are bilingual Spanish/Catalan secondary school students and relate them both to a theoretical question (Does the insertion proposal make sense in view of results obtained?) and to an applied one (Does L1 influence the production of L2 learners by making them produce *that* in written essays where native English speakers would not?). We cannot leave aside the nature of the input as an extremely relevant factor in the process of L2 learning (see section 3).

2. THE *THAT*-OMISSION CONTENTION

2.1 Absence as deletion, emptiness or movement

The term *deletion* refers back to Chomsky (1981), where *S'*-*deletion* was used for those embedded clauses which do not contain an initial *that*, such as embedded non-finite clauses in ECM constructions. In the same year, Stowell (1981) initiated a list of accounts of *that*-omission. Those framed in the GB model, like his own, regarded null C as an empty category that had to satisfy the basic principle of empty categories, the Empty Category Principle

(ECP). A basic aim of his proposal was to review the contexts in which *that*-omission was possible and explain why it is not a universal phenomenon. In a more updated version, Bošković and Lasnik (2003) provide an account of null C and its distribution eliminating references to notions that are not used in the present model. They follow an initial proposal by Pesetsky (1992) who claims that null C is an affix and posits a PF Merger analysis of affixation which requires adjacency of the affix and the verb. If the verb and a null C are adjacent, the null affix is licensed and attaches to the V, resulting in a construction where *that* is non-overt, i.e., an omission construction, such as (1)b, repeated here:

- (1) b. She thinks- \emptyset students enjoy the subject.

If null C is not adjacent to a V element, it is not licensed, and omission is, therefore, ungrammatical:

- (6) * \emptyset students enjoy the subject is clear

However, a very different analysis is posited by Pesetsky and Torrego (2001). They question the rooted assumption that the element *that* is a real complementiser. Their proposal is fundamentally minimalist and relies on the presence of features in functional projections which trigger obligatory movement if they are uninterpretable. A new conception of nominative case plus the essential assumption that uninterpretable features must be deleted are at the heart of their explanation, which assumes that nominative case is uninterpretable T (uT) in D. According to these authors, C contains a uT feature which must be deleted. Optionality arises when there are two equally close elements that can delete this feature: the element in T which is realised as *that* when moved to C, or a nominative subject (a D element with a uT feature). For Pesetsky and Torrego there is real syntactic optionality as both representations (those corresponding to present and absent *that*) are equal in terms of cost.

In (7)b the nominative subject (*students*) of the embedded clause moves to Spec-CP and deletes uT in C, whereas in (7)a *that* moves to C, it is the realization of T to C movement and deletes uT in C.

- (7) a. She thinks [*that* students enjoy the subject]
b. She thinks [students enjoy the subject]

A different approach to the phenomenon is adopted by Rizzi and Shlonsky (2007), who claim that an embedded clause lacking a *that* as in (7)b is an instance of a *truncated* structure which lacks levels in the left periphery (Rizzi 1997). These authors' aim is to account for the fact that subject extraction is less extended than object extraction. To this end the authors make use of two notions which are crucial in the left-periphery framework: the *Subject Criterion* and *Criterial Freezing*. The Subject Criterion restates

distinguishes between these two verb types and refers to verbs like *say*, as *bridge verbs*, and those like *quip* as *non-bridge verbs*. The two types show different syntactic behaviour with respect to extraction of elements within the embedded clauses: a bridge verb allows extraction, but a non-bridge verb does not:

- (10) a. What_i did Billy say (that) he saw ?
 b. *What_i did Billy quip that he saw ?
 (from Franks 2005)

Hence, Franks' proposal implies that a complement clause of bridge verbs is not a CP but a TP, as shown in (11a). Conversely, a complement clause of a non-bridge verb is a full CP, as in (11b):

- (11) a. Billy said (that) [TP he saw a ghost].
 b. Billy quipped [CP that [TP he saw a ghost]].

Franks' account of finite complement clauses seems much more plausible than others once real usage is taken into account (see section 2.4). As will be further explained, the frequency of *that* in informal oral speech is very low and this suggests that insertion of *that* in formal registers is a more adequate account.

2.3 A contrast between languages

As mentioned in the *Introduction*, Spanish and Catalan contrast with English with respect to the construction under analysis in that the former do not allow the absence of the complementiser in embedded clauses selected by bridge verbs, as shown in (4)-(5):

- (4) a. Cree que a los estudiantes les gusta la asignatura
 b. *Cree a los estudiantes les gusta la asignatura
 (5) a. Creu que als estudiants els agrada l'assignatura
 b. *Creu als estudiants els agrada l'assignatura

Both of these languages, though, allow a complementiserless clause in other contexts, associated with a different verbal tense (subjunctive), as in the following examples:

- (12) Rogamos esperen a ser atendidos
 (13) Preguem esperin a ser atesos

The production of clauses like these, however, is highly restricted in Spanish and Catalan, being limited to written formal contexts and thereby differing significantly from instances of complementiser absence in English, which are more informal. The process that allows the absence of *que* in these constructions is V-movement, a strategy that

Spanish and Catalan have (see Gallego 2007) and which underlies (12) and (13). Note that V-movement to C predicts the verb to precede the subject when both are present:

- (14) a. *Lamento María piense eso
 b. Lamento piense eso María
 (from Gallego 2007)

Thus, Spanish and Catalan seem to have a proper, complete CP structure in finite complement clauses where *que* is a proper head that projects a phrase; it is not a syntactically inert element. In contrast, as explained in the previous section, English complement clauses of bridge verbs are not full CPs when *that* is a head (see Llinas-Grau and Fernández-Sánchez forthcoming, for a more detailed account of the differences between these languages with respect to this construction). In section 2.5 we will briefly see how L1 data also point in this direction. This structural difference may underlie the L2 production facts found in our analysis (see sections 3 and 4). But before we proceed to the analysis of our data, we must first refer to the pragmatics of the constructions under analysis and place them in the L2 context.

2.4 *That*-omission in use

In Llinas-Grau and Fernández-Sánchez (forthcoming), it is claimed that the presence or absence of a *that* element in complement clauses of bridge verbs, like *say*, *think* or *know*, is strongly related to syntax-external factors, namely the pragmatics and the prosody of the utterance. The degree of formality of the context in which it is produced is a determining factor. The data reported therein reveal a contrast between formal and informal language in the usage of *that*. The informal data analysed in the paper comprises the speech of parents in several CHILDES files and the formal data are taken from Letters to the Editor in *The Economist*. As regards the informal data, out of the 3,288 sentences analysed, *that* was absent in over 97% of cases, while, in the 78 formal Letters to the Editor, *that* absence was only 13.63%.

Biber *et al.* (1999) observed the same behaviour in the use of *that*-omission in different registers. They found that in conversation the omission of *that* is the norm whereas academic prose favours its presence. They claim that the different distributional patterns found are related to what they call production circumstances and also communicative purposes. In other words, conversation favours omission of elements but academic prose is a more elaborated and explicit speech. These “production circumstances” can be the triggering factor for the *that*-insertion rule.

Moreover, and in view of the results in the current study, we would suggest that the two options, absence *versus* presence of *that*, are not in fact really optional, the choice is determined by register, an extrasyntactic factor. The percentages suggest that there is no real optionality: overt *that* occurs more often in formal contexts, absence of *that* is the default option in informal ones.

Optionality is a debated issue in both theoretical and applied proposals within the Minimalist framework. Optional phenomena are problematic in a framework which assumes an optimal design of the system, guided by economy principles. In L1 studies, optionality is also a crucial concept as child speech seems to contain a high amount of optional constructions. Two clear examples of this are missing subjects, which co-occur in child speech with overt subjects, or non-finite root infinitives, which also cohabit with certain inflected forms. Even in L1 studies, though, optionality has been questioned. Hyams (2001) reanalyses data in other works and finds that what is apparently optional depends on other factors that invalidate any account or description in terms of real optionality. What we see in the construction under analysis is that the presence or absence of *that* is also dependent on other factors associated to the utterance.

2.5 How L1 and L2 data can clarify the issue

We begin this section by briefly considering L1 acquisition of the two elements under analysis, *that* and *que*. Although there is not extensive research on this issue, complementisers in Spanish follow the expected order and are found in early utterances either a little before or a little after *wh*-questions (see Barreña 2000). In fact, Barreña found lexical complementisers before *wh*-question constructions in the production of the bilingual (Spanish-Basque) child he analysed. This suggests that the two constructions (lexical complementisers and *wh*-questions) are related to the acquisition of the CP layer, and thus indicates that *que* in Spanish is a proper C element.

The acquisition of English *that* seems to follow a different pattern. Interestingly, Norris (2004) analyses the production of three children and finds that the usage of *that* is delayed in comparison to their usage of a verb plus a finite clause. Norris attributes this late acquisition of *that* to the fact that this element is not a simple head, but an instance of T to C (Norris adopts Pesetsky and Torrego's view, see section 2.1). Independently of what the correct analysis of *that* is for adult English, these findings on L1 acquisition suggest that our conclusion related to adult speech is correct: the syntactic nature of *que* and *that* is not identical. Spanish and English children follow different paths in the acquisition of these elements.

Moreover, the L2 proposal in Sorace (2005) may also shed light on this phenomenon. Sorace claims that certain linguistic properties, those that “involve the complex interplay of syntactic and discourse conditions” (65) are harder for very advanced learners of a given L2 to acquire because of L1 interference. These are called “soft constraints” and have to do with “the mapping between syntax and lexical-semantics, pragmatics and information structure” (55). Conversely, “hard constraints” are related to basic structural properties of language; those syntactic features that L2 learners have to learn and whose production in very advanced speakers is similar or identical, to native speakers' production.

In Llinas-Grau and Fernández-Sánchez (2011) the distinction between ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ constraints was considered with respect to *that*-omission: Spanish and Catalan near-native speakers of English were tested in an oral task which elicited the use of complementiser

that in an informal context. The same experiment was repeated with native speakers of English. The results revealed that near natives produced sentences with an overt *that* in 75% of cases, in contrast to L1 English native production, where an overt *that* was quite marginal, reaching only to 8,3%.

In this article we provide evidence that seems to point in the same direction or, in any case, shows that the acquisition of *that* by L2 learners of English is not complete by adolescence.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Subjects

The study is based on 184 secondary school students ranging from 3rd year of ESO (Educación Secundaria Obligatoria) to 2nd year of Batxillerat, that is, 14 to 17 year-olds. All the subjects had been learning English as an L2/foreign language since the first year of Primary Education (6-7 years old) and had always received 3 hours a week of English teaching. All subjects were bilingual Catalan/Spanish. Whether the students were balanced or unbalanced bilinguals has not been taken into consideration since both Catalan and Spanish show the same syntactic behaviour with respect to the use of the complementiser in the contexts under analysis (see sections 1 and 2.3).

No placement test was applied, since the aim of the research was not to focus on the level of students, but rather on progress made concerning the use or omission of the complementiser although levels ranged from pre-intermediate to upper-intermediate. In Table 1 we provide information about the number of participants, the hours of exposure to English, the number of *that*-clauses produced and the mean number of words in the essays taken as a basis.

Table 1. Participants, exposure, *that*-clauses and number of words per essay

Students	Number of participants	Hours of exposure	Number of <i>that</i> -clauses	Mean number of words/essay
3 rd ESO	46	840	50	101.93
4 th ESO	63	945	61	94.23
1 st Batx	48	1050	56	128.91
2 nd Batx	27	1155	49	184.48
	184		216	

3.2 Data

Students were asked to write a composition about extracurricular activities and they were given 20 minutes to carry out the activity. The present research focuses only on the use of the verbs *think* and *say* with respect to complement clauses as these are the paradigmatic ‘bridge verbs’ which allow *that* absence in their finite clauses. In our analysis of the data the input has also been taken into consideration. In particular, the students under analysis were exposed to instructed SLA. One of the properties of this kind of input is that it is

non-native and very often incomplete. Foreign Language Learning takes place in a non-naturalistic setting, in which reference to the L1 is often made to explain certain syntactic structures.

Apart from analysing the compositions of the aforementioned students, part of the research focused on analysing two English textbooks of each course (from 3rd ESO to 2nd Batxillerat). In none of the books was there a section devoted to the analysis of *that*-deletion explicitly, so the study focused on the number of exercises which indirectly contained practice on the phenomenon, as part of activities of speaking or language in use. By way of illustration, activities such as the following were considered: “Ask your partner his/her opinion about these topics using the following expressions: I think that..., in my opinion, I believe that..., frankly... Topics: Mobile phones, Smoking, Football matches on TV”.

Use versus omission of the complementiser in the different activities in the textbooks under analysis was calculated, as Table 2 shows:

Table 2. Number of examples of insertion and omission of *that* in textbook activities

3 rd ESO	4 th ESO	1 st Batxillerat	2 nd Batxillerat
6 insertion	7 insertion	7 insertion	9 insertion
10 omission	9 omission	11 omission	14 omission

4. RESULTS

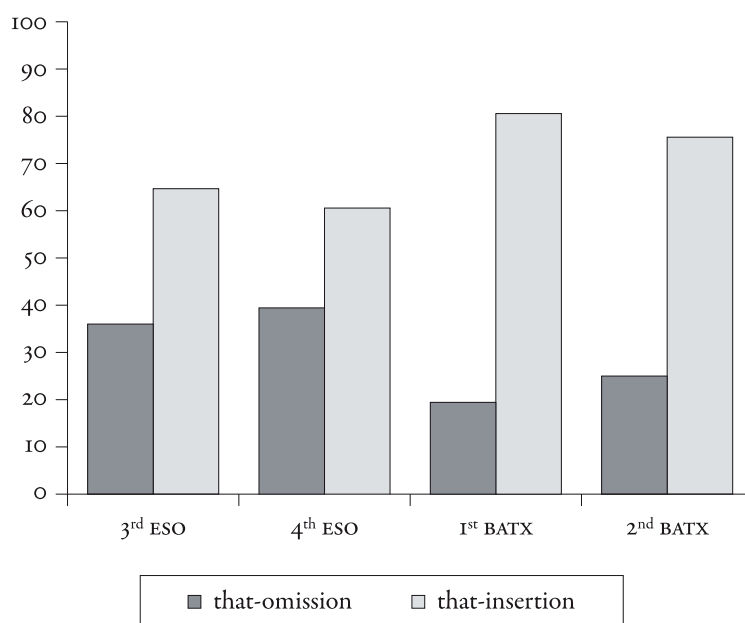
In order to analyse the insertion and omission of *that* in students’ written *that*-clauses and its relationship with their stage of L2 development, T-tests were carried out to find out if significant differences in insertion/omission existed within year groups and to analyse whether the percentages of *that*-omission were significantly different between year groups.

Table 3. Percentages of *that*-omission and *that*-insertion and p-values.

Students	Number of <i>that</i> -clauses	<i>that</i> -omission	<i>that</i> -insertion	p-value (<i>that</i> -omission between year groups)
3 rd ESO	50	18 (36%)	32 (64%)	p= .225
4 th ESO	61	24 (39.34%)	37 (60.65%)	p= .171
1 st Batx	56	11 (19.64%)	45 (80.35%)	p= .262
2 nd Batx	49	12 (24.48%)	37 (75.51%)	p= .160
Total	216	65 (29.86%)	151 (70.12%)	p= .0008

As Table 3 shows, the number of *that*-clauses in the students’ essays remains quite stable across year groups, although, as we can see in Table 4 further below, the mean number

of words per essay increases significantly with age, indicating that the use of *that*-clauses alone does not clearly illustrate development in students' interlanguage. As for the use and omission of *that*, taking into account overall percentages first, only 29.86% of *that*-clauses used by students display *that*-omission. In fact, the differences between the insertion and the omission of *that* are only significant in 1st and 2nd Batx, where there is a preference for the use of *that*. In the first two years studied the difference is not significant, so there does not seem to be a strong preference for one or the other. Regarding percentage of *that*-omission across year groups, there was a slight decrease as age and exposure—and hence supposedly development— increase. Yet differences are not statistically significant. Graph 1 illustrates the data in Table 3.



Graph 1. Percentages of *that*-omission and *that*-insertion.

The fact that no significant differences were found across year groups might indicate that no development in the students' L2 proficiency had actually taken place. Among other factors to be considered in the discussion section, the mean number of words per essay was calculated as a fluency measure and hence an indicator that development was actually taking place in the students' interlanguage and T-tests were carried out between the results for each year group to detect significant differences. In Table 4 the results of this analysis show that the mean number of words per essay significantly increases from 4th ESO to 1st Batx. and from 1st Batx. and 2nd Batx. Between the first and the second courses analysed the mean number of words per essay very slightly decreases but the difference is not significant.

Table 4. Mean number of words per essay and p-values (between courses).

Students	Mean number of words/essay	p-value
3 rd ESO	101.93	p= .503
4 th ESO	94.23	
1 st BATX	128.91	p= .009
2 nd BATX	184.48	p= .0005

From the data analysed, we conclude that students from all four year groups actually use *that*-omission in their written *that*-clauses but clearly much less than they use *that*-retention, which indicates that they might have started acquiring the syntax of *that*-omission but still show a strong preference for their L1 option, namely the obligatory presence of *that*. In fact, general percentages show a significantly higher use of *that*-insertion and differences are also significant in the last two courses analysed. As for the use of *that*-omission across year groups, it slightly decreases as age and exposure to the target language increase but differences are not significant. This might be taken to imply that the students’ L2 proficiency does not develop over the four years but in fact and as pointed out above, their essays do show L2 development, as the number of words per essay fluency measure indicates. The mean number of words per essay significantly increases from the second to the third course and from the third to the fourth, hence illustrating the students’ progress. What clearly does not show development is their insertion and omission of *that*.

5. DISCUSSION

We can analyse the results of this study in relation to what adult native speakers of English do and how their use and omission of *that* is accounted for. As explained in section 2.4, Llinas-Grau and Fernández-Sánchez (forthcoming) have observed 97% *that*-omission in informal adult native speaker English and a notable insertion of *that* in formal contexts. The data considered in section 2.5 (from Llinas-Grau and Fernández-Sánchez, 2011), also showed that native speakers deleted *that* in 91.7% of cases, whereas L2 near-native speakers only did so in 25% of cases, thus revealing specific L2 speaker difficulty in the acquisition of *that*-omission. The performance of these almost natives coincides with the written data we have analysed in the previous sections. L2 learners do not show full acquisition of *that*-omission in any of the levels studied.

More specifically in the case of the data examined here, and bearing in mind that the participants’ proficiency level ranged from pre-intermediate to upper-intermediate, we might well expect non-native use and omission of *that*. Although the context analysed —school essays— is written and might be considered formal, students do not tend to regard it as a very formal context but rather as a common everyday school activity that only the teacher will read. Participants indeed use *that*-omission in their compositions hence

indicating that they have at least begun to acquire its syntax and that their interlanguage use of *that* is not constantly interfered with by its L1 features where the use of *that* in embedded clauses is compulsory (except in very residual formal contexts, see section 2.3). However, *that*-insertion is significantly higher when general percentages are taken into account and in the last two year groups and non-significantly higher in the first two year groups. Considering that this context is not regarded as formal by the participants and given the results presented in Llinas-Grau and Fernández-Sánchez (2011; forthcoming), we would propose that these students are, as anticipated, not displaying native-like use of *that* but are instead frequently using their L1 option and are only just starting to show that they have acquired the L2 option.

Thus, in view of the information and results presented in the previous sections, we suggest that these L2 learners of English are analysing *that* as a proper C-element on a par with the Catalan and Spanish complementiser *que*. Moreover, given the low percentage of *that*-omission, we cannot say that the insertion rule we took to be responsible for the presence of *that* in native English underlies the performance of these learners. In relation to this, we observe in the data that no development takes place across year groups. This may be taken to illustrate that the students treat embedded clauses as CPs (and not TP)s, as if they were dealing with Spanish/Catalan sentences and have clearly not acquired the English insertion option.

The results obtained can also be related to the kind of input students have had, namely foreign language learning in instructed classroom contexts, with non-native and non-fluent language teachers and only being exposed to the target language three hours a week. The input teachers offer is often poor and it might not itself display *that*-omission. The students' learning occurs mainly through textbooks, where *that*-omission is not dealt with explicitly as a grammatical point (see section 3). The analysis of *that*-clauses present in two books per year group reveals that *that*-omission is only slightly more common than *that*-presence in all of them. School-based formal instruction might have provided enough exposure to trigger acquisition of the relevant syntactic features but clearly not enough exposure to facilitate register constraints on the use of the complementiser *that*. Further research is needed to test students' oral production in informal contexts or in more formal written contexts and also to observe how the phenomenon is affected when students reach higher levels of proficiency.

6. CONCLUSION

This article has explored the phenomenon of *that*-omission in different ways: we have considered the syntactic constructions which allow the presence and absence of *that* after *say*, *think* and *know* in English and shown how this phenomenon does not occur in Spanish or Catalan, the native languages of the L2 learners whose production we studied. We have also summarised some of the basic existing proposals on the issue in the minimalist literature and chosen one, Franks (2005), which captures the non-core nature of the phenomenon by postulating a rule of *that*-insertion external to the syntactic

component of the grammar. We analysed the written production of L2 adolescent learners of English in terms of the development of competence and the percentage of *that* presence and absence. Our corpus reveals that these L2 learners are strongly influenced by the syntactic structure of the embedded clauses in their native languages, which determines that the constituent selected by the verb *think* is a CP. L2 learners have not yet learned to distinguish between an inserted *that* (a syntactically inert element) and a proper *that* head, the only option in Spanish and Catalan. We suggest that the reason why L2 learners may not have reached complete competence in the usual native choice of *that*-omission may be due to several factors, among them, the input they receive in the context of classroom language instruction. The research presented here reveals that the phenomenon of *that*-omission may be a fundamental construction for L2 research.

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J. M. Coetzee's *Summertime*: Mistranslation, Linguistic Unhousedness, and the Extraterritorial Literary Community

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This article deals with J. M. Coetzee's *Summertime*, focusing on its depiction of linguistic multiplicity as allied with confusion and misunderstanding, given the impossibility of an unequivocal and straightforward road between languages and hence, the inevitability of mistranslation. In this work, we encounter characters that hover between languages without *properly* belonging to any of them, a linguistic unhousedness accompanied by territorial and cultural unsettlement. This is especially the case of John Coetzee, presented as an outsider as regards family and homeland, with an imperfect knowledge of Afrikaans and a relation to the English language depicted in primarily instrumental and professional terms. As a clear continuation of *Boyhood*, *Summertime* fancifully projects and subverts the illusion of belonging on the Afrikaans language, together with that of belonging on the Karoo land. Given the absence of other meaningful communities, such as the ethnic or the national, the only community projected by *Summertime* is the community of writers who, like J. M. Coetzee and borrowing George Steiner's expression, are 'extraterritorial' writers, never linguistically at home. In order to develop these ideas, attention will be paid to other works by Coetzee, such as *Boyhood*, *Youth*, *Slow Man*, *Diary of a Bad Year*, and the collection of letters he has exchanged with Paul Auster, *Here and Now*.

Keywords: J. M. Coetzee; *Summertime*; mistranslation; linguistic unhousedness; extraterritorial literary community

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Summertime, de J. M. Coetzee: La mala traducción, el desarraigo lingüístico y la comunidad literaria extraterritorial

Este artículo examina *Summertime*, de J. M. Coetzee, centrándose en el modo en que presenta la multiplicidad lingüística como unida a la confusión y la equivocación, dada la imposibilidad de un camino inequívoco y recto entre las lenguas y, por tanto, la inevitabilidad de la mala traducción. En esta autobiografía ficcionalizada, encontramos personajes que

oscilan entre distintas lenguas sin pertenecer *propiamente* a ninguna de ellas, un desarraigo lingüístico acompañado de un desarraigo territorial y cultural. Este es especialmente el caso de John Coetzee, que se presenta como desarraigado en cuanto a la familia y la nación, con un conocimiento imperfecto del afrikáans, y una relación con la lengua inglesa descrita en términos eminentemente instrumentales y profesionales. Como clara continuación de *Boyhood*, *Summertime* proyecta y subvierte de manera imaginativa la ilusión de pertenecer a la lengua afrikáans, así como la de pertenecer a la tierra del Karoo. Dada la ausencia de otras comunidades significativas, tales como la étnica o la nacional, la única comunidad proyectada por esta obra es la comunidad de los escritores que, como J. M. Coetzee y utilizando la expresión de George Steiner, son ‘extraterritoriales’, al no sentirse en casa en ninguna lengua. Para desarrollar estas ideas, prestaré atención a otras obras de Coetzee, tales como *Boyhood*, *Youth*, *Slow Man*, *Diary of a Bad Year*, y la colección de cartas que ha intercambiado con Paul Auster, *Here and Now*.

Palabras clave: J. M. Coetzee; *Summertime*; mala traducción; desarraigo lingüístico; comunidad literaria extraterritorial

But the Lord came down to see the city and the
tower that the people had started building.
And the Lord said, "If as one people all sharing a
common language they have begun to do this,
then nothing they plan to do will be beyond them.
Come, let's go down and confuse their language
so they won't be able to understand each other"
(Genesis 11.5-7)

1. INTRODUCTION

With *Summertime* (2009), J.M. Coetzee completes the sequence of fictional memoirs begun with *Boyhood: Scenes from Provincial Life* (1997) and followed by *Youth* (2002).¹ In the former, Coetzee deals with his childhood in Worcester and Cape Town in the late 1940s and early 1950s; in the latter, with the years spent by the young John Coetzee in London in the early 1960s. *Summertime* focuses on the years 1972 to 1977, when J.M. Coetzee returned to South Africa, after completing his PhD in the United States. In his third *autre-biographical* work,² John Coetzee is presented as dead,³ with the bulk of the narrative made up of five interviews carried out by a young English biographer, Mr Vincent, to people that had some kind of relationship with John Coetzee during the years in question. These interviews are preceded and followed by extracts coming from Coetzee's fictional notebooks dating from that time. From this assemblage of texts what emerges is an image of a single John Coetzee living with his widowed father in suburban Cape Town, engaged in manual labour and part-time teaching, publishing his first novels, and trying to establish meaningful relationships with women.

There are facts that establish a clear gap between the fictional Coetzee as presented in *Summertime* and the historical Coetzee: J.M. Coetzee's mother did not die until 1985, he had married in 1963, and had become the father of two children by the early 1970s.⁴ In spite of the impossibility, hence, of a complete assimilation between J.M. Coetzee, the writer and historical figure, and John Coetzee, the character created in *Summertime*, I would like to argue that in the construction of this fictional persona we can detect

¹ This essay was originally conceived as a paper presented in the Coetzee Collective, at the University of Cape Town, and at Rhodes University (Grahamstown, South Africa) in May 2010, and has greatly benefited from the comments and questions received on both occasions. It is part of a research project funded by the Spanish Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness (ref. FF12012-36765), whose support is gratefully acknowledged.

² This adjective has become generalized among Coetzee's critics in order to describe the inextricability between truth and fiction, personal engagement and detachment that we find in all the works in which he deals with his own self. The term '*autrebiography*' was actually coined by Coetzee himself in the 'Retrospect' of *Doubling the Point* (1992a: 394), in which he indulges in a typically Coetzeean *autrebiographical* exercise. In a 2002 interview with David Attwell, he similarly asserts that "all autobiography is *autre-biography*" (2006: 216).

³ Thus, Grant Farred describes *Summertime* as an "autopbiography": "the critical act of taking apart —autopsying— the life of the author before that life is (physically) over" (2011: 832).

⁴ See Patrick Denman Flanery's review of this novel, 'J.M. Coetzee's *Autre-biography*' (2009), for a discussion of Coetzee's interest in keeping a gap between himself and the character he creates in this fictional memoir.

concerns and predicaments that are also common to Coetzee, the writer, and that traverse his literary production, especially his trilogy of fictionalized memoirs. Specifically, my focus is on this work's concern with the language(s) of the self, these languages being English and Afrikaans in Coetzee's case. My analysis supports J. C. Kannemeyer's claim in his biography of J. M. Coetzee that Coetzee "had, from a relatively early age, an awareness of the twofold nature of his origins and a measure of ambivalence towards English and Afrikaans" (2012: 59).⁵ In *Summertime* —and *Boyhood*— Afrikaans is fancifully associated with a linguistic belonging and a cultural rootedness simultaneously questioned and yearned for, whereas it is suggested that in spite of his proficient command of English, John Coetzee does not belong in this language, approaching it "as a foreigner would" (Coetzee 1993: 7).

2. MISTRANSLATION

In *Summertime*, linguistic multiplicity and linguistic translation are highlighted from the opening pages, namely, in the 'Author's Note', which reads as follows: "My thanks to Marilia Bandeira for assistance with Brazilian Portuguese, and to the estate of Samuel Beckett for permission to quote (in fact to misquote) from *Waiting for Godot*". Brazilian Portuguese is the language in which one of the interviewees, Adriana, answers Vincent's questions, so that a translator must mediate between them. The scene in which full communication between two characters is thwarted, due to a linguistic barrier, leading to the intervention of a third character, is a repeated one in *Summertime*. Vincent tells another one of the interviewees, John's cousin Margot, that in his transcription of their interview into "an uninterrupted narrative" spoken in Margot's voice, he "asked a colleague from South Africa to check that [he] had the Afrikaans words right" (Coetzee 2009: 87). Or Sophie, erstwhile colleague of John at UCT, remembers how she took part in the interview that a journalist from *Libération* carried out with him: "I thought I would assist in case there were *language problems*, John's French was not good" (2009: 236, emphasis added).

The reference to language problems is found in another revealing passage, in which we encounter John and his cousin Margot remembering a disturbing episode of their childhood on the family farm in the Karoo, Voëlfontein: when John pulled the leg off a locust, so that his cousin had to kill it. John asserts that everyday he asks the poor thing's forgiveness — "*Kaggen*, I say, forgive me" (2009: 96)—, and gives the following answer to Margot's question about the meaning of *Kaggen*: "*Kaggen*. The name of mantis, the mantis god. But the locust will understand. In the afterworld there are no *language problems*. It's like Eden all over again" (2009: 96, emphasis added). The world

⁵ The reception of this biography in South Africa has been fairly controversial, mainly because of Imraan Coovadia's extremely hostile review —full of disparaging comments towards Coetzee the man and the writer— of what he calls "a badly written and sycophantic biography" (2012), and Ian Glenn's harsh response (2013) to Coovadia, arguing that his review is symptomatic of the struggles and tensions that characterize the South African literary field.

we encounter in *Summertime*, in contrast, is no Eden, but a world full of “language problems”. It is a postlapsarian world, the world after the destruction of the Tower of Babel, the mythical event taken to mean, according to Jacques Derrida, “the origin of the confusion of tongues, the irreducible multiplicity of idioms, the necessary and impossible task of translation” (2002: 109).

This confusion and multiplicity of tongues is manifested in the very linguistic texture of *Summertime*, pervaded by myriad words and phrases coming from languages other than English: Latin in “*dies irae, dies illa*” (Coetzee 2009: 6), “*mirabile dictu*” (30) and “*Homo sapiens*” (58); Russian in “*gulag*” (15); Yiddish in “*Schlemiel*” (25); German in “*Strafkolonie*” (48), “*Ich bin der Erstgeborene*” (49), “*Bagatellenmeister*” (82) and “*Autobahnen*” (143); French in “*amour propre*” (43), “*bien-pensant*” (66), “*salle à manger*” (74), “*célibataire*” (160, 162), “*comme il faut*” (166), “*entre nous*” (172), “*Francophonie*” (222), “*agrégation*” (222) and “*dirigistes*” (240); Khoi in “*Kaggen*” (96) and “*Koup*” (103); Portuguese in “*Senhora*” (155), “*brevidades*” (159), “*caminhonete*” (166), “*mamãe*” (168), “*militares*” (171), “*sublimar*” (175), “*despachantes*” (177), “*balet folclórico*” (182) and “*Brasileira*” (200); Italian in “*prima*” (64) and “*La donna è mobile*” (248); or Spanish in “*fin*” (84). In all cases, the words are introduced in italics, as a way of pointing to their foreignness, even to their intrusive character, to a resistant, stubborn linguistic materiality that cannot be assimilated or dissolved into the prevailing English discourse.

This attention to the materiality of words in their original language coincides with what Coetzee asserts in ‘Homage’ about the confrontation with the original poem when reading foreign poetry: “There is something physical in confronting the poem in the original, something about the words themselves, in their own brute presence . . . that cannot be provided by translation of any kind” (1993: 5). Carrol Clarkson calls attention to this passage, as she analyzes the “appreciation of language as material substance” that we keep encountering throughout Coetzee’s writing: “The sense of a signifying act *saying* through the fact of its perceptible materiality, rather than through an abstract semantics” (2010: 67, italics in the original). As Coetzee suggests in ‘Homage’, this materiality of words is untranslatable, and hence the introduction, in *Summertime*, of words in their original language without the English equivalent.

Furthermore, as he argues in ‘Roads to Translation’, “the necessary imperfection of translation” is due to “the incapacity of any given target language to supply for each single word in the source language a corresponding single word that would cover, precisely and without overlap, the denotation of the original and its major connotations” (2006: 216). In *Summertime*, this becomes especially obvious on the numerous occasions in which we encounter the Afrikaans language, particularly in the section devoted to Margot, which is pervaded, not only by words, but by whole sentences in Afrikaans. The point is often to convey the multiple, complex, intimate shades of meaning of certain Afrikaans words; semantic and cultural nuances that render an exact, accurate translation into English problematic, as in Margot’s detailed description of the denotative and connotative meanings of the word *slapgat* (2009: 116).

But the most revealing passages are those in which John is presented as uneasily and unsteadily posed between English and Afrikaans. Margot describes John's Afrikaans as "halting", full of solecisms that her sister Carol will parody (2009: 93), and many of which are a consequence of his making literal translations from English expressions into Afrikaans: "*Ek het my vanmiddag dik gevreet*": I stuffed myself like a pig this afternoon" (2009: 93). The two languages are juxtaposed, only to underline their mismatch, the insurmountable difference between them. Like in the passage from 'Roads to Translation' quoted above, the emphasis falls on the impossibility of finding a single, unequivocal, straightforward road leading from one language to another, and on the uncertain middle ground which the self inhabits.

3. LINGUISTIC UNHOUSEDNESS: AFRIKAANS

Summertime, then, is strongly concerned with what Rita Barnard has called "the Afrikaans Coetzee . . . the earlier self who once moved with the Afrikaans language around him" (2009: 101). Barnard assumes that after his leaving South African soil —Coetzee left South Africa for Australia in 2002—, Coetzee's "shadowy, hypothetical Afrikaans self will no doubt come to seem evermore like a discarded shell" (102). But contrary to that prediction, the Afrikaans self returns with full strength in *Summertime*, which constitutes, in this sense, a clear continuation of its predecessors, *Boyhood* and *Youth*. In the three memoirs, especially in the first and the third, John's ambivalent relation with the English and the Afrikaans language is presented as a central dimension of his identity.

In *Boyhood*, there are multiple references to the boy's relation to the Afrikaans language. This is so because as J. C. Kannemeyer explains, when his family moved from Cape Town to Worcester in 1949, John was exposed for the first time to a predominantly Afrikaans-speaking community. Before this moment, the Afrikaans he had been in contact with had been the Afrikaans spoken on Voëlfontein: the Afrikaans of coloured boys and the Afrikaans spoken by his father's family side, an Afrikaans pervaded by English words (2012: 51). And this is the kind of Afrikaans that the child enjoys: "the happy, slapdash mixture of English and Afrikaans" (Coetzee 1998: 81). It is a "funny, dancing language" that is "lighter, airier than the Afrikaans they study at school, which is weighed down with idioms that are supposed to come from the *volksmond*, the people's mouth, but seem to come only from the Great Trek, lumpish, nonsensical idioms about wagons and cattle and cattle-harness" (1998: 81).

There are, then, political and ideological reasons behind the child's rejection of Afrikaans, even if he is not fully aware of them: what is rejected is Afrikaans as the language of Afrikaner nationalism and of the apartheid system. Hence the multiple references to the feelings of repulse or alienation that a certain type of Afrikaans provokes in John. He characterizes the language of Afrikaans boys as "filthy" and full of "obscenity" (1998: 57) and "mocks his father's speech: '*Mammie moet 'n kombers oor Mammie se knieë trek anders word Mammie koud*' —Mommy must put a blanket over Mommy's knees, otherwise

Mommy will get cold. He is relieved he is not Afrikaans and is saved from having to talk like that, like a whipped slave" (Coetzee 1998: 49). Afrikaans is associated with a rigidity, hierarchy and sense of distance between the interlocutors that the boy strongly dislikes. His command of Afrikaans, furthermore, is a limited and restricted one: "The range of Afrikaans he commands is thin and bodiless; there is a whole dense world of slang and allusion commanded by real Afrikaans boys . . . to which he has no access" (1998: 124).⁶

Similarly, in *Summertime*, John's Afrikaans is characterized by artificiality and rigidity, cut off from the living, oral language of the people, as we see in Margot's mocking description of John's attempt to have a conversation with the farm labourer, Hendrik, in his "stiff and bookish" Afrikaans (Coetzee 2009: 124). As put by Sophie, "he knew Afrikaans well . . . though much in the same fashion as he knew French, that is, better on the page than spoken" (2009: 238). And John's imperfect command of the Afrikaans language is related to his not wholly belonging to Afrikaner culture, to the Afrikaner *volk*, a fact underlined by Margot: "Does he really think of himself as an Afrikaner? She doesn't know many real [*egte*] Afrikaners who would accept him as one of the tribe. Even his father might not pass scrutiny. To pass as an Afrikaner nowadays you need at the very least to vote National and attend church on Sundays" (2009: 95).

In *Boyhood*, the child is already aware of the fact that he cannot have an Afrikaner identity: "Because they speak English at home, because he always comes first in English at school, he thinks of himself as English. Though his surname is Afrikaans, though his father is more Afrikaans than English, though he himself speaks Afrikaans without any English accent, he could not pass for a moment as an Afrikaner" (124). In *Doubling the Point*, Coetzee gives both linguistic and cultural reasons for his non-Afrikaner identity: "No Afrikaner would consider me an Afrikaner. . . . Why not? In the first place, because English is my first language, and has been since childhood. An Afrikaner (primary and simplest definition) is a person whose first language is Afrikaans . . . In the second place, because I am not embedded in the culture of the Afrikaner" (1992a: 342). The boy in Coetzee's first fictionalized memoir feels a profound disjuncture in his personal and familial identity, due to what he perceives as an abnormal adherence to two different languages in a context in which Afrikaner nationalism emphasized the unbridgeable separateness between linguistic and ethnic groups. In such a context, "their family 'is' nothing" (1998: 18): it cannot be made to fit into prevailing categories or labels. Coetzee has referred to these problematic early linguistic experiences — "as a child from an Afrikaans background attending English-medium classes, at a time of raging Afrikaner nationalism, a time when laws were being concocted to prevent people of Afrikaans descent from bringing up their children to speak English" — as central to his development of a feeling of linguistic and cultural "alienness" (1992a: 393).

⁶ In *Boyhood*, close attention is also paid to the materiality of words, as the boy feels simultaneously fascinated and repelled by an Afrikaans linguistic materiality that remains unknown to him. Thus, he wonders about the spelling of Afrikaans monosyllabic words, or about the relation between Afrikaans and English words (Coetzee 1998: 57).

Nonetheless, as opposed to the passages from *Boyhood* quoted above, where the child examines Afrikaans with a detached perspective and critical eye, there is a moment in which he certainly seems to experience a feeling of linguistic belonging. He and his cousin Agnes —whom we should probably take as Margot's alter ego— go for a walk in the Karoo veld: "They began to talk. . . . He lost his reserve. As he spoke he forgot what language he was speaking: thoughts simply turned to words within him, transparent words" (1998: 94). This is a surprising moment in which the gap between words and thoughts is bridged, something that Coetzee, given his intellectual and philosophical background, would never accept from a theoretical, linguistic point of view, as we see in *White Writing: On the Culture in South Africa*, when he analyzes the literary production of early writers of European descent in South Africa. Coetzee detects in these writers a common anxiety about the English language as a medium that cannot fit the African natural world, that cannot be "authentically African" (1988: 7). However, he is suspicious of the notion of "an authentic language", the quest of which "is pursued within a framework in which language, consciousness, and landscape are interrelated" (1988: 7), and argues that "dissatisfaction with English would in truth hold for any other language, since the language being sought after is a natural or Adamic language, one in which Africa will naturally express itself, that is to say, a language in which there is no split between signifier and signified, and things are their names" (1988: 9).

In spite of this critical dismissal of the concept of an authentic or natural language, the passage from *Boyhood* quoted above actually constitutes an Adamic moment in which the split between signifier and signified disappears. According to Barnard, this is "a moment of unproblematic, culturally unfettered expression of a sort that Coetzee, the academic writer, would never associate with any given language" (2009: 96). This is certainly true, but still, or precisely because of that, we must approach the question of why Coetzee chooses to depict such a linguistic experience at all. The first thing to be taken into account is that the language John and his cousin Agnes are speaking is Afrikaans, and not English. Also it is important to notice that there is another moment in this memoir in which the child's plunge into Afrikaans is similarly depicted as both spontaneous and liberating: "When he speaks Afrikaans all the complications of life seem suddenly to fall away. Afrikaans is like a ghostly envelope that accompanies him everywhere, that he is free to slip into, becoming at once another person, simpler, gayer, lighter in his tread" (Coetzee 1998: 125). Again, the child experiences in Afrikaans an ease and smoothness that he never attaches to his use of the English language. In *Youth*, John also describes a relaxing and soothing moment when he meets his cousin in London and "switches to the language of the family, to Afrikaans. Though it is years since he spoke Afrikaans, he can feel himself relax at once as though sliding into a warm bath" (2003: 127). It is in Afrikaans that we glimpse the possibility of full communion between self and language, and of unblemished communication between speakers of the language.

However, the fanciful character of this projection is revealed when we realize that, in *Boyhood*, the conversation between John and Agnes in the veld constitutes an ephemeral, almost dreamlike moment: he is with a girl he suspects being in love with, and they are

“in the middle of nowhere” (1998: 94). Just a few paragraphs before, his own command of Afrikaans had been questioned as we read that “the Afrikaans the shearers speak is so thick, so full of strange idioms, that he can barely understand it” (1998: 93). What is more, the apparently fluid and intimate linguistic exchange with Agnes is ironically reversed in *Summertime*, where Margot emerges as Agnes’s older self and hints at the defective nature of their communication, due to John’s imperfect command of Afrikaans: “His Afrikaans is halting . . . But they have spoken Afrikaans together since they were children; she is not about to humiliate him by offering to switch” (2009: 93).

It is also revealing that in *Boyhood*, all the moments in which the child feels liberated and fulfilled by the use of Afrikaans take place on the Karoo farm, in reference to which he asserts that “there is no place on earth he loves more or can imagine loving more” (1998: 79). In the final *autre*-biographical retrospect of *Doubling the Point*, Coetzee points out that “the family farm” is “the place on earth he has defined, imagined, constructed, as his place of origin” (1992a: 393-94). Thus, the imaginative projection of belonging onto language—the Afrikaans language—tends to go together with the imaginative projection of belonging onto the land—the Karoo farm: “The secret and sacred word that binds him to the farm is *belong*. Out in the veld by himself he can breathe the word aloud: *I belong on the farm*” (1998: 95). But this belonging is an impossibility. In the case of the language, we have already seen why. In the case of the land, the child is aware of the fact that on the farm “he will never be more than a visitor” (1998: 96), since it is Coloured servants, like Freek, who truly belong on the Karoo, unlike his family: “The Karoo is Freek’s country, his home; the Coetzees, drinking tea and gossiping on the farmhouse stoep, are like swallows, seasonal, here today, gone tomorrow” (1998: 87). As Farred has argued, Coloureds and Hottentots in *Boyhood* are “ineradicable reminders of the spectral restrictions the South African Other imposes on white land ownership” (2011: 839), so that “the Karoo is a sacred place, a land made holy by life, by death, by the knowledge and a desire for an impossible belonging” (Farred 2011: 842).

Similarly, love of the Karoo farm is strongly present in *Summertime*. What Margot and John “share above all” is “a love of this farm, this *kontrei*, this Karoo . . . To him and to her it was granted to spend their childhood summers in a sacred place” (Coetzee 2009: 134). However, their presence cannot be one of full belonging: “the unspoken question” that has always lain between them is “*What are we doing here? . . . What are we doing in this barren part of the world? Why are we spending our lives in dreary toil if it was never meant that people should live here, if the whole project of humanizing the place was misconceived from the start?*” (2009: 140). To the traditional Afrikaner conception of toiling the land as a way of legitimizing presence in South Africa and white ownership of the land, Coetzee opposes a vision of a land that resists and repels any human inhabitation.

4. LINGUISTIC UNHOUSEDNESS: ENGLISH

As his literary production attests and as opposed to what he presents as an imperfect command of Afrikaans, J. M. Coetzee enjoys a complete, indeed, an outstanding command

of the English language. However, according to Coetzee's own words in 'Homage', linguistic proficiency does not necessarily imply cultural embeddedness: "Though I have spoken English since childhood, I was not brought up in a culture that anyone would recognize as English. English in South Africa is what one might call a deeply entrenched foreign language" (1993: 7).⁷ Thus, in *Boyhood*, we read that the child "commands [English] with ease" (1998: 129) and that he "always comes first in English at school" (124). However, he never associates with this language the cultural rootedness and feeling of belonging that he fancifully projects onto Afrikaans.

The boy's relation to English is depicted as instrumental and academic, as we can also see in *Summertime*, in which the relation between John and the English language makes its appearance early in the book, in one of the passages presented as coming from the late Coetzee's notebooks. John receives a call from an employment bureau where he has left his particulars: "a client seeks advice on language matters" (2009: 10). The client in question is a woman who is convinced that lawyers "have misread the wording" of her husband's will, as they have misunderstood a sentence containing the word "notwithstanding": "I am hiring you as an expert on English, not as a lawyer," she says. "The will is written in English, in English words. What do the words mean? What does *notwithstanding* mean?" (2009: 11). Again, full attention falls on the materiality of the English language, on words and their potential, complex, contradictory meanings, and on the possibility of mistranslation even within the same language, which corresponds to the vision of language and translation defended by George Steiner in *After Babel*: "[T]ranslation is formally and pragmatically implicit in *every* act of communication . . . To understand is to decipher. To hear significance is to translate" (1992: xii).

Should he deliver a report, John would attach "a copy, attested by a Commissioner of Oaths, of the degree certificate that makes him an expert commentator on the meaning of English words" (Coetzee 2009: 11). His relation to the English language is one of expertise, legitimized by academic and professional qualification, and in this sense, it resembles that of a foreigner: "There is a sense in which I have always approached English as a foreigner would, with a foreigner's sense of the distance between himself and it. This has not implied any linguistic insecurity: since childhood I have felt confident that I write English better than most natives" (Coetzee 1993: 7). As we see in *Summertime*, John's approach to the English language is characterized by "a foreigner's sense of distance", not for lack of linguistic proficiency, but because of his instrumental and professional relation to it. He approaches the language from a technical and analytic stance, and never as the member of a linguistic and cultural community.

In this sense, John very much resembles Paul Rayment, in *Slow Man* (2005), and J. C., in *Diary of a Bad Year* (2007), both of whom undermine the connotations of intimacy and at-homeness we associate with the mother tongue. For Rayment, divided between his

⁷ This conception of English brings to mind the moment in *Disgrace* in which David Lurie reflects on English as "an unfit medium for the truth of South Africa" (Coetzee 2000: 117).

French and his Australian identity, territorial unsettlement —he has no “home”, but just “a domicile, a residence” (Coetzee 2005: 197)— is tied with a linguistic one: despite being “perfectly fluent” in English, he feels like “a kind of ventriloquist’s dummy. It is not I who speak the language, it is the language that is spoken through me” (2005: 198). Rayment undermines the idea of closeness associated with the mother tongue, as he says, “English came to me too late. It did not come with my mother’s milk” (2005: 197).⁸ Similarly, to J. C., “English does not feel . . . like a resting place, a home. It just happens to be a language over whose resources I have achieved some mastery” (Coetzee 2007: 197). Very revealingly, in one of the letters he writes to Paul Auster, Coetzee describes his relation to the English language in exactly the same terms. He tells his American friend that he feels completely identified with Derrida’s assertion, in *Monolingualism of the Other*, that, in spite of being monolingual in French, French was not his mother tongue. The same could be said of his relation to the English language, Coetzee claims, and in fact, of many other writers and intellectuals “who have a removed or interrogative relation to the language they speak and write” (2013: 65).

In this letter, Coetzee approaches the question of the relation between the self and language appealing to the idea of property. He remembers how when he was a child he “thought of the English language as the property of the English” (2013: 66), and points to how he sees this question today: “English may not after all be the property of the English of England, but it is certainly not my property” (2013: 67). Similarly, in *Summertime*, in the section focused on Adriana —a Brazilian dance teacher with whom John was apparently infatuated— the relation between John and the English language is also discussed in terms of property. John gives extra English lessons to Adriana’s daughter, Maria, but she has doubts about his capacity as an English teacher: “This Mr Coetzee sounds like an Afrikaner to me, I said to Maria Regina. Can’t your school afford a *proper* English teacher? I want you to learn *proper* English, from an English person” (2009: 157, emphasis added). When she accuses him of not being English, this is the answer she receives: “I agree I am not of English descent . . . Nevertheless I have spoken English from an early age and have passed university examinations in English, therefore I believe I can teach English. There is nothing special about English. It is just one language among many” (161). But this answer infuriates Adriana even more: “My daughter is not going to be like a parrot that mixes up languages . . . I want her to learn to speak English *properly*, and with a *proper* English accent” (161, italics added).

John and Adriana are obviously arguing from antithetical conceptions of language, and of the relation between self and language. Adriana repeatedly uses the term ‘proper’: she wants her daughter to learn “proper English”, not only in the sense of a correct or standard form of the language, but especially in the sense of ‘proper’ because of its being the property of a speaker and a speaking community; ‘proper’ because it belongs exclusively

⁸ As analyzed by Clarkson, what casts Rayment and Marijana, his Croatian nurse, as foreigners “is the English language, not Australia” (2010: 166).

and distinctly to a person and group. Adriana appeals to an organic identification between language and identity that John demystifies, as he argues that his just having used, spoken and studied the English language provides him with full authority over it. Although the principal of the school tries to explain to her that Mr Coetzee is “adequately qualified” as he “holds a university degree in English”, for Adriana, John “is not a proper teacher, he has no qualification”, because “he is not even English, he is a Boer” (2009: 187). The term ‘proper’ in relation to language and identity had already appeared in *Boyhood*. There are “the proper English boys, with English names and homes in the old, leafy part of Worcester” (1998: 129), but John is obviously not one of them, given his family’s linguistic and cultural hybridity.

This connection between linguistic competence and properness/property interestingly relates to Derrida’s approach to the story of the tower of Babel, which he interprets as a disruption of the proper name.⁹ Derrida argues that ‘Babel’ means babble, confusion, but also “the name of the father, more precisely and more commonly, the name of God as name of father” (2002: 105). Hence, “the proper name of God (given by God) is divided enough in the tongue” (108), and “at the very moment when pronouncing ‘Babel’ we sense the impossibility of deciding whether this name belongs, properly and simply, to one tongue” (111). God’s imposition of his proper name, then, paradoxically implies a disruption of property, and of the “universal tongue” and “unique genealogy” the Semites were trying to impose (111). Adapting Derrida’s reflections to the South African context of *Boyhood* and *Summertime*, John’s impropriety or lack of property derives from his confusing genealogy and *translated* identity, which disrupts the official Afrikaner ideology of essentialist, purist and mutually exclusive conceptions of identity and language, according to which “not everyone who lives in South Africa is a South African, or not a proper South African” (Coetzee 1998: 18).

Then, if *properly* speaking, John is neither fully embedded in Afrikaans, nor in English, what is he, “in this ethnic-linguistic sense?” (Coetzee 1992a: 342). This is a question that Coetzee himself poses and that he answers in the following terms: “I am one of many people in this country who have become detached from their ethnic roots, whether those roots were in Dutch South Africa or Indonesia or Britain or Greece or wherever, and have joined a pool of no recognizable *ethos* whose language of exchange is English. . . . They are merely South Africans . . . whose native tongue, the tongue they have been born to, is English” (1992: 342). Here Coetzee dissociates his use of the English language from any rooted sense of ethnic and cultural identity, and in this aspect, he resembles other characters we encounter in *Summertime*, a literary text full of characters hovering between different territories and languages, and hence, between different selves. Julia, Mr Vincent’s first interviewee, is a Jewish South African — “Of course I was a South African too, and as white as white could be. . . . But I had a second self to fall back on: Julia Kiš, or even better

⁹ See Jonathan Roffe (2004: 107-09) for an analysis of Derrida’s insights into the relation between translation and the proper name.

Kiš Julia, of Szombathely" (2009: 53)—, whereas Adriana relates in detail her traumatic experience as a Brazilian immigrant in South Africa, with her "bad English" learned in school out of books (177).

But it is probably the account that Julia gives of her father that constitutes the most dramatic example of linguistic and territorial dislocation, of what Edward Said has called "the unhealable rift forced between a human being and a native place, between the self and its true home" (2001: 173).¹⁰ For Said, exile entails a "crippling sorrow of estrangement" (173), an estrangement that pervades Julia's father's life as a Hungarian immigrant in South Africa: "He had forgotten who he was, forgotten the rudimentary English he picked up when he came to South Africa. To the nurses he spoke sometimes German, sometimes Magyar, of which they understood not a word. He was convinced he was in Madagascar, in a prison camp. . . . 'Ich bin der Erstgeborene,' he kept saying" (Coetzee 2009: 48-49).

If, as put by Said, exile "is fundamentally a discontinuous state of being" (2001: 177), it is language, or rather the confusing hovering between languages, as we see in the passage quoted above, that constitutes the most powerful expression of this discontinuity. There is, however, a fundamental difference between, say, Julia's father and Coetzee. If the former has been estranged from his native home, both in a territorial and linguistic sense, Coetzee seems to have never enjoyed an ethno-linguistic home in the first place. Borrowing George Steiner's words in *Extraterritorial*, he is "a writer linguistically 'unhoused' . . . not thoroughly at home in the language of his production, but displaced or hesitant at the frontier" (1975: 14).

5. THE EXTRATERRITORIAL LITERARY COMMUNITY

In its concern, then, with the relation between language and identity, and with the transference between languages, *Summertime* emphasizes *discontinuity* and *unhousedness*, *mistranslation* and *misreading*. Going back to the 'Author's Note,' it refers to a "*misquote*" (emphasis added) from *Waiting for Godot*: again, an allusion to the unavoidable deviation and unfaithfulness that take place in any act of translation. I would like to argue that this apparently marginal reference to Beckett is actually pivotal for the interpretation of *Summertime*. It implicitly highlights the centrality, in this text, of translation as "law, duty and debt" (Derrida 2002: 111), not only because of its reference to a misquote, but also because of this misquote particularly coming from *Waiting for Godot* (1954), or *En attendant Godot* (1952), a literary text that we could regard as having a translated identity in itself: it is constituted by two different versions, one in French and one in English, both written by Beckett, whose proper name, in the transition from the English to the French language, stopped belonging, properly, to *one* tongue.

¹⁰ In his autobiography, *Out of Place*, Said describes his ambivalent relation to the Arabic and English language in terms that very much recall Coetzee's relation to English and Afrikaans: "I have never known which language I spoke first, or which one was really mine beyond any doubt" (2001: 4).

The great influence exerted by Beckett on Coetzee is well known.¹¹ Steven G. Kellman has argued that “what Coetzee found in Beckett . . . was an author for whom nature and the world are problematic because language cannot be taken for granted” (2000: 59). In this sense, it is interesting that, in ‘Homage’, after asserting both his confidence and sense of distance in relation to the English language, Coetzee refers to Beckett and Nabokov as “the two writers who came closest to shaking my confidence that I had nothing to learn about English lexicon and idiom” (1993: 7): Beckett, who kept “a certain skeptical distance” (7) from his mother tongue, English, which he abandoned in favour of French, and Nabokov, who was immersed in three languages, Russian, English and French, since childhood —“I was a perfectly normal trilingual child” (Nabokov 1990: 43)—, and who switched from Russian to English in his literary writing. The case of these two writers is different from Coetzee’s, who has written his whole literary production in only one language, English. But, as we have seen, he may also be regarded as an ‘extraterritorial’ writer, in Steiner’s terms, since he is also “a writer linguistically ‘unhoused’” (1992: 14).

This is the moment in *Summertime* in which we find the misquote coming from *Waiting for Godot*: “Given the existence of a personal God”, he says, “with a white beard quaquaquaqu outside time without extension who from the heights of divine apathia loves us deeply quaquaquaqu with some exceptions” (2009: 112). The original passage in Beckett’s text is delivered by Lucky, after Pozzo commands him to think (Beckett 2000: 36-38). Coetzee considerably reduces Lucky’s speech, but in both cases, the mixture of “grammatical sense” and “transgrammatical nonsense” (Nealon 1998: 110) disrupts metaphysical, referential and teleological discourse (1998: 109). However, as it works in *Summertime*, what is more important is its subversion of the Adamic moment of transparent communication that we find in *Boyhood*, analyzed in the previous section, and that this passage rewrites. John and his cousin are, once again, in the Karoo, and when asked by her to tell a story, he responds with this confusing postbabelian babbling, so that “she has not the faintest idea what he is talking about” (Coetzee 2009: 112). Whereas in *Boyhood* thoughts turn into transparent words (Coetzee 1998: 94), what we have in *Summertime* is “forbidden transparency, impossible univocity” (Derrida 2002: 111).

Surprisingly enough, it may be argued that Nabokov, like Beckett, is a hidden presence in *Summertime*, specifically his *Real Life of Sebastian Knight* (1941), structured upon a biographical device extremely similar to that we find in *Summertime*.¹² If, in

¹¹ Coetzee wrote his 1969 doctoral dissertation on the Irish writer, with the title *The English Fiction of Samuel Beckett: An Essay in Stylistic Analysis*. In the following years, he published several articles on Beckett: ‘The Comedy of Point of View in Beckett’s *Murphy*’ (1970), ‘The Manuscript Revisions of Beckett’s *Watt*’ (1972), ‘Samuel Beckett and the Temptations of Style’ (1973) and ‘Samuel Beckett’s *Lessness*: An Exercise in Decomposition’ (1973). Apart from his critical production on Beckett, the trace of the Irish writer is visible throughout the whole of Coetzee’s literary career.

¹² Nabokov is also a writer to whom Coetzee has paid explicit attention, namely in ‘Nabokov’s *Pale Fire* and the Primacy of Art’ (1974). In this essay, Coetzee analyzes the different planes of reality in *Pale Fire* and their construction as surfaces of a mirror.

Summertime, Mr Vincent is gathering information to write the biography of the late famous writer, John Coetzee, in Nabokov's work, the narrator of the novel is trying to write the biography of his late half-brother, the famous novelist, Sebastian Knight.¹³ It is important to know that *The Real Life of Sebastian Knight* was Nabokov's first work in English, and, in fact, the question of Sebastian's transition from Russian to the English language is an important strain in this frustrated biography. His half-brother argues that "Sebastian's Russian was better and more natural to him than his English" (Nabokov 2001: 71), and finds "pathetic" that "Sebastian's English, though fluent and idiomatic, was decidedly that of a foreigner": "he made queer mistakes . . . misplaced the accent . . . mispronounced names" (2001: 40), so that "there was something vaguely un-English about his poems" (2001: 41). The similarity between Sebastian's relation to English as that of a foreigner, and Coetzee's approach to the English language with a foreigner's sense of distance is clear enough.

In one of the undated fragments of *Summertime*, John Coetzee reflects on how, if he had not resisted the Afrikaner establishment, he would now have "a family and a home within a community within a homeland" (2009: 254). Instead, the only community that is probably left to him is the 'translinguistic' and 'extraterritorial' literary community: the community of those writers, who, like him, Beckett, and Nabokov, have approached the English language as foreigners and outsiders; writers who, borrowing Coetzee's own words on Beckett, have chosen or have found themselves in the "plight of existential homelessness" (2008: 20), and hence, "outside the security of a unified single viewpoint" (Beer 1994: 209).

6. CONCLUSION

In *Diary of a Bad Year*, J. C. wonders whether "all languages are, finally, foreign languages, alien to our animal being" (Coetzee 2007: 197). As writer and intellectual, Coetzee endorses the view that the self can never be fully present through language, so that the result is a divided, 'foreign' identity. As he puts it in his letter to Auster, following Derrida, "language is always the language of the other. Wandering into language is always a trespass" (2013: 67). However, as I have tried to show, when he approaches this issue from an autobiographical and fictional perspective, he occasionally allows for a fleeting yearning—which he immediately subverts—for linguistic rootedness and belonging. *Summertime* is pervaded by a nostalgia it simultaneously questions and resists: nostalgia for a land and a language in which to feel at home; nostalgia for "that promised land where, at last, words are meant to mean what they mean" (Nabokov 2000: 64).

¹³ It is very revealing that Neil Cornwell's words on the biographical method followed in *The Real Life of Sebastian Knight* could be equally applied to *Summertime*: "*Sebastian Knight* itself emerges, overall, not so much a biography of its subject (whose 'real life' remains unknown and unknowable), but rather an account of the stumbling attempts to approach and compile this would-be biography—or even an oblique 'guide' to biographical methodology" (2005: 159).

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Patriarchal Hauntings: Re-reading Villainy and Gender in Daphne du Maurier's *Rebecca*

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Criticism of Daphne du Maurier's popular classic *Rebecca* (1938) can be divided into two mainstream interpretations. On the one hand, it was traditionally marketed as a gothic romance where the hero and the heroine conquered the evil women that separated them. On the other, certain feminist critics have recently provided a very different view of the story, aligning it with gothic narratives that deal with the dangers women suffer under the patriarchal control of their husbands. This would imply that du Maurier's novel should not be read as a traditional romance that promotes patriarchy, as the former interpretation suggested. In this article, I propose, through a Gothic Studies and a Gender Studies reading, that villainy in this novel is not exclusively linked to gender and, therefore, the victim and abuser statuses cannot be equated to femininity and masculinity, respectively. Instead, I argue that villainy in the novel is inextricably connected to being in a powerful position within patriarchy, and that it is the desire to maintain this position and perpetuate the patriarchal system that leads the main characters (men and women) to commit acts of villainy.

Keywords: Daphne du Maurier; gender; gothic; masculinity; patriarchy; *Rebecca*

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Fantasmas del patriarcado: una relectura de la villanía y el género en *Rebecca*, de Daphne du Maurier

La crítica sobre el clásico popular *Rebecca* (1938), de Daphne du Maurier, puede dividirse en dos interpretaciones principales. Tradicionalmente, la novela se vendió como un romance gótico en el que el héroe y la heroína vencían a las mujeres malvadas que los separaban. En cambio, recientemente, algunas críticas feministas han dado una visión muy diferente de la historia, que ha pasado a verse como una novela gótica que relata los peligros que las mujeres sufren bajo el control patriarcal de sus maridos. Esto implicaría que la novela de du Maurier no podría leerse como un romance tradicional que fomenta el patriarcado, como sugería la anterior interpretación. En este artículo, propongo, a través de una lectura desde los estudios góticos y los estudios de género, que la villanía en esta novela no tiene que ver exclusivamente con el género de los personajes y, por lo tanto, los roles de víctima y villano no pueden equipararse a la feminidad y la masculinidad, respectivamente. En cambio, sugiero que la villanía en *Rebecca* está directamente ligada al hecho de estar en una posición de poder dentro del patriarcado, y que lo que lleva a los personajes (hombres y mujeres) a cometer actos de villanía es el deseo de perpetuar el sistema patriarcal y mantener su posición de poder.

Palabras clave: Daphne du Maurier; género; gótico; masculinidad; patriarcado; *Rebecca*

1. INTRODUCTION

English writer Daphne du Maurier's novel *Rebecca* —first published in 1938 and adapted many times for the theatre, the cinema and the television— is still today a classic of popular fiction. Described by the author herself as “a sinister tale about a woman who marries a widower . . . psychological and rather macabre” (Beauman 2003: vi), the main plot in *Rebecca* concerns a young woman (Mrs de Winter) who falls in love with an older man (Maxim de Winter) that is hiding a secret about his first wife (Rebecca). Criticism of *Rebecca* is divided into those who read it as a gothic love story, in which a virtuous woman triumphs over an evil one by winning the love of a gentleman, and those who identify the novel as a reworking of the Bluebeard tale, in which the gentleman actually turns out to be a villain who unjustifiably murdered his first wife. The novel was originally advertised and sold emphasizing the former interpretation. As Beauman puts it, “*Rebecca* was touted to booksellers as an ‘exquisite love story’ with a ‘brilliantly created atmosphere and suspense’. It was promoted and sold, in short, as a gothic romance” (2003: vii). This traditional reading of du Maurier's novel as a romance became even more popular thanks to Alfred Hitchcock's 1940 adaptation.¹ As Watson states, “Hitchcock . . . makes the novel more unambiguously romantic” (2005: 43). To achieve this effect, Hitchcock “ma[de] Maxim more important and more sympathetic” by “rewriting . . . Maxim's murder of Rebecca as an unfortunate and practically self-inflicted accident for which he feels irrationally guilty” (Watson 2005: 43). These changes in the film are significant insofar as they have influenced readers' and critics' reading of the story. Even recently, some critics, such as Yanal (2000), still project the film's more romantic vision on du Maurier's text, claiming that Mrs de Winter's decision to become Maxim's faithful wife improves her situation in the end, overlooking the fact that this means being married to a murderer.

This reading of *Rebecca* as a romance has been revised and rejected by certain feminist critics, who point out that du Maurier is using the unreliable narrator technique; therefore, “*Rebecca* is only ‘romance’ if the reader confines him —or herself— to the narrator's viewpoint” (Watson 2005: 39), the narrator being the second Mrs de Winter herself. Yet, if the reader questions the unreliable judgements of the narrator, the novel seems to be telling a very different story about the ill-treatment that women suffer at the hands of men. However, this standard feminist interpretation of du Maurier's text has consisted mainly of inverting the main characters' roles. If the traditional reading sustained that the dead wife —Rebecca— was the villainess that interfered with the harmony of the heterosexual couple, Watson claims the opposite: Rebecca is a gothic heroine and the husband, Maxim, a Bluebeard figure who not only murdered his first wife, but also oppresses and alienates the second Mrs de Winter. Similarly, Nigro proposes the following reading:

¹ Here, ‘romance’ is understood as “the development of a love relationship, usually between a man and a woman” (Cawelti 1976: 41) which “seduce[s] [its] female readers into ‘good feelings’ about the dominion of men and the primacy of marriage” (Auerbach 2002: 102).

The common assumption about Daphne du Maurier's *Rebecca* figures the first Mrs. de Winter as a secretly conniving manipulator who had convinced the world that she was as morally flawless as she was beautiful. According to the second Mrs. de Winter, the narrator of the novel, Maxim murdered Rebecca justifiably: only he knew the true, corrupt Rebecca. What if, however, Maxim is the one who is lying, and Rebecca was as good as reputation held her, if his jealousy was the true motive for her murder? (2000: 1)

Thus, reading Maxim as a gothic villain seems to automatically imply that Rebecca is a feminist heroine, "a woman whose worst crime . . . was 'simply that she resisted male definition, asserting her right to define herself and her sexual desires'" (Wood in Nigro 2000: 1).²

I agree with the idea that *Rebecca* should be read either as a "failed romance" (Radway 1987: 157) or not as a romance at all,³ because "[it] signally fails to deliver happy heterosexual romance with its conventional promise of domesticity and procreation" (Watson 2005: 44). Nevertheless, when it comes to analysing villainy in the novel, the reversal of gender roles proposed by the feminist critics above is, from my point of view, as essentialist as the traditional reading: it does not break with the assumption that villainy stems from one sex to the detriment of the other. Furthermore, re-reading Rebecca as a heroine who dares to defy her husband is rather simplistic if we consider that Daphne du Maurier's presentation of this character is highly ambiguous. As I believe that du Maurier's text resists both the traditional and the standard feminist interpretations, my main question here is why criticism of this novel has not paid attention to the fact that *all* the main characters in the novel display signs of vice and dishonesty, regardless of their gender. I would argue that rather than any specific character, the ultimate gothic villain in Daphne du Maurier's novel is the haunting presence of an old-fashioned, strict patriarchal system, represented by Maxim's mansion, Manderley, and understood as a hierarchical system. The novel portrays the characters' inability to fulfil the highly demanding gender roles imposed by this system, which leads them towards hypocrisy, hysteria and crime.

I want to undertake this revision of the feminist reading of *Rebecca* for two main reasons, which are in fact interrelated. First, at a textual level, I believe previous readings provide a rather reductive view of gender roles and villainy, overlooking the ambiguous nature of Daphne du Maurier's novel. And second, at an extra-textual level, these readings do not challenge the assumption that abuses of power are gender-based, which encourages the female perception of man as the 'other' and the enemy, a posture which perpetuates inequality and naturalizes women as victims. According to Meyers: "by naturalizing heterosexuality as a Gothic gender system . . . [the] cultural feminist discourse potentially

² The original quotation can be found in: Robin Wood. *Hitchcock's Films Revisited*. New York: Columbia UP, 1989.

³ Radway distinguishes between 'ideal romances', which end with a promise of patriarchy, and 'failed romances', which deal with the problems of patriarchy. Daphne du Maurier's *Rebecca* could be said to belong to the latter.

leave[s] us suspended in a seemingly permanent state of victimization and paralyzing paranoia" (2001: 57).

The reasons why Rebecca cannot be considered the ultimate villainess of the novel have been pointed out by the critics already mentioned, who claim that she is actually a victim of her husband and that there is no possible justification for Maxim's crime. As a consequence, my starting point here will be Maxim de Winter, the patriarch himself, the character that has emerged as the new villain in *Rebecca*, but has been very much left at the margins of criticism at the same time. To support my thesis, I intend to read the novel from a Gothic Studies perspective, focusing mainly on how villainy is articulated throughout relationships between the victimisers and the victimised, while taking into account a crucial question in the field of Gender Studies and, particularly, Masculinity Studies: the idea that being a man is not necessarily the same as being in a powerful position within patriarchy (Kimmel, Hearn and Connell 2004). With this, I intend to sustain the idea that du Maurier's portrayal of villainy in *Rebecca* is not directly related to gender, but rather to the patriarchal abuses of power by those characters who find themselves in powerful positions, in terms not only of gender but also of class.

2. REVISITING BLUEBEARD'S CASTLE: DU MAURIER'S REWORKING OF THE FEMICIDAL VILLAIN

Rebecca, like 'Bluebeard', begins with the marriage of a rich aristocrat to a naive, inexperienced, young woman. From the very beginning, the hastiness, the coldness, and the condescension in the gentleman's marriage proposal raise the question of whether it is a marriage for love —as the narrator would have us believe— or just a convenient arrangement for a widower who needs an 'angel' for his house. On the other hand, the fact that the narrator's name is not revealed and that she is always referred to as 'Mrs de Winter' suggests that she is no one but Mr de Winter's wife; a young woman who is "desperate for the validation provided by a man's love —a woman seeking an authoritarian father surrogate", a pursuit that "involves both self-effacement and abnegation" (Beauman 2003: xiii).

According to Tatar, "the Bluebeard thread in the fabric of Gothic narratives offers an exceptional opportunity for elaborating on the problematic issues arising as women leave childhood behind and move toward an alliance with adult males" (2004: 69). In *Rebecca*, one of the problematic issues that the narrator has to endure once married to Maxim is her own ambivalent attitude towards knowledge and maturity, for which she feels both attraction and disgust. On the one hand, the second Mrs de Winter feels that life in Manderley demands that she is mature and experienced enough to manage the big house. Yet, all her attempts to behave as a mature woman appear unnatural and are continuously frowned upon or mocked by her husband, who wants to keep her away from what he refers to as "not the right sort of knowledge" (du Maurier 2002: 226). Thus, the husband's paternalistic attitude, treating her like a child and insisting that "it's a pity you have to grow

up" (59), thwarts his young wife's passage from immaturity to maturity. As a consequence of her husband's authority, as well as her own inexperience and self-consciousness, Mrs de Winter is alienated, not only from the upper-class world that Manderley represents, but also from the world of adult femininity, of which she remains ignorant. It is this sense of alienation, together with her frustrated attempts to fit in, that make her both hate and identify with Maxim's dead wife, Rebecca, whose ghostly presence represents the beauty, the intelligence and the knowledge that Mrs de Winter would like to possess. And the more acute her obsession grows, the more invisible she becomes: "in that brief moment . . . I had so identified myself with Rebecca that my own dull self did not exist, had never come to Manderley. I had gone back in thought and in person to the days that were gone" (224-25). This pressure is increased by Mrs Danvers, the housekeeper, who tortures Mrs de Winter by keeping the memory of Rebecca alive, telling Mrs de Winter that, unlike her, when Rebecca was a child she "had all the knowledge then of a grown person" (273). Mrs Danvers, as Lovell-Smith puts it, functions as the "older woman who plays the role of initiator offering the way to necessary knowledge" (2002: 203). This initiator, however, is presented as perverse by the narrator, who is both lured and disgusted by the knowledge offered by Mrs Danvers. This leads the second Mrs de Winter to become obsessed with the idea that she can never measure up to her predecessor, due to her own inexperience and her childish ways, and that she will never be good enough to live up to the highly demanding expectations of Manderley. This arouses her strong apprehension about her dead rival, while at the same time she cannot help admiring her and wanting to emulate her, seeking this "knowledge of a grown person" that Rebecca was said to possess.

The reading of Maxim as a Bluebeard figure is finally confirmed when Mrs de Winter discovers that her husband hides a dark secret: contrary to everyone's belief that Maxim adored Rebecca, it turns out that he actually murdered her. Interestingly, it is also at this point that the story moves away from its fairy tale precedent: Mrs de Winter is not going to be rescued from her murderous husband by another man, but, instead, will voluntarily, become Bluebeard's ally, helping him hide his secret and escape the law. Such a twist to the story already suggests that there is more to the novel's presentation of villainy than meets the eye. Whereas Maxim psychologically annihilates his second wife, with her own connivance, there is also his actual, physical murder of his first wife, which is what has induced some feminist critics to regard Maxim as an unquestionably villainous character. Choosing murder over divorce as a solution to his first wife's untameable nature, the patriarch attempts to maintain his reputation and ensure the continuity of his estate. When Rebecca's body is found in a boat, prophetically named *Je Reviens*, Maxim is aware that his secret will come out and confesses his crime to Mrs de Winter, telling her that "our marriage was a farce from the very first. [Rebecca] was vicious, damnable, rotten through and through. We never loved each other, never had one moment of happiness together" (304). For Maxim, Rebecca has all the qualities of 'the other': she was promiscuous, rebellious, adulterous, and possibly lesbian or bisexual (Berenstein 1995; Horner and Zlosnik 2000; Meyers 2001). She was—in Maxim's view—everything that is traditionally

undesirable in a wife, a threat against patriarchal rules. As he himself puts it, “she was not even normal” (du Maurier 2002: 304). At a symbolic level, Rebecca can be read as a supernatural force that threatens to feminize the estate and the patriarch, by challenging patriarchal order and heterosexuality.

As the feminist critics previously cited have noted, Maxim’s murder of Rebecca is predominantly motivated by Rebecca’s challenging of the patriarchal rules. What is more, as Maxim relates the facts to Mrs de Winter, he uses a manipulative discourse where he attempts to justify his crime under the pretext that, as Meyers (2001) puts it, women actually *create* their own gothic experiences: “It doesn’t make for sanity, does it, living with the devil”, he states (du Maurier 2002: 305). Thus, Maxim demonizes Rebecca and blames *her* for *his* crime. When he confesses what he did to Mrs de Winter, the confession acquires a melodramatic tone, as he starts positioning himself as the victim by stating that “Rebecca has won” (297). It is at this point that the tables turn. As Maxim becomes childish, Mrs de Winter becomes more like a mother figure — a protector — and the dependence that exists between them is reinforced. For the first time in the novel, it becomes apparent that these two characters need each other; it is not just the wife clinging to the husband. In this respect, du Maurier’s narrative differs significantly from its fairytale precedent, ‘Bluebeard’. As Russ explains, in gothic novels that follow the ‘Bluebeard’ narrative thread, “the Heroine . . . knows even more than the mere fact that danger exists; she knows that it *has all happened before*” (1995: 109). Even though Mrs de Winter knows what her husband has done, she does not take Rebecca’s murder as a warning. Instead, she feels relieved and affirms that “none of the things that he had told me mattered to me at all. I clung to one thing only, and repeated it to myself, over and over again. Maxim did not love Rebecca. He had never loved her, never, never” (du Maurier 2002: 306). As Meyers claims, “Maxim’s assertion that he hated and killed Rebecca makes him less of a villain and more of a hero in her eyes” (2001: 37). By contrast, from a feminist point of view, Maxim’s reputation as a gothic villain is finally confirmed, not only by his “overwhelming desire to control what [he] can and to destroy what [he] cannot” (Nigro 2000: 7), as well as by his revelation that “if I had to come all over again I should not do anything different. I’m glad I killed Rebecca. I shall never have any remorse for that, never, never” (du Maurier 2002: 336). And the reader is left wondering if he will, in fact, kill again in the future.

Last but not least, in his confession he also mentions that he would never go through a divorce, and preferred to murder Rebecca and lead a life of deceit instead. As Maxim explains:

[Rebecca] knew I would sacrifice pride, honour, personal feelings, every damned quality on earth, rather than stand before our little world after a week of marriage and have them know the things about her that she had told me. She knew I would never stand in a divorce court and give her away, have fingers pointing at us, mud flung at us in the newspapers, all the people who belong down here whispering when my name was mentioned. (306)

As this passage shows, Maxim's main preoccupation was to maintain his domestic sphere intact. Nigro, as well as other feminist critics, argues that Maxim's murder of Rebecca reveals "his anger toward Rebecca's demands to express her own sexuality" (2000: 5). While I agree that Maxim is repelled by Rebecca's sexuality, I believe that his main concern is not so much Rebecca's sexuality *per se*, but the effect that it might have on his estate and on his reputation. As he remarks, "what she did in London did not touch me —because it did not hurt Manderley" (du Maurier 2002: 308). This finally introduces a central issue: the fact that, unjustifiable as Maxim's act of villainy is, there is something else behind it, another source of villainy to which this patriarch is enslaved, just as the other characters are. And the key to this ultimate source of fear and anxiety in du Maurier's novel lies in Maxim's statement: "I accepted everything - *because of Manderley*" (308, emphasis added).

3. FROM BLUEBEARD TO GENTLEMAN UNKNOWN: THE MASCULINITY CRISIS OF DU MAURIER'S VILLAIN

The first time Mrs de Winter sees Maxim she tells the reader that he reminded her of a portrait she had seen of a certain "gentleman unknown", which is ironic considering that Maxim was presumably well-known for being the owner of Manderley. Thus, right from the very beginning, there is a sense that the glamour of Maxim's character is constantly downplayed and mocked by the author. Although I agree with the reading of Maxim's character as a villain, there are some implications of this reading I would like to question. First, he is not a traditional gothic villain whose passion makes him both fearsome and attractive at the same time. And second, for most critics, interpreting Maxim as the femicidal villain of the novel automatically implies extolling Rebecca as a feminist heroine who defies the patriarchal system and dies in the attempt. As Nigro states, "[an] examination of Maxim as an Othello figure reveals Rebecca as a gothic heroine, who is dominated by her husband and the 'tyrant custom', whose only real crime was in insisting on her right to individuality" (2000: 7). I suggest that, although the reader may indeed be tempted to admire Rebecca, du Maurier's text complicates this reading. Instead, I would argue that *all* the characters in the novel—including both Mrs de Winters—are willing to commit acts of villainy regardless of their gender, as a means to maintain their powerful positions within patriarchy. Furthermore, in *Rebecca*, there is no such thing as a real threat to the patriarchal system, not even on Rebecca's part, but rather there is a constant preoccupation about *its perpetuation*. Thus, Maxim de Winter is a more complex kind of Bluebeard and his crime is not only the result of misogynistic anger towards a perverse woman. It also has roots in this other source of villainy, to which he and all the other characters, male and female, are subjected.

Maxim belongs to a literary tradition which presents the patriarch as an ambivalent figure, complicating the Bluebeard character, as is the case of his literary predecessor, Charlotte Brontë's Mr Rochester in *Jane Eyre* (1847). The gothic villain and the gothic hero merge in the figure of Maxim de Winter: Maxim *is* a gothic villain when seen from

a feminist perspective, but in the eyes of Mrs de Winter, he is a hero, a protector, a father figure. In fact, Maxim is described by his peers as someone who “always gives a hand if he can” and would “give the coat off his back for any of his own people” (du Maurier 2002: 285). On the other hand, as Rey Chow explains, Maxim is also “the powerful man who perceives himself as a victim . . . even though the man is wealthy and often has dark moods, he is presented . . . as a kind of victim who has been wronged and oppressed” (1999/2000: 145). Unlike in Bluebeard’s tale, in *Rebecca* it is not the young, innocent woman that has to be rescued in the end, but Bluebeard himself. Maxim is a protector who has to be protected: he is the protector of the values and conventions of patriarchal masculinity, even of the ideal itself, which was increasingly under threat at the beginning of the twentieth century. As Maxim’s friend, Frank, states, “I wish there was more like him” (du Maurier 2002: 285), which suggests the masculine model that the people at Manderley celebrate—presumably embodied by Maxim—is the fast disappearing hegemonic model of masculinity. In order to determine what exactly is meant by ‘hegemonic masculinity’ as opposed to undesirable and, therefore, marginalized masculinity, Kane proposes the following “set of oppositions: good, light, unity, male, limit, mind, spirit, culture, high, ‘fit’” versus “bad, darkness, plurality, female, unlimited, body, matter, nature, low, ‘degenerate’” (1999: 11). The patriarch, in this case Maxim de Winter, was expected to fulfil the former set of requirements, as a means to emerge as the ‘fittest’ and distinguish himself from the ‘degenerate’. However, Rebecca’s ‘return’ complicates drastically the preservation of this ideal, as the plot becomes a struggle between those who desperately try to maintain Maxim’s ‘disguise’ as an ideal patriarch, and those who desperately try to expose him publicly. At this point, it is already clear that there is a discrepancy between, on the one hand, what Maxim pretends and is expected to be, and, on the other, what he really is. He has to play out the part of father figure, but he is a murderer and an incompetent patriarch. Yet, those characters who know or suspect that Maxim is guilty of murder still insist on covering up for him. In protecting Maxim, these characters are not just protecting a person but *an ideal*. The anxiety about the blurring of gender roles and the turn-of-the-century masculinity crisis are reflected in passages like this:

‘You don’t play golf, do you, Mrs de Winter?’ said Colonel Julian.

‘No, I’m afraid I don’t,’ I said.

‘You ought to take it up,’ he said. ‘My eldest girl is very keen, and she can’t find young people to play with her. I gave her a small car for her birthday, and she drives herself over to the north coast nearly every day. It gives her something to do.’

‘How nice,’ I said.

‘She ought to have been the boy,’ he said. ‘My lad is different altogether. No earthly use at games. Always writing poetry. I suppose he’ll grow out of it.’

‘Oh, rather,’ said Frank. ‘I used to write poetry myself when I was his age. Awful nonsense too. I never write any now.’

‘Good heavens, I should hope not,’ said Maxim (331).

The anxiety reflected here is not so much about women becoming boyish, but about men becoming feminized. Similarly, Maxim's main problem with Rebecca is not so much the fact that she cut her hair short and enjoyed sailing, but that he felt feminised and 'otherised' by her. The apprehension he shows towards her feminizing force reveals his preoccupation with manhood, and suggests that he may not be so assured of his masculine identity. As Light notes, "the manliness of [Daphne du Maurier's] heroes is often as doubtful as the docility of her heroines" (1991: 165) and, in her novels, we find representations of "a modern masculinity no longer entirely at ease with itself" (169). As Light adds, in du Maurier's novels, "a psychologising of sexuality . . . makes the idea of an untrammelled, undivided individual, and with it the notion of the English male as gloriously unselfconscious and at ease with his masculinity, impossible to sustain" (170). Instead, du Maurier's male characters are "full of self-doubt, nervy ('neurasthenic' even), and tortured about their own desires, dependent upon their own fantasies of an older, stronger man" (170). This is applicable to Maxim, whose fear of the feminization of his estate reveals his own insecurity as patriarch and the fact that he is aware of his incompetence and his incapability of living up to this ideal of "an older, stronger man" (170).

Reading Maxim de Winter as a representation of the early-twentieth-century crisis of masculine identity implies that "Maxim de Winter might be . . . masking his true personality with his 'double' as a gentried landowner" (Nigro 2000: 1). In addition to this mask of respectability that du Maurier's character wears to hide his crime and fulfil the model of patriarchal masculinity imposed on him, Light proposes another dimension to du Maurier's male characters, which is certainly applicable to Maxim:

[Daphne du Maurier's] men are not latter-day knights, their masculinity is detached from the idea of nationhood or empire which made the historical settings of the stories so often the romantic place where manhood was to be proven. Rather history has become a kind of Never Never Land in which men are still boys who never grow up and where any skirmishing is on the frontiers of sexual relationships with women who question their mode of being. (1991: 171)

When Rebecca's body is found and Maxim's pretence starts to fall apart, emphasis is put on the fact that Maxim becomes childish, whereas Mrs de Winter suddenly becomes an older person: "He stared at me at first like a puzzled child, and then he held out his arms" (du Maurier 2002: 402). As Light puts it, du Maurier's heroines are "finally older and wiser than their men and come in the end to mother them" (1991: 171). Although Mrs de Winter's maturity and wisdom are questionable, she willingly becomes Maxim's protector in the end.

This final reversal of the characters' roles suggests that, underneath the surface, Maxim has been an immature and incompetent boy all along, forced to become a father figure to protect his estate and his people. The tensions created by his incapability, both of managing his estate and of fulfilling the patriarchal system's highly demanding model of masculinity,

have turned him into a villain who has to conceal both his crime and his immaturity under an external image of the 'ideal patriarch'. Such behaviour, when enacted in real life, can mean, as Kimmel, Hearn and Connell point out, that "by continuing to follow the dictates of separate spheres, we may be creating manly men, but we are also crippling men emotionally and creating husbands and fathers who are destined to be outsiders or despots in their own families" (2004: 233). In light of this, I would argue that du Maurier's novel offers a literary representation not only of how women suffer at the hands of men, but also of men's problem of having to live up to the extremely demanding expectations of patriarchy in order not to be marginalized from the system. According to Kimmel, Hearn and Connell (2004), men's violent responses against those who are considered weaker are not due to their powerful position inside patriarchy but rather to their frustration when they realize that masculinity *per se* does not endow them with innate power, as they had been led to believe. Thus, meeting someone's resistance triggers their use of violence to reassert their patriarchal rights and this, I suggest, is what du Maurier subtly succeeds in depicting in the plight of Maxim de Winter.

4. "LAST NIGHT I DREAMT I WENT TO MANDERLEY AGAIN": PATRIARCHY AS THE ULTIMATE HAUNTING PRESENCE IN *REBECCA*

Assuming that patriarchy oppresses not only the women in *Rebecca* but the men too complicates reading the male character as the other. In this last section, I intend to conclude my reading of villainy in *Rebecca* by analysing how patriarchy is the ultimate corruptive force which negatively affects all the characters in the novel. At this point I would like to go back to some of the characters' insistence on protecting patriarchal ideals, focusing particularly on the case of Mrs de Winter, who is probably the most misleading character.

Whilst readers have been led to believe throughout the novel that Mrs de Winter is a good woman (in contrast to Rebecca), who is faithful to her husband and unconditionally in love with him, towards the end of the story she undergoes an important change which reveals that this might not be the case. I read Mrs de Winter as a selfish and hypocritical character who tries to restore patriarchy and protect the patriarch for her own benefits. She needs patriarchy because it is what secures her one and only identity. Being Mrs de Winter is what has worried her all along, as her obsessive repetition of the statement "I am going to be Mrs de Winter. I am going to live at Manderley" (du Maurier 2002: 61) suggests. In the same way, when Maxim confesses his crime, the only thing that matters to her is the fact that she feels that she has triumphed over Rebecca and this allows her to reassert her identity as mistress of Manderley. As Chow points out,

In the course of the second wife's progress, she gradually moves from being a powerless outsider, rejected by her society, to being an insider firmly rooted in the patriarchal order, its angel of the house. Her power as woman, notably, is achieved through the removal and exclusion of others,

especially other women, from her arena. Instead of her, it is these other women who must now remain forever on the outside. (1999/2000: 159)

Once her identity and her power have been reasserted through this 'triumph' over other women —Rebecca and Mrs Danvers— Mrs de Winter's docile character fades away and she enjoys exercising her new power on those she now considers to be below her in terms of class. As she states, "I had not thought it would be so easy to be severe. I wondered why it had seemed hard for me before" (du Maurier 2002: 324-25). By the end of the book, Mrs de Winter is no longer the shy girl who treated servants as equals and who felt like a servant herself. However, in order for her to exercise this power, she needs a man and she needs to be in a powerful position within patriarchy. And this is why she has to become Bluebeard's ally and protect him. As Allen and Ishii-Gonzalez claim, "in *Rebecca*, the ostensible narrative is that of one woman trying to prove the guilt of another in a manner that restores patriarchy" (2004: 9). And this restoration of patriarchy has to do with Mrs de Winter's own selfish need for self-definition. This is, therefore, not so different from what Rebecca did, i.e., submitting to being the patriarch's companion in order to benefit from certain privileges.

This interpretation of Mrs de Winter's character again supports the idea that *Rebecca* cannot be read as a novel where women are feminist heroines. What turns Mrs de Winter into 'someone' is the fact that she is the mistress of an estate. As Light affirms,

It is not just that places, and especially houses, are for du Maurier the repositories of the past, where we can best find and read the accumulation of marks of change, but that they house 'us': who we are, and what we imagine ourselves to be. . . . 'We' are best discovered in some place to which we belong and our connection with others depends on this sense of identity, a private, individual place, somewhere deep inside, which is then the true subject of history. (1991: 188)

And as Light adds, this message "can be a source of consolation or of terror, for if identity is attached to places and places are vulnerable locations in time, identity itself is potentially unstable, always in danger of being uprooted and of needing to be rehoused" (188). As a consequence, when Manderley is burnt down at the end of the novel and Mr and Mrs de Winter are forced to go into exile, they become ghostly figures; when Maxim loses his patriarchal estate, he becomes the unknown gentleman that he really is.

Last but not least, the question of why I do not read *Rebecca* as a gothic heroine even though she threatened the villain and why her rebellion cannot really be considered a threat to the patriarchal system are still unanswered. As Maxim explains to Mrs de Winter when he confesses his murder, his marriage to Rebecca was a farce:

She made a bargain with me up there, on the side of the precipice. . . . 'I'll run your house for you,' she told me, 'I'll look after your precious Manderley for you, make it the most famous show-place in all the country, if you like. And people will visit us, and envy us, and talk about

us; they'll say we are the luckiest, happiest, handsomest couple in all England. What a leg-pull, Max!' she said, 'what a God-damn triumph!' (305)

Maxim's part of the deal was to allow Rebecca to do whatever she wanted and not reveal her promiscuity. This bargain shows that Rebecca never really broke away from patriarchy. On the contrary, she was glad to be part of the system and to live among the luxuries of Manderley, and being the mistress of Manderley made it particularly easy for her to hide the promiscuous life that she led in London. As Maxim said to her, "What you do in London does not concern me. You can live with Favell there, or with anyone you like. But not here. Not at Manderley.' She said nothing for a moment. She stared at me, and then she smiled. 'Suppose it suits me better to live here, what then?' she said" (311). And, of course, it did actually *suit* her to live at Manderley. If we accept that Mrs de Winter is an insecure woman who would like to be "one whose sexual autonomy would not bring about her social disgrace" (Light 1991: 178), so too is Rebecca's character. Rebecca's problem is also "how to find sexual pleasure without going beyond the pale —how to be like, and yet not like, those 'other women'" (Light 1991: 177). Thus, just as Maxim admits that "I accepted everything— because of Manderley" (du Maurier 2002: 308), all the other characters in *Rebecca* are just as concerned about the perpetuation of the patriarchal estate and they cling to it for protection: Mrs de Winter needs patriarchy to define who she is, and Rebecca needs it to protect and conceal her unaccepted sexual behaviour under the image of a perfect wife. The preservation of Manderley and everything it represents in terms of class and patriarchal power is, therefore, the biggest preoccupation in du Maurier's novel and, as such, it is also the most prominent source of evil and suffering. According to Brinks, "castles [and big houses] figure as material emblems of an enduring patriarchal line . . . such estates assume great symbolic weight in the transmission of cultural ideologies, felt as burdens placed upon their inhabitants" (2003: 13). Even if Manderley *is* a burden for the characters, they are nevertheless desperately concerned about its preservation, because otherwise they will have to face "the crucial question . . . of how to live after the end of patriarchy" (Kane 1999: 212). And this is actually what happens at the end of the novel when the house burns down. Thus, the destruction of Manderley is not a liberation and a new beginning as the burning of Thornfield Hall in *Jane Eyre* is for both Jane and Rochester. Instead, the ending of *Rebecca* "poses a . . . question of social reproduction and continuance" (Chow 1999/2000: 152), the ruined estate becoming the most prominent haunting presence in the minds of Maxim and Mrs de Winter in their exile.

5. CONCLUSIONS

As Alfred Hitchcock very well observed, "*Rebecca* is the story of two women, a man, and a house. Of the four . . . the house, Manderley, is the dominant presence" (qtd. in Beauman 2003: vii). As I have pointed out throughout this article, Manderley represents patriarchy and the rigidity of traditional patriarchal rules regarding the socially imposed

boundary between femininity and masculinity. The source of all the trouble is Manderley; not Rebecca—who, after all, is absent from the narrative—and not even Maxim, who is simply a puppet in the upper-class world he is trapped in. Imposing “the belief that hierarchy and authority were ‘fit’ and egalitarianism was degenerate” (Kane 1999: 12), the strictures of patriarchy corrupt all the characters in *Rebecca*, and make them act as villains, oppressing each other and abusing their power whenever they can. The desperate attempts to perpetuate this system originate from a strong sense of nostalgia which pervades du Maurier’s narrative right from the very first line —“Last night I dreamt I went to Manderley again” (1)— for the values of the past that are under threat. As Light argues, “In *Rebecca*, it is the desire to go back, to live earlier times again in the imagination, which forms the mainspring of the plot. ‘Last night I dreamt I went to Manderley again,’ that resonant opening line, gives us the novel in miniature, as Manderley is revisited by an older and sadder narrator, remembering, looking back” (1991: 183). As Light adds, “at the beginning of the girl’s story in *Rebecca* nostalgia for the past is the root of all evil: going back to Manderley with her new husband sets in motion an unstoppable train of memories, real and imagined, which poison their life together and make the loss of their home inevitable” (1991: 184). This nostalgia and the constant need to return to what is familiar and reassuring show how the characters can never actually break away from the world that Manderley stands for. This is why, when Manderley is destroyed, Mr and Mrs de Winter do not feel liberated, but dislocated; they cannot find a satisfying alternative once the big house is burnt down. The consequence of this is a great anxiety about the end of patriarchy, “the problem of the connection between aristocracy and immortality” (Punter, 1996: 17) or rather Mr and Mrs de Winter’s realization that this connection does not really exist. At one point in the novel, it is mentioned that “all these big estates will be chopped up in time and bungalows built” (287), a remark which, being uttered by an anonymous character, seems trivial and may pass unnoticed, but which I think gives an important piece of information: it signals that the story is set at a time when social changes are taking place. And change inevitably brings about anxiety about the future.

Rebecca is, in short, a story about a man’s struggle to preserve patriarchal order at all costs, even if this means committing murder. However, what makes du Maurier’s narrative intricate is that this does not automatically turn the patriarch into a villain because he is also represented as a manipulated subject, eventually ruined by the world he is trying to preserve. As the aforementioned feminist critics have pointed out, the one who seems to be the principal victim of Maxim’s manipulative strategies is Mrs de Winter, his inexperienced new wife. Nevertheless, she herself is just as guilty of trying to manipulate others as Maxim is. To start with, being an unreliable narrator, she attempts to trick the reader into believing that her story is an ideal romance which promises patriarchy, stability and continuity. Moreover, her compliance with patriarchal norms and her rapture when she finds out that Maxim murdered Rebecca reveal that, far from being a victim or a heroine, du Maurier’s female protagonist is in fact the villain’s accomplice. *Rebecca* is, therefore, not only about how far a man can go to comply with patriarchal norms, but also

about how much a woman is —or, rather, since this also applies to Rebecca, women are— ready to accept, overlook and sacrifice in exchange for patriarchal stability.

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The Finkler Question: Very Funny is Very Serious

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Most critics agree that Jewish humour is defined by its capacity to laugh in the face of despair, tragedy, persecution. Humour has been a source of salvation for the Jews, allowing them to survive in a hostile world. Howard Jacobson is an English Jewish writer who has always celebrated the important role that comedy plays in literature. He regrets the false division between comedy and seriousness that critics have created and firmly believes that comedy reaffirms the value of life by offering us a way to transcend our sadness and misfortunes. In *The Finkler Question* humour indeed fulfils this redeeming function and allows Jacobson to tackle the dark forces of anti-Semitism.

Keywords: Jewish; comedy; seriousness; transcendence; anti-Semitism; anti-Zionism.

. . .

The Finkler Question: muy divertido es muy serio

La mayor parte de los críticos considera que el humor judío se define por su capacidad para reírse frente a la desesperación, la tragedia, la persecución. El humor ha sido una fuente de salvación para los judíos, permitiéndoles sobrevivir en un mundo hostil. Howard Jacobson es un escritor judío inglés que siempre ha celebrado la importante función que la comedia desempeña en la literatura. Lamenta la falsa división entre comedia y seriedad que los críticos han creado y cree firmemente que la comedia reafirma el valor de la vida al ofrecernos una manera de trascender nuestras tristezas y desgracias. En *The Finkler Question* el humor cumple esta función redentora y le permite a Jacobson enfrentarse a las oscuras fuerzas del antisemitismo.

Palabras clave: judío; comedia; seriedad; transcendencia; antisemitismo; antisionismo.

In her article on Jewish humour, Salcia Landmann asserts that “Experts in Jewish humour are in fact agreed that it is more acute, more profound, and richer in expression than that of any other people” (1962: 194), an idea shared by Berger, who not only argues that the best jokes are Jewish jokes, but does not hesitate to add that this “is a well-known fact among, at any rate, college-educated Americans of whatever ethnic or religious background” (1997: 87). This characterization of the Jews as a peculiarly humorous people or as having a distinctive comic sensibility has been endorsed by both Jewish and non-Jewish scholars, who, since the beginning of the twentieth century, have tried to define what makes Jewish humour such a unique phenomenon.

One of the critics who has explored the image of the Jews as “the People of the Joke” is Elliott Oring. Like many other authors, Oring stresses that Jewish humour is a relatively modern invention originating in the nineteenth century, derived “from a conceptualization of Jewish history as a history of suffering, rejection, and despair” (1983: 266). Oring argues that the unique Jewish experience of defeat, exile, segregation and persecution allows for a conceptualization of Jewish humour which relies upon three characteristics: transcendence, defence and pathology, which are often intertwined. Oring’s analysis highlights two aspects of Jewish humour that have been thoroughly examined by scholars: on the one hand, the definition of Jewish humour as essentially self-mocking and self-derogatory and, on the other, the notion that Jewish humour is essentially transcendent in the sense that it allows Jewish people to cope with their suffering and liberates them from the social, political and economic forces that oppress them.

The idea that self-mockery is the most distinctive feature of Jewish humour was originated by Freud:

A particularly favourable occasion for tendentious jokes is presented when the intended rebellious criticism is directed against the subject himself, or, to put it more cautiously, against someone in whom the subject has a share —a collective person, that is (the subject’s own nation, for instance). The occurrence of self-criticism as a determinant may explain how it is that a number of the most apt jokes . . . have grown up on the soil of Jewish popular life. They are stories created by Jews and directed against Jewish characteristics. . . . Incidentally, I do not know whether there are many other instances of a people making fun to such a degree of its own character. (1991: 156-57)

Freud believed that tendentious jokes fulfilled a liberating function since they allowed individuals to criticise people or institutions to whom they were hostile or by whom they were oppressed. His arguments were further developed by Martin Grotjahn and Theodor Reik. The former emphasised the element of self-aggression in Jewish jokes: “It is as if the Jew tells his enemies: ‘You do not need to attack us. We can do that ourselves – and even better’” (1957: 12). Reik, on the other hand, distinguished masochistic and paranoiac tendencies in Jewish humour: “There is even a subterranean tie between the masochistic and the paranoid attitude in the idea that God chastises those He loves” (1962: 231).

Other scholars have rejected the notion that self-mockery is a characteristic feature of Jewish humour. Dan Ben-Amos's 'The "Myth" of Jewish Humor' (1973) has probably been the most influential work in this area. Ben-Amos questions the theories that have tried to explain self-criticism in Jewish humour as either symptomatic of the unique nature of the Jewish psyche or as the consequence of the socio-economic environment in which the Jews lived. He argues that the main problem with all these approaches is that, in following Freud's ideas, they see Jewish society as a collectivity, as a united whole and not as a network of multiple interrelationships and affiliations. He asserts that as in Jewish humour there is no social identification between the narrator and the subject of his joke, the joke-telling thus merely shows the tensions within Jewish society: "The fact that Jews tell jokes about each other demonstrates not so much self-hatred as perhaps the internal segmentation of their society" (129).¹

Ben-Amos's scepticism about Jewish humour being self-derogatory or expressing masochistic self-hatred is shared by Christie Davies. Like other ethnic minorities, Jewish people tell, enjoy and even invent jokes about themselves: "If the joke tellers really were suffering from and revelling in self-hatred, then the occasions on which members of the minority meet and exchange jokes about their own group ought in general to be tense and hysterical" (1991: 190-91).² Bernard Saper's thesis is similar to Davies's: Jews accept and even enjoy being the butt of a joke as long as it is generated in an atmosphere of playfulness and not in a context of hate and anger (1991).

Interestingly enough, most of the critics who have been concerned with analysing whether Jewish humour is self-deprecating or not, have also emphasised the coping and liberating function that humour has fulfilled for the Jews. It is true that some of them believe that with the rise of the Jewish state, humour as a weapon against oppression, persecution or suffering became obsolete. As such, Salcia Landmann admits that in the nineteenth century "the joke achieved a special eminence and became an important means of expression among the Jews, a defeated and persecuted people *par excellence*" (1962: 194), but adds that Israeli citizens of today do not need humour to cope with reality, since they can take up arms to defend themselves: "in Israel today the joke as a weapon is out of favour and moribund" (198). Nevo and Levine also believe that with the transit to Israel the unique characteristics of Jewish humour were lost, but argue that when the Gulf War started and the Jews in Israel were confronted with conditions similar to those in the diaspora, old Jewish humour emerged again. For the first time Israelis could not respond actively to stop enemy attacks: "At this point, joking erupted. In no other Israeli war was humor so rich and prolific" (1994: 128).

¹ In a suggestive chapter on disparagement humour, Dolf Zillmann argues that the measurement of attitudes might explain why self-mockery in Jewish humour is enjoyed by both Jews and non-Jews. His conclusion is similar to that of Ben Amos: "to the extent that sentiment is not bound by formal affiliations and may run counternorm, a member of a particular group should be able to enjoy the humiliation of one of his or her own kind" (1983: 90).

² Interestingly enough, in an article written in 1941 and revealingly titled 'Self-Hatred among Jews', Kurt Lewin claims that Jewish self-hatred is a well-known phenomenon among the Jews and argues that the tendency towards aggression against one's group can be found in many underprivileged groups.

Other critics believe that Jewish humour continues to be transcendent. Thus Oring argues that as long as Jewish history and experience remains different from the history and experience of other nations, Jewish humour will flourish (1983: 271), while Davies reminds us that people usually joke about what they fear most and asserts, “The self-mocking Jewish jokes are thus a way of coping with a difficult situation by an overt, controlled, and temporary fantasy that combines imagination with reality to produce a laughter of endurance for those within the group” (202). Saper also draws attention to the fact that the Jewish sense of humour is defined by its capacity to laugh in the face of despair, tragedy, persecution: “[T]here is a unique tendency — cultural, religious, and ethnic— for the Jew to pick up on the terrible miseries of his/her life as well as its absurdities, to make jokes and laugh at them” (1991: 54).

This coping function of Jewish humour, which allows the Jews to maintain their dignity, integrity, equilibrium and sanity, as well as to look toward the future, has been beautifully explained by Berger in *Redeeming Laughter*. He argues that the Jewish comic sensibility that originated in the Yiddish culture of Eastern Europe is defined by the element of tragicomedy. The Jews of Eastern Europe, and especially those living in appalling circumstances in Russia in the nineteenth century, were aware of the incongruity between the promises of a majestic destiny for Jewish people as proclaimed by Judaism and the miserable conditions in which they lived. They developed a tragicomic approach to life in order to cope with their painful predicament allowing them to provoke laughter through tears.³ Tragicomedy does not annul suffering or sadness, but makes them more bearable. It consoles and reaffirms the power of life in spite of so much horror. Berger goes so far as to say that laughter fulfils a redeeming function and establishes a very interesting comparison between the comic as a signal of transcendence and Christian sacraments:

Sacraments are not magic. They do not transform the world in its empirical reality, which continues to be full of all the afflictions to which human beings are prone. Also, sacraments are not logically compelling: The grace that they convey cannot be empirically or rationally demonstrated, but is only perceived in an act of faith. In this case, the experience of the comic does not miraculously remove suffering and evil in this world, nor does it provide self-evident proof that God is active in the world and intends to redeem it. However, perceived in faith, the comic becomes a great consolation and a witness to the redemption that is yet to come. (1997: 214-15)

Berger’s arguments are shared by Conrad Hyers, who endorses this redemptive quality of humour. Hyers believes that laughter and comedy do not obviate suffering or conquer death but allow us to stand apart from and adjust to whatever circumstances in which we find ourselves. In laughter we transcend disappointment and the contradictions of our

³ Nathan Ausubel (1967) was the first to use the expression “laughter through tears” to describe the mixture of comedy and tragedy we find in Jewish humour.

lives and are thus able to celebrate the gift of life. Hyers considers that this capacity for contemplating the dark side of life, while at the same time reaffirming the unconditional value of life, is characteristic of Jewish humour. He claims that it is no coincidence that a high percentage of comedians in the USA are either Jewish or black: "As gallows humor or concentration-camp humor will attest, it may also express a certain heroic defiance in the face of life's most crushing defeats, an unquenchable nobility of spirit that refuses to permit a given fate or oppressor to have the last word—to be absolute. . . . Where there is humor there is still hope" (1997: 91).⁴

Irving Saposnik also believes that implicit in Yiddish comedy is the affirmation of the unconditional value of life: "Best of all, no doubt, Yiddish culture developed a comedy unlike any other Jewish comedy that had been before, a comedy that emerged from poverty and despair to celebrate life; a comedy that came close to tears but rarely cried, a comedy that came close to screaming but laughed instead" (1991: 101). Yiddish comedy is borne out of the awareness of the contradictions between the heavenly promise of being the chosen People and the cruel reality of exile, dispersion, wandering, alienation. The Jews faced this gap between the ideal and the real with characteristic humour and transformed Yiddish comedy into an existential force: "More eloquent oft-times than words, laughter is the beginning and end of Yiddish comedy, for, more than anything else, it insures survival" (105). Sarah Blacher Cohen shares Saposnik's view of Jewish humour as a source of salvation for the Jews, allowing them to survive in a hostile world: "The Jews refuse to succumb to the dire circumstances. Abandoning the stance of tragic heroism, they create an alternative to an ennobling death. They learn to fashion their own reality. Though they are often gasping for air in their underwater existence, they somehow manage to survive, for humor is their life preserver" (1987: 14).

Howard Jacobson is an English Jewish writer who has always celebrated the important role that comedy plays in literature. He is proud of being labelled a Jewish author and does not hesitate to describe himself as "entirely and completely Jewish" (Jacobs 2008: 1). In fact, most reviewers have pointed out that few British authors have written so explicitly and fearlessly about Jewish experience and identity.⁵ Jacobson himself has explained that the reason why Jewish writers do not dare or are even embarrassed to write about Jewish life overtly is because they do not want to look provincial: "Jewishness is not at the heart of English culture. This is one of the things cultured Jews in England feel every time we write or make a play or music. But we're not disrespected or disregarded. American culture is already Jewish culture. It's yours, it's ours. . . . Here, we're still making space for ourselves" (Manus 2004: 3). Jacobson has admitted that when he started writing about Jewish experience he surprised his family, his friends and himself: "I never thought when I was trying to write in my 20s and even in my 30s, that I was going to write about Jews. But

⁴ Most of the critics who have explored the possibilities of treating a subject as serious as the Holocaust in a comic way have stressed how humour in ghettos and camps functioned as both a coping mechanism and a means of resistance. See Des Pres (1991), Cory (1995), Gilman (2000), Morreall (2009: 119-24).

⁵ See Lyall (2010) and Sax (2010).

I wasn't getting anywhere not writing about Jews. I couldn't write a page" (*Tablet* 2010: 3). But although Jewishness has become part of his subject, he does not consider himself conventionally Jewish, mainly because he was not raised in a particularly observant Jewish home: "What I feel is that I have a Jewish mind, I have a Jewish intelligence. I feel linked to the previous Jewish minds of the past" (Manus 2004: 1). In fact, he confesses that he feels a bit like Treslove in *The Finkler Question*: "I'm still a bit of a gentile, looking with my nose pressed in against the window of Jewishness, thinking, 'How fantastic! What great jokes they make! Look how wild they are, look how warm they are, look how deeply they love, and so on!'" (NPR 2010: 3). Although he has been compared with Philip Roth, he prefers to be called the Jewish Jane Austen: "As far as I'm concerned I'm an English novelist working absolutely square in the English tradition. . . . The voices in my head are Shakespeare, Dr. Johnson, Dickens, George Eliot" (*Tablet* 2010: 2).

Interestingly enough, one of the reasons why Jacobson does not identify himself with Roth is that, as he declared in an interview, he thinks that Roth "has essentially stopped being funny" (Jacobs 2008: 2). Jane Austen, on the other hand, was acutely aware of the importance and seriousness of comedy, like Jacobson himself: "To me, being a comic novelist is obviously to be serious, too – what else is there to be comic about?", he told Sarah Lyall of the *New York Times* (2010: 2). In fact, most critics have stressed that his novels are "Funny, yes, but seriously funny" (Jacobs 2008: 1) or, in other words, that he fuses comedy and tragedy in his novels, dealing with very serious issues in a comic way without trivializing them.⁶ Jacobson himself not only claims that comic novels should be taken seriously, but goes even further and argues that the distinction between 'comic novelist' and 'literary novelist' should be abolished, since, as Jane Austen suggested in *Northanger Abbey*, a good novel should always be effusive with wit and humour. Jacobson regrets the false division between comedy and seriousness that critics have created: "But there is a fear of comedy in the novel today – when did you last see the word 'funny' on the jacket of a serious novel? – that no one who loves the form should contemplate with pleasure" (2010b: 2). Jacobson stresses how from the very beginning the novel has been defined by its subversive character: "Comedy is nothing if not critical" (2). The novel has been the expression of freedom, as the work of Cervantes and Rabelais patently show.⁷ And in the process of challenging the reader and his/her beliefs, comedy "asserts the stubbornness of life" (6). Jacobson firmly believes that comedy reaffirms the value of life, thus allowing us to transcend our misfortunes: "Comedy is the handmaiden of tragedy . . . humor doesn't make things light – quite the contrary. . . . We affirm life with it"

⁶ See Cheyette (1999), Jacobs (2008), Brown (2010), Jeffries (2010), NPR (2010), Herschthal (2010, 2011).

⁷ Jacobson argues that the satyr plays of classical times and the novel share the same subversive intention, a statement which is very Bakhtinian, since one of Bakhtin's main arguments is that the parodic-travestying literature of Greece and Rome introduced the corrective of laughter to show that reality was richer and more contradictory than the straightforward genres suggested: "Such laughter paved the way for the impiety of the novelistic form" (1992: 59). Like Jacobson, Bakhtin also believes that "True ambivalent and universal laughter does not deny seriousness but purifies and completes it" (1984: 122-23).

(Herschthal 2010: 1). Comedy is crucial for our daily survival since it offers us a way to deal with the sadness of life, “[i]t’s our greatest achievement. Forget the pyramids. *Comedy*” (Tracy 2011: 3).

Like some of the critics mentioned in the first part of this essay, Jacobson thinks that there is something particularly Jewish about this blending of comedy and tragedy. The experience of 5000 years has shaped the Jewish sense of humour and, in fact, Tracy with great irony has described Jacobson as representative of one of the two archetypes of the Jewish intellectual: “For what is Jacobson if not the ribald and morbid Jew from the Pale . . . the fragility of whose life has led him to fear harm and to raise humor as a shield” (Tracy 2011: 1). Jacobson argues that, although many of his readers think that if a novel is funny it cannot be serious, “I think a Jew knows that very funny is very serious” (Manus 2004: 2).⁸ In fact, in *The Finkler Question* a character who has just found out that he is Jewish, exclaims, “It could explain where I get my comic genius from” (138).

Adam Kirsch has claimed that “as Jacobson shows, it takes a writer of genius to take all of life’s sordid humiliations and redeem them with laughter” (2011: 3). *The Finkler Question* is the best proof that comedy is capable of dealing with all aspects of life, including those that are most important or painful to us, without trivializing them: “When I do comedy, it bleeds” (Herschthal 2010: 3). Comedy allows Jacobson to tackle and transcend the dark forces of anti-Semitism and anti-Israel activism in modern Britain: “The question of anti-Semitism in this country is vexed. That’s why I wrote *The Finkler Question*. . . . Do we Jews imagine it, do we half want it to define ourselves by, do we contribute to it by harping on about it (a particular sinister suggestion)?” (Schischa 2011: 2-3). *The Finkler Question* was written in an extremely uncomfortable political climate during Operation Cast Lead, the name the Israeli army gave to its incursion into Gaza in 2009. Israel was being harshly attacked not only by British politicians and the media but by the most vocal Jewish critics. In fact, Jacobson devoted one of his columns in *The Independent* to denounce the hatred of Israel which the events in Gaza had generated: “A discriminatory, over-and-above hatred, inexplicable in its hysteria and virulence whatever justification is adduced for it; an unreasoning, deranged and as far as I can see irreversible revulsion that is poisoning everything we are supposed to believe in here” (2009: 1).

With characteristic irony Jacobson claims that he is not allowed to ascribe any of this to anti-Semitism: “It is, I am assured, ‘criticism’ of Israel, pure and simple” (2009: 1). Jacobson explains that it is as if nothing good could come out of Israel, whose inhabitants are compared to the Nazis, whereas Gaza is likened to the Warsaw Ghetto:

It is as though, by a reversal of the usual laws of cause and effect, Jewish actions of today prove that Jews had it coming to them yesterday. Berating Jews with their own history, disinheriting

⁸ Although Jacobson has underlined that laughter allows us to transcend our problems and sufferings, he has also made reference to the way in which Jews make fun of themselves. Interestingly enough, like Reik, he believes this is a masochistic strategy that allows the person telling the joke to achieve an intellectual and moral superiority (Manus 2004: 2).

them of pity, as though pity is negotiable or has a sell-by date, is the latest species of Holocaust denial. . . . According to this thinking, the Jews have betrayed the Holocaust and became unworthy of it, the true heirs to their suffering being the Palestinians. (2009: 3)

Jacobson argues that this hatred of Israel is very well represented in Caryl Churchill's *Seven Jewish Children* (2008), a play which, in his opinion, shows a very poor knowledge of the history of Israeli-Palestinian relationships:

Jewish-hating pure and simple —Jewish-hating which the haters don't even recognize in themselves, so acculturated is it— the Jew-hating which many of us have always suspected was the only explanation for the disgust that contorts and disfigures faces when the mere word Israel crops up in conversation. . . . No, you don't have to be an anti-Semite to criticise Israel. It just so happens that you are. (2009: 5)

What really worries Jacobson is not so much that plays like *Seven Jewish Children* can be written and celebrated by critics, but that language can be manipulated to generate racist ideas:

And so it happens. Without one's being aware of it, it happens. A gradual habituation to the language of loathing. Passed from the culpable to the unwary and back again. And soon before you know it...

Not here, though. Not in cosy old lazy old easy-come easy-go England. (2009: 5)

The irony in the last sentence expresses Jacobson's own fears at the time he was writing *The Finkler Question*, fears that were shared by many British Jews: "When I was writing this novel . . . many Jews that I knew, rational, calm Jews were truly wondering whether England would go on being the safe haven for them that it's been for a long time" (*NPR* 2010: 2). Jacobson admits that many English people show much goodwill towards Jews (Jacobs 2010: 2), but there is also a virulence about Israel which English people would never acknowledge and which can be really trying for the English Jews: "It's just the temperature of the newspaper. It can be very wearing to Jewish nerves to have this bombardment all the time" (*NPR* 2010: 3). Jacobson confesses that it is very difficult to know for certain if anti-Semitism has increased in England, but he thinks that it is a Jew's duty to be constantly vigilant: "I'm not saying antisemitism is on the increase, but I am looking. I think it's irresponsible of a Jew not to. Especially a Booker-winning one", he stated in an interview (Jeffries 2010: 3).⁹ Jacobson is especially troubled by the virulent rhetoric used by left-wing intellectuals, many of them Jews themselves, to attack Israel:

⁹ Jacobson's joke at the end of the quotation illustrates perfectly how laughter allows him to cope with those aspects of life that worry him most.

What we don't know and what we're all trying to figure out and measure, those of us who think this is worth putting our mind to, is how far the rhetoric of anti-Zionism is spilling over into another thing, through the sheer violence and virulence of its own language. Because it might very well be that a person might say, "I'm not anti-Semitic, not at all, my best friends are Jews" —you know the story— "I just think this has to be said." But it might be that if enough people are saying that, then a kind of linguistic climate is created in which people feel Jews are what they've always felt Jews to be: fair game. (*Tablet* 2010: 3)

He accuses the anti-Zionist Jews of being one-sided and trying to impose on others what they consider to be the truth about the Palestinians and the Israelis.¹⁰ He even defines their anti-Zionist language as "pathological": "I don't need to know anything about Israel to know there is something wrong with the way they are talking, something false about it. No place could be as vile as they describe it. No people so lost to humanity. Not even the Nazis were as bad as the Jews are accused of being" (Jacobs 2010: 2).

But although Jacobson is a supporter of the Israeli state, he has tried to be fair and has pointed out those aspects of Israel's policy that he finds reprehensible: "to be a friend of Israel is to be critical of Israel" (*NPR* 2010: 2). Thus he has admitted that he does not like what has happened to Zionism or agree with the Israeli settlements: "I'd go out with my own bare hands and pull them down" (*Tablet* 2010: 4). In fact Jacobson asserts that much of the comic anger in *The Finkler Question* stems not so much from the political position of the anti-Zionists, which in some cases is perfectly respectable, but from their attitude of shame: "What annoys me about it is not the politics, but the idea that what's happening somewhere else is about them. . . . It's the vanity of it; it's the egotism. It's the wearing their hearts on their sleeves. It's this carnival of conscience that I make fun of in the book" (*NPR* 2010: 2).

Jacobson's fear that anti-Zionism may slide into anti-Semitism is present in *The Finkler Question* and echoed most accurately by two female Jewish characters: Hephzibah, who is setting up a museum of Anglo-Jewish culture, and Emmy, whose twenty-two-year old grandson has been stabbed in the face and blinded by an Algerian. Hephzibah is deeply worried about the steady escalation of anti-Semitism:

It had started again, anyway. Her emails streamed reported menace and invective. A brick was thrown through a window of the museum. An Orthodox man in his sixties was beaten up at a bus stop in Temple Fortune. Graffiti began to appear again on synagogue walls, the Star of David crossed with the swastika. The internet bubbled and boiled with madness. She couldn't bear to open a newspaper.

Was it something or was it nothing? (2010a: 282)

She is aware of the fact that her fear is shared by other British Jews:

¹⁰ Whenever he writes defending Israel, hate mail follows, having even once received a letter signed in excrement (Cooke 2006: 2).

An anxiety had settled like a fine dust on everything she did, and on everyone she knew —on all the Jews at least. They too were looking askance— not over their shoulders exactly, but into a brittly uncertain future which bore fearful resemblances to an only too certain past.

Paranoia, was it? She asked herself. The question itself had become monotonous to her. (257)

Hephzibah becomes increasingly anxious about the museum's opening "because the atmosphere was wrong" (291). The only thing she can do is hope things will change for the better: "Head down, eyes lowered, fingers crossed" (291). Hephzibah's apprehensions are shared by Emmy. Thus in a conversation with Finkler and Treslove she "told them about the work she did, about what she feared, about the Jew-hatred which was beginning to infect the world she'd inhabited all her life, the world where people had once prided themselves on thinking before they rushed to judgement, and about her grandson, blinded by a person she didn't scruple to call a terrorist" (287).¹¹ She closely echoes Jacobson's rejection of anti-Zionist inflammatory language: "The trigger isn't the violence in Gaza. The trigger, in so far as they need a trigger —and many don't— is the violent, partial, inflammatory reporting of it. The trigger is the inciting word" (156). Even Samuel Finkler, a philosopher and well-known television personality who hates everything about Israel, becomes aware of how dangerous it is to use the word 'Jew' in public:

After everything that had happened, wasn't it a word for private consumption only? Out there in the raging public world it was as a goad to every sort of violence and extremism.

It was a password to madness. Jew. One little word with no hiding place for reason in it. Say 'Jew' and it was like throwing a bomb. (185-86)

Ironically Julian Treslove, a former BBC producer who is so obsessed with Jews that he wants to become one of them, seems to be more clear-sighted about the Jews' real problems than the Jews themselves:

He could see because he was outside it. He could afford to see what they —his friends, the woman he loved— dared not. The Jews would not be allowed to prosper except as they had always prospered, at the margins, in the concert halls and at the banks. *End of*. As his sons said. Anything else would not be tolerated. A brave rearguard action in the face of insuperable odds was one thing. Anything resembling victory and peace was another. (266-67)

Treslove, the Gentile, is merely reproducing what Jacobson believes others think of Jews and which, according to Jacobson, became obvious with the Six-Day War in 1967.

¹¹ Interestingly enough, although Emmy is convinced that anti-Semitic feeling is increasing, she, like Jacobson, believes that most British people are not hostile to Jews: "What you see is not what non-Jews see. Not the fair-minded ones and most of them are that. . . . You might be surprised to learn how few people see the archetypal Jew every time they see him. Or even know that he's a Jew. Or care" (214-15).

As long as the world thought that Israel was going to be defeated and destroyed everyone was on the side of “poor little Israel”. But things changed the moment Israel won: “Israel winning became a problem. And Israel winning big became a bigger problem. . . . It’s one thing to feel, ‘Those poor Jews, they’re about to be murdered,’ and another thing to feel, ‘Those bastard Jews have just won’” (*Tablet* 2010: 4).

It is true, as Kirsch has pointed out, that Treslove is the best source of comedy in the novel since his obsession with Jewishness and his melodramatic character allows Jacobson to make fun of some of the stereotypes about Jews. Jacobson himself has acknowledged that the “whole point of Treslove was to make some comedy out of how Jewishness looks to somebody who isn’t a Jew” (*NPR* 2010: 1).¹² And while Treslove wants desperately to become Jewish, Finkler “can’t wait to get the hell out of it” (Jacobs 2010: 2). Finkler and the anti-Zionist group he has joined, The ASHamed Jews, provide us with some of the most hilarious scenes in the novel: “People think they’re parodies of Jews who happen to disapprove of Israel. But they’re not. They’re parodies of Jews who parade their disapproval of Israel” (Lyall 2010: 1).¹³ Kirsch has argued that Treslove’s comedy is deeper and more humane than the satire Jacobson makes out of Finkler and he gives a very good explanation for this difference: “Jacobson is too personally implicated in this debate over Anglo-Jewish identity to be able simply to laugh at it. Instead, in the last part of the novel, the portents of Anglo-Jewry get darker and darker. . . . But the power of Jewish history is such that paranoia is a standing temptation —one that, as Howard Jacobson knows, can sometimes be banished by the power of laughter” (2010: 3). Kirsch’s argument seems to me fully backed by episodes in the novel. In fact, when Hephzibah’s museum is vandalized for the first time she cries and laughs at the same time, claiming that it is important to see the funny side of it: “She wasn’t, he realised, going from fear to amusement and back again, she was experiencing both emotions simultaneously. It wasn’t even a matter of reconciling opposites because they were not opposites for her. Each partook of the other” (208). Thus, although in *The Finkler Question* there is pain, sadness and the fear of anti-Semitism spreading in Britain, Jacobson uses humour to rise above all the forces that try to crush his spirit. And one very important way in which Jacobson ‘exorcises’ his anxiety about anti-Semitism is by making fun of Finkler and the ASHamed Jews, who give us some of the best comic passages in the novel.

Jacobson has confessed that Finkler is something of an archetype: “There are a lot of Sam Finklers . . . which is why I invented him —I invented him out of what I saw” (*NPR* 2010: 2). Both Tyler, Finkler’s wife, who although a Gentile seems to be more Jewish than her husband, and Libor Sevcik, a Jewish retired history teacher and Hollywood reporter who supports the state of Israel, are very critical of Finkler’s actions and ideas and reprimand him for his public display of shame and vanity: “Look at him,” Libor said, ‘parading his shame to a Gentile world that has far better things to think about, does it not, Julian?’”

¹² Some critics have argued that Jewish humour plays with stereotypes about Jews themselves. See Davies (1991) and Nevo and Levine (1994).

¹³ Rebecca Schischa has suggested that Jacobson is referring to Independent Jewish Voices, an organization founded by a group of prominent British Jews to condemn perceived Israeli brutality (2011: 2).

(26). Of course, Jacobson does not miss this opportunity to make fun of Finkler and what he represents: “A thinking Jew attacking Jews was a prize. People paid to hear that” (230). Jacobson also introduces the comic element by highlighting the contradictions in Finkler, for instance that it does not make much sense to join a group of Jews in order to turn on Judaism: “He was a thinker who didn’t know what he thought, except that he had loved and failed and now missed his wife, and that he hadn’t escaped what was oppressive about Judaism by joining a Jewish group that gathered to talk feverishly about the oppressiveness of being Jewish. Talking feverishly about being Jewish *was* being Jewish” (275). Also, this man who prides himself on his highly rational mind and on being ‘a principled amoralist’ is the victim of religious superstition. Whenever he is out driving with a mistress he feels less safe than when he is out driving with his wife: “Yet apprehensive he always was, whenever he committed one of those sexual crimes which in his eyes were no crime. The car would crash. The hotel would burn down. And yes —for it was as primitive as this— his dick would fall off” (186).

Tyler, a very clever woman, who before marrying Samuel Finkler insisted on getting an education in Judaism, tells him that his problem is that he is too Jewish and, like the orthodox Jews he constantly scorns, arrogantly believes that “Jews either exist to be ‘a light unto the nations’ (*Isaiah* 42: 6) or don’t deserve to exist at all” (271). In fact, Jacobson continuously makes fun of how incongruous it is for a man like Finkler who “would eventually spit out Israel-associated words like Zionist and Tel Aviv and Knesset as though they were curses” (20) to believe that there is something special about the Jews. Thus, when Treslove intervenes in a conversation Samuel and Libor are having on Israel, “[t]hough he detested his fellow Jews for their clannishness about Israel, Finkler couldn’t hide his disdain for Treslove for so much as daring, as an outsider, to have a view” (26). Finkler’s “Jewishness” becomes obvious when his son gets involved in an anti-Semitic incident and explains to his dad what actually happened:

‘And then I knocked his hat off.’

‘You knocked a Jew’s hat off.’

‘Is that so terrible?’

‘Jesus Christ, of course it’s so terrible. You don’t do that to anyone, least of all a Jew.’

‘Least of all a Jew! What? Are we a protected species now or something? These are people who bulldoze Palestinian villages. What’s a hat?’

‘Did you hurt him?’

‘Not enough.’

‘This is a racist assault, Immanuel.’

‘Dad, how can it be a racist assault when they’re the racists?’

‘I’m not even going to answer that.’

‘Do I look like a racist? Look at me.’

‘You look like a fucking little anti-Semite.’

‘How can I be an anti-Semite? I’m a Jew.’ (189-90)

The ludicrousness of the conversation lies in the fact that Finkler, the anti-Zionist par excellence, is speaking like an orthodox Jew, and his son, like the anti-Zionist his father purports to be. But behind the façade of laughter lies Jacobson's fear that anti-Zionism might be transformed into anti-Semitism.

Finkler is not alone in his crusade against Israel: he has joined the so-called ASHamed Jews, an anti-Zionist group which becomes the target of Jacobson's comic genius. As outlined earlier, the ASHamed Jews are parodies of Jews who parade their disapproval of Israel and humour totally pervades those passages of the novel dealing with them. To start with, the main members of the group could not be more ludicrous: Lonnie, a presenter of children's television programmes, scares children because of his "hungry horse's face and yellow horse's teeth" (168), whereas Merton Kugle becomes the comic incarnation of the political fanatic:

a *gornisht* who belonged to every anti-Zionist group that existed, along with several that did not, no matter that some were sponsored by far-out Muslims who believed that Kugle, as a Jew, dreamed of world conspiracy, and others expressed the views of ultra-Orthodox Jews with whom Kugle would not in any other circumstances have shared a biscuit; so long as the phrase anti-Zionist was in the large or in the small print, Kugle signed up. (167)

Another member of the group has just found out that he is Jewish and after "weeping before a memorial in Auschwitz to dead ancestors who until that moment he had never known he'd had", decides to take a stance against Israel: "Born a Jew on Monday, he had signed up to be an ASHamed Jew by Wednesday and was seen chanting 'We are all Hezbollah' outside the Israeli Embassy on the following Saturday" (138-39). Tamara Krausz, academically the best known of the ASHamed Jews, becomes a caricature of the Jewish intellectuals who passionately criticize Israel and whom Jacobson sees as a threat to the safety of Jews: "Zionism was her demon lover, not Finkler. She could not, in her fascinated, never quite sufficiently reciprocated hatred of Zionism, think about anything else. Which is how things are when you're in love" (231). Although Finkler shares her ideological position, there is something in her voice that inflames him almost to madness. Every time she talks about anti-Zionism he thinks of slicing off her tongue and slitting her throat:

Which might have been the very thing she was referring to when she spoke of the breakdown of the Jewish mind, the Final Solution causing Jews to go demented and seek final solutions of their own, the violence begot of violence. Indeed, Finkler would have done no more than illustrate her thesis.

Was this not the very thing she sought? Kill me, you demented Jew bastard, and prove me right. (231)

As Finkler regretfully admits, with the exception of Tamara, if he "had gone into adult education, these were the sorts of people with whom he would have spent his evenings" (144).

In spite of their radical ideas, the ASHamed Jews have their 'soft spots' and make their excuses when a meeting coincides with a Jewish celebration: "those ASHamed Jews who were only partially ashamed —that's to say who were ashamed, qua Jews, of Zionism but not, qua Jews, of being Jewish— were permitted to put their mortification into abeyance on Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur and Hanukkah, etc., and would resume it again when the calendar turned secular" (138).

Jacobson also makes fun of the ASHamed Jews' discussions, like the one in which they decide the name of the group:

'Firstly there already is an ASH,' Ivo Cohen said. 'It's an antismoking charity with which, as a thirty-a-day man, I would rather not be confused. Secondly, it sounds like we've been burnt alive.'

'And thirdly,' Merton Kugle interposed, 'it too closely resembles AISH.'

AISH was an educational and dating organisation for young Orthodox Jews, one of whose aims was to promote travel to Israel.

'Not much chance we'd be confused with that,' Finkler said. (166)

In another meeting the ASHamed Jews are trying to make up their mind about the boycotts against Israel and Jacobson, who once asserted that "the university lecturers who are boycotting Israel—they make my blood boil" (Cooke 2006: 2), uses his comic artillery to satirize those in the group wanting to boycott Israel poking fun at academics who want to boycott Israeli Universities and Institutions arguing that they "could imagine no greater deprivation than being denied access to academic conferences or having your latest paper refused by a learned magazine" (143). The group has the 'honour' of having a prime boycotter, Merton Kugle: "Already he was boycotting Israel in a private capacity, going through every item on his supermarket shelves to ascertain its origin and complaining to the manager when he found a tin or packet that was suspect. In pursuit of 'racist merchandise'—usually, in his experience, concealed on the lowest shelves in the darkest recesses of the shop— Merton Kugle had ruined his spine and all but worn his eyes" (143). He is deeply disappointed when he is told that there can be no boycott of Israeli athletes and sports competitors because there are none. But the greatest joke as far as the boycotts are concerned comes from Finkler himself, who at the beginning of the novel is in favour, but when confronted with the issue in the meetings of the ASHamed Jews decides to steal a line from Libor: "So if we're family, what's with the boycott? Whoever boycotted his own family?" (145).

In *The Spirituality of Comedy* Hyers asserts that comedy is no more tied to the happy ending than tragedy is to an unhappy one. In fact, happily-ever-afters are presented humorously and as fantasies: "We know that it is a clever trick, an ingenious farce, and we laugh. Our wildest dreams have been simultaneously indulged and debunked" (1996: 162). What defines the comic is not a particular ending, but the celebration of life and the renewal of hope and faith despite the problems, tensions and incongruities of the

world. Interestingly enough, Jacobson expresses the very same idea in his defence of comic fiction: "If there's one thing the novel at its comic best knows for sure it's that a happy outcome . . . is an illusion. How not feeling good nonetheless conduces to our not feeling bad, indeed conduces to our feeling exhilarated, is one of the great mysteries of art" (Jacobson 2010: 5). *The Finkler Question* ends ambiguously: Treslove leaves Hephzibah and goes back to his life as a celebrity double, Hephzibah cries for Libor, who is dead, and Treslove, who has left her, while Finkler seems to have gone back to his religious roots, praying three times a day not only for those already dead —Libor and Tyler— but also for Treslove. The characters' —and arguably the readers'— expectations have not been fulfilled and the threat of anti-Semitism has not disappeared, and yet, because comedy permeates the whole novel, we are not left with a sense of failure or despair, but with the feeling that life should be enjoyed, celebrated and affirmed.

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Surviving Trauma and Chaos in Nigel Farndale's Accidental Fiction

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Nigel Farndale is the author of two novels so far, *A Sympathetic Hanging* (2000) and *The Blasphemer* (2010). Both striking plots rest on a number of motifs the copresence of which reads as quite contemporary. Caught between politics beyond their reach or in which they find themselves involved, and a deceiving or deceived intimacy, Farndale's lost characters endeavour to survive through complex forms of social or love Darwinism. In *The Blasphemer*, religion and terror, faith and guardian angels become to Farndale new connecting elements between the world and the self. Equally post-millennial is the acute significance of the challenge to survive: plots teem with accidents, and past as present characters do or do not manage to survive the chaos of the world and the havoc wrought in their individual lives. Farndale's most modern touch might be deciphered in his accidental —i.e., both totally fortuitous and based on accidents— narrative and writing, grounded on the unexpected and misleading random.

Keywords: contemporary fiction; Farndale ; trauma; intimacy; accident; survival

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Sobrevivir al trauma y al caos en la ficción accidental de Nigel Farndale

Nigel Farndale ha publicado dos obras de ficción, *A Sympathetic Hanging* (2000) y *The Blasphemer* (2010). Sus sorprendentes tramas se estructuran en torno a un conjunto de motivos que confieren un carácter muy contemporáneo a ambas novelas. Atrapados en una política que no entienden o en la que se encuentran implicados a pesar suyo, y en una intimidad engañosa o engañada, los personajes desorientados de Farndale se esfuerzan por sobrevivir mediante formas complejas de darwinismo social o amoroso. En *The Blasphemer*, la religión y el terrorismo, la fe y los ángeles de la guarda se convierten para Farndale en nuevos elementos que permiten establecer conexiones entre el mundo y uno mismo. El sentido preciso del reto por sobrevivir es también postmilenario: se acumulan los accidentes en las tramas y los personajes pasados o presentes consiguen o no sobrevivir frente al caos del mundo y a los estragos creados en sus vidas. La dimensión más moderna de Farndale se encuentra, sin duda alguna, en su narración y su escritura accidentales —tanto fortuitas como construidas mediante accidentes— basadas en lo inesperado y en el azar.

Palabras clave: ficción contemporánea; Farndale; trauma; intimidad; accidente; supervivencia

With *A Sympathetic Hanging* (2000) and *The Blasphemer* (2010), columnist Nigel Farndale's fiction opened and marked the end of the last literary decade with ethical and aesthetic issues such as political conspiracy and intimate chaos. This article suggests that Farndale's specific and most contemporary input might be linked to the multifaceted accidental fiction he builds up in his novels, by which I mean plots and characterisation based on accidents, but also fortuitous and unplanned plots, characters and aesthetics—and eventually the more philosophical sense of the word, with its emphasis on what is added to the essentials of identity. In order to define such accidental contemporaneity, and to locate it between conspiracy, chaos and survival, I will insist on the contrary logics we find from one novel to the next, opening on other contemporary social and literary questions such as religious, supernatural and political clutter. The narrative and aesthetic echoes of Farndale's approach to the literary accidental will then be studied to underline the questions they ask of trauma theory and traumatic realism.

1. FROM ACCIDENTS TO CHOICE: AGAINST ACCIDENTAL FICTION

A Sympathetic Hanging opens on two simultaneous 'accidents': journalist Michael Yates runs over a young woman, Jennifer, just ten seconds after he has heard on his radio that the Premier has been assassinated during the State Opening of Parliament in London. Michael will run Jennifer down again a few pages later, as well as be the unfortunate witness of a bomb attack in Romania, get beaten up in the street, etc. What should be noticed is that if the first accidents seem to launch the novel, and the intimacy between the two heroes, they also allow for the main conspiracy to unfold and lock Michael in deceitful intimacy. The woman he accidentally meets is in fact the daughter of his father-in-law's enemy or accomplice, Lambert, the Vice Chief of the Defence Staff. The book's plot is, indeed, full of plotting and conspiracy: the magazine for which Michael writes belongs to his father-in-law Bruce Tenant, a media and politics tycoon busy plotting a worldwide InfoWar with computer viruses; China plots to invade Romania; a major coup by the Conservatives to set up a republic in England and appoint the King as temporary head of the government, involving both Tenant and Jennifer's father, Lambert, is revealed, as well as their role behind the Premier's murder (the latter having blocked Tenant's research into the InfoWar software). Even Michael's article is not published eventually and the affair never made public, since Tenant manages to virus the computers and the whole printing system. We move thus from accidents to conspiracy, then, the first accident triggering both the plot and the plots. Yet this first move is also based on fake accidents, or Michael's fake accidental or fortuitous impressions as, we will discover, he and Jennifer did not meet by accident and the overall pattern of the novel is rather one of delusive accidental in that the opening accident turns out to have been planned so as to disguise conspiracy and wreak intimate chaos. Michael keeps being deceived and used in the book, and accidents are a mere narrative tool to enable conspiracy to cancel out intimacy and randomness.

The fantasy England that Farndale uses as a background for his political plot is at the same time funny and politically ludicrous (for instance a Premier, a King, the euro as the English currency, a parody of Lady Diana's funeral, a Spice Girl now Dame Halliwell) and is a revisiting of a world 'à la Orwell' with home appliances and electronic devices, such as the "Multicard", reducing individuality to numbers and references and ruling out any form of intimate relationships. When Jennifer twice tries to kill Michael, for the second time at the very end of the novel, the only locus for intimacy, or what is thought to be intimate, is thus conspiracy itself, and the randomness from which Michael hopes to find intimacy is all the more rigged since accidents too are conspiratorial, and not at all a promise of honest, deep and unexpected relationships. This last twist in the novel clearly runs counter to its initial, but fake, shift from accident to intimacy: in *A Sympathetic Hanging* accidents only question the very possibility of accidental events and lives, simply because they are no accident at all.

The plot of *The Blasphemer* relies on new and more complex interactions between accidents, politics, intimate chaos and survival. Farndale's latest novel also opens on an accident, when academic Daniel Kennedy literally climbs over his wife, Nancy, to save himself after their plane has crashed deep in the sea not far from the Galápagos Islands, wherein lies the most obvious link between accidents and intimate chaos, since Nancy will find it impossible to forgive him. Meanwhile Wetherby, a colleague of Daniel's, addicted to religious sadomasochism especially with his young female students, is doing his best in London to ruin Daniel's career and promised chair. Many character connections will emerge, along with the subplot of Daniel's great-grandfather, thought to have been killed at Passchendaele in 1917; Andrew had in fact been a deserter sentenced to death, but was saved and was able to make himself a new life in France. Whether it be with the plane crash, when Daniel faints after a new vision, with the 1917 battle, or another bomb explosion Daniel witnesses in London, in *The Blasphemer* accidents always determine and create, or *seem* to create, something new and unexpected.

Accidents in this novel seem to have no fortuitous consequences but, on the contrary, trigger self-consciousness and choice. Wetherby, for instance, after accidentally (or not) and violently making a student pregnant, confesses his sin and repents, and instantly feels relieved and his mind to be at rest. In the next chapter, while Daniel is about to swim to shore in order to save those who have survived the crash, his heroism is played down and equated with Wetherby's penitential mood by the narrator's disclosure that "[h]ad he not been feeling ashamed about deserting Nancy, he might not have volunteered so readily" (Farndale 2010: 84). Surviving accidents or failures, as will be seen, is first a matter of shame and of self-balance, therefore having nothing to do with broadening one's identity but rather with erasing one's shame through forced decisions, words or actions: in other words, penitence but neither heroism nor self-betterment. The end of the novel is even clearer about this when, in the last accident, Daniel jumps to save his daughter who has been abducted by Nancy's counsellor, and goes into a coma. Ironically, the ending suggests that the best way to survive the intimate chaos triggered by the first accidents (and

political, or here academic, conspiracy) is to *choose* another accident and catastrophe. As Daniel's father states, "It wasn't an accident. He jumped to save my granddaughter's life" (Farndale 2010: 407). There is nothing accidental in this last accident, which indeed was motivated and unconsciously planned. The best way for Daniel to survive is to once again risk being killed, though now deliberately.

The pattern comes full circle and any notion of the accidental is cast aside in favour of choice, even choice of accidents. This is where Farndale's fiction clearly follows contemporary paths in British literature. To mention only a few very recent examples, in Zadie Smith's *NW* one of the ways for characters to narrate themselves and to exist is decision, or rather decision-making (2012: 28, 287). Similarly, the last words in Ian McEwan's *Sweet Tooth* make the heroine Serena bear full responsibility for the existence of the novel, with a final twist perhaps more literary and metanarrative than that in *Atonement* (2012: 320). *Disputed Land*, by Tim Pears, touches upon the same issues when it confronts "spectator[s] of events" (Pears 2012: 163) with the imperative of acting (150), always along some metanarrative line. The book almost opens on the remark "The futility of art, when action was needed" (xi), to close on these bitter words: "It would have been better to have taken a chance—for the thinkers to turn into doers—to have betrayed ourselves and become men of action, flawed heroes of our own lives. Who knows what might have happened?" (209). Twice the conclusion states that nothing really happened because of inaction, and locates the essentials of fiction in this necessary explanation, much more than in a narrative of what really did take place. In Farndale's *The Blasphemer*, it is the need for self-consciousness of action that Daniel eventually understands.

2. INTIMATELY SURVIVING ACCIDENTAL POLITICS

At the heart of this questioning of accidents we find many correlations between politics and intimacy, with many accidental links between the public and the private. *The Blasphemer* opens on quite a private plot or conspiracy, since Daniel has plotted the fateful trip with his daughter as a surprise for Nancy: "They both grinned conspiratorially" (2010: 16). This motif of characters planning against or in favour of others is central to Farndale's fiction, and both novels teem with intimate, political, military or professional conspiracies and machinations. But in *A Sympathetic Hanging* accidents also trigger intimacy, effective and immediate though deceitful. Michael kisses Jennifer after running her over (2000: 9), cannot hold back his tears when the Premier's death is made official (20), and he eventually observes that, with Jennifer, "There is an easy intimacy between us that wasn't there before. Not contrived. Not awkward" (121). Intimacy is clearly interwoven with politics and accidents in the narrative, for instance when the *Evening Mirror* sums up the events of the first chapter and insists on the links between intimacy and politics through accidents: "The story is about the daughter of the Vice Chief of the Defence Staff who has been run over by Bruce Tenant's son-in-law while cycling on a country road in Devon. 'Award-winning journalist Michael Yates, 39, knocked the cyclist down when he was

distracted by the news coming through on his car radio about the assassination of the Premier” (66). In a chiasmic structure, the passage mentions intimacy by framing the accident between two references to politics. On the next page Farndale uses an anaphora to suggest the accidental politics of intimacy: “Three months have passed since the assassination. . . . Three months have also passed since the accident” (67). The Premier’s murder and Michael’s more intimate accident with Jennifer are now narratively equated.

Yet between Jennifer and Michael, as between Wetherby and his students in *The Blasphemer*, intimacy can be violent and submitted, with sexual games based on domination and power. Violence and domination also define intimacy when in the second novel Daniel cannot help reading his wife’s diary, obsessed as he is to discover whether or not she knows that he saved himself before saving her after the crash. So that on these issues too patterns seem to be reversed from one novel to the next: in *A Sympathetic Hanging* political conspiracy leads to intimate chaos. Michael first sees his own world turned upside-down after meeting Jennifer, and this chaos is framed by plots on a larger scale. Surviving is here a matter of finding a new balance between feelings and new intimate emotions, along with the awareness of being part of machinations beyond one’s ken.

Daniel in *The Blasphemer* first survives, starts by surviving, the crash; and only then do intimate chaos with Nancy and conspiracy intermingle with Wetherby’s plot, among others. While readers are under the impression that surviving logically follows accidents, in *The Blasphemer* surviving also creates chaos and new accidents. Even going back in time, the story of Daniel’s great-grandfather is so tricky to unravel in the first place because he did survive and no one knew —hence the present chaos. Daniel’s first physical, instinctive reaction is to survive, and then his main intimate and professional tragedy is to survive until the cathartic last accident. The fact that the plane crashes in the Galápagos archipelago is relevant, since it was there that Darwin started studying species and putting together his theories. Daniel instantly feels shame after saving himself first, but also the conviction that he just had to do it, being a “life survivor”: “Daniel knew the answer. He had read about it. Given the slightest opportunity, certain people will always find a way to safety. They are known as ‘life survivors’ and they make up 8 percent of the population” (2010: 73). The ambivalent phrasing is much to the point since it definitely will be a matter of surviving not so much the crash but surviving life. The plot of the novel is clearly based on other love or social forms of Darwinism, with competition within a couple to survive, or to be the more heroic afterwards, and more traditional competition between colleagues. Farndale evokes the question of instinct in an article about survival published in *The Telegraph*:

While luck may be one explanation for survival, a ruthless instinct for self-preservation seems to be another. This, I should perhaps explain, is the central theme of *The Blasphemer*, a novel of mine being published in January, hence my interest in the subject. When a light aircraft crashes into the sea, a zoologist saves himself by climbing over the woman he loves. They both survive, but his act of betrayal causes fissures in their relationship that lead to...

Well, the point is, while writing the book I came across examples of similar things happening.¹ (2009)

In this summary of the opening of *The Blasphemer*, Farndale clearly lays emphasis on survival and Daniel's strategy to save himself. Such might be the gist of his novel, together with the issues of luck and the accidental. Farndale thus engages, once again, with questions dealt with by other contemporary British authors. Smith in *NW* and Pears in *Landed* similarly suggest that the literary might be the only space for individuals to resist and survive. This "instinct for self-preservation" and the traumatic aftermath of survival are as pregnant with meaning in *The Blasphemer* as they are in trauma theory, the aim of which "in the arts" is to "explore the relation between psychic wounds and signification" (Hartman 2003: 257). In his article Hartman underlines how literature can voice trauma and thereby find some sort of ethical legitimacy. We know how prominent the question of survival is for trauma theorists, and particularly what is now studied as the "survivor's guilt" (Rothberg 2000: 47). Significantly, Farndale expands on the issue in his article:

Of those who do escape, many suffer from survivors' guilt. This can stem from feelings of being unworthy of survival, or from feeling pleased that they escaped when others didn't. Dr Stephen Joseph, a psychologist at the University of Warwick, has studied this phenomenon in connection with the sinking of the Herald of Free Enterprise in 1987. "In the three years after the disaster, it was found that 60 per cent of survivors suffered from guilt," he says. "There were three types: first, there was guilt about staying alive while others died; second, there was a guilt about the things they failed to do —these people often suffered post-traumatic 'intrusions' as they relived the event again and again; third, there were feelings of guilt about what they did do, such as scrambling over others to escape. These people usually wanted to avoid thinking about the catastrophe. They didn't want to be reminded of what really happened." (2009)

Joseph's emphasis on guilt, failure, repetition, and the avoidance of remembrance is a cogent snapshot on the main directions we find in trauma theory, each present in the complex plot imagined by Farndale. In *Unclaimed Experience* (1996), Cathy Caruth elaborates on Freud's concept of the *Nachträglichkeit*, "l'après-coup" for Lacan, with its strategies and effects of deferral and belatedness. What is traumatic for the subject is never the event itself, which is too immediate and unaccountable, but its repetition. Trauma theorists believe that the location and the role of literature, and above all narration, are between those two extremes —the event and its traumatic repetition. Roger Luckhurst writes, "Trauma, in effect, issues a challenge to the capacities of narrative knowledge. In its shock impact trauma is anti-narrative, but it also generates the manic production of

¹ Farndale then explains, "Studies of passenger behaviour in crash situations have found that eight per cent of people are 'life survivors' who, given the slightest opportunity, will find a way out. By contrast, 12 per cent of people won't escape under almost any circumstances; their 'behavioural inaction' is based on a feeling that in an emergency they will die, so they remain seated, paralysed by shock" (2009).

retrospective narratives that seek to explicate trauma" (2008: 79).² Hence the numerous interests of the motif of trauma for literary theorists, here summed up by Georges Letissier in his reading of Ian McEwan's *Atonement*: "Trauma . . . entails a breach in the mind's experience of time, self and the world. Both iteration and belatedness constitute the specificity of trauma, though, and correlatively its interest for literary studies. In a sense, trauma involves a process of deferral" (2011: 210). In *The Blasphemer*, the narrative of the initial accident is repeated many times and often by Daniel himself, who is thus living through both repeated and deferred versions of his traumatic event in order to overcome it; this narrative device fits one of the main tenets of literary trauma theory.

Surviving accidents, or accidents that help one survive, are also closely related to traumatic falling, as indicated by the etymology of *accident*, which comes from Latin *accidens*, from *accidere* (to happen), itself from *cadere* (to fall). After surviving the crash and while doing his best to help the others survive, Daniel is already confused between those two logics: "His only alternative was to remove his lifejacket and allow himself to sink. Drowning is supposed to be painless" (2010: 105). During the last accident falling and surviving are almost merged into one: "Daniel now knew he had to jump, but he also knew that *even if he survived the fall*, the broken glass would lacerate him. . . . The sensation he felt was of falling through time, of finding its inward flow" (394-95). Eventually Daniel even doubts he did survive the crash (309), while the 1917 subplot defines surviving as enduring pain and trauma: "Being shot? You don't feel owt. Blokes I know who've been wounded say it feels like being punched —a dull pain. Sharp pain only comes later if you survive long enough to feel it..." (374). The point of surviving is eventually questioned in *The Blasphemer*, or at least it is located within another, more philosophical and supernatural, framework, which I will specify in the next section, before coming back to the issue of trauma.

3. ANOTHER ACCIDENT: PHILOSOPHICAL AND SUPERNATURAL EVOLUTION

Accidents with Farndale may also be enriched with philosophical undertones. We know that to Aristotle accidents were not radically opposed to essence in the definition and reality of man, but might, when emerging, reshape, specify, and qualify essence without altering it (Aristotle 2004: 150). In both novels accidents likewise may not so much open on the accidental as fortuitous, but rather throw light on *change*. In the way accidents lead to change and new characters, new inclinations, expectations, decisions or actions, they steer clear of the fortuitous and, conversely, allow protagonists to self-consciously change and make choices. Here again, accidents limit the accidental by opening onto change, and favour evolution and progress rather than randomness. In *A Sympathetic Hanging* Michael initially acknowledges: "Although I've been a political correspondent and written two

² See also his development on Jean-François Lyotard's assertion that "trauma freezes time, and therefore any possibility of narrative" (80-81).

political biographies, I think I was born without the political gene, the one that makes politicians embarrassing yet unembarrassable" (2000: 30). Yet after the accident and the meeting with Jennifer he surprises himself by becoming more interested—and involved in spite of himself—in politics, as well as more able to be sentimentally committed (through another colliding of intimacy and politics). The narrative teems with self-awareness of such evolution. The same is true of Jennifer, whose father sarcastically remarks, "Yes, yes, her personality did change after she came out of the coma. She became more stable and rational" (149). The novel also mentions the difficulty of setting up a sexual politics: "I've never been good at sexual politics", Michael states, to which Jennifer replies, "Oh, give it a rest. *Please*. . . . You always have to, like, analyse things. All this politics bollocks. You always make things more complicated than they are. There doesn't need to be a motive behind everything, you know" (156). This passage links intimacy and sex to politics and explanation, and echoes a similar intimate exchange on the nature of politics in Jonathan Coe's *What a Carve up!*:

"You think you can reduce everything to politics, don't you, Michael? It makes life so simple for you." "I don't see what's simple about it." "Well of course politics can be complicated, I realize that. But I always think there's something treacherous about that sort of approach. The way it tempts us to believe there's an explanation for everything, somewhere or other, if only we're prepared to look hard enough. That's what you're really interested in, isn't it? Explaining things away." "What's the alternative?" (2008: 354)

Equally applied to intimate relationships in Coe's novel, this definition of politics as a way to explain and understand things is in both texts another way to defuse the accidental and rationalise both narration and intimacy.

As a zoologist (a nematologist to be precise), Daniel Kennedy is a rational researcher who will embark on a journey to the discovery of doubt, faith, religion and guardian angels. "Flying was an act of faith in the people who build, inspect and fly planes: as a scientist, Daniel knew he of all people should appreciate that. But he was not a great believer in faith. 'I keep telling him it's irrational,' Nancy said. 'He hates that. Thinks he's the most rational man on the planet'" (Farndale 2010: 55). The accidental was just what was missing in his life and convictions, as he almost admits here: "Death is part of life. It is programmed into our DNA. I can even tell you, more or less, how long you will live, barring accidents" (236). There may be nothing new in the motif of the rational scientist who learns to take into account more supernatural features of life, but here it appears as the first consequence of accidents and being forced to survive. And it is above all the visions that Daniel so often has that push him to question his own rationality. On their way to the airport (21), once there (31), in Quito (49), or when he is just about to give up getting to the shore to find some help (105), Daniel has the precise vision of the same young man, whom he will be dumbfounded to recognise in the face of his daughter's teacher, Hamdi. His great-grandfather Andrew happens to have been saved after the

massacre, as well as driven to desert, by some similar vision and a man looking exactly like Daniel's visions and like Hamdi (148). When Daniel catches a glimpse of Hamdi at a demonstration in London, he stops his car and thus avoids death in a bomb explosion a few minutes later and a hundred yards further, and therefore he confusingly thinks Hamdi might be his guardian angel (162). The only picture the family has of Andrew, posing next to his own future guardian angel with Hamdi's features, might finally be the only way to save Daniel out of the coma at the end of the book, when his father brings it to him and Daniel recognises Hamdi next to Andrew. Things will not be explained, yet ironically this supernatural side with its recurrent enigma could be construed as the ultimate form of conspiracy and machination in *The Blasphemer* —Daniel, in spite of his rational doubts and blasphemes, despite being a life survivor, is at the heart of yet another conspiracy this time aimed at saving him.

This is the most conspicuous example of the supernatural in Farndale. In his first novel allusions to religion are to be found when at the beginning Michael is on his way to interview a faith healer, when he writes a paper entitled "The Premier as Saint" (2000: 30), or when after the absence of political genes he defines himself through another absence: "[A]lthough I'd say I have a religious temperament, I have no belief whatsoever" (13). Faith and religion are given much more weight in *The Blasphemer*, where faith, guardian angels and Islam often intermingle, with Hamdi of course but also, for instance, with the legend of the Angel of Mons during WWI. This is a further example of the contemporary background to Farndale's fiction, not only in its political questioning of faith and religion but also in the way accidents shake the foundations of belief. This might be one significant aspect of Farndale's contemporaneity: this accidental and unexpected shift from fragile certitude to new doubts and confusions. The ways in which the public and the private inevitably collide, as well as politics and religion, Islam and suspicion of terrorism, science and guardian angels, sex and politics, etc. —all based around the issue of survival— endow the novels with a sometimes muddled yet inventive contemporary colour.

This direction recalls the ambiguities of 'traumatic realism', defined by Michael Rothberg as the main narrative and stylistic option in trauma fiction. Rothberg points at the rejuvenation of realism and its traditional functions thanks to traumatic realism: "Traumatic realist texts, moreover, challenge the narrative form of realism as well as its conventional indexical function" (2000: 104). Anne Whitehead identifies the double nature of traumatic realism: "[T]rauma fiction relies on the intensification of conventional narrative modes and methods. There are, however, a number of key stylistic features which tend to recur in these narratives. These include intertextuality, repetition and a dispersed or fragmented narrative voice" (2004: 84). Traumatic writing would then follow the traditions of literary realism but also be based on less realistic and more 'hyperbolic' strategies, as studied by Jean-Michel Ganteau, who defines traumatic realism as being: "dominated by poetic modalities such as hyperbole, intensification, saturation, anachronism and fragmentation —devices that are supposed to be mimetic

of traumatic effects and that problematise the conventions of transparent mimesis in a hyperbolical fashion" (2011: 111). Which narrative and stylistic features in Farndale's writing, then, drive towards a symbolical and supernatural dimension in traumatic realism?

4. FROM A 'MEANING VACUUM' TO NARRATIVE AND STYLISTIC ACCIDENTS

José M. Yebra recalls how the stylistic tools of trauma fiction can bridge the gaps between trauma and representation: "There seems to be an apparently unbridgeable gap between traumatic events and their narrative representation . . . Nevertheless, a breaking down of language does not imply complete silence. Trauma fiction has elaborated complex strategies to represent its inarticulacy: disruptions, temporal and logical gaps, silences, unreliable narration, grammatical dislocations are some of the formulae to (mis)represent the vacuum left by a traumatic event after a period of latency" (2011: 185). Farndale's writing does not usually go as far as "breaking down" language, although at certain points Daniel's traumatic narrative evokes such "temporal and logical gaps", for instance when telling Susie of his present confusion:

"We both survived, you and me." . . . "Sort of," he said distractedly. "I still don't feel like I did before the crash. I feel off-centre. Sometimes I wake myself up with my own shouting. Sometimes I'm afraid to sleep. I'll get all shivery like I have a fever but at the same time I'll be feeling clear-headed. It's hard to describe. It's like everything is more vivid. Wet seems wetter. Blue seems bluer. I feel more energised and restless. People tell me I keep smiling. I sometimes feel that, since the crash, I have found my true self—that a glass wall that separated me from the rest of the world has come down. It was like, before it happened, I was underwater and everything was muffled. I was hearing sounds coming from a distance. Now I hear everything clearly. Does that make sense?" (2010: 309)

However off-centre Daniel might feel, his traumatic recollection and narrative is the point to which the novel keeps returning. Here and elsewhere, the text follows misleading strategies of excess and fluidity to stress how slowly trauma may be overcome through narration: short sentences, noun sentences and confused perceptions which indeed might not make sense.

Elsewhere Farndale's narrative seems to rely on a specific pattern involving chaos and the trivial to represent the vacuum of trauma. This narrative device becomes another case of accidental fiction, the aim of which is to order meaning from the trivial and the fortuitous. In a similar way to what happens after the traumatic event, the text will reorganise the vacuum after too many facts or too much narrative. What is at stake here echoes Mary Shelley's definition (and practice) of creation out of chaos in *Frankenstein*: "Invention, it must be humbly admitted, does not consist in creating out of void, but out of chaos; the materials must, in the first place, be afforded: it can give form to dark, shapeless substances,

but cannot bring into being the substance itself" (1992: 8).³ Creation may only emerge from chaos, while to Farndale such chaos is also to be understood as a correlative of the vacuum engendered by trauma.

What I want to insist on is the aesthetic link between chaos and the void —aesthetic inasmuch as it tackles the logic of creation, embedded in the plot of *The Blasphemer* through another complex thread related to the score for an alternative opening to Mahler's Ninth Symphony. Wetherby has been looking for it for years, and it turns out that conductor Major Morris, who had been bequeathed the score, was the person who shot himself enabling Andrew to be saved in 1918. However excluded arts and creation seem to be in the plot, they also constitute the main MacGuffin and even help Daniel's father save his son's career and reveal Wetherby's machinations. Creation and writing, with narrative and stylistic accidents, might become the only remaining space for the accidental and the fortuitous to take shape with Farndale.

The Blasphemer plays with genres and expectations, with definitions, to reshuffle standards and deliver contemporary fiction. *A Sympathetic Hanging* soon drifts towards intricate scenes and conversations, in the middle of which Michael Yates seems to be lost. What he is witnessing or given to hear does not make more sense than do, to us, some of his own rambling actions in the novel. Unplanned and incoherent twists could thus be seen as first textual traces of accidental and random aesthetics. In the incipit of *A Sympathetic Hanging* Farndale comes up with this aphorism on order and accidental creation: "The urge to impose order, to think clearly, must begin with the trivial" (2000: 3). And indeed both novels, perhaps so as to impose narrative order on chaotic references, begin with the trivial and the accidental —*A Sympathetic Hanging* with two accidents, public and private, and with one character trapped somewhere in his car, surely one character and one place among potential others. *The Blasphemer* similarly opens on the figure of the hero confined in a closed space, the bathroom this time, in a short first scene with Nancy using the weighing scales, to install intimacy and desultory forms of the trivial or the accidental; by so doing more importance is lent to their growing apart when having to survive. Accidental and desultory beginnings are embedded in *The Blasphemer* with this introduction of Nancy: "Nancy was his dentist, the mother of his child, the woman he loved" (11). How could the introduction of a heroine be more trivial, at the same time funny and pompous, unexpected and accidental? Yet the reader will move from the accidental and the trivial to order and understanding, following the paths of Farndale's heroes.

In the end, Farndale's relation to time might be both accidental and chaotic. The fantasy he creates in *A Sympathetic Hanging* is a first sign of his tendency to play with history and political reality, reshuffling actual references to approach some allegory of our times. It is also in this debut novel that we find a first definition of accidental time: "Even though time warps and slows down during an accident —something to do with a delay

³ On chaos in *Frankenstein*, see Mellet 2011.

in the electrical impulses that transmit information from the retina to the brain— it isn't slow enough for me to prevent the car from slewing from one side of the road to the other" (2000: 8). Then this slowing down of perception is followed by a repetition of the scene in the narrative, since another accident happens after Jennifer has temporarily regained consciousness and cycled on a few metres. Time distortion leads to repetition and, once again, anything but accidental and fortuitous events, as if the two were doomed by the first accident literally to bump into each other forever. The trivial might therefore not always be leading to any imposed narrative order, and be repeated just to bring to the fore its own traumatic qualities. More than any dubious form of order, the representation of trauma imposes the logic of repetition and its primary emphasis on traumatic structures.

The links between narration and the void associated to trauma are discussed in Farndale's essay 'The Children who Survive Plane Crashes', where he evokes the experience of surviving: "Psychologists also talk of 'survivor syndrome', a pattern of reactions including chronic anxiety, recurring dreams of the event, a general numbness and withdrawal from the pleasures of life. Survivors find themselves in a 'meaning vacuum' where they question the point of life" (2009). The motif of the vacuum here becomes the metaphor of depression and the ground for a fresh questioning of one's identity and meanings. Farndale continues: "But in other cases, surviving can have positive benefits. People re-evaluate their lives and find new meaning and depth. This is what is known as 'adversarial growth'. The survivors become, if you like, better people: more compassionate, less materialistic. They determine to live their lives to the full and in the moment. Significantly, many no longer worry about death" (2009). This alternative path, from the traumatic void to new meaning and a fresh approach to life, becomes the gist of the 'meaning vacuum', insofar as the former exists only to be filled with meaning. At the crossroads of this pattern at the heart of trauma theory can be found the essentials of what Anthony Giddens has called "self-identity" as based on the narrative:

Self-identity, in other words, is not something that is just given, as a result of the continuities of the individual's action-system, but something that has to be routinely created and sustained in the reflexive activities of the individual. . . . Self-identity is not a distinctive trait, or even a collection of traits, possessed by the individual. It is *the self as reflexively understood by the person in terms of her or his biography*. (1991: 52-53, emphasis in original)

Personal identity will emerge and be asserted through the self-narrative in which the individuals will recognise themselves: "A person's identity is not to be found in behaviour, nor —important though it is— in the reactions of others, but in the capacity *to keep a particular narrative going*" (54, emphasis in original). The weight laid by Jacques Rancière on the democratic chaos and disorganization at work in what he calls, with Derek Attridge (2010), the process of 'literariness', appears as another theoretical opening suggested by Farndale's traumatic aesthetics: "[Writing] disrupts the legitimate order of speech in the way the latter is distributed and at the same time distributes bodies in a well-ordered

community. . . . I propose to call this disruption 'literariness'" (Rancière 1998: 125-26; my translation). To Rancière, such democratic use of writing will lead individuals to "political subjectivation", defining or redefining their identities.

This would finally explain why the traumatic narrative cancels the need to impose order and begin with the trivial: "The urge to impose order, to think clearly, must begin with the trivial" (Farndale 2000: 3). For the survivor whose meaning vacuum Farndale relates in his article,⁴ "trivial things don't worry [one] any more" (2009). The trivial itself no longer is the source for order, even narrative order. Surviving becomes a matter of accepting chaos and the accidental, as Daniel does in the last pages of *The Blasphemer*, when choosing and creating new accidents for himself. Farndale's accidental fiction might then assert itself as the best narrative mode to encompass trauma and its aftermath, as well as to endow his characters with the ethical possibility of facing and accepting chaos as the enduring token of their new inclusion into life.

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⁴ "Juliane Köpcke is one of these. She is a professor of biology now, based in Germany. In 1971 she was a 17-year-old schoolgirl flying with her mother to Lima. Lightning struck the plane. There was an explosion and the next thing she knew she was in the air, strapped to her seat at 10,000 feet. Her final thought before she passed out was that the rainforest below her looked like broccoli. When she came round it was morning and she was on her own in the Peruvian jungle, still strapped into her seat. Her arms and legs were gashed and she had broken her collarbone, but otherwise, miraculously, she was unharmed. She was the only survivor out of 92 on board. 'I was too shocked to feel frightened,' she says. 'I realised there was no way a search party would find the plane—it was too deeply hidden—so my only chance was to reach help. When I heard the sounds of running water I knew I had to follow it, because a river would lead to a human settlement.' Her survival instinct took over. She scooped maggots from her wounds, drank muddy water and walked for 10 days in the jungle before being found by tribesmen. 'The accident changed me completely,' she says. 'I have learnt that life is precious—that it can be taken from you at any moment. I came so close to death then that everyday stress no longer affects me. Trivial things don't worry me any more'" (Farndale 2009).

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Comic Books and Graphic Novels in their Generic Context. Towards a Definition and Classification of Narrative Iconical Texts

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In current criticism on comic books and graphic novels there is a recurrent use of the terms ‘comic’ or ‘comic book’ to refer both to the language employed by these texts and to the different subgenres that use this language. Comic strips, comic books and graphic novels share the common characteristic of employing the same iconical language. Nevertheless, they are different texts that should each be placed in their own context in order to understand their generic specificities. Their contextualisation will help avoid the confusion produced by the indiscriminate use of the term ‘comic’. This article aims to offer a proposal for the assessment and classification of the different types of texts that exist under the umbrella terms of ‘comics’ and ‘comic books’, with a view to placing them within what can be called the ‘iconical discourse community’.

Keywords: iconical language; iconical discourse community; comic book; graphic novel; comic strip; illustrated novel

. . .

Comic books y novelas gráficas en su contexto genérico. Hacia una definición y clasificación de los textos icónico narrativos

En la crítica actual de cómics y novelas gráficas hay un uso constante de los términos ‘comic’ y ‘comic book’ para referirse indistintamente tanto al lenguaje empleado por estos textos como a los diferentes subgéneros que emplean este lenguaje. Las tiras cómicas, los cómics y las novelas gráficas comparten la característica común de emplear el mismo lenguaje icónico. Sin embargo, son tipos de texto diferentes que deben ser ubicados en su propio contexto para poder comprender sus especificidades genéricas. Esta contextualización ayudará a los críticos a evitar la confusión producida por el uso indiscriminado del término ‘cómico’. El objetivo de este artículo es ofrecer una propuesta terminológica para la consideración y clasificación de los diferentes tipos de textos que existen actualmente bajo los términos ‘comic’ y ‘comic book’, con el propósito de ubicarlos dentro de lo que se puede llamar la ‘comunidad de discurso icónico’.

Palabras clave: lenguaje icónico; comunidad de discurso icónico; cómic; novela gráfica; tira cómica; novela ilustrada

In 1972, Gérard Genette introduced his book, *Narrative Discourse: An Essay in Method*, with the following words: “We currently use the word *narrative* without paying attention to . . . its ambiguity, and some of the difficulties of narratology are perhaps due to this confusion” (1980: 25, emphasis in original).¹ When approaching the world of comic books and graphic novels, critics seem to be labouring within exactly the same confusion. In the state of current Comics Studies, there seems to be a constant use of the terms ‘comic’ and ‘comic book’ to refer both to the language employed by comic books and to the different subgenres that use this language. Labelling everything as ‘comics’, as done, for example, by Scott McCloud (1994), David Carrier (2000), Miguel Ángel Muro Munilla (2004), or Thierry Groensteen (2007), may inevitably lead to terminological confusion similar to that pointed out by Genette. In fact, the analysis of iconical texts seems to be hampered from the outset as the terminology that elucidates their classification does not offer a plain distinction between their language and the different types of texts.

Further in the critical literature, we can find many examples of authors, such as Ana Merino (2003), Jesús Jiménez Varea (2006), or Jeet Heer and Kent Worcester (2009), who indistinctly label comic strips, comic books or graphic novels as ‘comics’, thus terminologically including them all within the same subgenre of comic books, regardless of their intrinsic differences. In their analyses, three different meanings are given to the same term: ‘comics’ may refer to the language, the medium and the subgenre of the comic book. Heer and Worcester acknowledge the ambiguity of the term, although they perpetuate it in *A Comics Studies Reader*. As they affirm in the opening pages of the book, “The term ‘comics’ is itself filled with ambiguity . . . For our purposes, the term most often refers to comic strips, comic books, manga, and graphic novels, but also encompasses gag cartoons, editorial cartoons, and *New Yorker*-style cartoons” (2009: xiii). The reader of critical theory may become lost in the difficulty of trying to ascertain the meaning of the same word in various different sentences.

When a literary critic approaches the analysis of a novel, the text scrutinised is not labelled as a piece of ‘poetry’, since a novel and a poem are obviously different types of texts, although they both might employ the written word on paper. When analysing a comic book, it would be helpful, if not necessary, to distinguish between the language employed (iconical language), the discourse community that has created the text (the iconical discourse community, following John Swales’ terminology, 1991), and the type of text as text (in this case, a comic book, in contrast to other narrative iconical subgenres, such as comic strips or graphic novels). This distinction between iconical language, iconical discourse community, and narrative or non-narrative iconical texts will help situate comic books and graphic novels in their own generic context. The aim of this article is, therefore, to introduce the concept of iconical discourse community for

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the analysis of comic books, graphic novels and other related narrative and non-narrative iconical subgenres. With this purpose, I will firstly highlight certain problems affecting the terminology employed to describe the language of comics. I will consider the various proposals for the analysis of the language of comic books that have appeared to date. Then, I will provide a definition of the iconical discourse community, together with a classification of non-narrative and narrative iconical subgenres, where comic books and graphic novels belong. This article is aimed at gaining insight into the world of these texts in order to avoid the problematic confusion produced by the indiscriminate use of the term 'comics'.

1. CONSIDERING LINGUISTIC TERMINOLOGY

With regard to the question of linguistic terminology, the major drawback comes primarily from a general lack of agreement among critics. In the critical literature we can find at least five different ways of labelling the comic-book subgenre, depending on the various authors involved in the field. Consequently, even though they are writing about the same subject and the same level of analysis of works and genres, critical intercommunication is hampered by the fact that they do not share the same critical language.

a) Scott McCloud and comics as language

One way of labelling comic books is by using the term 'comics' in an all-inclusive sense. Scott McCloud (1994), David Carrier (2000), Mario Saraceni (2003), Douglas Wolk (2007), Thierry Groensteen (2007), or Mike Chiin and Chris McLoughlin (2007), among many others, employ this term to refer not so much to the comic-book subgenre, as to the language used by iconical texts, regardless of whether they are graphic novels, comic strips, single-panel cartoons, or comic books. The basic premise behind this inclusiveness is that all such books have a common language which is not shared by any other type of text. Otherwise we would label newspaper advertisements or book covers as comic books, as all of them employ words and images to create a certain type of text. This seems to be the reason why Scott McCloud considers the Bayeux tapestry and Egyptian paintings as ancient comic books (1994: 12-15). McCloud focuses on the use of iconical language to create a narrative text but, as he employs the terms 'comic book' and 'comics' to refer to this language, he also suggests that medieval tapestries and Egyptian paintings are types of comic books. Obviously, these tapestries and paintings are not types of comics. McCloud's use of the term 'comics' to refer to the common language shared by these texts creates an ambiguity of meaning that misleads to the belief that the Bayeux tapestry should be considered a comic book.

This ambiguity becomes apparent when we consider those examples of primitive comic books offered by McCloud. We cannot distinguish the concepts of language and genre when we label both as 'comics'. I would agree with McCloud on the fact that Egyptian paintings employ the same language as comic books, and present a narrative structure based on a juxtaposition of different iconical representations. However, sharing the same

language does not necessarily mean being the same type of text (otherwise a narrative poem and a novel written in poetic prose would be considered the same type of text). For this reason, I propose the use of the term ‘iconical language’ to refer to the language which employs icons in order to deliver a message, and the terms ‘comics’ and ‘comic books’ to refer to a specific narrative iconic subgenre.

Thierry Groensteen, in his book *The System of Comics*, also considers ‘comics’ a language and aims at analysing this language “not as a historical, sociological, or economic phenomena, which it is also, but as an original ensemble of productive mechanisms of meaning” (2007: 2). Later on, in his “systematic description of the physical essence of comics” (2007: 24), he affirms nevertheless that “comics is a genre” (2007: 10). Although Groensteen’s work offers many useful tools for the analysis of such texts, this author too cannot avoid the overriding ambiguity of such a taxonomy. For Groensteen, comics are a language, a genre and also a ‘system’ (2007: 159), a notion stemming from the semiotic perspective he employs in his analysis.

Douglas Wolk, similarly, affirms that “comics are not a genre; they’re a medium” (2007: 11), pointing to the origin of the terminological ambiguity in this precise distinction. With this statement, Wolk’s aim is to endorse Scott McCloud’s contention that we must learn “to separate the form of comics from its often inconsistent contents” (1994: 199). Comics scholars, then, seek to establish clear differences between the language that the medium employs and the types of texts that are created by means of that language. This is what Randy Duncan and Matthew Smith also convey when they affirm, “The search for a definition [of a comic book] must begin with disentangling the comic book medium from the semantic confusion of the term ‘comics’. First of all, there is no distinct medium known as comics. ‘Comics’ is a useful general term for designating the phenomenon of juxtaposing images in a sequence” (2009: 3, emphasis in the original). As can be gathered, Duncan and Smith consider comic books a medium, not a genre, whereas the term ‘comics’ refers to the juxtaposition of images in a sequence and, therefore, it may also refer to cinema and many other types of texts. In *The Power of Comics* (2009), Duncan and Smith employ ‘comic book’ as an umbrella term to include every iconic text.

Neither Wolk’s nor Duncan and Smith’s use of the terms ‘comics’ and ‘comic book’ separate form from content, since they employ the same term to refer both to the iconic (text-and-image) language and to the comic-book and graphic-novel subgenres, thus leading to ambiguous statements such as, “Even though all graphic novels are comic books, not all comic books are graphic novels” (Chiin and McLoughlin 2007: 15). The reader is left to wonder whether the authors are talking about genres, subgenres, language, or everything at once. The first part of this statement clearly refers to the language employed by both subgenres, and might be rephrased as ‘even though comic books and graphic novels use the same iconic language’. The second part of the statement refers to the generic distinction between different types of texts. Thus, saying that “not all comic books are graphic novels” is establishing a generic difference between types of text that employ

the same language. Hence, using the same term for the medium, the language and the texts creates a confusion which prevents critics from reaching certain insights and forces us to look beyond it to the elaboration of adequate critical tools.

b) Will Eisner, comic books and the sequential nature of art

Another terminological proposal comes from one of the most important figures in the history of these genres. Will Eisner, in *Comics and Sequential Art*, published in 1985, proposes the term 'sequential art' to refer to narrative iconical texts. In the chapter 'Writing and Sequential Art' (2001: 122), Eisner coins this phrase to express the system of creating a narrative with words and images by opposition to the written text of, say, a novel. The author employs the term *sequential* as used in other visual media, such as cinema, thus establishing the sequence as the central structuring element of the visual narratives.

'Sequential art' has been a successful label for these texts, apparently for two related reasons. On the one hand, it connects the world of comic books with the sequential narratives of the cinema, thus profiting from the huge popularity that the latter has achieved in recent years. On the other hand, the label relates the term 'art' to a field that has been usually considered a peripheral manifestation of a certain 'subculture' for children (Sabin 2001: 157). Thus, terminologically, 'sequential art' highlights the urge, in the cultural arena, for comic books to be considered on equal terms with those artistic expressions usually labelled as 'high art'.

Nonetheless, this phrase labels as art the sum total of these texts, but does not make specific reference to the iconic nature of the texts themselves. Therefore, the term 'art', as employed here, could also be used to refer to any other type of art presented in the form of a sequence: it could be applied to written texts, including the novel, whose written words are read sequentially.

c) Graphic language

Trying to use a term closer to the iconic nature of comic books and graphic novels, other critics prefer labels which emphasise the visual aspect of their language. Rocco Versaci, for instance, claims that he reads 'graphic language', understanding 'graphic' as in 'illustrated' (2007: 1). In this way, he employs the term 'graphic' to refer to the iconical nature of the language employed by comic books and graphic novels. The image is thus different from the written word in the category of 'graphicality', if we oppose the language of a comic book to the language of a novel. However, although the image as drawn on the page of a comic book certainly has a graphic nature, so too does the written word on the page of a novel (one only has to open *Tristram Shandy*, or one of Samuel Beckett's late novels to realise this). Indeed, the 'graphicality' of words and images is a common, not a distinguishing element: both have a graphic substance, and this common feature integrates, in the case of iconical texts, both visual and written elements within the same category of iconical language. The term 'graphic language' is not without ambiguity.

d) Literatures of the image and verbal-iconical genres

Various Spanish critics have coined other terminological formulas for discussing the relationship between words and images in these genres. Román Gubern, for instance, talks about 'literatures of the image' (*literaturas de la imagen*, 1973: 17), and labels the comic book a 'narrative in images' (*narrativa en imágenes*, 47). Still, although this phrase is applicable to comic books and graphic novels, it can also be applied to cinema, in so far as both are narratives composed of images. As stated previously, the Bayeux tapestry is also a narrative in images, but it is difficult to think of it as an example of a comic book. Sharing the same language and being a narrative does not make any type of text into a comic book.

Nevertheless, Gubern, as well as other critics, employs the phrase 'verbal-iconical' genres (*géneros verbo-icónicos* and *códigos verbo-icónicos*) to refer to the generic family to which comic books and graphic novels belong. With this phrase, critics like Alfonso Lindo (1975), Antonio Altarriba (1984), Miguel Ángel Muro Munilla (2004), and even myself in an earlier study (Romero-Jódar 2006), highlight the existence, in these text types, of two different languages, to wit, the 'written language' (*lenguaje verbal*, Gubern 1973: 55) and the 'iconical language' (*lenguaje icónico*, Gubern 1973: 55). The label suggests that the written words in caption boxes and word balloons interact and intertwine with the iconic images in the panels, and vice versa.

However, according to this perception of verbal-iconical genres, written words and images remain separate in two different language types. Strictly speaking, what the term implies is that there is both a verbal and an iconic aspect, which may occasionally interact with each other, while still belonging to different areas. As Douglas Wolk states, drawn images and written words are "vastly different things, they work in different ways, and comics require them to be jammed together constantly" (2007: 126). The use of this terminology implicitly foregrounds a tension between two different semiotic systems contained in a hybrid genre, that is, a genre that does not have a language of its own, but has to borrow strategies from other media in order to convey its meaning.

Additionally, critics making reference to the dichotomy between verbal and iconic languages seem to forget an important aspect of the written text. Will Eisner has highlighted the fact that "text reads as an image" (2001: 10), and further noted that "lettering, treated graphically and in service of the story, functions as an extension of the imagery" (10). This is one of the key elements of these texts: words, as graphic representations, or as pure signifiers (in Saussure's conception of the term), have an iconic component that makes the reader perceive them as images. Hence, the verbal aspect as stated by critics in the previous section stops being verbal in the sense attributed to written words, and becomes instead part of the iconic language.

e) Narrative iconic subgenres

It is my contention that, in order to place comic strips, comic books and graphic novels in their generic context, we should employ the phrase 'narrative iconic subgenres'. These three types of texts are narratives which make use of iconic language in order to deliver

a story. Nevertheless, many other types of texts, which are not necessarily narrative, also employ this kind of iconical language, comprising both written and iconic elements. To give a clarifying example, the visual, iconic side of the written text is also employed by the discourse of advertising, where lettering and written text function as images to support the message they try to convey. This is what Vázquez and Aldea refer to as the ‘semantisation of lettering’ (*semantización de las grafías* 1991: 138). Words, understood as graphic images with a visual quality, can be filled with paralinguistic meanings which go beyond the linguistic sign. Thus, a word such as ‘revenge’, depicted in capitals, with a certain broken font, in red and a big font size, does not only convey the literal meaning of ‘revenge’, but also includes the speaker’s attitude: anger, passion, and shouting; that is, certain paralinguistic elements which remain outside a linguistic sign (Cook 1996: 64).

2. THE ICONICAL DISCOURSE COMMUNITY

A connection is thus established between the worlds of graphic novels and advertising, in that they share a common iconical language. Nevertheless, they remain different types of texts that should be placed in their respective position inside their discourse community. This takes us to the second part of this article: the assessment of the iconical discourse community, and the classification of the non-narrative and narrative iconical subgenres. To do so, it will be helpful to approach this subject from its very beginning, from the concepts of iconical language and genre, in order to define the concept of iconical discourse community, in the hope that this will help differentiate between non-narrative and narrative iconical subgenres.

As previously stated, iconical language is that which employs icons in order to deliver a message. According to Peirce, “an icon is a sign which refers to the object that it denotes merely by virtue of characters of its own” (Buchler 1955: 102); that is, “it represents its object mainly by its similarity” (105). There is a physical resemblance between the icon and the object it represents (Vázquez 1991: 64; Cook 1996: 74). Nevertheless, in the process of representation of the real object by means of an icon, there is always an operation of modelling of the sensory reality (Villafañe 1996: 25). Thus, obvious as this may seem, it is not reality itself that is being represented by the icon, but rather a modelling of that reality through the perception of the artist-speaker.

When considering the nature of language, Ferdinand de Saussure pointed out that “contrary to all appearances, language never exists apart from the social fact, for it is a semiological phenomenon. Its social nature is one of its inner characteristics. Its complete definition confronts us with two inseparable entities” (1964: 77). These are, on the one hand, language itself and, on the other, its community of speakers. When considering iconical language, we also have to keep in mind its community of speakers, or, in other words, the community of those who use iconical language to communicate.

Leonard Bloomfield, in his book *Language* (1933), defines this community of speakers in the following terms: “A group of people who use the same system of speech-signals is a

speech-community" (1979: 29). As he further explains, "a speech-community is a group of people who interact by means of speech" (1979: 42). The concept of speech-community, as Dell Hymes points out, is highly significant, as it "postulates the unit of description as a social, rather than linguistic, entity" (1974: 47). Thus, language contains an important social component that allows human beings to interact with one another. Nevertheless, the term 'speech-community' is apparently too narrow, as the word 'speech' seems to refer only to spoken language (the production of sound by means of spoken words) and the concept, therefore, cannot be applied to the languages of written words or iconical representations. Drawing on this notion, John Swales proposed the term 'discourse community' to comprise social groups which employ other types of languages, different from speech, whether spoken, written, iconical, etc. A discourse community therefore comprises the community of people who employ the same language in order to establish a communicative event. But, following Bloomfield, Swales drew a distinction between 'speech-community' and 'discourse community'. In his own words, "a speech-community typically inherits its membership by birth, accident or adoption; a discourse community recruits its members by persuasion, training or relevant qualification. . . . An archetypal discourse community tends to be a *Specific Interest Group*" (1991: 24, emphasis in the original). According to Swales' reading of Bloomfield's theories then, it takes no real effort to enter a speech-community, except for that of understanding the community where one grows up or finds oneself. By contrast, entrance to a discourse community implies an effort of training or relevant qualification on the part of the member and some process of selection or choice or obligation. Adherence to a discourse community would demand training, instead of natural development: in other words, a discourse community recruits its members. They must be persuaded to enter the community, and are conscious of the effort involved. Such would be the case of learning how to read and write the language of one's speech-community, of learning a second language, or learning how to read and draw images or create icons.

Applying these concepts to the world of comic books and graphic novels, it could be stated that these texts belong to a specific discourse community which employs iconical language with the purpose of delivering messages. The iconical discourse community, then, produces and decodes all types of texts which use images to establish a communicative event.

3. ICONICAL GENRES

Having introduced the idea of the iconical discourse community, we can now move on to the analysis of genres and generic specifications. John Swales points out that "genres are the properties of discourse communities; that is to say, genres belong to discourse communities" (1991: 9). Any communicative event based on iconical language is included and classified into the genres belonging to the iconical discourse community. A bas-relief in the Greek Acropolis, for instance, is the product of this community (in its specific historical context). And so is an altarpiece in a church, depicting stories from the Bible

or the life of Christ. These icons carved in stone or painted on the walls are not only aesthetic works, they are narratives communicating stories to those who have the “relevant qualification” (1991: 24) to decode and interpret them.²

The physical medium of the two examples above are wood and stone. In order to narrow the scope to the genres directly related to comic books and graphic novels, I will centre on those iconic texts whose medium is paper, which includes disparate genres, such as comic books, comic strips, graphic novels, illustrated novels, single-panel cartoons, film posters, book and CD covers, and advertisements, among many others. All of them share the common characteristic of being texts that convey messages by means of a type of language combining written words and images, and brings to the fore the iconic potential of both.

Although there are critics like Román Gubern (1973: 55) who oppose iconic and written language as completely different elements in these genres, many others integrate the two into the single category of iconic meaning. In this sense, Guy Cook points out that “in communication, language always has physical substance of some kind. . . . In writing, the same is true of page and letter sizes, fonts and handwriting styles. [They] also carry meaning. . . . They are examples of paralanguage” (1996: 71). Although this critic was analysing the discourse of advertising, this statement can also be applied to comic strips, comic books and graphic novels. As Mario Saraceni notes, “besides being a verbal entity, a word on paper is also a visual entity” (2003: 14), in keeping with the ideas of Eisner previously endorsed in this paper. Hence, the written word in these genres is seen as consisting of a linguistic sign and paralinguistic elements, both working at the same time but “counted as one message” (Barthes 1998: 71).

4. NON-NARRATIVE AND NARRATIVE ICONICAL SUBGENRES

A characteristic feature of the iconic discourse community is its ability to create narrative texts by means of the juxtaposition of icons. Thus, it can produce either descriptive or narrative texts, depending on the structure of images included. The concept of ‘narrative’ as employed here refers to the creation of a narrative text by means of juxtaposed images that create a progression of action in an unfolding of time.

In the examples of iconic texts given earlier, there is a plain difference between some of them. Although graphic novels and advertisements share a common language and are thus addressed to and produced by the iconic discourse community, they are obviously different in one important aspect. An advertisement in a newspaper, for instance, delivers a message to the reader by means of linguistic elements and a single image, which is not

² Note that, in their vast majority, paintings in medieval churches were aimed at people who could not read and write. That is, the viewers were not part of the discourse community of written language, but were already acquainted with the basics for decoding the iconology of medieval religious paintings. Therefore, these viewers were part of the iconic discourse community, even though they were not trained in the creation of images, but only in their decoding and interpretation.

articulated as part of a sequence. The message comes as a shot from the iconic elements, and can be translated into words as a single, simple sentence. By contrast, a graphic novel, while also delivering a message, in this case in the form of a narrative text, does it not with a single image, but by means of a sequence of juxtaposed panels. Therefore, the narrative of a graphic novel cannot be translated into words as a single sentence, but only by means of more complex linguistic structures.

The iconic genres on paper include both those subgenres which do not present a narrative and those which do. In other words, a distinction between non-narrative iconic subgenres and narrative iconic subgenres can be made. The narrative iconic subgenres present a sequential structure which relates panels, following a relationship of juxtaposition (McCloud 1994: 9). On the other hand, in the non-narrative iconic subgenres there is no sequential structure, as there is no relationship between different images or panels: the reader is offered one single icon, which may be composed of images and words, with their visual quality, but which does not relate sequentially to any other image.

To give a simple example similar to that offered by Scott McCloud (2006: 13): we have the drawing of a man with a hat, without any background or additional information (Figure 1).



Figure 1. Single iconic image. Andrés Romero-Jódar 2009, graphite on paper.

In this case, we are offered a single iconic image which may be translated into words by a noun phrase: *A man with a hat*. We may add possible adjectives to this phrase, such as: *An old man with a hat*; or a relative clause: *An old man with a hat, who is dressed in elegant clothing*. Nevertheless, as soon as we limit the space of the drawing to a panel (or vignette, or frame), and we add the drawing of the ground on which he is standing, the dark-red bricks of the building at his back, and a bus stop on his right, the reader is offered a non-narrative iconic text (Figure 2).



Figure 2. Non-narrative iconic text. Andrés Romero-Jódar 2009, graphite on paper.

The reader can translate this picture into words as a single sentence which contains the previous noun phrase: *An old man with a hat, who is dressed in elegant clothing, is waiting for the bus.*

As soon as we add other panels, so that they may relate to each other in a juxtaposed sequence, the reader is offered a narrative iconic text (Figure 3).

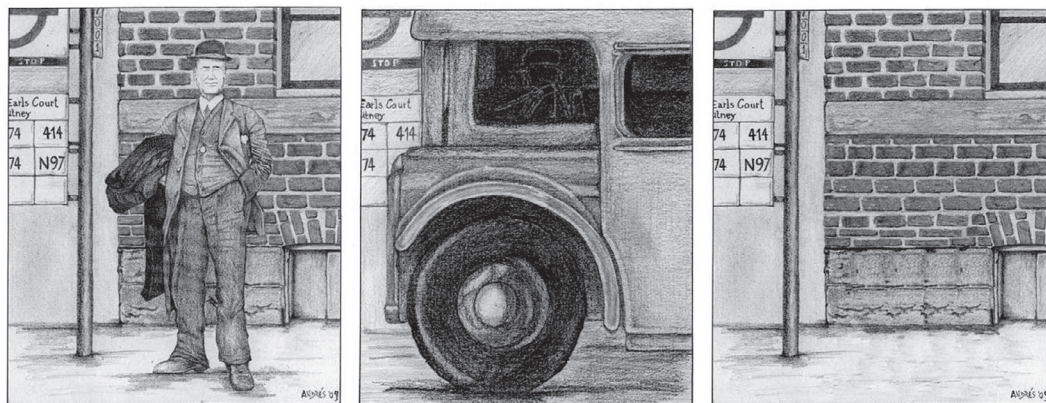


Figure 3. Narrative iconic text. Andrés Romero-Jódar 2009, graphite on paper.

Thus, we add a second panel, with the same size of the first, depicting the drawing of a bus standing in front of the stop. And then, we add a third panel showing the dark-red building bricks and the bus stop, but the “old man with a hat” is nowhere to be found. The reader will consider these three images as a sequence of events, related by a juxtaposition of panels, and will translate them into words as a narrative structure of juxtaposed

sentences: *An old man with a hat, who is dressed in elegant clothing, is waiting for the bus* (Panel 1). *The bus reaches the stop* (Panel 2). *The man jumps into the bus and leaves* (Panel 3). In this narrative structure, the time sequence is important for the understanding of the message. The juxtaposition of the single sentences may be understood by the reader as relationships of additive coordination (*and... and... and*), or subordination (*when, as, later, etc.*), in the present tense (*A man is waiting for the bus*), or in the past (*A man was waiting for the bus*). The different possibilities may be given by the panels themselves, by means of caption boxes holding that information. Nevertheless, the key idea to grasp from this third case is the existence of a narrative structure through the juxtaposition of different panels.

5. NON-NARRATIVE ICONICAL SUBGENRES

Some characteristics of non-narrative and narrative iconic subgenres can be highlighted. In non-narrative iconic subgenres, there is no sequential structuring between images, and thus they can be translated into verbal language as single sentences. Instead of narrating, they describe the situation portrayed in the image. And, when translated into words, they rely on a present tense that describes the single temporality of the situation.

This group of texts on paper includes advertisements (from newspapers, magazines, leaflets, and so on); front and back covers of books, CDs, DVDs, magazines, etc.; film posters and other types of bills; and also single-panel cartoons and illustrated novels. The last two require further explanation. Although usually related to narrative iconic subgenres, such as the comic book or the comic strip, the single-panel cartoon and the illustrated novel do not present a sequential structure of panels to deliver a message and to create a narrative. They are essentially descriptive in their iconic nature. The single-panel cartoon, usually found as entertainment in newspapers, does not offer a sequential narrative, but tends to present single caricatures of well-known public characters or situations. There is neither time sequencing nor narration of different events by means of sequentially-arranged panels. Its function is mostly descriptive, with a parodic or censoring tone for the amusement of the reader. To give a visual example, we can consider the following single-panel cartoon (Figure 4).

As can be seen in this iconic text, the reader is offered a visual description of a situation by means of a single picture. There is no sequence of images and, therefore, no visual narration of events.

Similarly, the illustrated novel belongs to a non-narrative iconic subgenre. In an earlier work, I offered a formal definition of this type of text, highlighting the complex relationship that is established between the written text of the novel and the illustrations that complement and translate it into images. As I stated in that essay, the verbal aspect of an illustrated novel can be seen as “a *closed frame written text* inside which some images (pictures, drawings...) are embedded. The text is *closed* because the written (verbal) aspect of the work is not conscious and does not depend upon its accompanying images



Figure 4. Single-panel cartoon. Andrés Romero-Jódar 2009, ink on paper.

(iconical aspect). And it is a *frame*, for the images are embedded inside that closed text” (emphasis in the original, Romero-Jódar 2006: 97). When considering the iconical language employed in illustrated novels, the drawings are not sequentially arranged, and do not have a relationship of juxtaposition to each other. Obviously, they are directly related to the written text of the novel, but they do not create a narrative as an iconical text would do. Consequently, there are different ways of approaching and labelling an illustrated novel generically: if we focus on the relationship between written text and images, we might affirm that the illustrated novel is a verbal-iconical production. If, however, we centre on the relationship established between images, whether they follow a sequential structure or not, the illustrated novel could be seen as a non-narrative iconical subgenre.

To clarify this aspect, we can experiment with an example of a classic illustrated novel. Below, I have arranged John Tenniel’s first four illustrations for Lewis Carroll’s *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* (1865, Figure 5) as a sequence.

As can be seen, there is no narrative relationship between the images. The sequential arrangement of these illustrations does not offer a coherent progression of events in an unfolding of time. These images achieve their complete meaning in the illustrated novel depending upon the closed written text, not by means of their juxtaposition. Therefore, we can affirm that the illustrated novel, from the perspective of the iconical discourse community, is a non-narrative iconical subgenre.

6. NARRATIVE ICONICAL SUBGENRES

In the category of narrative iconical subgenres, we encounter the central problems for the analysis of comic strips, comic books and graphic novels. These texts present a complex

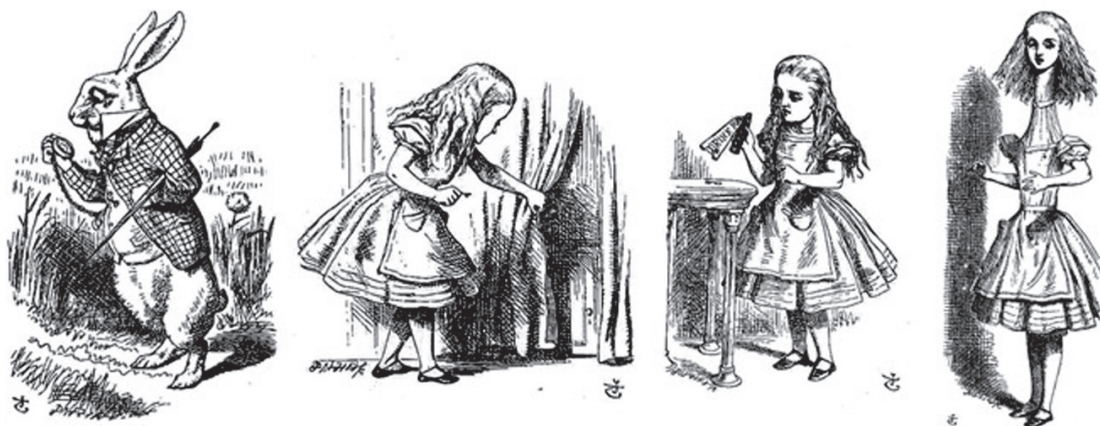


Figure 5. First four illustrations for Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*.

Sir John Tenniel, wood engravings (1866: 1, 8, 10, 15).

structure based on a juxtaposition of panels. This relationship can be understood either as coordination or subordination of clauses, depending on the deictic elements of time and space that may or may not appear in the picture. These subgenres are narrative, as they offer a sequence of events unfolding in a progression of time.

Working on the definition of comic strips, I contended in a previous essay that, formally, the comic strip is “made up by . . . several coordinated pictures . . . , usually humorous in tone, and based on a slapstick effect or sudden denouement, producing a final laughter/joke” (2006: 99). As explained before, the term ‘coordinated’, employed in this quotation, should be understood as ‘juxtaposed’, because the relationship established between pictures may be either coordinative or subordinative. Excellent examples of these texts can be found in the comic-strip series *Calvin and Hobbes* by Bill Watterson (1985-1995), *Peanuts* by Charles Schultz (1950-2000), or *Garfield* by Jim Davis (1978-2013).

The main difficulties of definitions come from the problematic issue of how to define the comic-book subgenre. We can define comic books in comparison to comic strips, as both are serialised productions of periodical appearance which employ iconical language to create a narrative. There are primarily two distinguishing features. One is formal: the comic strip is shorter than the comic book. The first usually being no more than one page, whereas the comic book commonly is much longer (for instance, the American comic book set the standard of twenty four pages). And the other difference is generic: whereas the comic strip can be said to be always humorous in tone, the comic book is not necessarily a comical book. In other words, comic books such as Alan Moore and Kevin O’Neill’s *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen* (1999-2000), or Neil Gaiman and Andy Kubert’s *1602* (2004), are adventure narratives which do not aim at being comical.

The third and final narrative iconical subgenre to be presented in this article is the graphic novel. It is commonly agreed that the first graphic novel appeared in 1978 with *A*

Contract with God by Will Eisner.³ As Paul Gravett explains, American publisher Richard Kyle coined the term ‘graphic novel’ around 1964 (2005: 8), and Eisner employed it to establish a distinction between this work and the previous comic-book production. Nevertheless, the term ‘graphic novel’, or at least its Spanish counterpart *novela gráfica*, was already present in the world of iconic narratives since the early 1960s. *La Tumba de Hierro*, by Eugenio Sotillos and José María Sánchez Boix, published by Ediciones Toray, saw the light in 1961 as the first issue of the *Hazañas Bélicas* graphic-novel series —a series that would last for ten years, releasing two hundred and fifty two issues. Six years later, in 1967, the term was already firmly established in the Spanish readership when Ediciones Toray published a series of fifteen graphic novels for adults (*novelas gráficas para adultos*) starting with Jorge Nabau’s *Miedo en la noche* and finishing with Joaquín M. Piles and Antonio Borrell’s *Los monstruos del mar*.

When attempting to define the graphic novel, critics do not even agree on its existence. For instance, Douglas Wolk affirms that there is no difference between comic books and graphic novels, and he claims that the opposition between them is the same as “the difference between movies, films and cinema” (2007: 61). In a similar way, Mario Saraceni claims that the term graphic novel “has been adopted mainly for commercial reasons. In fact, the distinction between comic book and graphic novels is nothing more than a matter of labels, and has barely anything to do with content or with any other feature” (2004: 4).

On the other hand, there are authors who support the term for the new subgenre but do not offer enough distinguishing features to differentiate graphic novels from comic books or comic strips. Thus, Aviva Rothschild passionately affirms that “graphic novels use words and pictures in ways that transcend ordinary art and text, and their creators are more than writers and artists” (1995: xiv). However, the only distinguishing aspect that she uses to define graphic novels is that they are book-length comics. Stephen Weiner points out that graphic novels “have a beginning, middle, and end between two covers and attempt to have the same effect as serious prose novels —in other words, the characters grow, change, and reach a point of resolution” (2005: vii). In both cases, the authors might be describing comic books, as they also have a beginning, middle and end between two covers, and their length may vary from just a few to any larger number of pages.

³ Manuel Barrero offers an in-depth discussion on the origin and use of the term ‘graphic novel’, and the establishment of Eisner’s work as the first of this subgenre. As he explains, “La obra de Eisner ha sido elegida como la piedra basal por razones que van más allá de la intencionalidad del autor. Este acuerdo, adoptado oficialmente en la convención de cómics de San Diego de 2003, valoraba fundamentalmente que: A, la obra era americana y no iba dirigida a los niños, B, la obra gozó de éxito entre público y crítica, al contrario que sus antecedentes, C, venía firmada por un símbolo del cómic norteamericano, y D, y no menos importante, servía a los intereses de quienes así lo consensuaron (DC/Warner, por ejemplo, acababa de reeditar la obra y tenía esperanzas en ciertas adaptaciones cinematográficas de historietas). La elección de Eisner como fundador de la novela gráfica era, claramente, la opción más útil desde la óptica editorial” (2008). I agree with Barrero in that there are graphic novels prior to *A Contract with God*. Despite the commercial purpose of the generic label, the phrase ‘graphic novel’ has been helpful in drawing attention to other ways of creating narratives with iconic language different from mainstream superhero comic books.

At this stage, we should bear in mind Tzvetan Todorov's warning that "a new genre is always the transformation of an earlier one, or of several: by inversion, by displacement, by combination" (2000: 197). The graphic novel is clearly a transformation of the comic book. However, although they share the same iconical language, comic books and graphic novels may be said to be essentially different in their use of narrative time. This fact allows graphic novels to explore and create more complex narrative structures.

The concept of narrative time and space is explained by Mikhail Bakhtin with the notion of the chronotope, which he defined as "the intrinsic connectedness of temporal and spatial relationships that are artistically expressed in literature" (1988: 84). Bakhtin also affirmed that "it is precisely the chronotope that defines genre and generic distinctions, for in literature the primary category in the chronotope is time" (85). The Russian formalist established three different categories of ancient novels, according to the perception of time in the chronotope, to wit, the Greek romance, the adventure novel of everyday life, and the ancient biography and autobiography.

Starting from the first two categories, I established a generic distinction between the comic book and the graphic novel (Romero-Jódar 2006: 103-04). Basically, the comic book relies on the chronotope of the Greek romance, in which, according to Bakhtin, the character "keeps on being the same person [after his or her adventures] and emerges... with his identity absolutely unchanged" (1988: 105). That is, characters in comic books are not affected by the passing of time, and their identities remain static. To give a clarifying example, Jerry Siegel and Joel Shuster's Superman has never changed his essential identity, even after seventy years of adventures and life-threatening experiences. And the same can be said of Albert Uderzo and René Goscinny's Asterix, Hergé's Tintin, or Superlópez, by Juan López Fernández "Jan", as well as of many other comic-book characters around the world.

By contrast, the graphic novel relies on the chronotope of the adventure novel of everyday life. According to Bakhtin, this kind of novel "depicts only the exceptional, utterly unusual moments of a man's life, moments that... shape the definitive image of the man, his essence, as well as the nature of his entire subsequent life" (1988: 116). Characters in graphic novels suffer the passing of time as it transforms their identity and behaviour, turning them into different beings from those that started the narrative. Thus, character-change and narrative-time progression are the two basic concepts that may be said to define graphic novels in contrast to comic books. This allows works like Neil Gaiman and Dave McKean's *Signal to Noise* (1989), Alan Moore and Dave Gibbons' *Watchmen* (1986), or Paul Hornschemeier's *Mother, Come Home* (2002-2003) to be considered graphic novels.

7. CONCLUDING REMARKS

To conclude, comic books and graphic novels belong in a vast group of texts which employ iconical language to deliver a message and produce a communicative event. In these texts, the iconicity of written language is foregrounded by underlying its graphic nature, so that words become icons that can be modelled in order to add paralinguistic elements to the text.

Comic books and graphic novels are narrative iconic subgenres, part of the iconic genres on paper, and are created in and by the discourse community that employs iconic language. I use this new terminology in order to avoid ambiguities of meaning, and to clearly state the focus of my analysis. With previous terms, such as 'graphic language', 'comics' as language, 'sequential art', or 'verbal-iconic genres', the object of analysis is, for one reason or another, not completely clear from the onset. I therefore propose the use of the phrase 'iconic language' to refer to the language of comics, and 'iconic discourse community' to refer to the community that produces and decodes these texts.

Further, within the iconic genres on paper, we may distinguish between those which do not present a sequential relationship between different panels (the non-narrative iconic subgenres), and those which rely on the syntactic juxtaposition of panels to create a narrative (the narrative iconic subgenres). Within the category of narrative iconic texts, we find the comic strip, the comic book and the graphic novel. The first two can be differentiated by means of their length and their tone, whereas the comic book and the graphic novel tend to differ in their use of narrative time and space.

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Reading the Double Diaspora: Representing Gujarati East African Cultural Identity in Britain

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August 2012 saw the fortieth anniversary of the South Asian population's expulsion from Uganda, by Idi Amin. Many members of this community, who were indeed also Gujaratis, migrated to Britain. My research, grounded in literary studies, excavates the cultural impact of these painful deracinations, which were forced in Uganda, and less coerced in Kenya. Given the trauma of departing from multiple homelands and relocating in a sometimes racist host nation, this article explicates how both individuated and collective identity are formed and reformed. Here I also seek to demonstrate a broad overview of the intervention my research effects within scholarship on the Gujarati diaspora, their narratives of belonging and, as Parminder Bhachu describes, discourses on the 'twice migrant'. Within this remit, close reading of selected dance, culinary practices and visual materials will illustrate the trajectory of my research. Because of the paucity in fictional literary representation of the Gujarati East African in Britain, it is to these other forms of social knowledge that I turn. I argue that this lacuna in fictional writings highlights an inadequacy in the written text when articulating the experience of the twice displaced community. I demonstrate that it is the embodied 'text' that is favoured by this diasporic community in communicating identity. These embodied 'texts', of dance and culinary practices, are also significant in embedding knowledge covertly. The sense of secret or 'esoteric knowledge', that manifests itself time again within the double diaspora, is here too examined.

Keywords: diaspora; identity; Gujarati; embodiment; dance; food

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Una doble lectura de la diáspora: la representación de la identidad cultural gujarati del este de África en Gran Bretaña

Agosto de 2012 contempló el cuadragésimo aniversario de la expulsión de Uganda de la población del sur de Asia, por orden de Idi Amin. Muchos miembros de esta comunidad, que eran en realidad también gujaratis, migraron a Gran Bretaña. Mi investigación, basada en estudios

literarios, indaga en el impacto cultural de estos dolorosos desarraigos, que fueron forzosos en Uganda y menos coaccionados en Kenia. Este artículo explica cómo se forma y reforma la identidad individualizada y colectiva, debido al trauma de dejar atrás varias patrias y reubicarse en una nación de acogida a veces racista. También intento ofrecer una amplia panorámica del impacto de mi investigación en la crítica especializada en la diáspora gujarati, sus textos sobre el sentimiento de pertenencia y, en la descripción de Parminder Bhachu, los discursos de los ‘dos veces migrantes’. Con este cometido, ejemplificaré mi investigación mediante una lectura atenta de una selección de danzas, prácticas culinarias y materiales visuales. He recurrido a estas formas de conocimiento social debido a la escasez de representaciones literarias de los gujarati del este de África en Gran Bretaña. Sostengo que esta laguna de textos de ficción pone de manifiesto la inadecuación del texto escrito para articular la experiencia de una comunidad que ha sido desplazada dos veces. Demuestro que la preferencia de esta comunidad diaspórica para comunicar su identidad es el ‘texto’ corporeizado. Estos ‘textos’ corporeizados de la danza y las prácticas culinarias son significativos a la hora de arraigar el conocimiento implícitamente. También se estudia el sentimiento de un conocimiento secreto o ‘esotérico’, que se manifiesta una y otra vez en la doble diáspora.

Palabras clave: diáspora; identidad; gujarati; corporeización; danza; comida

August 2012 saw the fortieth anniversary of the expulsion of the South Asian community from Uganda, by the dictator Idi Amin. Given just ninety days to pack up their belongings and find a new home, this diasporic community were part of a much larger migrant population. Having migrated to East Africa to undertake voluntary and coerced indentured labour under colonial rule, to build the Kenya-Uganda railway, and engage in mercantile activities as early as 1890, many members of the South Asian community lived in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania until the sixties and seventies. When 'Africanisation' policies were introduced in East Africa after decolonisation, large numbers of South Asians—long settled in East Africa under the British Empire—left their established homes.¹ Many came to Britain, starting new lives as double migrants.² These double migrants are characterised by their Gujarati heritage, though some also are Goan, Punjabi and Ismaili.³ Through the literary critical interpretive practices of close reading this article examines the cultural representations of the Gujarati community who are *now* settled in Britain, via not only Uganda, but also Kenya.

There is, however, a dearth of literary production by, or indeed about, the Gujarati East African in Britain and consequently a lacuna exists in the emergence of literary criticism centred upon this diaspora.⁴ It is therefore through both the existing literary material and a range of other modes of cultural production, which have thus far gone unexamined, that I investigate forms of cultural representation. I shall consider individuated and collective memory by the close reading of culinary practices in Yasmin Alibhai-Brown's *The Settler's Cookbook: A Memoir of Love, Migration and Food* (2009);⁵ how the dance practices of *dandiya* embed esoteric knowledge of the 'double diaspora'; and how the defining ambitions of progress and improvement are manifested in visual materials. By refocusing my critical gaze beyond the traditional fictional text, and considering how other forms of social knowledges can better represent the diaspora, I aim to outline an understanding of multi-layered cultural identity formation amongst the twice displaced Gujarati East African community in Britain.

¹ Africanisation policies primarily sought to privilege the African population over minority groups in East Africa. Agehananda Bharati outlines some of the initial moves to elevate the African above the South Asian. For example, he delineates the withdrawal of import licences after 1965 in East Africa, which "automatically 'discriminate[d]' against the Asian" (1972: 113). Mahmood Mamdani too outlines pre-independence intentions of elevating the African. He, however, also illustrates post-independence changes. For example, he discusses the policies that were introduced to expand the volume of trade carried out by Africans (1976: 236). Of course the most notorious of Africanisation policies was Idi Amin's act of expelling South Asians from Uganda in 1972.

² The diaspora, in the main, also settled in Canada, United States and India.

³ Many of those who migrated and settled in East Africa from India were from Gujarat. Dharam P. Ghai describes the *dukas* as being "owned almost exclusively by Gujarati speaking Asians" (1965: 14) and it is these migrants who came to Africa of their own free will and formed the overwhelming majority of the 360,000 Gujarati Indians in the region (Tinker 1975: 15). The Gujarati majority in East Africa has, then, been translated into the double diaspora.

⁴ There are some sociological and historical scholarly works on the 'singly displaced' Indian East African diaspora (Ghai 1965; Mangat 1969; Ghai and Ghai 1971; Bharati 1972; Tandon and Raphael 1978; Twaddle 1990).

⁵ Henceforth referred to as *The Settler's Cookbook*.

The structure of this article is set out in three parts: having outlined my aims, I shall now substantiate my thesis *vis-à-vis* close readings of the written and embodied ‘texts’ of food, dance, and visual material. I later conclude this article by drawing together my examples, and commenting upon representation within this diasporic community.

1. COOKING UP IDENTITY

One of the few texts produced by the Indian East African in Britain, concerned with cultural identity, is political commentator-cum-author Yasmin Alibhai-Brown’s *The Settler’s Cookbook*.⁶ Alibhai-Brown’s non-fictional account, couched in the written form, fuses together the genres of memoir and cookbook to narrate the writer’s experience of Uganda, the expulsion, and resettlement in Britain. Whilst using the memoir form to articulate the pain of deracination and relocation, she also calls upon the cookbook genre to adequately articulate her experience. It is this combination of genres, and the written text alongside the embodied narrative of culinary practice, which I will now scrutinise.

The intimacy and sense of revelation one experiences on reading *The Settler’s Cookbook* emerges from the personal narratives Alibhai-Brown entangles within the recipes and the prose of her writing, and it is these combined aspects of the cookbook memoir that perform autobiography. In these personal narratives, a marked sense of pain is revealed, as too is the racism experienced in Britain on resettlement. For instance, the reader is presented with: a bus conductor who scolds Jena, Alibhai-Brown’s mother, for smelling like a “curry pot” (10); an emasculated Punjabi factory worker who quits his job because of racism, only to go home and, out of frustration, beat his wife, who miscarries their first baby (334); a “young white man” on the bus who shouts “fuck your bastard. Don’t touch me again”, to a heavily pregnant Alibhai-Brown (318). Merely a few of the incidents narrated—an indication of the endless abuse encountered—this habitual narration of racism, as Cathy Caruth’s distinguished scholarship suggests, is symptomatic of trauma. Caruth explains: “to be traumatized is precisely to be possessed by an image or event” (1995: 4-5).⁷

There are, however, other instances of habitual traumatic narration within the text, pertaining to liberated Uganda, and the use of sexual violence as a strategy of subjugation: from the chilling tale of how a fellow student of Alibhai-Brown’s, part of “Amin’s circle of concubines”, was most probably murdered by mutilation, disposed of in a bag, while

⁶ Whilst others texts do exist, like Parita Mukta’ *Shards of Memory: Woven Lives in Four Generations* (2002) and Jameela Siddiqi’s *Feast of the Nine Virgins* (2001), Alibhai-Brown deals explicitly with migration and resettlement.

⁷ I am compelled to include a note here pertaining to the racism encountered by Africans in East Africa. The prejudice against the native people of East Africa was prolific and dealt out by all sections of society. Both South Asian and white settlers adopted as standard practice of subjugating the Africans, and, as Alibhai-Brown points out, often these attitudes remain endemic within the South Asian communities that once lived in these countries. Alibhai-Brown recounts an upsetting incident which exemplifies these attitudes: a Ugandan servant is subjected to accusations, swearing and physical abuse for simply wearing the gift of cuff links from his employers (129-30). She later outlines Indian East Africans’ continuing prejudice toward Ugandans (131).

“her naked sister was made to watch as he [Amin] stroked her” (240-2); to the two sisters who disappear from campus, one returning with a painful shuffle and the other appearing in hospital “with a severely ruptured anus and bleeding, infected nipples” (247). There are other incidences involving the author herself: whilst a friend is violated on the way to a lecture, Alibhai-Brown wets herself (249); and later, again en route somewhere, her friends, and perhaps the author herself, experience “molesting hands crawl . . . over breasts and faces” checking to see if “Indian ladies are having bosoms” (251). These stories gesture towards the landscape of new, free Uganda and the violent conflict that dominated the birth of this nation. Such conflict is often, and not unusually, played out upon the bodies of the female population.⁸

From Greek, ‘trauma’ once referred to a literal ‘wound’; however, now in medical and psychiatric terms it “is understood as a wound inflicted not upon the body but upon the mind” (Caruth 1996: 3). The term has come to name “a wide spectrum of responses . . . and cover a multitude of disparate injuries” (Miller and Tougaw 2002: 2). I contend that because of their repeated appearance in the text these prolific experiences of racism and sexual violence can be understood as internalised trauma. Whilst the proliferation of these experiences, which are also repeated in various other texts by Alibhai-Brown, suggests that there is a need to articulate them, it also accounts for the deployment of the memoir mode.⁹ The confessional genre of writing enables the expression of these anxieties, and highlights the need to speak of them.

In speaking of such experiences there is an attempt to overcome this sense of trauma. However, I argue that, paradoxically, the text’s continual return to the pain of relocation, in its many citings of racism, illustrates an inability to overcome them. This inability culminates in Alibhai-Brown pondering whether she should “keep a bag half packed. Just in case” she is thrown out of Britain (421). In these last lines of the main body of the text there is a voiced struggle to belong, an echo apparent throughout the memoir, and indeed the author’s talks and other writings.¹⁰ At the end of the epilogue Alibhai-Brown complicates this lack of belonging by referring to London and stating that “the city where no one belongs is where I belong” (426). The paradox between these two assertions highlights the ambiguity in her sense of belonging. Thus, whilst the memoir form can potentially be seen as (part of) a healing process, it proves to be only palliative. The inadequacy of the memoir lies in the limits of language, because, as the evidence suggests and Gilmore explicates: “Trauma is beyond language in some crucial way. . . . Language fails in the face of trauma... Yet, at the same time language about trauma is theorized as an

⁸ During the partition of India, for instance, the female body became the subject of grotesque sexual violence, an arena where the conflicts of the two emerging nations were played out and the honour of each nation was tarnished via the abuse of women.

⁹ With particular reference to the repetition of the racism experienced: Alibhai-Brown relives her experiences of a racist cab driver in her cookbook memoir (233), as well as in her texts on race, ethnicity and culture (2001: 74). She also regularly makes use of the account of her racial transgression during a performance of *Romeo and Juliet*, and the beating she encountered from her family as result (2009: 207; 2012).

¹⁰ During her talk at Asia House, 6 May 2010, the memoirist again expressed this complication of belonging.

impossibility, language is pressed forward as that which can heal the survivor of trauma" (2001: 6).

There is thus, following trauma, a necessity to represent; however, language fails to perform this task, resulting in the persistence of the trauma. This inadequacy of language highlights the significance of the genre of the cookbook memoir. I would like to suggest that the reliance on food —manifested in the culinary genre— attempts to compensate for the limitations of language in expressing the trauma of double dislocation.

The cookbook form enables the pain of multiple displacements to be embedded and articulated. In the act of recipe writing, and the subsequent act of culinary ritual, the author can defy and resist, or weave intimate memories of family members and difficult times. These purposes are embedded in the recipes of 'Retribution Beef' and 'Jena's Fish and Chips'. 'Retribution Beef' asserts the author's politics and belonging; a tailor-made concoction which doles out justice to those she feels have wronged her and her family and, as the name suggests, is cooked to execute revenge. The recipe is fiery, including plenty of spices, and furthermore "[three] dried whole hot chillies". Served to "British friends [invited] over to meet the [newly born] baby and tuck into a curry", Alibhai-Brown makes the dish "so hot [that] they burned . . . and cried" (323). This offering was her retribution for Thatcher's thinly veiled racist attitudes of the late seventies, readily accepted by the British public. The pain of dispossession is clear as the multiply displaced Alibhai-Brown writes about her sentiments over Thatcherite discrimination, just after she has given birth: "We [migrants] were breeding too much and too fast for this leaderine too. My breasts were bursting with milk as those unforgivable words resonated through the land. She meant my boy and me and his father – who played croquet like an English gentleman" (323).

The sense of rejection and defiance the author feels is not only manifested in the words of her writing and the recipe, but also in her body: her breasts burst with milk, a metaphor for her overwhelming emotions of anger and dispossession, being transcribed for a third time through the body, after they have been firstly articulated through writing the recipe and then, secondly, by cooking it. It is the fiery beef curry itself, however, that compels her guests to "cry, pa[y]ing them back for Thatcher's words" (323). Alibhai-Brown deploys food to resist, and to defend her family who are under attack, and this reading begins the consideration of the entangled relationship of food and the body in relation to collective and individuated identity.

I would like to argue that Alibhai-Brown fashions selfhood *through* community. Because the recipes in her cookbook memoir have been collated from family and friends, and the product of these recipes are often produced and consumed communally, the culinary instructions and techniques are of a collective nature. It is *vis-à-vis* the collective of culinary practices that this memoirist is recreating an individuated sense of selfhood. 'Jena's Fish and Chips' —a collective endeavour in many ways— reifies some of these conceptual paradigms. Not only is the recipe handed down from the author's mother (Jena), but it is also with Jena after her husband has left her that the author is able to

cook the dish.¹¹ On the conclusion of her marital relationship, Alibhai-Brown tells us, “That night I cooked Jena’s fish and chips, an ensemble I had refrained from making for many years. How TL [the author’s first husband] moaned if we left spicy smells lingering too long, and fried food had more or less been banned” (355). Layered narratives of experience and cultural memory are entwined in the cooking and eating of this spicy, fried repast.

Embedded within the preparation and eating of ‘Jena’s Fish and Chips’ are the tensions and ensuing break-up of the author’s marriage. Indeed the meal can be understood as a metaphor for the divisions between TL and Alibhai-Brown, and, beyond that, the struggles of relocation. I would like to suggest that where TL manages twice migration through dispensing with what could be termed traditional culinary practices, and becoming a croquet-playing English gentleman (323), Alibhai-Brown instead longs to taste and cook these comforting spicy, fried foods. The recipe for and enactment of ‘Jena’s Fish and Chips’ is therefore an embodied practice that discloses (distinct) narratives of dislocation, and the resulting tensions in the couple’s marriage. The dish, however, also embodies the experience of two-fold movement more extensively, by accounting for the mixing often engendered in the diaspora. This narrative is available through the ingredients: the fish is marinated in garlic, chillies, lime and coriander, whilst the ketchup for the chips is spiked with 2 tablespoons of *garam masala*. Thus this version of fish and chips, a meal often noted as typically ‘English’,¹² has been spiked with full, fiery flavours to create a repast that reflects the movements from India to East Africa and then to Britain. Taking into account Arjun Appadurai’s scholarship on the “social life of things”, which suggests “meanings are inscribed in their [the commodity’s] forms, their uses, their trajectories”, and given that “human actors encode things with significance”, it is possible to think of the fusion in this recipe as a microcosm for the mixing that dislocation engenders (Appadurai 1999: 5).¹³ Like those who make and eat such meals, these foods themselves have also taken on new qualities and adapted according to the displacement experienced.

2. DANCING *DANDIYA*, DRESSING TO IMPRESS

The investment in the embodied practice by the double diasporas is deeply entangled with a desire for esoteric knowledge. The dance practices of the Gujarati East Africans in Britain demonstrate these twin preferences. The quintessentially Gujarati dance of *dandiya raas* is an example of another form of embodied text used to express identity. Although now performed all over the sub-continent, and originating in western India, *dandiya raas* is well known as a popular dance of Gujarat. The folk ritual involves the use

¹¹ In her talk at Asia House, 6 May 2010, Alibhai-Brown discussed her mother’s support, and “fish and chip intervention”, during this difficult time.

¹² It is worth commenting here that despite common belief, the origins of English ‘Fish and Chips’ lie in Irish, French and Jewish cooking (Panayi 2008:16-19).

¹³ This ‘mixing’ shall be discussed further in this article, with reference to dance.

of *dandiya*, sticks of varying material and colour around twelve to eighteen inches long.¹⁴ Contemporary *dandiya* dance is ‘played’ in pairs, generally by participants forming two lines with partners facing each other: “The lines move clockwise, and each person steps forward to hit sticks with their partner, then moves on two people”. The arrangements of this practice are said to symbolise the Hindu mythological fight between the deities Durga and Mahisasura, with the sticks symbolising swords (David 2005: 138-40).

The primary data on *dandiya* referred to here has been obtained through qualitative methods: namely the observation, participation in and documentation of the community event of *Navratri*. I attended *Navratri*, an annual Hindu festival lasting nine nights, in various North London locations during 2010 and 2011. Here I shall refer to the festivities at Harrow Leisure Centre and those at the *Mochi* Kenton Hall in October 2010.¹⁵ Through the abundance of material on *YouTube.com* from Harrow Leisure Centre, it became clear that this was a large, popular, local place for energetic *Navratri* festivities. The *Mochi* Kenton Hall is a community venue known to me via my familial affiliation to the ethnic group. My findings on *dandiya* suggest that a link with India, and Gujarat, is deliberately formed via particular dress modes, yet a vernacular youth culture also spontaneously emerges during the *Navratri* festival.

Male sartorial preferences at *Navratri* festivals demonstrate the changing relationship between the double diaspora and India. During my fieldwork I observed men generally wore jeans, t-shirts and jumpers, although some donned *kurtas*, a long sleeved, hip-length thin shirt associated with Indian men’s clothing. Though rarer, there were other, rather conspicuous, modes of dress which aligned the wearer with an Indian identity. It is these modes of dress that I examine, and Figure 1, taken in the *Mochi* Kenton Hall, illustrates the style. What characterises the male dress, and differentiates it from the *kurta*, is the excessively baggy style of the trousers and tops, the bright colours and patterns, and the sequins and jewels. I argue that these more unusual types of garments hark back to India and the folk traditions of the dances at these events. The red and green/black *sari* worn by the female participant in Figure 2 has a unique pattern, and Linda Lynton describes these patterns as *Bandhani saris*. *Bandhani* work, which translates as ‘tie-dye’, “is traditional in western India and appears in many saris used for special and ritual occasions” (2002: 38-39). Though of not exactly the same material and design, the male attire in Figure 1 and 2 also signal towards these styles that are orientated towards festivals and special events. The *dandiya* dancer’s garment in Figure 2 has some animal iconography on it, and although the exact representation cannot be identified from this image that captures fast dance moves, as Lynton points out, these icons refer to the customs of “traditional rural India” (2002: 161).

The simple dyes and patterns are also closely aligned with the styles set out in the second chapter of *The Sari*, which outlines the rural and tribal dress of the “The Western

¹⁴ The dance style is often referred to by simply this word: *dandiya*, and I will henceforth use this contraction.

¹⁵ ‘Mochi’ refers to a Hindu caste. The Kenton Hall has been built for, and is frequented predominantly by, this community.



Figure 1. Taken in Kenton Mochi Hall,
traditional folk dress



Figure 2. Taken in Harrow Leisure Centre,
traditional folk dress

Region” (Lynton 2002: 25–41). The preference for folk ‘fashion’ by these participants, during *Navratri* in North London, inverts once traditional dress for festival attendees in western regions of India, to dress which is overtly performative of ‘Gujaratiness’ in its diasporic context. The relationship of the folk dress to that of the Rabari tribe, who live in the western regions of India and would wear these types of clothing, underlines the ‘Gujaratiness’ of this style.¹⁶ Rabari garments would have been made from coloured wool, and would signify the types of jobs the wearer undertook, for example herding sheep. This context is now, however, lost, with just the colours and icons remaining. In the diaspora these garments, it seems, are the signifier without their signified.¹⁷ Nevertheless, these styles are seen more often in the diasporic dance space; attendees, if not dressed in full regalia, are often in simple, less dominant patterns, that give an inconspicuous nod —perhaps often without the wearer’s knowledge— to traditional rural dress and Gujaratiness.

The continued alignment of the diaspora with India, through dress, becomes complicated if we take a moment to look towards East Africa. As Aghananda Bharati has explained, the preference for western dress by the South Asian in East Africa was ubiquitous, and indeed, commenting on his own experience, the critic explains how in East Africa his hosts once “shrieked with laughter” when they saw him dressed in monastic Indian wear. This reaction was elicited as Bharati’s clothing was considered neither ‘decent’ nor compatible

¹⁶ See Edwards (2010: 35), for a visual example of a Gujarati Rabari garment. The similarities to what is seen in the diasporic space immediately become clear.

¹⁷ Here I refer to Saussure’s (1990) widely acknowledged structuralist theory of the sign.

with the image of the 'modern man' (read: educated and English speaking) (1972: 249). Taking into account the preferred male dress in this instance, it would seem the British South Asian diaspora has in fact lost some of these prejudices. And, indeed, given that folk dress, which is intimately rooted in rural India, is also donned by some it seems that there is an inverted outlook on 'Indian' modes of dress. There is, now, a preference on the part of some to simulate authenticity. By wearing what are considered to be authentic garments, an imagined link with the homeland is cultivated. However, I contend that despite these preferences, if a close analysis of dance is undertaken, a sense of cultural hybridity is paradoxically revealed and it is towards this exploration that the article now moves.

A sequence of energetic dance, captured on video in Harrow Leisure Centre, complicates how identity is manifested amongst the double diaspora. It is what occurred in the interior of the dance space, amongst many groups of dancers, which was both surprising and fascinating. Behind a group of proficient *dandiya* players, another group of participants danced the *macarena*, a popular nineties routine that accompanies the Spanish song of the same name. I would argue that in this moment boundaries are traversed through the insertion of non-folk dance. As the tempo intensified this version of the pop dance quickly disintegrated into free form dancing. The *macarena* moves were, nevertheless, uncannily in time with the *dandiya* beat, up until its disintegration.

Within the grid formation of the *macarena*, behind a row of girls, a row of boys were moving with a bounce in their knees and their arms outstretched, not horizontally as the *macarena* dictates, but at an upward angle. Both of these movements I argue introduce an element of popular culture *bhangra* to the European dance.¹⁸ Once free form dancing commenced there were unstructured moves, and, in the clapping and throwing up of the hands in the air, this section of dance is further aligned to contemporary *bhangra*.¹⁹ There was one young male participant wearing a chequered shirt and jeans, beside the female dancers, partially hidden by the *dandiya* players, who particularly exemplified this amalgamation of the dances. As the tempo increased, from taking part in the *macarena*, this participant suddenly began to frantically punch his hands into the air and kick his feet out. This change into *bhangra* then just as suddenly became a faster, more bouncy version of the *macarena* once again. The two styles of dances impressively merged and seamlessly entangled, all the while to the *dandiya* beat, and this entanglement of moves was observed once again during my 2011 fieldwork, at the same venue.

Within this sacred space of *Navratri* there is then the emergence of a vernacular youth culture. The occurrence of the secular within the sacred space of the *Navratri* celebrations

¹⁸ *Bhangra* itself originates from Punjab and was a Sikh celebratory folk dance and song marking harvest. It has now modified paralleling diasporic migrations, and is synonymous with modern 'British Asian' culture. For some of the debates concerning *bhangra*, and discussions of its early occurrence in the UK, see Sharma, Hutnyk, and Sharma (1996); Banerji and Baumann (1990: 137-53); Roy (2010). See Vatsyayan (c1976) for a discussion of the roots of *Bhangra* in India.

¹⁹ Vatsyayan describes the folk *bhangra* style as "an abrupt jerky movement of the shoulders and a hop-step: this is followed by many vigorous movements of the whole body and the raising of the hands to the shoulders or above the head level" (c1976: 126).

complicates the primary understandings of the *Navratri* space as purely spiritual. The performance of non-folk dances in the *Navratri* space speaks of the cultural hybridity of the British South Asian youths who perform them. The term cultural hybridity has, however, often directed these discourses on South Asians in Britain to suggestions that there is a 'clash of culture'.²⁰ The addition of the secular into the non-secular space also quickly brings to the forefront discourses based on competition. Whether the spirituality of *Navratri* is being marginalised for the inclusion of, for example, the *macarena*, is pertinent to this discussion. However, in conjunction with Michael Rothberg's recent work on multidirectional memory, I argue the framework of competitive identity need not dominate, and other, less linear modes of thinking are more appropriate (2009).

Accordingly, a more useful approach, which moves away from the hegemonic binaries that define western thought, would be to think of cultural hybridity in the Indian diaspora as akin to bilingualism. In *Desh Pardesh*, Ballard states, "[Asian youths are] skilled cultural navigators, with a sophisticated capacity to manoeuvre . . . both inside and outside the ethnic colony" (1994: 31). Whilst this vision of the British Indian community certainly speaks to how the double diaspora manages identity, I would nonetheless argue there is less of the code-switching between cultures that Ballard describes, and instead an amalgamation of varying traditions and identities. As Jane Desmond in *Meaning in Motion* (1997), alongside Barbara Browning in *Samba: Resistance in Motion* (1995) articulate, the body, and the way it moves, is able to express this multi-faceted, constantly evolving ethnic identity. On the one hand the attendance of *Navratri*, and the partaking of religious dance and quintessentially Gujarati dress, expresses a religious and ethnic identity affiliation; on the other, the inclusion of non-secular moves signals towards vernacular culture. Of course, the bodies that embed these varying identities are not necessarily the same ones; however, together they represent the entanglement of representation found in the dance space, and the potency of the body itself in these stakes. In short, the body, as we have seen with culinary ritual, can articulate the entangled complexities of collective and individuated identity in a way that the mind, via the written text, cannot.

3. BACKWARDS, YET FORWARDS

Before I draw this article to its conclusion, I would like to demonstrate how the narratives of progress and modernity are central to the twice migrant story. Emma Crewe and Uma Kothari contend that migration for East African Gujaratis to Britain was often about finding a modern, progressive existence. This ambition far outweighed those connected with materialism because "Gujaratis have it in their blood to be enterprising, to migrate and to have a sense of adventure" (1990: 16). The Gujarati, it is argued, has left a prosperous life in India to ultimately find a "modern, clean, 'civilised' country with high morals and

²⁰ See Mukadam (2007: 107) for a list of critics who have posited this type of argument.

plenty of opportunities” (Crewe and Kothari 1990: 16). The desire for modernity perhaps accounts for the multiple migrations that this double diaspora has experienced.

This sense of modernity can be identified in the visual materials from my family archives.²¹ Figure 3, 4 and 5 capture my mother’s uncle, and are set in Kenya during the 1950s. Each image is from a family album belonging to this same uncle, Ramanmasa. Figures 4 and 5, both in black and white, showcase a figure, Ramanmasa, who dons sunglasses, which to a contemporary voyeur resemble retro Ray-Bans. The sunglass-wearing figure sports a dark suit, tie, white shirt and has a moustache and short, curly black groomed hair. Each image has him looking away from the camera into the distance, at a slight upward angle. He smiles in neither, but in the second there is less gravity in his countenance. These images, each framed by a white border, are striking for their stylistics. Nothing appears in the background, yet the foreground is sharp and well composed with decent proportions attributed to the face and body. In Figure 3, Ramanmasa stands on what appears to be sand, in front of a deserted road and a block building. He no longer wears his retro ‘Ray-Ban-esque’ sunglasses, but instead, a seemingly unlit cigarette—an accoutrement of modernity—hangs from his mouth. He again wears his dark suit, white shirt, tie and polished shoes. He holds something lightly in both his hands, contributing to a stylish, charming pose. Each image portrays the subject as not only smart to the last detail, but also fashionably ‘cool’. The way the sunglasses are worn, the way the body is directed away from the camera, the way the cigarette hangs in the mouth, are all very suggestive of a role undertaken.

The background of Figure 3 can be read as harmonious with the fashionably ‘cool’ character that appears in the foreground. On close inspection the large building looks to be comprised of apartments on the upper floor, denoted by the curtains and hanging clothes, with offices on the lower floors. Below the block is what appears to be a row of shops with some pristine cars parked outside. All is well set out and organised by posts and roads: there is a clear regulation, and creation, of the urban city space. Peer a little closer, and the shop appears to be only one outlet, which is a bank: the words “STANDARD BANK” can be seen written in white on the front and along the side of the shop section. Why a picture of Ramanmasa standing outside a bank was taken is unclear, and why it has indeed been deemed important enough to enter the space of the family album is also unclear. On requesting further information, from close family and in conversation with my aunt, it seems there are few direct links to that bank itself.²² The location of the shot is peculiar, and its appearance in an album filled with collective family photographs too is incongruous.

Some continuity between the background and the figure seen in the foreground can be fathomed. Like the confident looking lone figure, the block building seems architecturally smart and modern for its time. Further, where the bank can perhaps be read as a symbol of capitalism, and progress, the figure that poses in front of it, by his simple appearance in

²¹ I would like to acknowledge the generosity of my family members, in particular Aman R. Chauhan, for lending me these images for analysis.

²² Indumasi Chauhan, interview by the author, London, 26 September 2011.



Figures 3 and 4. Taken from personal archives, Ramanmasa outside bank and posing.

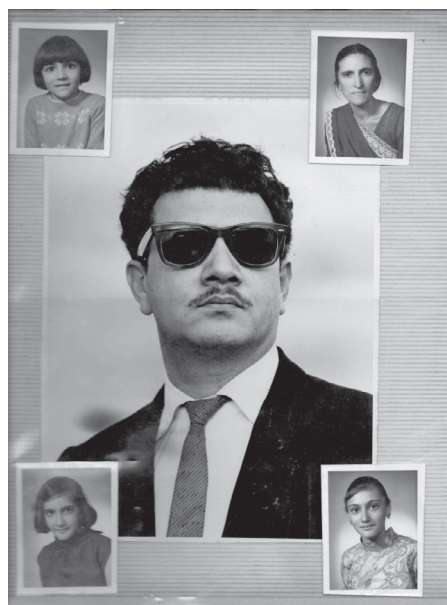


Figure 5. Taken from personal archives, Ramanmasa posing with family photographs

the Kenyan space, is someone who can be read to seek that progress. His dress and pose suggest that there is something of a symbiosis between the cityscape photographed and his ambitions and narrative. Each component of Figure 3, as well as those of Figures 4 and 5, points to a singular desired perception of the individual: he is the 'modern man'. Figure 3, though, extends this image of the Ramanmasa from the 'modern man', to the 'modern businessman'. The performance of the role of modern businessman in these shots

is heightened when one looks to the rest of the album where Ramanmasa is often captured in family settings dressed in a shirt and cardigan. In these family images, a style that dominates the album, he is no longer acting the part of the 'suited, booted', progressive businessman. In Figures 3, 4 and 5, however, there is a role to be played, and a performance of identity, within the photograph, and also within the album space. An image of progress and modernity is being sought.

Let us delve a little deeper into this construction of the modern businessman, and analyse its formulation by probing the black suit, tie and white shirt, which attire his body, a little further. Gijbert Oonk has explored why the "western business suit became acceptable among South Asians in East Africa" (2011: 530). He suggests there are three reasons for the prevalence of the suit. Firstly, education played a primary role in western "dress types bec[oming] acceptable", because teachers, although from India, often wore "British clothes". This, according to Oonk, set an example to Indian East African families (2011: 542). I would add that school uniforms were generally moulded around the chequered dress and cardigan or shirts and shorts combination, promoting these types of garments amongst the middle class. Oonk, secondly, suggests that "South Asian settlers in East Africa developed a gradual economic and social separation from India". "In the perceptions of Asian Africans", he comments, "India was on the decline and the future was in Europe". Furthermore, after Indian independence, Nehru made it clear to Indians abroad that they should demonstrate their loyalties to their host nations, as India would not be responsible for Indians living outside of the sub-continent. During the same period the *khadi* was implanted within the national narrative of independent India. Oonk argues that in light of India's turning away from its citizens abroad, middle class Indian East Africans chose to ignore this lead and forsake the *khadi*. Economically and socially speaking, links with India were on the decline, resulting in the proliferation of the business suit (2011: 543). This is perhaps why my aunt, in conversation, declared that the "*kurta* was for India, whilst western wear was for Kenya".²³ Lastly, the critic cites leaders such as Aga Khan III, of the Ismaili religious sect as directing followers towards western clothing and language (Oonk 2011: 544).

The choice to wear business suits, and indeed other forms of western wear, is thus intimately linked with the ideology of progress. These items of dress are associated with being educationally, economically and socially forward. If western wear is metaphorically interpreted as such, the business suit can be understood to be the epitome of this metaphor, which relates to progress. The metaphor of the business suit as symbolising progress does embody the ideologies of community very succinctly. As I have suggested previously, in conjunction with scholarship by Emma Crewe and Uma Kothari, migration for East African Indians was primarily about fulfilling an ambition for a modern, progressive existence, and this community's multiple movements represents a desire for adventure, and their enterprising nature. As Oonk describes above, this enterprise was addressed towards Europe, as this was where the future lay, in the minds of the South Asian East Africans. It

²³ Indumasi Chauhan, interview by the author, London, 26 September 2011.

would therefore follow that to demonstrate this sense of enterprise and progress, western clothes would naturally be privileged, and in particular the business suit. By wearing these clothes for a photograph and in addition inserting them into the framework of the album, it is clear that a particular role is being sought and demonstrated for the benefit of the album user.

However, let us now take into account gender considerations: with the sartorial choice of the suit by Ramanmasa in the black and white images, there is a contrast with the choice of dress in the photographs of his wife. Whilst there is a presentation of the modern, and indeed cosmopolitan in the Figures discussed, I now contend that the modern and traditional co-exist in representations of my mother's aunt. Figure 6, again found within the leathery red family album and set in Kenya, catches my attention time and time again. Found three quarters of the way through, Figure 6 is again startling in its perspective, composition and stylistic foresight. To recite Annette Kuhn's formulation, from Barthes, the photograph "pierces" me (2002: 18). Standing on a slightly elevated piece of unidentifiable beach debris, my mother's aunt poses in front of the rolling sea, on what is a beautiful day. The sand and the water merge into one, as do the sky and the sea. The subject of the composition, my mother's aunt, is standing stylishly off-centre, to the right, and her deep green *sari*, rather roughly draped, blows in the wind. The *sari* is nothing special, by today's standards at least. It is light in weight, unembroidered and print-less. The blouse could be deemed old-fashioned, with its long sleeves, and simple plain white colour, which does not match the *sari*.²⁴ Yet, the way the entire garb is worn, and how the aunt stands conveys a sense far from the mundane. With her weight on her back foot, her pose is neither timid nor shy. As in all her moments captured on film, littered throughout the album, she looks straight into the camera, with much confidence and character. Her trendily drawn figure stands with authority and her right hand tilts her right shoulder backward slightly by resting on her hip. On closer inspection, this is not the 'hands on the hips' pose that is so popular amongst celebrities and those accustomed to posing, the subject of this image is, it seems, loosely grasping her wayward *sari* around the hip.

It is a number of facets —the self-assured look alongside the suggestive and stylish pose, in such a dramatic, distinctive landscape— that when coupled with an ordinarily *sari* clad figure, results in such a striking composition. In her beautifully illustrated text, Lynton opens with a statement that aligns the idea of 'Indianness' with a certain way of dressing: the "sari is the quintessential Indian female garment. *Nothing* identifies a woman as being Indian so strongly as the sari" (2002: 7, my emphasis). By dressing in the *sari*, the aunt in this image is implicitly signalling her Indian identity. The simple *sari* is not the only paraphernalia that is suggestive of the ordinary or traditional: the figure wears a large red *chanlo* or *bindi* upon her forehead, that, much like a wedding ring, denotes she is a married woman. She also has her hair parted, and slickly oiled back, a common hairstyle

²⁴ The simplicity of this ensemble is apparent if compared with the dress during *Navratri*, as per the figures cited previously in this article. Of course, *Navratri* is a special occasion, and as such merits elaborate dress; however, the comparison simply serves to illustrate how the dress in this image is starkly simple.



Figure 6. Taken from personal archives, Indumasi posing on beach

for ladies of her generation. The juxtaposition of the ordinary and so-called traditional, and the conviction and modernity of the poser must be what fascinates, and compels me to linger upon its meaning. The distinctive landscape is characterised by the seascape. Whilst the sea and sand almost merge into one, the sea itself can be understood to epitomise movement and migration; a symbol of bringing people, but also taking them away.

How the lone figure stands in an open, confident manner, perhaps aware of the striking composition, or the significance of the photographic image, as well as the landscape of this image, are all suggestive. Perhaps her stance is an acknowledgement of, or testament to, the modernity of the Gujarati, who find themselves in East Africa, in an endeavour to attain increased progress. Though what surely makes this image wonderful, worthy of comment, and eye catching is the manifestation of the modern, with the traditional, the convergence of two identities, which do not compete, but sit happily alongside each other. There is a harmonious blend of tradition and modernity in Figure 6, and an outright determination towards progress in Figure 3, 4 and 5. Each represents a differing mediation of modernity, which is determined by gender ultimately, yet each is a testament to the double diaspora's characteristic 'forward looking'.

4. CONCLUSION

These visual images evidence the twice migrant's drive to move forward and progress, yet, I contend that these innovations are sometimes traumatic and painful, as exemplified by

Alibhai-Brown's writings. These painful experiences are often hidden by the hegemonic stories of success that surround the double diaspora, and it has been my aim to unveil alternative narratives that carve a more nuanced understanding of this community. I conclude that the desire for, and successful achievement of, modernity compels the double diaspora to move forward, yet this often engenders pain. Alibhai-Brown's individuality formed from the collective is ambivalent in its belonging; yet, the dancing youth of Harrow Leisure Centre who forge the *macarena* to *Navratri* beats and infuse *bhangra* moves demonstrate a confidence in their multiplicity. These current identities are underpinned by the story told by the modern figure standing outside the Kenyan bank in his smart get-up. Amongst the articulation of these identities is the common deployment of them via embodied practices. As I have suggested, the embodied practice is significant to the double diaspora, for the capacity of written language is limited. Yet I end by briefly commenting on the need to code culture, something which embodied practices undertake, and is paramount to the twice migrant. For diasporic minority communities who have experienced displacement, there is the continual threat of uprooting and, indeed, this is coupled with an anxiety to protect culture against the encroachment of the other. By positioning culture beyond the decipherability of those beyond the community, through embodied practices, it is not vulnerable to the violence of cultural destruction by the other. This does not mean, however, that cultural practices and expressions of identity remain static. The performances during *Navratri* are a testament to this. Thus, whilst covert culture can be understood partly as a mechanism to protect a continually migrating culture, the understandings of *Navratri* here demonstrate that cultural identity does not evolve as such. Insertions, omissions and re-workings are inevitable. Embodied practices, it seems, are essential to articulating identity for the Gujarati East African in Britain, not least because they are esoteric, but also because they can mediate an identity that is paradoxical, multifaceted, and fascinating.

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REVIEWS



RESEÑAS

Armengol, Josep M., ed. 2011: *Men in Color: Racialized Masculinities in U.S. Literature and Cinema*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars. 171 pp. ISBN: 1-4438-2630-8, 978-1-4438-2630-3.

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In his introduction to *Men in Color*, editor Josep M. Armengol —author of *Re/Presenting Men: Cultural and Literary Constructions of Masculinity in the U.S.* (2008) and *Richard Ford and the Fiction of Masculinities* (2010), and co-editor of *Debating Masculinity* (2009)— emphasises the fact that not only are Masculinities Studies a relatively young branch of Gender Studies, but also that, up until the early 1990s, the conceptualisation of the masculine gender had been carried out almost exclusively from a psychological and sociological perspective. It has only been during the past two decades that interest in the mechanisms of (re)production of gendered masculine identity has entailed a formal exploration of the variety of ways in which this concept can be expressed, embodied, interpreted and re-presented. In particular, recent studies in masculinities aim principally at exposing the complex cultural strategies through which the masculine is represented in literature, cinema and the mass media: Baker's *Masculinity in Fiction and Film: Representing Men in Popular Genres 1945-2000* (2006) approaches the representation of masculinity from a wide-angled perspective, mainly aiming to offer a historical overview of the intersection of masculinity and other identity dimensions. In the late 1990s, however, the seeds were only just being sown for what would become a thriving academic debate in the first decade of the twenty-first century: the dynamics of specific models of racialised masculinity in fiction and popular media. Harris's *Boys, Boyz, Bois: An Ethics of Black Masculinity in Film and Popular Media* (2006) applies Connel's (2005) and Kimmel's (1996) influential theorisations of masculinity to the (re)production of Black men's racial stereotyping in popular culture. Likewise, Eng's *Racial Castration: Managing Masculinity in Asian America* (2001) and Mirandé's *Hombres y Machos: Masculinity in Latino Culture* (1997) explore the process of (de)construction of, respectively, Asian American and Latino masculine identities. Conversely, *Men in Color* seems to follow the example set by Uebel and Stecopoulos's *Race and the Subject of Masculinity* (1997) since it offers an insight into more than one model of racialised masculinity. Yet, the former volume differs from the latter in that it purposefully sets out to address as many ethnic groups as possible.

At a point when theoretical investigations in this field of study can be said to have grown to maturity, Armengol has acknowledged the need for a volume which provides

the reader with a series of case studies that apply state-of-the-art theories to particularly relevant —i.e., visible— cultural productions. *Men in Color* is thus intended as an introductory tour across different academic attempts to map the manifold dimensions on which specific ideas and experiences of masculinity and ethnicity are articulated. In particular, Armengol's volume succeeds in offering a comprehensive view of the way in which Masculinity/masculinities and the representation thereof establish a fluid dialogue with US society in general and between/within ethnicised minorities in particular. Indeed, one of the most appealing aspects of this volume consists in the thorough selection of papers investigating the cinematic and/or literary representation of some of the largest ethnic groups in the USA, including two chapters focusing on whiteness as an ethnic category. Armengol's choice of concluding the volume addressing this particular group is coherent with the fact that, from a chronological point of view, research in whiteness is among the latest to have emerged in Cultural and Gender Studies.

The first chapter is devoted to the concept of *el macho* in *(Me)Xicano* culture and the way it influences and moulds the construction of Mexican and Chicano masculine identities. Aishih Wehbe-Herrera first examines the attention paid in academic debates to the concept of *macho/machismo*, discussing the limitedness of previous understandings of this idea, which mainly focused on its ability to establish cohesive “ties between Mexico and the Chicano community” (10). Wehbe-Herrera argues, instead, that the categories of the *macho* and of *machismo*, far from being mere stereotypes, are intricately interwoven in the process of constructing both feminine and masculine genders in *(Me)Xicano* culture. To demonstrate this point, she analyses two novels, Denise Chavez's *Loving Pedro Infante* (2001) and Ana Castillo's *Sapogonia* (1990). According to Wehbe-Herrera, the former merges the questioning of gender polarisation and ethnic stereotypification in films with the diasporic need to reinforce ethnic belongingness through imaginary representations of the homeland. In particular, by establishing symbolic connections between the main character's obsessive admiration for Mexican actor Pedro Infante and her submissive entanglement in a destructive romantic affair with a married man, Wehbe-Herrera penetrates Chavez's deconstruction of the traditional image of the Mexican *macho* from a feminine perspective. Then, in her analysis of Castillo's novel, Wehbe-Herrera reverses the focal point from which masculinity is being perceived and questioned and offers a well-constructed argument in favour of a reading of *Sapogonia* as a response to Octavio Paz's exposition of the Mexican cultural myth of the *chingador/chingada*.

Marta Bosch, in her chapter on post-9/11 representations of Arab masculinities, reaches some relevant conclusions on recent trends in the fiction produced by women writers of Arab descent. Through her analysis of Laila Halabi's *West of the Jordan* (2003) and *Once in a Promised Land* (2007), Alicia Erian's *Towelhead* (2005) and Frances Khiralla Noble's *The New Belly Dancer of the Galaxy* (2007), Bosch traces the evolution of the perception and re-presentation of Arab and Arab American masculinities in the aftermath of 9/11. Her decision to focus on the works of three women writers is due to the fact that, immediately after the attacks, US publishing houses preferred the works of female

writers of Arab descent to those of male Arab American writers. In order to expose which particular negative images Arab American women writers might need to counteract in their works, Bosch begins her chapter with a brief overview of the main stereotypes associated with Arab men, concentrating on their being ambivalently perceived as feminised and emasculated, as well as “despotic, fanatic, and sexually predatory” (37). She then outlines the specific way in which feminists of Arab descent have been negotiating the overlapping of gender, ethnicity, and diaspora for the past three decades, before proceeding to apply this theoretical framework to the text analysis. Her case study demonstrates that fiction by Arab/Arab-American women writers published immediately after 9/11 tends to avoid any direct mention of the terrorist attack and to offer a more negative portrait of Arab men which emphasises their patriarchal behaviour and beliefs. By contrast, novels published later in the decade see Arab/Arab American men embarking on an identity quest which not only provides them with a progressive negotiation of ethnic belongingness in a diasporic context, but also with the eventual acknowledgement of the limitedness of imposed genderisation.

In ‘Constructing Identity: The Representation of Male Rappers as a Source of Masculinity’, Pedro Álvarez-Mosquera begins by describing the representational mechanisms through which black rappers were traditionally identified with an ethnic interpretation of masculinity. Through the analysis of the use of the Afro-American Vernacular English (AAVE), as well as that of other elements distinctively associated with or identifying Afro-American ethnicity, particularly those which emerge from the lyrics of rap songs, Álvarez-Mosquera draws a map of what it means to be a black man, both in terms of ethnic identity and in terms of gender. He then moves on to explore the way in which rappers have now been abstracted into an ideal of hypermasculinity to be appropriated by white individuals, as well as by other minority groups, whenever a male subject may want to overcome conditions of disempowerment and victimisation. What is more, despite the general opposition of Afro-American communities and black rappers, rap music has undergone a process of mainstreaming which has resulted in its being commodified by the music industry. Rap music as a site of resistance and articulation of the ethnic specificity of Afro-American culture is thus being challenged to the point that many elements which once signalled exclusive belongingness to the Afro-American ethnos are now even being used by white middle class teenagers and young men in an effort to present themselves as ‘cool’, virile and unambiguously heterosexual. Concentrating on the ‘bio-pics’ of two of the most well-known rappers of all time, Eminem and Notorious, the author dissects the representation of rappers in the mass media in relation to the construction of successful masculinity and concludes that this mainly revolves around images of toughness, sexual and economic success, violence, and the ability to use language both to reaffirm belongingness to an ethnic community and to identify the self with exactly these qualities. Perhaps, the author should have drawn more specific conclusions from the comparative analysis of Eminem and Notorious, in particular regarding the mechanisms of ethnic exclusion/inclusion.

María Isabel Seguro's case study of Chang-rae Lee's novel *A Gesture Life* (2001) focuses on how the representation of Asian American masculinity is moulded by the process of assimilation into the recipient society. The first part of this chapter is, in fact, devoted to undermining critical accounts of the novel which reduce it to the format of the Western genre of the *Bildungsroman*. Seguro demonstrates that, far from constituting an example of how a diasporic identity is re-constructed through successful membership in the target society, *A Gesture Life* portrays a lifetime effort to disguise the irredeemably fractured identity of a man, Hata, subjected to both Eastern and Western colonialism. In the second part of the chapter, Seguro contends that Hata's attempts to define himself ethnically always depend on his ability to define himself in terms of gender. His affiliation to Japanese culture is a consequence of his ability to perform his masculinity as a soldier and a patron of Korean 'comfort women', thus linking the idea of manhood with that of violent colonisation —be it of land or female bodies. On the other hand, his integration into American society depends on his economic status as a successful business man and on his ability to become a successful father, thus establishing a direct connection between the patriarchal head of the family and masculinity. Masculinity then is being consistently articulated through male dominance of the female Other, to the point that, according to Seguro, even male Others become subsequently feminised. Since Seguro argues that Hata eventually fails in all these requirements, her critique of *A Gesture Life* demonstrates how a process of self-construction can, under diasporic conditions, become a sustained exercise in self-de(con)struction.

Deirdre L. Wheaton, by examining the "minority-minority race relations in Paul Beatty's fiction" (101), also exposes how attempts to subvert ethnicised stereotyping of masculinity are dangerously carried out by abusing feminine subjectivities. She delves further into one of the concepts —the alienation of the ethnicised male Other— at which María Isabel Seguro has already hinted. Indeed, Wheaton opens the fifth chapter of *Men in Color* with a description of Beatty's use of Japanese characters in *The White Boy Shuffle* (1996) and *Tuff* (2000) as both crucial to the deconstruction of stereotyped assumptions of Black masculinity and, at the same time, as disturbingly close to racist and sexist representations of the Oriental Other. After presenting the critical and cultural context of Beatty's fiction, Wheaton embarks on a compelling analysis of Beatty's use of reversal and satire to question popular representations and understandings of Afro-American masculine identity as homogenous and well-defined. Throughout her analysis of stylistic strategies such as the use of humour, Wheaton deconstructs Beatty's success in undermining "constructions of racial authenticity" (109), while she lucidly addresses the way in which, ironically, black women and Japanese/Japanese-American men and women become disposable tools in the process of criticising the genderisation and ethnicisation of Afro-American male subjects.

Mercé Cuenca's is the first of the two closing chapters discussing how whiteness and white male subjectivity have been genderised and racialised to the same extent, albeit through different mechanisms, as minority identities. Cuenca applies her analysis first to

Ray Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451* (1953), contending that the white male crisis of the Cold War era is embodied in the main character's quest for interior balance between the intellectual and the emotional dimensions of the self. Then, Cuenca shifts the point of view from which hegemonic ideas of masculinity are criticised and deconstructed by focusing on two female writers, Anne Sexton and Sylvia Plath, and the way in which they appropriate masculine elements in the process of poetic self-construction. Thus, on the one hand, *Fahrenheit 451* is a clear example of the use of excess and transgression in a journey to re-construct a white masculine identity that happens to be as fragmented as that of subaltern subjects. And on the other, Plath's *Ariel* (1965) and Sexton's *To Bedlam and Part Way Back* (1960) constitute two instances of how cultural constructions of gender can be subverted and assimilated in such a way that the apparent granitic solidity of polarised identities can be turned into a fluid and fluent dialogue between different dimensions of the same subjectivity, regardless of biological sex. In spite of Cuenca's unarguably well-documented discourse, the chapter might have benefitted from a more direct comparison of the three texts under scrutiny, as there appears to be too abrupt a discontinuity between the section devoted to Bradbury's dystopian novel and the one dealing with Plath's and Sexton's poetical works.

Sara Martín's chapter on the "construction of white patriarchal villainy in the *Star Wars* saga" (143) provides an insight into the complexities of whiteness and masculinity as represented in mainstream cultural productions such as George Lucas's phenomenally successful films. Martín's analysis, as is the case with Mercé Cuenca's chapter, is firstly relevant for its take on the genderisation and racialisation of white male heterosexual subjectivity, which undermines the 'default category' so far taken for granted by many scholars. She questions readings of white male heterosexual subjects as 'negative' in that they are inherently informed by monolithic socio-cultural constructions of the Self. In this sense, she contends that contemporary notions of whiteness are configured by the stereotypes projected onto this category by minority groups as much as they are by mainstream processes of stereotypification and ossification of referential models. She also problematises Afro-American fans' readings of Darth Vader's character as black, exposing how an interpretation of Vader as a positive instance of racial empowerment and of subversive questioning of racial power balance effectually obscures the fact that this sci-fi villain is actually a servant to an unambiguously *white* representative of excessive patriarchal oppression — Senator Palpatine/Darth Sidious. Consequently, in the second and third sections of her chapter, Martín expounds at length on the dangers of wishing to mould non-white identities in general, and Afro-American identity in particular, on the same traditional power-versus-impotence patterns that have historically forged patriarchal societies. She then concludes by pointing at the danger of legitimising white hegemonic structures by humanising the white villain, as Lucas does in the first three episodes of the *Star Wars* saga, which were specifically written to justify Anakin Skywalker's journey to the "dark side".

Due to the variety of perspectives from which the racialisation of masculine identities is approached, as well as to the consistency of the theoretical framework through which

the different authors channel their analyses, this volume would seem particularly useful in an introductory course at both undergraduate and graduate levels. This is not to say, however, that *Men in Color* could not be found to be a useful source of information for specialised researchers. On the contrary, it possesses the topical range necessary to make it appealing as a thematic introduction, while each individual chapter offers a sufficiently profound analysis for advanced researchers. An index at the end of the volume, however, would have contributed to making it a more efficient tool for research. Also, analyses of cinematic productions might have been included in more than just three chapters, so as to provide a more balanced approach to both film and literary fiction. Nevertheless, *Men in Color* can certainly be said to comprehensively outline the most recurrent fields of study in current research in masculinity and to offer a clear and polyphonic portrait of the academic state of the art in both epistemological and discursive terms.

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Felicity Hand 2010: *The Subversion of Class and Gender Roles in the Novels of Lindsey Collen (1948-), Mauritian Social Activist and Writer*. Lewiston, Queenston and Lampeter: Edwin Mellen. x + 232 pp. ISBN: 0-7734-1428-2, 13, 978-0-7734-1428-0.

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This volume by Felicity Hand comes as a ground-breaking, and first book-length, critical study on the work of the Mauritian author Lindsey Collen. From the introductory section to the conclusions, the book engages the reader in an analysis of Collen's fiction and succeeds in bringing to the surface both the politics and poetics underlying her *oeuvre*. Hand also unveils for the reader the major concerns and literary strategies informing the works of Lindsey Collen in a manner that parallels, to a certain extent, the latter's narrative style inasmuch as she ushers us into a communal triangular bond, in which she becomes the mediator between the reader and Collen's fiction.

The degree of complicity required to achieve the creation of this bond —and therefore, our understanding and appreciation of the novels of Lindsey Collen— is successfully accomplished through Hand's effort to enhance our knowledge of the Mauritian context in which Collen writes and which serves as a setting for her work. Indeed, it is precisely this exuberance in Collen's depiction of the locale, by means of her numerous references to Mauritian culture, history, geography, customs and cuisine, along with her resort to Creole vocabulary on multiple occasions, that Hand sees as one of the accomplishments of Collen's fiction. According to Hand, this inclusion of local elements contributes to the presentation of Mauritius as a mosaic ensemble of religions, ethnicities, languages and cultural influences which models the views and attitudes of Collen's characters and immerses the reader within the richness of the local Mauritian context. In her exploration of Collen's work, Hand offers us a double-sided view of this aspect, asserting that this abundance of local references "demand(s) a certain degree of intellectual commitment and effort on the part of her readers, but they are rewarded in turn by a refreshing repositioning as regards our postcolonial world" (Hand 2011).

Accordingly, Hand devotes part of her Introduction and the whole of Chapter One to providing a brief, though highly informative, overview of the recent history of Mauritius, as well as offering an insight into the socio-cultural and political situation of the country. This certainly helps to comprehend the themes, attitudes, tropes or scenes present in Collen's novels. In keeping with this, Chapter One also introduces Hand's accurate coinage of the term *clethnicity*, which becomes one of the pivotal concepts in her analysis. By means

of this new category, Hand attempts to transcend the binary opposition between class and ethnicity that, according to her, “seems so much to hamstring Collen’s work” (Hand 2010: vii). Hence, it reflects Collen’s view, according to Hand, that it is impossible to identify clear-cut categories within the highly heterogeneous nature of Mauritian reality, particularly “the inescapability of poor economic resources being identified rather too closely with ethnic essentialism” (Hand 2010: 21). This notion reinforces one of Collen’s chief purposes in her narrative, the promotion of a blurring of boundaries and divisions based on class, gender or race.

The next five chapters deal with the critical analysis of the five novels in English published by Collen up to 2010.¹ From the outset we find a commitment towards honesty and a remarkable aspect of Hand’s study is its distancing from the type of scholarly study which fails to critique authors, tending towards hagiography. Thus, in her discussion of Collen’s *There is a Tide*, Hand points out the flaws in the first novel of an author who struggles to make her work an instrument of political action while still being in the process of finding her own literary voice. In fact, the commitment with honesty is double-sided, as she also observes Lindsey Collen’s own awareness of these weaknesses in her work, which she acknowledges in the “author’s note” preceding her narration. As Hand remarks, in *There is a Tide* (1990) Collen attempts to present a utopian society as the ideal order to which Mauritian people need to aspire and strive to reach through their action. However, Hand contends, she fails to provide a reliable link between this desirable reality and the past which is to be rejected. The author does not, however, underplay the relevance of this first novel by Collen in the whole of her *oeuvre*. Despite the inconsistency or apparent lack of solidity in the ideological scaffolding of the narrative, Hand argues, it succeeds in anticipating some of the elements that will be at the core of Lindsey Collen’s fiction and political activism, such as the philosophy of femihumanism, the rejection of fixed categories of class, ethnicity or gender, or the essentiality of preserving the plurality and hybrid nature of Mauritian identity. Likewise, some of the central literary techniques and motifs in her later novels—including the resort to a stream of consciousness style, the presence of triads of characters linked together to epitomize the multifarious nature of Mauritian life and society, the palimpsest quality of the text and its interaction with other narratives and the motifs of food or the cyclone as polysemic tropes—are highlighted throughout this discussion inasmuch as they set the bases for Collen’s vindication through fiction.

Hand’s discussion of Collen’s narrative seems to gain particular solidity in her analysis of *The Rape of the Sita* (1993), the book that plunged Collen into the limelight after she was awarded her first Commonwealth Prize (the second arriving in 2005, with her novel *Boy*). Prior to the discussion on *The Rape of the Sita* though, Hand affirms her commitment

¹ As Felicity Hand announces in Chapter One, Collen’s sixth novel in English, *The Malaria Man and her Neighbours*, was published in 2010 (2010: 2). In this new novel, Collen makes an allegorical use of the illness to unveil the parasites that continue to exist in our society. Likewise, she perseveres in her purpose of calling the working classes to action for renewal and social change (Groëme-Harmon 2010).

to the denunciation of the symbolical 'rape' of the author through the coercion of her liberties as a writer and political activist. Paradoxically, while the novel is a condemnation of the injustices of a dictatorial system trapping women within a form of contemporary slavery, Collen is at the same time a victim of a similarly oppressive order, as a consequence of which she was accused of blasphemy and her novel was depicted (in Mauritius) as an intolerable offence against Hindu religion and tradition. The similarities with the case of Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses* on its publication a few years earlier, in 1988, and the controversy it provoked are also brought to the fore. This brings the reader, probably familiar with Rushdie's case, much closer to Lindsey Collen's plight. With Collen having found her voice and style with this novel —and thus having become capable of communicating her message and purposes more efficiently— Hand devotes herself to unveiling Collen's ultimate intentions and insists on her idea of the novel as being, rather than a blasphemous depiction of religion, a celebration of religious tolerance "by deliberately (con)fusing the ethno-religious origins of her characters" (Hand 2010: 63).

Hand succeeds in revealing the central literary strategies that lead to the very kernel of each of the novels analyzed. In *The Rape of Sita*, she draws attention to Collen's use of intertextuality as a means of modeling her reproof of patriarchal oppression and her presentation of the maimed reality of Mauritian women. In this regard, Hand underlines the confluence of certain literary traditions in Collen's novel —namely, a reinterpretation of Hindu mythology, folklore tradition and canonical Western texts, such as T.S. Eliot's *The Wasteland* or Shakespeare's *The Rape of Lucrece*. Simultaneously, the regressive nature of trauma and the impossibility of hiding or burying it are also pointed to.

The focus upon women, as Hand observes, is more patent in Collen's third novel in English. In this respect, the author highlights Collen's call for communal solidarity among women in *Getting Rid of It* (1997) as a means to overcome the injustices of a patriarchal and eminently classist society. Again, Hand applauds Collen's mastery in combining literary artistry while conveying a political message. The return in this novel to one of Collen's pivotal motifs, the triadic element, to subvert established notions of binomial categories proves here, according to Hand, to be especially convenient insofar as it is linked to the call for female unity recalled by feminist struggles for collective bonding and complicity among women in contexts such as Suffragist Britain.

Through Hand's revision of *Getting Rid of It*, we come to appreciate Collen's actual degree of commitment with the socio-political situation of Mauritian people —and more particularly in the case of this novel, with the adverse reality of women in this context. Accordingly, the author of this volume skilfully draws attention to some of the most significant aspects that account for this political pragmatism in Collen's novel, one of which is the all-enveloping decentralizing philosophy that operates in the narrative. This occurs not only at a thematic level —the plot being focused upon the disposing of the corpse of one of the three women protagonists' miscarried foetus, which is equated with notions of fixed gender roles for women. Additionally, at a constructive level, the strategies in *Getting Rid of It* are similarly raised upon the politics of the erasing of gender or class

boundaries and the promotion of communal action. In this sense, as Hand notes, Collen prevents all of her characters from emerging as privileged voices, although they may, on certain occasions, serve as spokespeople for her own ideas (Hand 2010: 107).

A strong point of this volume, aside from the visibilization of the ideas lying at the core of Collen's fiction, is the author's dexterity at decoding the significance of recurring images and motifs. In her analysis of *Mutiny* (2001), Hand revisits the motif of the cyclone, which she had dealt with previously through her examination of *There is a Tide*. Her conclusions lead her to a re-reading of the image of the cyclone as a symbolical leveller of social classes and categories insofar as it represents a destructive and inescapable force for everyone, irrespective of social or economic status, gender, ethnicity or religion. Likewise, on the grounds of its devastating power, the cyclone, Hand signals, epitomizes the possibility of renewal, of the new beginning Collen desires her readers to fight for.

The volume includes a chapter on the author's latest novel at the time of publication, *Boy* (2010). Hand underlines how this novel perseveres in the issues Collen has been concerned with throughout her literary and political career. Thus, beneath the *Bildungsroman* tale of Krish, the young protagonist, we continue to delight in the discovery of Mauritian cultural and geographical singularity, as well as being invited to believe in the power of communal action and the need to collaborate to achieve the collective aim of social and political change. Anny-Nzekwue (2005) also highlights this aspect in Collen's novel: "Here Collen's position is made clear: There must be a determined cooperation from everyone —cooperation in the form of a push or a shove— in order that Africa can be set free from the rut. *Boy* may be a psychological novel, but it does not hide its political bent".

Hand completes this in-depth exploration of Lindsey Collen's narrative in English with a chapter in which she states the final conclusions of her analysis. This section is certainly helpful, as it offers a well-defined summary of the main points in Hand's discussion, and a vivid portrayal of Collen's fiction. Hand's unveiling of the work of this author as a political instrument, with a pragmatic function towards social change, along with its determined call for collaborative action, are restated here. We are also reminded of the femihumanist perspective from which the reading is approached and which —as has been demonstrated throughout the volume— becomes particularly useful for the study of Collen's novels. Hand also persists in her desire to bring to the surface the aesthetic value of the narrative framing the political content of Collen's *oeuvre*, which she essentially defines as "a strong and earnest political commitment transmitted through a powerful poetics" (Hand 2010: 6).

This volume's revision of Lindsey Collen's novels in English comes as an undoubtedly illuminating and enriching overview of the work of an author who, as Hand very aptly shows us, beyond past accusations of blasphemy and offence, succeeds in taking us closer to present Mauritian reality through her effort to elicit communal solidarity and social transformation. At the same time, we are invited to enjoy the cultural wonders of a land which, blessed with the paradisiacal conditions of its geography, aspires to improve its social and political order. Thus, like the cyclone motif in much of Collen's fiction, Hand's work provides a refreshing approach to the novels, while simultaneously promising to

destroy certain earlier readings of the narrative and to bring about new insights into the texts.

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David Rio, Amaia Ibarra and Martin Simonson, eds. 2011: *Beyond the Myth: New Perspectives on Western Texts*. London, Vitoria and Berkeley: Portal. xxxiii + 274 pp. ISBN: 978-84-938360-7-8.

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The cover of the opening volume in Portal Education's collection *The American Literary West*, *Beyond the Myth: New Perspectives on Western Texts*, edited by David Rio, Amaia Ibarra and Martin Simonson, combines the mythical western image of a horse grazing in an open pasture at sunset with the panoramic view of some of the skyscrapers in downtown Los Angeles. The combination of these two iconic representations of the West is in tune with the book's aim to go beyond, as its main title claims, mythical representations, views and meanings of the 'old West' to include the polyhedral nature of the contemporary urban West: a West that is not anchored in time but is constantly evolving and adapting to changing historical and social circumstances. Yet, as the cover design and some of the chapters in the book suggest, myth informs history and can neither be ignored nor done away with. Myth does not need to be incorporated into reality because it is already a part of it. As David Rio states in the introduction, following Richard White, "The mythic West imagined by Americans has shaped the West of history just as the West of history has helped create the West Americans have imagined. The two cannot be neatly severed" (xiv). A myth-producing factory itself, probably no other city is better equipped than L.A. to capture the complexities and diversities of living with (or in spite of), and outliving one's own myths. Like the vast and open plains of the Old West, the city of L.A. was and still is for thousands of people—from aspiring actors to the many undocumented immigrants walking its streets—the stuff that dreams (and myths) are made of. The mediated nature of the myth is suggested here by using a mirror image of the skyscrapers in L.A.'s financial district. To those familiar with the skyline, the left/right reversed image produces a sense of estrangement similar to Freud's notion of the *unheimlich*, which neatly captures some of the topics of the book, namely, the re-reading and re-visioning of many old and contemporary myths in a wide variety of western texts.

The book explicitly seeks to situate itself within the field of Western American Literature and to contribute a new perspective to those proposed by, among others, Neil Campbell's *The Rhizomatic West* (2008) and Michael Johnson's *Hunger for the Wild* (2007), the anthology edited by Susan Kollin *Postwestern Cultures* (2007), and articles by Kollin, Alex Hunt and Daniel Worden, included in *A Companion to the Literature and*

Culture of the American West —edited by Nicholas Witschi (2001)—, all of them works that are engaged with in this volume, particularly in the Introduction. Rio, Ibarra and Simonson approach the topic from the more general framework provided by border theory and Border Studies. Thus, they place the American West and the American Frontier, and as a consequence the literature produced about them, on the cultural space of the border. In this sense, by attempting to transcend traditional conceptions of borders and boundaries and conceptualizing western writing as belonging to “an international imaginary” (xxi), the book makes an interesting addition to the complex and ever-expanding field of Border Studies. Following the path opened by Gloria Anzaldúa’s foundational text, *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* (1987), the border, with its manifold and contradictory dimensions and meanings, has become a prolific area of research within cultural and literary studies, from Hicks’s *Border Writing: The Multidimensional Text* (1991), Henderson’s *Borders, Boundaries and Frames: Essays in Cultural Criticism and Cultural Studies* (1995), Benito and Manzanar’s *Literature and Ethnicity in the Cultural Borderlands* (2002), to Schimanski and Wolfe’s *Border Poetics De-limited* (2007), to name just a few. The popularity and multidisciplinary interest in the topic is also evident in the recent publication of two companions to the field: *The Ashgate Research Companion to Border Studies* (Wastl-Walter 2011) and *A Companion to Border Studies*, edited by Wiley-Blackwell (Wilson and Donnan 2012). Conceptually, the American Frontier that generated the corpus of western literature is seen as a specific historical manifestation of the border, as a particular way of drawing and redrawing borders and, in the process, constructing a nation on the strength of the expansion in its borders. In this sense, the concepts of border and frontier enter into a dynamic tension in the current book, which also inscribes itself within the larger theoretical underpinnings of Border Studies. Borders, border myths and border dynamics feature prominently in most of the chapters of this anthology that, in the tradition of so-called postfrontier writing, compels us to see the West as a matter of perspective. As Rio claims via Robert Gish, “West is ‘here and now’ from indigenous perspectives, West is perhaps still west, although maybe urban and rural, from Anglo and African American perspectives. West is north from Mexican American perspectives” (xiv). The scope of the book is not restricted to written narratives and also includes other western texts: from the *Star Trek* franchise and the star persona of Woody Guthrie to the urban-to-rural migration of the last decade.

The book opens with a preface by US writer Gregory Martin. The great-grandson of Basque immigrants in Northern Nevada, Martin’s piece explores issues of identity and belonging while telling the story of his one-year-long stay in the small community of immigrant Basques in the ghost town of Mountain City. His moving piece ‘Elegy and the Defiance of Elegy: Longing and Writing in the American West’ tells the untold stories of small places and lives that never made it into history books. In an indirect way he touches on some of the issues regarding space that will be recalled in later essays of the collection. Spatial considerations are paramount to the topic of the West and, therefore, the analysis

and the implications of space are the overarching themes running through most of the pieces in this anthology.

The volume is structured in three different but interrelated sections: 'Continuity and Renewal', 'Beyond Stereotypes' and 'Cultural Transfers'. The essays in the first section address the resilience and powerful hold of the old myths about the West in contemporary US culture. In 'The Rural West as Frontier: A Myth for Modern America', J. Dwight Hines explores the prevalence of the frontier myth and its myriad contradictions, in the search for authenticity behind the urban-to-rural migration of some members of the upper middle-classes in the 1990s. Drawing on his own ethnographic research, Hines argues that the myth of the frontier seamlessly encapsulates the two coexisting but antithetical ideals of progress and regress that comprise the cultural dialectic of Modernity. In spite of the many closings of the frontier that may have been argued from different perspectives, Hines maintains that the frontier will remain open, and, therefore, its power effective, as long as we remain modern subjects.

The frontier and the rugged landscapes of the mythical West are essential to Aitor Ibarrola's reading of the trope of the double in 'David Guterson's *The Other*: The Doppelgänger Tradition Visits the American West'. In this essay Ibarrola sets out to explore the combination between the psychological complexities of this narrative trope, which he considers "alien" to the literature of the American West, and the traditional topics in the fiction of the region, such as social non-conformism, masculine bonds and, in particular, the clash between wilderness and civilization, here embodied by the divergent life paths of the novel's mirror protagonists. In their duality these two protagonists become an embodiment of the border itself, and their intimate friendship, characterized by simultaneous co-dependence and alienation, casts an interesting light on the way the narrative revises the meanings of the mythical western border.

Male friendship and the border also feature prominently in Maria O'Connell's 'That Boy Ain't Right: Jimmy Blevins, John Grady Cole, and Mythic Masculinity in *All the Pretty Horses*'. For O'Connell, the wounded masculinity of the protagonists of McCarthy's book is a consequence of their reliance on two interrelated iconic male myths, the romantic knight and the all-American cowboy, that are rendered as both obsolete and inadequate in a modern environment such as that of the novel. O'Connell finds homosocial relationships in this context damaging, not only for the women, but mainly for the men, who become both victims and perpetrators of the male patriarchal system that oppresses them.

The last chapter in this section, 'Western Images in Paul Auster's Work: From *Moon Palace* to Later Fiction', by Jesús Ángel González, explores the role of western landscape and imagery in four novels by Paul Auster: *Moon Palace* (1989), *Mr Vertigo* (1994), *The Book of Illusions* (2002) and *Travels in the Scriptorium* (2006). For González, the metafictional elements in these novels both lay bare the constructed nature of most myths about the American West and highlight their enduring power on the contemporary historical and political situation of the US. These novels, González claims, problematize the idea of the

West as a fixed concept and render it a fluctuating and even evanescent category, more a symbolic than a physical place.

The essays in the second section of the book, 'Beyond Stereotypes', question the sense of homogeneity that emerges in some visions of the American West. Neil Campbell's illuminating essay, 'Affective Critical Regionalism in D.J. Waldie's Suburban West', argues for the postnational and transnational possibilities embodied in expanded regionalism by looking at D.J. Waldie's accounts of suburban life in Lakewood, Los Angeles. Drawing on the spatial theories of Michel Foucault (1980) and Michel de Certeau (1984), he argues that Waldie's writings challenge suburban normative mythology and its illusion of homogeneity and predictability and compel us to look beyond the suburban grid and engage in the multiplicity of lives lived within it. The grid may be limiting but never paralyzing, Campbell claims, quoting Waldie. There is room for creative use of the urban space "inside and alongside these much-maligned patterns of everyday existence" (93). Another presumed type of homogeneity is revised in Monika Madinabeitia's 'Shoshone Mike and the Basques'. In its examination of the portrayal of Basques in the West in both fictional and non-fictional accounts of a real life event —the killing of four stockmen, three Basques and one Anglo, in the winter of 1911— this essay contributes to a further exploration of the complexity of the history of the American West and its ethnic diversity, one in which "Indians, Hispanics, Norwegians, Basques and Armenians have much to tell" (108). Yet, as this comparative analysis shows, Basque characters are either absent from these accounts or are the object of racial discrimination of different sorts, which shows the Old West mentality still at work well into the twentieth century.

The redefinition of American Indian identities in contemporary society is the key issue in Elisa Mateos's 'Revision of American Indian Stereotypes and Post-Indian Identity in Sherman Alexie's *Flight*'. Mateos claims that the reductionist and essentialist nature of most stereotypes about Native Americans curtails their chances to engage with contemporary life and culture. Her essay relates the fantastic migrations among different bodies and historical moments of the novel's protagonist to the need to construct contemporary *postindian* identity as a flexible and changing category that incorporates both Native and non-Native American traits.

The last chapter in this section, 'The Pros and the Cons of Writing Confessional Memoir in the Mormon Milieu', by Mormon writer Phyllis Barber, is an insightful reflection on the rationale behind writing confessional memoir and, to a certain extent, on the role of writers and the nature of writing. However, whilst having been written by the author of two memoirs dealing with the experience of being born into and shaped by both the American West and Mormonism, the piece itself does not engage directly with the role of Mormons in the construction of the American West.

The last section of the book moves away from written texts and looks at the mythical American West in other artistic expressions. It opens with 'The Bronze Rose of Texas: Film and Chicano I/dentity in Tino Villanueva's *Scene from the Movie GLANT*', by Juan Ignacio Guijarro. Villanueva's collection of poems is, for Guijarro, an illuminating and

touching meditation on the absence of Chicanos in Hollywood history and a vindication of the potential of art, poetry in this case, to heal wounds and confront social injustice. The poems are inspired by Villanueva's complex reaction, as a Chicano teenager watching the film for the first time, to the scene in which the character played by Rock Hudson in *Giant* fights the owner of a diner over some Chicano customers. Finding his identification options in the scene curtailed and frustrating, Villanueva reflects in his poems both on Chicano cultural (mis)representation in films and official US history as well as provides an insightful account of how real spectators may find a place of resistance within films in spite of the texts' narrative and ideological maneuvering. The second chapter in this section, "Wagon Train to the Stars": Star Trekkin' the US Western Frontier', by Stefan Rabitsch, sees the US western frontier as one of the primary themes in the *Star Trek* franchise. The article analyzes the implications and meanings of *Star Trek*'s primary intertext (the 1950s television show, *Wagon Train*) and claims how the show's inherently postmodern storytelling manner constructs the mythical western frontier as a polysemic text that allows for the exploration of a variety of issues such as race, ethnicity, gender identity or the dialectics between faith and reason, among others. Unfortunately the chapter never really develops any of these issues in detail nor does it provide any specific examples from the texts, offering instead a rather lengthy contextual introduction.

Next, David Fenimore analyses the transnational figure, legacy and appeal of folk singer Woody Guthrie in 'From California to Jarama Valley: Woody Guthrie's Folk Banditry'. For Fenimore, Guthrie's folk compositions and performances reflect his instinctive understanding of borders as imaginary lines trying to mask and sometimes even deny our collective humanity. Guthrie emerges from this article as a natural born border-crosser: "By singing and writing about rich and poor, capitalist and worker, American and Mexican, police and outlaw, Guthrie reconciled these contraries and, with ironic humor created a lyrical utopia that to this day rights wrongs, locates the dislocated, gives a home to the homeless, and lends a voice to the voiceless between all borders real and imagined" (231).

The section closes with Carmen Camus's essay on the impact of Franco's censorship on the translation of some western novels into Spanish: 'How Some of the West Was Lost in Translation: The Influence of Franco's Censorship on Spanish Westerns.' Through the analysis of three different novels —*Duel in the Sun* (Busch 1946), *Horseman, Pass By* (McMurty 1961) and *Little Big Man* (Berger 1964)— approved for translation by the censorship board in three different periods, she concludes that most of the changes, both those demanded by the censors and those produced by the translators' self-censorship, had to do with sexual morality and, in particular, with the portrayal of the female characters, who lost some of their independence and sexual drive to make them closer to the prototypical woman promoted by Franco's regime.

Beyond the Myth brings together a wide variety of perspectives on different historical and cultural aspects of the American West. The essays in this wide-ranging volume share a strong theoretical foundation and, taken together, constitute a valuable contribution to both American Studies and Border Studies, and, more specifically, to the study of

Western American Literature and Critical/Cultural Regionalism. By locating their study at the intersection between American and Border Studies, the authors manage to frame the all-important historical concept of the American Frontier within a novel perspective. The essays offered in this volume are a relevant and interesting account of the variety and heterogeneity that attend an apparently inexhaustible myth; one that, although geographically and even historically bounded, has long transcended its own frontiers.

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Poonam Trivedi and Ryuta Minami, eds. 2009: *Re-playing Shakespeare in Asia*. London and New York: Routledge. 343 pp. ISBN: 0-415-99240-0.

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Poonam Trivedi and Ryuta Minami's *Re-playing Shakespeare in Asia* (2009) confirms that the interpretation and appropriation of Shakespeare's works in the continent has become a recurrent topic in the field of Shakespeare Studies. Proof of the scholarly interest in the reception of Shakespeare in Asia is found in the proliferation of treatises and volumes on the topic —published just before or after the book under review. The special issue of *Borrowers and Lenders*, *Asian Shakespeares on Screen: Two Films in Perspective* (2009), Alexander Huang's *Shakespeare in Asia, Hollywood and Cyberspace* (2009), Dennis Kennedy and Yong Li Lan's *Shakespeare in Asia: Contemporary Performance* (2010), a special issue of *Asian Theatre Journal* entitled *Asian Shakespeares 2.0* (2011), edited by Alexander Huang, and *Shakespearean Adaptations in East Asia* (2012) are cases in point.¹ With the exception of the special issue of *Borrowers and Lenders*, all these volumes focus mostly on Shakespeare on the Asian stage, and cover the areas of China, Korea and Japan. Trivedi and Minami's compilation is distinctive in its wider perspective/view of Asia —India, the Philippines, Bali, Malaysia and Taiwan are included in the volume. Yet, Trivedi and Ryuta not only explore in depth the reception of Shakespeare in Asia and how Asian societies/cultures intersect with Shakespeare, but they also subtly touch upon interculturality.

The book is neatly structured into four thematic sections: 'Re-playing Interculturality', 'Re-playing Textuality/Theatricality', 'Re-playing Ethnicity, Identity and Postcoloniality' and 'Re-playing Genre and Gender'; a seemingly appropriate division, given that the volume moves from the general —the discussion on intercultural Shakespeare— to the specific. Apart from providing an excellent summary of all the chapters included in the book, the introduction is interesting *per se*. It is challenging and groundbreaking, for it argues how intercultural borrowing is dialogic rather than a one-way process. Perhaps the book's most innovative idea is its engagement with a new kind of interculturality that has to do with the reception of the Shakespearean *oeuvre* in the different Asian locations. The introduction also contends that the category of *Asian Shakespeare* may be problematic,

¹ Unlike the rest of the volumes mentioned, *Shakespearean Adaptations in East Asia* does not consist of critical and theoretical articles on specific productions in Asian theatrical forms, but comprises twenty-five Asian adaptations of Shakespearean works translated into English.

and substantiates the editors' purpose in establishing the multiplicity of Shakespearean representations in Asia, in which heterogeneity, not hegemony, is the rule.

The first part of this collaborative project revolves around the intricacies and complexities of the term *interculturality* and the four essays contained here provide a thorough discussion of the concept. Jim Brandon inaugurates the section with his chapter 'Other Shakespeares in Asia: An Overview'. He identifies three tendencies in the trajectory followed by the majority of Asian countries in their appropriation of Shakespeare: the canonical, the indigenous and the intercultural. Although Brandon's chapter is well-meant, it falls precisely into the generalization of Shakespeare in Asia that the volume rejects in the introduction. Brian Singleton's essay is much more specific than Brandon's and concentrates on Ariane Mnouchkine's reworkings of Shakespeare —*Richard II*, *Twelfth Night*, and *Henry IV, Parts I and II*— which are highly inspired by Japanese, Indian, Chinese and Indonesian theatrical conventions. For Singleton, Mnouchkine's reworkings —in spite of being produced in the West— favour interculturalism. Trivedi's essay clearly contrasts with Singleton's, for one of Trivedi's premises is that intercultural Western adaptations of Shakespearean works inevitably become Orientalized versions. Consequently, his critique of Mnouchkine's versions is implicit. Trivedi compares two different versions of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*: Tim Supple's version (2006) and Chetan Datar's Marathi adaptation *Jungla Mein Mangal* (2004). While he strongly criticizes Supple's version on the grounds of its "orientalising" perspective —being targeted at global audiences— the author praises the Marathi adaptation because it challenges traditional stereotypes. This chapter is quite transgressive, since it interrogates the "fields of interculturalism" (7), considering the audience that a performance addresses. Co-editor Ryuta Minami closes the first section by contrasting two Japanese productions —Fukuda Tsuneari's *shingeki Hamlet* (1955) and Ninagawa Yukio's *kabuki* adaptation of *Twelfth Night*— exposing the ironies brought about in intercultural theatre. While Japanese audiences were familiar with Shakespeare, they needed to be familiarized with the traditional Japanese theatrical forms in these productions. Minami then offers a strong conclusion to the section evoking the ironies and subtleties of interculturalism, indicating that the concept is still in the early stages and deserves more discussion.

The second section of the book entitled 'Re-playing Textuality/Theatricality' bundles together four chapters which focus on the transformations that the original texts have to undergo when they are performed in other languages for other cultures. It starts with an engaging review of the performance history of Suzuki Tadashi's *King Lear*, by Ian Carruthers. In spite of the fact that intercultural productions tend to be criticized for loss in translation, Carruthers demonstrates Tadashi's script retains the heart of the play. Li Ruru's chapter provides a thorough analysis of the translation and performance of the "To be or not to be" soliloquy in six Chinese productions —three in *huaju*, or modern spoken drama, and three in *xiqu*, traditional sung theatre. Like Carruthers, she concentrates on the challenges of translating Shakespeare, this soliloquy being of particular interest since Chinese does not have an equivalent for "to be". Ruru foregrounds that the appropriations of Shakespearean plays on the Chinese stage work at an intercultural and intracultural

level. In her chapter, Yoshihara Yukari examines three Inoue Hidenori pop adaptations of Shakespeare. *Shakespeare in the Year Tempo 12* (2002), an adaptation that reduces the 37 works to one; *Metal Macbeth* (2006), influenced by manga, Hollywood film and Japan's subculture; and *Lord of the Lies* (2007), based on *Richard III* and *Macbeth*, are examples of 'un-Shakespearings' Shakespeare *par excellence*. Yukari's brilliant essay discusses the role of Shakespeare in Hidenori's adaptations and in contemporary Japanese culture, where Shakespeare is just another cultural commodity which is constantly recycled and even combined with manga, rock or kabuki. In this way the original texts are diluted to the extent that sometimes the only similarity with the original is in the title, and people may question whether this is indeed Shakespeare. Tapati Gupta closes this second section with an analysis of a production of *Romeo and Juliet* by Utpal Dutt in the Indian *jatra* tradition, called *Bhuli Nai Priya*.² As Dutt aimed to reach the masses, he 'Indianized' the names and locations, and also added postcolonial contemporizations. The whole section explores the transformation of the source texts in Chinese and Japanese cultures.

The five articles gathered together in the third part of the volume ('Re-playing Ethnicity, Identity and Postcoloniality') concentrate on lesser known imperialisms, such as those of America, Japan and Islam, to see how the "Shakespearean canon was twinned with imperial authority either in an assertion or in a resistance to it" (10). The section opens with Judy Ick's chapter, which concentrates on the Filipino director Ricardo Abad's bilingual *The Merchant of Venice / Ang Negosyante ng Venecia* (1999) and *The Taming of the Shrew / Ang Pagpapaamo sa Maldita* (2002), highlighting the fact that Abad's adaptations make use of Shakespeare to criticize American colonialism in the Philippines. Next, Kim Moran touches upon the complexity of the modern Korean condition in relation to the reception of Shakespeare via the analysis of Oh Tae-seok's *Romeo and Juliet*, an attempt to 'Koreanize' Shakespeare that hints at the conflicts between North and South Korea. Unlike other Asian countries which encountered Shakespeare via Western imperialism, the Koreans' first encounter with his work was under Japanese rule, and Shakespeare thus became a comrade in the Koreans' battle for emancipation. Nurul Farhana Low Abdullah and C.S. Lim's chapter is a valuable asset in the volume, since it is the only exploration of Shakespeare in Malaysia to date. Delving into shadow puppet theatre, the authors emphasize the combination of the *wayang kulit* — an element of Malay culture — with Shakespeare. This fusion heralds a future for *wayang kulit*, which was heading for

² Utpal Dutt was a key figure in the re-birth of Shakespeare in post-colonial India. Dutt began his encounter with Shakespeare at St. Xavier's College (Calcutta) where he performed several Shakespearean plays. He joined the Shakespeareana Company (with Geoffrey, Laura, Jennifer and Felicity Kendall, amongst others) touring India and Pakistan in 1947-48 and 1953-54. He later founded the Amateur Shakespeareans, which was later renamed Little Theatre Group. They produced many Shakespearean plays in English, namely *Hamlet*, *Othello*, *Richard III*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Twelfth Night* and *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. Yet, Utpal Dutt is mostly remembered for his significant contribution to the re-emergence of Shakespeare in post-colonial India with his Bengali productions of Shakespeare's plays (*Julius Caesar*, *Romeo and Juliet* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*) and his performances in Indian theatrical forms such as *jatra*: for instance in the 1970s he produced both *Romeo and Juliet* and *Macbeth*; in the latter Dutt attacked Indira Ghandi's regime.

‘extinction’ due to the ban imposed on it by the Muslim government in the 1990s. The last two chapters in this third section both reflect on the presence of Shakespeare in Taiwan. Wu Peichen sheds light upon the difficult geopolitical situation of Taiwan through the analysis of two Shakespearean plays. Alexander Huang then concentrates on two local productions of *Romeo and Juliet* —*Zhuo Mi and Ah Luo* and *The Flower on the Other Shore*— that performed regional Chinese opera and did not tour abroad. Placed at the end of this third section, Huang’s engaging reading of these two adaptations is a springboard to a new concept of *local*. This whole section is especially useful for future research, because it extends the notion of Shakespeare as colonial baggage.

The following section, ‘Re-playing Genre and Gender’, reveals how genre and gender have to be transformed in the re-playing of Shakespearean works in Asian theatrical forms. Paromita Chakravarti and Swati Ganguly’s contribution offers an original analysis of Saibal Basu’s *Wheel of Fire* (2000), based on *Macbeth*, *Hamlet* and *King Lear*, and Vikram Iyengar’s *Crossings* (2004-2005), inspired by *Macbeth*. These authors move beyond the intercultural performance to focus on the intracultural aspects of performances, mirroring Li Ruru’s chapter. Chakravarti and Ganguly explore how the performance of gender is altered by Indian theatrical and dance forms, and conclude that “Shakespeare’s texts are feminized in these dance performances” (283). In a smooth chapter that flows easily and reads well, John Emigh explores a *Macbeth* in Bali in the ancient *gambuh* theatre style, where the genre was renegotiated as a result of the Shakespearean influence and Shakespeare became the means to criticize politics. The volume is brought to a close with Beatrice Lei’s chapter on two camp productions of *Romeo and Juliet* in Taiwan. In a well-documented essay, Lei initially alludes to several Taiwanese productions of Shakespeare’s plays, later focusing on these two particular Taiwanese appropriations in which the essence of *Romeo and Juliet* is completely transformed —both productions playing it as a farce. Throughout her essay she emphasizes the constant trivialization of Shakespeare in Taiwan. Of particular interest in this section is this new view of Shakespeare, which entails more experimentation, where, alongside Inoue Hidenori’s pop adaptations mentioned in part two, the adaptations analyzed promote new, alternative and ‘free’ Shakespeares that distance themselves further and further from the source texts.

The bold strategy of the book, focusing on such a large number of appropriations of the Shakespearean *oeuvre* in the vast terrain of Asia, has its weaknesses at points. With so many reworkings, the coherence and unity of the volume as a whole is sometimes lost. *Re-playing Shakespeare in Asia* feels at times to be more an encyclopedia than a single treaty. The multiple approaches to the different performances in so many Asian theatrical modes may sometimes discourage the reader. Although the volume never in fact becomes incomprehensible in its use of jargon, it is clear that it is targeted at scholars with a clear knowledge of Shakespeare in Asia. If the collection had aimed to address a less erudite audience, a glossary with the different Asian theatre forms explained would need to have been included. Although the authors occasionally clarify some terms, such as *huaaju*, *xiqu* or *jatra*, the characteristics and complexities of the forms would have benefited from further explanation.

Yet, curiously enough, the collection's strength resides in just this variety and wide coverage of Asian locations, since, through its broad representation of performances and countries, the book is an accessible entry point for Westerners unfamiliar with the cultures discussed. The study of Shakespeare in Taiwan —explored in several chapters— is especially innovative and enriching. The volume's index of Shakespeare's plays mentioned and alluded to throughout is also an important contribution. Characteristic of each entry is that the director of the performance, language and/or theatre form is provided. This index therefore acts as a comprehensive and extremely useful tool to learn about a specific production. Minami and Trivedi's work is also pioneering in its engagement with a different level of interculturality —intraculturality— which focuses on the differences concerning the representation of Shakespeare in the locations of Asia, demonstrating that interculturality is hardly an exhausted topic. The collection is an enlightening and up-to-date contribution to the field of Shakespeare in Asia. Its lucid and captivating articles provide a vast range of encounters between Shakespeare and Asian theatrical forms making it a compulsory collection for those interested in this growing field of studies. With their work, the authors smooth the way for future research and consolidate the need for this critical paradigm in order to arrive at a global understanding of Shakespeare.

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The fact that Shakespeare's Globe Education programme of events for spring 2012 featured *La vida es sueño* (*Life Is a Dream*) by Pedro Calderón de la Barca is but one example of the revitalized Anglo-Saxon interest in Spanish classical drama. What makes this example especially significant is that in 'Shakespeare Found in Translation', as the said programme was called, Calderón was accompanied by John Fletcher and Francis Beaumont, with their play *Bonduca*, and by Thomas Kyd, with *The Spanish Tragedy*. The three plays made up Globe Education's 'Read Not Dead' season —and were thus performed preceded by introductory seminars. The choice of Calderón for the Globe's 'Read Not Dead' series, which is focused on Shakespeare's contemporaries and usually features English plays, reveals the magnitude of the British theatre system's current interest in Spanish classical drama and, therefore, testifies to the relevance of Jorge Braga Riera's monograph *Classical Spanish Drama in Restoration English (1660-1700)*.

Back in the mid-2000s, Braga Riera was wise enough to anticipate the renewed popularity of Spanish Golden Age drama among English-speaking theatre-goers. Being aware that the only precedent of such popularity was to be found in the seventeenth century, when Spanish theatre entered England, he undertook a doctoral thesis on the translation of Spanish Golden Age drama into English at that time in history. Now, he offers English readers a fascinating study based on his dissertation, which won the EST Young Scholar Award 2007.

The monograph is not limited, however, to a seventeenth-century context. Far from this, Braga Riera makes constant allusions to contemporary theatre and provides numerous examples from both periods, showing an intimate knowledge of the theatre systems of both Spain and England in these periods. His study is rooted in so-called Descriptive Translation Studies, as clearly explained in the introduction. The author aims to describe the relationships between, on the one hand, a selection of English translations of Spanish comedies and, on the other, their source texts. Emphasis is placed on the need for translation researchers to take into account the function that any given translation was to fulfil in the target culture. Braga Riera's ultimate aim is to determine the reasons underlying certain decisions made by the translators in his corpus, as well as to ascertain the degree of acceptance of various translation mechanisms during the English Restoration.

The first chapter is devoted to drama translation, given that its peculiarities may have a considerable influence on the way in which plays are rendered. The author delves into translation theory and its application to drama, highlighting the cultural dimensions of translation. It is worth mentioning that he compares other scholars' ideas on theatre translation with his own findings, which leads him to enrich the existing literature by adding new knowledge that can help us better understand the area. For instance, he points out that two of Susan Bassnett's (1985: 90-91) drama translation strategies, namely, translating the play purely as a literary text and translating it in a team, did not have a place in the seventeenth century. The first chapter contains also a comprehensive discussion of the particularities of drama translation, from phonological and syntactic specificities, gestures and stage characteristics (e.g. stage dimensions, props, lighting and music) to the influence of the audience, critics and/or censors and the role of culture and of the translator. Terminological controversies such as whether 'adaptation' or 'version' should be used for the rendering of plays are likewise dealt with, and the author's position is stated.

The second chapter brings the reader to the translation of Spanish Golden Age comedies in seventeenth-century England. An enlightening opening section reviews drama translation theory as it was in this socio-historical context. John Dryden, with his pioneering taxonomy of translation methods ('metaphrase', 'paraphrase' and 'imitation'), stands out among other translators such as Denham and Cowley. Attention is paid not only to their statements but also to their profiles, motivations, translating competence and translated works. Two different periods are identified as regards practice: one where literal translation was the norm and a second one characterised by greater freedom to stray from the source text. The second section of Chapter 2 is focused on the reception of Spanish drama and starts with an introductory overview of the state of theatre in seventeenth-century England. Spanish influence is most noticeable as from 1660, which is why the Restoration period is given prominence in the rest of the section —and in the book as a whole. The first two subsections cover, respectively, the period preceding the closing of the theatres at the start of the English Civil War (1600-1642), and the years between the beginning of this conflict and the end of the Interregnum (1642-1660); the Restoration period (1660-1700) is the subject of the final three subsections. The information is thus presented in a logical manner. Furthermore, the developments of English theatre are explained against the political and social background in England and Spain, as well as against the relationships between both countries. In addition, abundant examples of Spanish influence, as observed in the work of playwrights and/or translators, are provided.

Chapter 3 opens the second and main part of the book, that is, the study of the above mentioned corpus. The plays selected include all those performed during the Restoration which have been preserved and are considered in the existing literature to be translations of, and not just works inspired by, Spanish Golden Age plays. These are: *The Adventures of Five Hours* (first performed in 1663), Samuel Tuke's translation of Antonio Coello's *Los empeños de seis horas*; *Elvira, or the Worst Not Always True* (1664), George Digby's translation of Calderón's *No siempre lo peor es cierto*; *Tarugo's Wiles, or, the Coffee-House*

(1667), Sir Thomas Sydeserf's translation of Agustín Moreto's *No puede ser el guardar una mujer*; and *Sir Courthly Nice, or It Cannot Be* (1685), John Crowne's translation of the same play by Moreto. A further play, *An Evening's Love; or the Mock Astrologer*, rendered by Dryden (1668), was added to the corpus on the basis of evidence found by Braga Riera that it is a translation of Calderon's *El astrólogo fingido*.

After setting out the corpus selection criteria, the author offers brief but informative introductions to the translations selected and a biographical sketch of each of the translators. Perhaps the most interesting information here is that all of the translators were close to the court of Charles II and willing to satisfy their king with their translations. The descriptive analysis of the corpus follows, and commences by looking at plots, lists of characters and titles, although I will attend to the structure of the translations first, which is the subject of the last section of Chapter 3.

The three acts of the Spanish originals turn into five acts in the English translations, in keeping with English theatrical tradition, which also rules the plays' length. The translations are significantly longer than the originals because English shows —lasting approximately three hours— did not include any playlets to accompany main productions, unlike Spanish shows —lasting two to three hours. The introduction of music and dance, a prologue and an epilogue —all of which are typical elements of Restoration theatre— went a long way towards making up the additional length of the translations. Added scenes counteracted the shortening or suppression of the frequent, lengthy monologues in the originals. All of these shifts, together with alterations in the order of events and in events themselves, contributed to the plays' dynamism, which suffered due to the translators' decision to ignore the original versification —a complex combination of verse forms such as the *redondilla* and *romance*. According to Braga Riera, their translating into prose or blank verse might reflect their intention “to prevent English audiences from hearing their characters express themselves in such an apparently artificial fashion” (121), besides time constraints and a lack of literary ability. Another interesting aspect that the author points out is the translators' extensive use of stage directions. In the originals, these are scarce and less detailed, in line with Spanish Golden Age conventions. The translators acted in accordance with their own theatre tradition when they opted to offer plentiful indications of how to perform the plays.

Returning now to titles, lists of characters and plots, the new segmentation into five acts led Samuel Tuke to develop his comedy's action in five hours, instead of the original six, and, as a result, to translate *seis* (six) as ‘five’ in the title. On their part, the four remaining translators converted the simple titles of their respective comedies into double titles, generally by highlighting one of the characters in the added part. In this regard, Braga Riera conveniently reminds us that “English theatre . . . traditionally gave less importance to action and more to the description of the characters” (97).

All of the translators added characters (mainly minor) and made significant changes to the action in order to adjust it to the target audience. However, the earlier ones (Tuke, Digby and Sydeserf) followed the original plots more closely than the later ones (Dryden

and Crowne), which supports Braga Riera's claim that an evolution towards greater freedom to deviate from the original can be observed in the history of translation in seventeenth-century England.

Chapter 4 focuses on the extra-linguistic factors that influenced the translations. Given that no visual records of the stage representations are available, the translations themselves are the primary source of information, and the socio-historical context in which they were performed stands as an auxiliary source. Many of the gestures in the originals are well suited to the English audiences of the time, which is why gestures were usually maintained. In fact, the translators often added gestures similar to the original's, as well as others typical of their own theatre system (e.g. bows and curtsies). The latter were aimed at adapting the plays to the target culture.

Braga Riera argues that the translators bore in mind the theatre building where their translations would be performed. Among other evidence, the incorporation into the action of scenic elements that cannot be found in the original, such as a balcony, is particularly noteworthy. With reference to Tuke's translation, Tim Keenan has claimed that "the stage itself dictates the staging, to the extent that [certain] possibilities would probably not have occurred to Tuke" (2007: 28). Braga Riera could have used this article by Keenan to support his otherwise convincing reasoning.

Regarding the introduction of songs, the author points out that it was one way of appealing to the potential spectators and, therefore, should not be attributed only to aesthetic or literary reasons. Allusions to garments that were commonly used in Spanish classical theatre but differed from those used in Restoration theatre were often omitted and sometimes made up for with references to garments proper to the latter. It is worth mentioning that in his analysis of garments, Braga Riera provides an example of how the semiotic value of certain allusions may be used to the translator's advantage: Tuke translated "Flora, ponte el manto luego" as "Flora, run quickly . . . [*Exit Flora*]" (166). He also provides examples of the influence of the audience, critics and patrons on the translations, and speculates on the possible economic and (self-)censorship factors affecting them. A section on the translators' profiles follows, where we learn that the original authors' names do not appear on the covers of the translations, which were presented as plays written by the translators themselves, although the original authors were sometimes mentioned in the prologues, epilogues or dedications. Braga Riera considers the translators especially suited to carry out the translations on the grounds of their command of Spanish, their familiarity with theatre and their links to the court of Charles II. Chapter 4 concludes by highlighting the influence exerted by the English theatrical tradition and by the translators' concept of translation. The latter can be observed not only in the texts themselves but also in the statements about translation by some of their authors, and it favours the rendering method that Dryden termed as "imitation".

Chapter 5 analyses the translation of proper nouns and cultural references so as to determine how the translators responded to the cultural content in the originals. The treatment of character names evolves over time from 'foreignising' to 'domesticating'

techniques. This is true both for characters participating in the action and for characters only alluded to, although the trend is less uniform in the case of the latter. Toponyms also exhibit a trend towards domestication, with omission and creation of new, original place names as the prevailing techniques. The cultural references looked at include clothing (e.g. *enaguas*, *faldriquera* or the aforementioned *manto*), dwellings (*reja*, *oratorio*), stage objects (*puchero*, *rosario*), locations (*casa de las postas*, *convento*), dishes (*berzas*, *empanada de figón*) and coins (*maravedís*, *reales*), as well as forms of address, insults, religious invocations, proverbs and historical allusions. Their treatment varies depending on both the type of reference involved and the translator, but in general omission and creation techniques prevail again. In Braga Riera's opinion, this can be explained to a certain extent by the difficulty in rendering cultural references, the demands of the target culture and the omission of scenes and introduction of entirely new ones.

The sixth and last chapter examines how the translations depict, on the one hand, humour present in the originals, and, on the other, the typical motifs of Spanish classical drama, that is, love/women and honour. Most of the attention is concentrated on comicity and, despite the lack of visual records of the stage representations, humour conveyed through non-textual elements is not neglected; in fact, pages awarded to this category of humour more than double those awarded to textual humour. The non-textual aspects considered range from intonation, gestures and characters' appearance and movements (chases, concealments, etc.) to the use of buffoons, props, music and lighting, and the deliberate suspension of illusion. Interestingly enough, the translators make greater use of certain types of elements, such as gestures, garments and props. Omissions of non-textual comic aspects abound, and are often made up for. The same is true for textual aspects conveying humour (e.g. wordplay, metaphors, neologisms and asides), which are frequently substituted by analogous elements.

Despite the divergent treatment of love in the Spanish and English literary traditions, the translations respect the comedies' portrayal of love, although their female characters tend to be more daring, in accordance with Restoration society and drama. Honour is present in the originals as a family's reputation, an individual's social rank and a lady's chastity. These three concepts were familiar to Restoration spectatorship, so they were all respected, and the translations, like the originals, subject the couples' happiness to a father or brother having his honour restored.

The analysis of the translations is followed by a succinct 'Afterword' where Braga Riera reviews the revival of Spanish Golden Age drama on Anglo-Saxon stages as of 2009. He concludes by affirming that "[the twenty-first] century . . . will surely see *Siglo de Oro* theatre become more international than ever" (312). One cannot but agree, in light of the events referred to in this review's opening paragraph.

It goes without saying that *Classical Spanish Drama in Restoration English (1660-1700)* makes a significant contribution to the field of Translation Studies, which had not yet turned its eyes to the translation of Spanish classics into Restoration English, an area only explored so far from a literary-comparative perspective, and by less in-depth studies.

My one query is that comprehension is sometimes hindered by the manner in which the information on the translations is presented, which feels excessively fragmentary. Nevertheless, the author achieves his goals comfortably, and one can hardly think of a more suitable person to conduct a study of how contemporary translators are rendering Spanish classical comedies for English-speaking audiences.

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Antonio Ballesteros González, ed., trans. and notes 2011: *Poesía romántica inglesa. Antología bilingüe*. Madrid: Asociación de Directores de Escena de España. 442 pp. ISBN: 978-84-92639-24-3.

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Anthologies constitute highly complex meta-literary products and a genre of their own. The texts included undergo alterations in the light of the new context in which the anthologist situates them, in accordance with selection criteria and with the function the collection is to fulfil. The prestige of the author(s), the novelty or prevalence of a particular literary form and the aesthetic quality of the anthologised compositions are usually the main considerations for the inclusion of representative authors and texts. Additionally, anthologies may be determined, to a lesser extent, by ideological, economic or social motivations (Lefevere 1992). Therefore, anthologists face a multifaceted task which involves, as Claudio Guillén (1985: 413) notes, an intricate process of re-elaboration of an already existing corpus of texts, and consequently a critical rewriting of the selected pieces.

The task is even more complex in the case of anthologies of translated texts, since the corpus was originally written in a foreign language and belongs to a different literary tradition. As Harald Kittel points out, “despite obvious correspondences, it would be a mistake to assume that anthologies of literature translated from one or several source languages are a mere subclass of anthologies of untranslated literature . . . the dual nature of literary translations would have to be emphasized, not to forget the complex functions of a translator editor” (1995: xv).

Mindful of such specificity, Essman and Frank (1991: 71-72) distinguish between “editor’s anthologies” or collections of texts translated by others and “translator’s anthologies”, where the responsibility of selection, translation and critical analysis falls on the same person —the anthologist-translator-critic. Indeed, Antonio Ballesteros González’s *Poesía romántica inglesa. Antología bilingüe* (2011) belongs to the second category as the author fulfils that triple function in this new edition of English Romantic verse in translation. First, as in an art exhibition, the book offers a selection of texts from the total repertoire of English Romantic poetry deemed worth transmitting to Spanish readers. Secondly, the anthology is also a vehicle of cultural transfer since it expands the store of extant translations in the Spanish literary polysystem. Finally, by means of paratextual material —introduction, list of primary and secondary sources and

philological notes— it supplies readers with a critical perspective as to the place English Romantic verse occupies within the larger corpus of English poetry and highlights its most significant traits.

This new anthology is by no means the first devoted to English Romantic poetry in Spain and, therefore, it may be said to confirm an undying fascination for the poetical works of English Romantic writers in the country. It is true that Romantic poets were gradually introduced through the scattered versions which did occasionally see the light in Spanish literary magazines in the late nineteenth century. Those were eventually collected in anthologies of foreign verse in the early decades of the nineteenth century, thus establishing a long-standing tradition throughout the twentieth century.¹ Such was the case of the emblematic editor's anthologies by Enrique Díez-Canedo, *Del cercano ajeno* (1907) and Miguel Sánchez Pesquera, *Antología de líricos ingleses y anglonorteamericanos* (1915-1924), and the memorable compilation by Fernando Maristany, *Las cien mejores poesías (líricas) de la lengua inglesa* (1918), an early example of a translator's anthology of English verse.² These monolingual collections were fundamental in granting Spanish readers access to a fairly recent corpus of Romantic and Victorian poetry. After those early translation anthologies, all of which devoted space to Romantic poetry, nineteenth-century English verse gathered new impetus in Spanish versions just after the Civil War. This was mainly owing to Marià Manent's celebrated three-volume bilingual anthology, *La poesía inglesa* (1945-48) whose first issue was entirely devoted to *Románticos y Victorianos* (1945).³ Furthermore, *La poesía inglesa*, reissued in 1958 by Janés, offered an invaluable source for emerging poets, literary critics, and academics alike concerned with foreign verse. As Ángel Crespo (1988: 36-37) and José M^a Valverde (1979: 73) later claimed, Manent's anthology exerted a powerful sway over their work as critics, translators and poets, somehow coming to shape their aesthetic values. Indeed, Valverde, one of the forerunners acknowledged by Ballesteros, was a crucial figure in the process of making English Romantic poetry known to Spanish readers. Yet, Spanish anthologists in the second half of the twentieth century are also highly indebted to Manent's *Románticos y Victorianos*, which made of Wordsworth,

¹ For a detailed analysis of the reception of foreign poetry through translation and renewal of the poetic repertoire in Spain in the early twentieth century, see Gallego Roca (1996).

² Enrique Díez-Canedo's *Del cercano ajeno* (1907) anthologizes European poetry and includes Percy Bysshe Shelley and Victorian poets Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Robert Browning, George Meredith, Arthur Symonds, as well as Walt Whitman; Miguel Sánchez Pesquera in *Antología de líricos ingleses y anglonorteamericanos* (1915-1924) devotes two half volumes to Byron's poems by several translators, although he does not only compile versions of Romantic poets. Fernando Maristany in *Las cien mejores poesías (líricas) de la lengua inglesa* (1918) follows A. L. Gowans and Gray *The Hundred best Poems (Lyrical) in the English Language* (1903) and includes Anna Laetitia Barbauld, Robert Burns, Samuel Rogers, Lady Nairne, William Wordsworth, Walter Scott, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Robert Southey, Walter Savage Landor, Thomas Campbell, Allan Cunningham, Lord Byron, Percy Bysshe Shelley, John Keats and Thomas Hood.

³ The second volume was *De los primitivos a los neoclásicos* (1947) and the last one *Los contemporáneos* (1948). José Janés commissioned Manent to produce the bilingual collection of English poetry. It was published by Lauro, a name used by the publisher after the Spanish Civil War for his new cultural venture.

Coleridge, Shelley, Byron and Keats enduring figures just when the first anthologies of English poetry had fallen into oblivion.

Ballesteros's awareness of not being the first to offer Spanish readers a selection of Romantic verse in translation leads to his due acknowledgement of precursors. However, some major Spanish anthologies are overlooked. Mention is made of Ángel Rupérez and his *Lírica inglesa del siglo XIX* (1987), as well as of José M^a Valverde and Leopoldo Panero's anthology *Poetas románticos ingleses* (1989), both being noteworthy compilations of English Romantic verse in translation.⁴ Although exhaustiveness is not required in this respect, other significant anthologies of translation have been omitted in Ballesteros's account. According to Enríquez Aranda (2004) there were seventeen extant anthologies fully or partially devoted to English Romantic verse published throughout the twentieth century. Two other anthologies should also be noted here as contributing to the dissemination of English Romantic poetry in the recent past through excellent poetic versions: *La música de la humanidad: antología poética del Romanticismo inglés* (1993) by Ricardo Silva-Santisteban and published by Tusquets, and the latest by Gabriel Insausti, *Poetas románticos ingleses: antología* (2002).

Despite the long list, Ballesteros makes an outstanding contribution in expanding the Romantic canon of English verse in Spain. In *Poesía Romántica Inglesa* it is literary considerations in the first place which compel the author to make an extraordinary selection including the most quoted of English Romantic compositions: Wordsworth's 'Ode Intimations of Immortality', the 'Lucy Poems', 'Tintern Abbey' and sections from 'The Prelude'; Coleridge's 'Rime of the Ancient Mariner' and 'Kubla Khan'; Shelley's 'Ozymandias' and 'Ode to the West Wind'; Byron's 'She Walks in Beauty' and fragments from the epic 'Childe Harold's Pilgrimage'; some of Keats's odes, 'To a Nightingale', 'To Autumn', 'On a Grecian Urn', and a selection from the work of Blake, pioneer of this literary movement. The larger catalogue, which is briefly summarized here, partially coincides with Rupérez's and with that offered by Valverde and Panero, all of whom focus chiefly on the male poets above mentioned, although 'minor poets' such as Robert Southey or John Clare, present in previous collections, have been ignored here.⁵

Aware of the restrictive approach of former compilations, Ballesteros adds to the expected index of names and titles a selection of women's voices, and this undoubtedly adds further value to this volume. I contend that, apart from the purely literary, there is also an underlying ideological criterion informing this anthology which aims at vindicating a more varied and richer repertoire than that exclusively based on male canonical poets. As a result, Spanish readers of this anthology will have the pleasure of discovering the as yet

⁴ *Lírica inglesa del siglo XIX* was reprinted in 2007 while *Poetas románticos ingleses* has been systematically reissued in the last two decades by several commercial publishing houses: 1993, 1994, 2000, 2002, 2010.

⁵ Exception has to be made of three women poets —Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Emily Brontë and Christina Rossetti— included in Rupérez's collection, although they are regarded as Victorian, chronologically speaking. However, Ballesteros also considers Barrett Browning's poetry as quintessentially female Romantic verse.

unfamiliar compositions by Mary Alcock, Anna Laetitia Barbauld, Charlotte Smith, Jane Taylor, Felicia Dorothea Hemans and Letitia Elizabeth Landon next to others by more readily recognizable names —Dorothy Wordsworth and Elizabeth Barrett Browning.

The will to go beyond the well-established inventory of English Romantic poetry known to Spanish readers demonstrates an unprejudiced attitude and an evident responsiveness to the existence of a multifarious literary history of English which has been gradually rewritten over the past twenty-five years. Ballesteros's decision to promote the knowledge of English female writers is naturally informed by notable achievements in the field of Women's Studies leading to the much delayed recovery of long-forgotten or ignored female authors. Consequently, the anthologist offers classical feminist references in 'Bibliografía Selecta. Estudios de índole general' (2011: 21-25), such as Gilbert and Gubar's *The Madwoman in the Attic* (1979) and Mellor's *Romanticism and Gender* (1993), just to mention a couple, in addition to more updated titles like Wolfson's *Borderlines: The Shifting of Gender in British Romanticism* (2006). Additionally, there is a separate section on 'Poetas románticas inglesas' (2011: 41-43) that provides a larger reference list on Romanticism, gender, and the anthologised women poets.

Indeed, there is no collective anthology of Romantic women poets in English translated into Spanish as yet and the present volume endeavours to pave the way in that direction. All the women poets, with the exception of Jane Taylor, were present in Gilbert and Gubar's foundational *Norton Anthology of Literature by Women* (1985), which attests to their significance. However, only two of the female poets included in *Poesía romántica inglesa* have occasionally been present in Spanish compilations, Barrett Browning being the most widely anthologised both in English and Spanish. A selection of Barrett Browning's poems appeared in 1907 in Díez Canedo's compilation, and later in 1945 in Manent's *Románticos y Victorianos*.⁶ Anna Laetitia Barbauld was also included in Maristany's anthology with a single poem in 1918.

It should be highlighted that a mixed readership, ranging from poetry lovers and students to more specialised readers, is being addressed by Ballesteros, but they will all undoubtedly benefit from engaging with the anthology. First, the instructive tone that characterizes the paratexts makes it a suitable work for a readership approaching English Romantic poetry for the first time. The six-page survey on the literary period and its contribution within the wider framework of world literature will be a useful guide in this respect. Ballesteros avoids excessively lengthy textual annotations and referencing within the body of the text in order to escape the weightier apparatus of other scholarly editions. The footnotes accompanying the poems usually offer biographical, cultural and historical data or highlight the link among related texts. This bilingual edition is also clearly intended to offer the best and most representative English poems of the Romantic era so that readers can truly enjoy reading them in the language they were written, while it provides reliable

⁶ Manent chose to translate 'Flower-spirits' also included in this anthology, and some *Sonnets from the Portuguese* (VI, VII, XV, XVIII, XXI).

assistance for those seeking to fully understand the original texts in Ballesteros's accurate and pleasing versions. As for readers well-acquainted with English Romanticism, they will find the paratexts quite valuable, particularly the exhaustive reference section under 'Bibliografía selecta' (2011: 21-43) comprising a useful and up-to-date list of bibliographic and online materials. An inventory of general sources on English Romanticism is supplied under 'Estudios de índole general' (2011: 21-25), including classical studies such as Maurice Bowra's *The Romantic Imagination* (1950) and M. H. Abrams's *The Mirror and the Lamp* (1953), as well as recent publications catering for a variety of critical approaches to this period. English anthologies of poetry both on the period and on individual poets, and general introductions to Romanticism are also listed. Additionally, under the name of each of the poets selected, a list of Spanish editions is given, when available, followed by English editions ("Ediciones utilizadas") consulted for the preparation of the volume in question, and an updated inventory ("Biografías y estudios críticos") of secondary sources mostly in English, including web pages.

Browsing through this initial section of the book it becomes patent that while there are many Spanish editions for each of the male Romantic poets, women poets of the nineteenth century have gone unnoticed so far. It is in this regard that Ballesteros's anthology makes an essential contribution. Certainly, this is the first to bear witness to the commendable production of a considerable number of women poets in the Romantic era, more female than male poets being represented. This seeming predilection for female writers, however, is misleading, for the space devoted respectively to male (44-367) and female (368-414) poets is unbalanced, with Blake, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Shelley, Byron and Keats being more generously represented by a greater number of texts and pages.⁷ Ballesteros states that "[a] la espera de traducciones y publicaciones en España que reivindiquen el elevado valor estético de la producción literaria de estas últimas . . . valgan los comparativamente escasos poemas que aquí se incluyen como muestra de que merecerían ser más conocidas y difundidas en nuestro entorno" (2011: 373).

To many readers one of the most appealing aspects of this anthology will be the possibility it offers to ascertain the diverse array of interests and sensibilities encompassed within the selection of women's verse. Ballesteros's choice certainly undermines the biased notion that women's verse of the period is largely characterized by an excess of sentimentality. The corpus chosen ranges from the moralising and politically concerned tone of Mary Alcock ('Instructions, Supposed to be Written in Paris, for the Mob in England') and Anna Laetitia Barbauld ('The Rights of Woman') or the patriotic epics by Felicia Dorothea Hemans ('England's Dead' and 'Casabianca') to the lyric mode of Dorothy Wordsworth's 'Floating Island' and 'Thoughts on my Sick Bed'. Furthermore, this selection significantly comprises poems that explore the morbid and the sinister, elements the author explicitly relates to the 'gothic mode' alongside the predominantly

⁷ Ballesteros's admiration for Wordsworth (twenty-three complete poems or fragments) and Keats (thirteen poems) is palpable, while the rest of canonical Romantic poets are allotted half the number of pages.

lyric-meditative poems by Dorothy Wordsworth. Hemans's 'The Haunted House', Letitia Elizabeth Landon's 'The Little Shroud' and Barrett Browning's 'The Dream: A Fragment' are paradigmatic of this gothic vein. The choice of gothic, also present in Coleridge's 'Rime of the Ancient Mariner' and Keats's 'La Belle Dame Sans Merci', pinpoints Ballesteros's fondness and long acquaintance with the literature in question.

Deciding on the appropriate translation method is always one of the most challenging aspects in the elaboration of poetry anthologies. The choice between verse —rhymed, metrical, free verse— and prose is a complex one and is frequently determined by the relevance of the source text's formal and prosodic qualities as regards achieving the desired aesthetic effect. Translation decisions are also determined by textual display. In bilingual editions, with original and translation facing one another, this turns into a key constraint when opting for a suitable translation method. Although coherent with current norms for poetic translation which suggest not 'upgrading' the target text by forcing rhyme, Ballesteros also shuns metrical versions in Spanish *verso blanco* which would convey greater musicality to sonnets and ballads.

On the whole, Ballesteros's translations are written in polished free verse or else poetic prose, achieving a high degree of semantic and pragmatic accuracy. However, given the variety of poetic forms present —from short epigrammatic poems and sonnets to lengthy meditative poems in blank verse and some pieces in free verse— the approach to each one of these might have been undertaken individually in an attempt to recreate as much as possible the distinctive qualities of each text-type. Thus, while the option for free verse seems satisfactory in the case of William Blake's 'Proverbs of Hell' or Wordsworth's fragment of the 'Prelude', for which Ballesteros offers commendable versions, this does not seem the most suitable vehicle for rendering the resounding compositions of 'The Tyger', 'Rime of the Ancient Mariner' or 'Ode to the West Wind'. The translator might have attempted versions in Spanish *verso blanco*, not an exact equivalent for the English 'blank verse', which Lefevere (1975) suggested as a desirable method to render rhymed verse. Yet, the translator coherently justifies his choice, pointing out that he opts for "el verso libre para no forzar en exceso la traducción mediante una rima artificiosa que solo lograría distorsionar y subvertir el sentido del poema" (2011: 10). He undoubtedly acknowledges the high degree of difficulty involved in poetic translation and has adopted a sensible and honest approach to deal with it.

Following Jakobson's *dicta* that "poetry by definition is untranslatable" and hence "only creative transposition is possible" (1959: 238), it must be agreed that Ballesteros has succeeded in rendering the spirit of the Romantic age through reliable versions, for which he is to be highly commended. By registering some major women's voices in *Poesía romántica inglesa* Ballesteros has also helped re-define an all-encompassing picture of what English Romantic poetry was, illustrating the broad range of interests, styles and voices that shaped it. It was high time that a more comprehensive catalogue of English Romantic poetry saw the light in Spain and we can only be grateful to Antonio Ballesteros González for having made it possible.

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This volume contains a selection of papers presented at the seminar *The Anglicization of European Lexis*, held in Turin (Italy) in August 2010, as part of the 10th International ESSE Conference. As a comparative study of the Anglicization of European languages, it serves to fill a gap in the field opened up by Görlach's (2001) *Dictionary of European Anglicisms* (DEA), which in fact inspires several of the works in the present volume. The work comprises an Introduction, written collectively by the editors, and fifteen papers classified in three sections: 'I) Exploring Anglicisms: Problems and Methods' (seven papers); 'II) English-induced Phraseology' (five papers); and 'III) Anglicisms in Specialized Discourse' (three papers).

The editors' Introduction constitutes a comprehensive review of the terminology used in the study of Anglicisms, and could itself be used as a manual for any course on lexicology, with no question left unanswered and with a plentiful supply of examples to illustrate each notion. In this opening chapter the authors summarize the factors that should be taken into account when conducting lexicological studies, the reasons for borrowing, and the possible hierarchies of borrowing. A section is also included in praise of the usefulness of corpora in lexicological studies, a methodological approach adopted by some of the contributors here. In the following paragraphs I briefly discuss each of the fifteen studies in the volume.

Section I, 'Exploring Anglicisms: Problems and Methods', with seven papers, is the largest in the volume. In the first study, Ian MacKenzie's 'Fair Play to them: Proficiency in English and Types of Borrowing', the reader might expect to find some correlation between different levels of proficiency and different types of borrowing. However, these expectations are only superficially dealt with in the chapter's conclusions, which are not based substantially on the findings presented in the paper, but are hypotheses for future studies. In fact, the main problem with this chapter is an apparent confusion of the terms *prediction* and *speculation*, which the author uses alternatively from the first paragraph (27). For predictions to be made and tested, a detailed, scientific corpus-based study might have accompanied this chapter.

An effective use of corpora is made in the second chapter, 'Proposing a Pragmatic Distinction for Lexical Anglicisms', by Esme Winter-Froemel and Alexander Onysko.

This paper investigates the different pragmatic interpretations of Anglicisms in German, taking Levinson's (2000) theory of presumptive meanings as a starting point. The authors manage to combine a critical review of the theoretical framework (rejecting terms such as 'necessary loan' and 'luxury loan' and opting for alternatives such as 'catachrestic' and 'non-catachrestic loan') with a thorough analysis of their corpus data, which allows them to propose a most interesting refinement of the theory: that the classification of Anglicisms as catachrestic and non-catachrestic must be considered a dynamic one. It is unfortunate, however, that the authors did not specify that such dynamism is unidirectional, since, according to their own data, non-catachrestic loans may become catachrestic ones, but the opposite development is not observed.

Marcus Callies, Alexander Onysko and Eva Ogiermann's 'Investigating Gender Variation of English Loanwords in German' combines a corpus-based methodology with the analysis of a survey of German speakers, with the aim of exploring the assignment of grammatical gender to Anglicisms in German. The main conclusions are: a) surveys allow for the observation of much more variation than newspaper-based corpora do, in that the latter are usually constrained by editorial systematizing decisions, and b) there seems to be a divide between the southern German-speaking regions and the north and central areas. From a methodological perspective, the paper is impeccable and the reader is left with only one question: why did the authors choose to distribute the surveys only to German learners of English, when they claim that "knowledge of the meaning of a certain word in English could affect and even override criteria such as geographic origin" (73)?

The fourth chapter, 'The Collection of Anglicisms. Methodological Issues in Connection with Impact Studies in Norway', by Anne-Line Graedler, asks a number of questions regarding the methodological problems that arise when retrieving Anglicisms from Norwegian corpora. These include problems related to the identification of Anglicisms, the empirical data to be used, and the statistical treatment of the data extracted. Such questions are very relevant, but few answers are given, especially in the section devoted to statistical data. The article might serve as an introduction to Anglicisms in Norwegian, since it constitutes a good review of the work in this area. Nevertheless, the presence of this chapter in what seems to be the methodological section of the book is not entirely justified.

Chapter 5, 'Semi-automatic Approaches to Anglicism Detection in Norwegian Corpus Data', by Gisle Andersen, is an excellent article in several ways. Not only is the topic currently of great relevance, but Andersen's study has been conducted in a highly scientific manner, considering many different approaches to automation and justifying all decisions made. The usefulness of automatic approaches is manifest, in that they save the researcher considerable time; yet the author also describes the advantages of automatic searches in addressing concrete linguistic issues, in this case the emergence of alarmist sentiments with regard to the threat to Norwegian posed by the constant entry of Anglicisms into the language, a threat which the author elegantly minimizes by claiming that the scarcity of data in early studies may have led to impressionistic and inaccurate conclusions (11).

To round off a very stimulating chapter, Andersen provides many sound suggestions for improvements in automated searches.

The next contribution, Tvrtko Prčić's 'Lexicographic Description of Recent Anglicisms in Serbian: The Project and Its Results', reports on the compiling of a dictionary of recent Anglicisms in Serbian (published in 2001) and the results of this after a decade. Prčić, one of the authors of the dictionary, reviews the different problems faced by lexicographers in its production, which makes the contribution a highly useful guide for anyone embarking on a similar project in another language. It is an honest assessment of a collective work in which the author does not hesitate to include self-critical observations and judgments. My only concern regarding this study is that, although the authors of the dictionary claim to have included only Anglicisms with "some degree of integration" (135, 136), the way in which such a degree is measured is not clarified.

The last chapter of Section I is 'Anglicisms in Armenian. Processes of Adaptation', by Anahit Galstyan. The degree of integration of Anglicisms (referred to as 'domestication') is the main issue in this paper, which includes sections on each level of linguistic analysis: phonetic, graphemic, grammatical and semantic integration. The chapter is very clearly written and provides excellent guidance for the reader unacquainted with the Armenian language. However, I feel that refinements could have been made in three areas. Firstly, 'semantic integration' remains an underdefined label. Secondly, the exact source of the data is not explained clearly; only a quantitative, corpus-based study would allow for conclusions such as "most loanwords have remained monosemantic" (165). Finally, even though different levels of analysis are considered as a means of determining the degree of integration of Anglicisms in Armenian, no comprehensive index is provided to allow the reader to assess the different degrees of integration undergone by each loanword.

Section II, 'English-induced Phraseology', contains five papers. The first of these is 'Phraseology in Flux. Danish Anglicisms Beneath the Surface', by Henrik Gottlieb. This is an excellent example of a well-conducted piece of research, the perfectly-woven combination of bibliographical review and analysis of corpus-data allowing the author to succeed in the dual aim of identifying the types of English-based phraseological calques, and of determining whether these are preferred over their equivalent Danish expressions. The author also concludes with some suggestive remarks on the role played by corpus-based analysis in lexicological studies, observing that the linguist's intuition, when checked against corpus-data, often proves to have been biased.

The following chapter, by Ramón Martí Solano, "Multi-word Loan Translations and Semantic Borrowings from English in French Journalistic Discourse", includes a comparison of the phraseological units found in *Frantext*, the largest French corpus, and in a corpus consisting of the weekly issues of *Le Nouvel Observateur* (*LNO*) over a ten-year period, compiled by the author. His main conclusions are: (1) that mass media resort to English-based loan translations and semantic borrowings to a higher degree than other registers, and (2) that these phrases exhibit different degrees of integration in French. Concerning the former conclusion, no quantitative information about the

specific characteristics of the *LNO* corpus is provided (number of words, etc.), which makes the comparison with *Frantext* appear to be speculative. The latter conclusion is actually expected, and the reader might have appreciated a discussion of the relevant implications of this fact.

José Luis Oncins-Martínez's 'Newly-coined Anglicisms in Contemporary Spanish: A Corpus-based Approach' is an excellent example of the kind of research that can be carried out with the help of corpora. With the aim of assessing the usefulness of two Spanish corpora (*CORDE*, diachronic, and *CREA*, synchronic) for lexicological studies, the author studies four semantic Anglicisms and four loan translations. After a rigorous analysis of the data, he concludes that these corpora are indeed good resources for this sort of study. At the same time, every question that the reader might reasonably have regarding the eight Anglicisms under analysis is answered with scientific rigour, including queries on the normalized frequencies of the Anglicisms or their diachronic distribution and regional variation, among others.

The next chapter is Sabine Fiedler's '*Der Elefant im Raum...* The Influence of English on German Phraseology'. In line with the previous paper, the author scrutinizes corpora with the aim of identifying phraseological units, divided into borrowings and loan translations. She resorts to four clear and sound criteria to identify a given phraseological unit as an Anglicism, although no solid conclusions seem to have been reached, since the lack of information regarding the features of the diachronic corpus (number of words, etc.) does not allow for a reliable diachronic description of the phraseological units. In addition, following the descriptive sections, the author hypothesizes as to the relationship between linguistic borrowings and cultural borrowings, trying to answer the familiar question of whether Anglicisms constitute a threat to German. There is no doubt that these reflections may inspire further research, but they do not constitute conclusions as such, in that the author merely provides speculative explanations about the alleged intentions of speakers.

The final contribution to section II is 'English Influence on Polish Proverbial Language', by Agata Rozumko. The author provides a detailed description of ten proverbs, based on the data drawn from three Polish corpora as well as from the World Wide Web (in accordance with Wierzbicka 2010). The use of the latter, of course, does not allow for a quantitative approach to the proverbs, but it does help the author illustrate the metalinguistic tags used to introduce them and the main contexts in which they are found. Rozumko also comments on the possible reasons as to why so many English proverbs have been borrowed into Polish, tentatively concluding that they are a result of the influence of the popular and philosophical Anglo-American culture. Her reflections, which are of great value from a cultural perspective, will surely inspire researchers interested in the history of proverbs.

Section III, 'Anglicisms in Specialized Discourse', contains just three papers. The first of these is 'English Direct Loans in European Football Lexis', by Gunnar Bergh and Sölve Ohlander, and contains information regarding 25 English football terms in 16 European

languages (including Germanic, Romance and Slavic languages, as well as a miscellaneous class). The data are extracted from *DEA* (Görlach 2001) and ranked according to two criteria: the expansion of the Anglicisms in the 16 languages, and the propensity of each language to accept these direct loans. The authors conclude that two factors are responsible for the main findings: a) linguistic similarity (i.e. a short typological distance), and b) the socio-cultural attitudes of speakers towards the acquisition of direct loans. The interest of this chapter is probably more societal than linguistic in nature, and the authors acknowledge that their ideas should be studied in far greater detail.

Paola Gaudio's 'Incorporation Degrees of Selected Economics-related Anglicisms in Italian' follows. The author has compiled her own corpus from issues of the *Official Journal of the European Union* (*OJEU*) in their English and Italian versions, amounting to 10 million words. With the help of *WordSmith Tools*, she isolates eighty economics-related Anglicisms and classifies them as, (1) non-incorporated, (2) semi-incorporated, and (3) fully-incorporated Anglicisms, beginning with the hypothesis that the context of use and the frequency of the Anglicism determines its degree of integration. This paper constitutes a very honest and creative piece of research, with sound implications for contemporary society.

The last paper in the section and in the volume is Sabrina Fusari's 'Anglicisms in the Discourse of Alitalia's Bailout in the Italian Press'. This is also a very contemporary topic, and once again the author compiles her own corpus, based on articles from two Italian newspapers, *Corriere della Sera* and *La Repubblica*, with the aim of determining the role played by Anglicisms and false Anglicisms in the transparency of the information provided. She concludes that the meaning of some operations was obscured by the use of unknown Anglicisms and the bad quality of the translation of others. The author relies on the often-stated idea that this use of new Anglicisms is a euphemistic way of biasing the language of the news (e.g. Fairclough 2006). She is, however, very cautious in her conclusions and says that it is not possible to determine whether this attempt to obscure language is made intentionally or is unconscious. The article is highly relevant within the literature on critical discourse analysis.

All in all, the editorial work underlying this volume is remarkable, as seen in the almost encyclopedic introduction as well as the ascription of papers to each of the sections. Furthermore, the edition is extremely tidy (I have not identified one single typo!). Some of the papers are very relevant and illuminating from a linguistic perspective, while others appear to be more valuable from a social or cultural angle. I should also point out that the critique offered in these lines is based on the assumption that the book's readership is expected to have a linguistic background and to be familiar with specific methodologies. Notwithstanding any comments on individual chapters, all the papers here have something to contribute to different research fields, particularly popular culture. From this perspective, the book can be considered as a solid interdisciplinary bridge between cultural and linguistic studies. It certainly sheds considerable light on the study of Anglicisms in European languages and will greatly engage future researchers.

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The last few decades have witnessed a growing interest in the language of the Late Modern English period in general and, more specifically, in the history of scientific English. As a result, a broad variety of studies have been published. Books have incorporated chapters covering the linguistic characteristics of this time (Barber et al. 2009); specific manuals describing the English language (Beal 2004; Ticken-Boon van Ostade 2009) and changes in the writing of scientific texts (Banks 2008; Schnell 2010) have been written; finally, corpora containing texts written in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and corpora of scientific language have been compiled. Following the pattern of *Early Modern English Medical Texts: Corpus Description and Studies* (Taavitsainen and Pahta 2010), the book under review, *Astronomy 'playne and simple'*, offers a description of *CETA*, *The Corpus of English Texts on Astronomy*. It also includes a CD-ROM copy of the corpus. *CETA* is one of the many sections of the *Coruña Corpus*, which contains scientific texts (e.g. natural, medical, agricultural and social sciences) written between 1600 and 1900.

The eleven chapters of the book have been organised in three parts. Chapters 1 and 2 can be read as an introduction, Chapter 3 provides a description of *CETA*, while Chapters 4 to 11 describe different pilot case studies using *CETA*. The four compilers of the corpus contribute with either one or two articles each, authoring six in total, whereas the other five chapters are written by specialists in the period and/or in corpus linguistics. No better author could have been chosen for the first introductory chapter, as Joan Beal is a world-known expert in the English language of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Also, the choice of Isabel Moskowich to describe the characteristics of the corpus is entirely appropriate, as she heads the project. As regards the rest of the contributors, the book includes a variety of authors who specialise in different disciplines within the field of corpus linguistics, and how they present the case studies varies according to their own areas of interest.

In the opening chapter, 'Late Modern English in its Historical Context', Beal provides a lengthy introduction to the historical events of the time before concentrating on the linguistic features that distinguish this period from its predecessor. This chapter is an abbreviated version of the book written by the same author, *English in Modern Times*

(2004). However, the chapter fits in perfectly as the introduction to the book because constant reference is made to the *Coruña Corpus* and to the fact that this is the time in which the English language starts to be regarded as equally powerful, in scientific writings, as classical languages.

The second chapter, 'Astronomy as Scientific Knowledge in Modern England', by Begoña Crespo, must also be read as an introduction. It carries out an in-depth analysis of the relationship between society and science in eighteenth and nineteenth-century England. According to the author, this explains the proliferation of certain types of texts and the specific features of the language of scientific writing. Crespo introduces the reader to some of the features of *CETA* by concentrating on the authors of the texts included in the corpus and "their cultural background" (19). Despite mentioning that there are only two women writers among the authors in *CETA*, Crespo does not explain the reasons for this scarcity. Some of the authors in consecutive chapters point out the lack of texts written by women as a flaw, since as a consequence the corpus does not allow comparisons between men and women writers; however, it is arguably justifiable due to the lower presence of women writing in the society of the time.

When faced with a new corpus, the researcher needs to know its characteristics before initiating any linguistic analysis. This description is precisely the aim of Moskowich's 'CETA as a Tool for the Study of Modern Astronomy in English' (Chapter 3), where she presents the main features of *CETA*, such as text types, authors, number of words and time-span covered. The use of tables, graphs and search windows to exemplify searches in the corpus provide invaluable guidelines for those using *CETA* for the first time. Moskowich thoroughly justifies the importance of the compilation of *CETA*, arguing that it fills "a gap left by other historical corpora" (38). The author also explains aspects related to the decisions made when editing the texts and to the software employed when using the corpus.

The rest of the chapters focus on the analysis of specific features of the English language, with special reference to scientific texts. All of them make use of *CETA* for their corpus-based analyses. Unfortunately, they all tend to describe again the features of the corpus that are relevant to their studies, making the contributions rather repetitive; the reader does not expect such reiterations, since all these characteristics of *CETA* are already described in Chapter 3. References back to this chapter would have sufficed for essays which appear consecutively in a monograph on the corpus.

In Chapter 4, 'Astronomical Discourse in 18th and 19th Century Texts: A New-born Model in the Transmission of Science', Crespo describes how scientific texts written in the Late Modern English period reflect the changes that Science underwent at the beginning of the eighteenth century. She chooses for her analysis only the texts written by men. The reason may lie in the fact that only two women writers are included in the corpus and, had she chosen to include them all, she might have felt the need to observe differences between male and female writers without enough evidence. However, she does not explain the reasons for the exclusion. The conclusions to this chapter are not too illuminating, since

no important differences between the two centuries are found, and the author tentatively relates the higher presence of persuasion devices in dialogues with their conversational style.

In her analysis of adjectives, 'Patterns of English Scientific Writing in the 18th Century, Adjectives and Other Building Blocks' (Chapter 5), Moskowich again reiterates the description of the corpus. Given that she signs the chapter describing the characteristics of *CETA* (Chapter 3), it is surprising to find all the figures indicated again (with an error appearing on page 84, Table 1, in the total number of tokens, which the author herself has given earlier as 13,724). The repetition is not only reflected in the description of the corpus, but also in the comments on sources. Moskowich wisely emphasises how the size of the samples contained in the corpus allows for better research, since a wider number of words contributes to clearer conclusions in quantitative analyses.

In Chapter 6, 'Accounting for Observations of the Heavens in the 18th Century, New Nouns to Explain Old Phenomena', Gonzalo Camiña analyses the morphological processes employed to form nouns which are found in the texts contained in the eighteenth-century sub-section of *CETA*. The choice for this sub-section of the corpus is well and extensively justified by the author. Since Camiña is one of the compilers of the corpus, he provides detailed descriptions on some of its features, although he also refers the reader to Chapter 3. The considerable number of graphs and tables included contributes to clarifying all the explanations and findings. The author interestingly points to the fact that, when analysing first-occurrence dates for some terms, corpus studies can provide better results than the *OED*. Finally, Camiña acknowledges that having only one sample written by a woman is a drawback, although he offers some tentative conclusions.

Chapter 7, 'Subject Specific Vocabulary in Astronomy Texts, a Diachronic Survey of the Corpus of English Texts on Astronomy', by Pascual Cantos and Nila Vazquez, differs from most chapters in the book on several accounts. First of all, it is the only study that uses not only *CETA*, but also the Corpus of Late Modern English Texts, Extended Version (*CLMETEV*). The reason for this is the interest of the authors in comparing their data extracted from a corpus of astronomy with data from a non-specific corpus. Secondly, this is a chapter that shows a higher degree of complexity than the rest in terms of application of statistical methods, as shown in the use of formulae and of statistical concepts such as 'terminology density' (130). More than in any of the other chapters are the graphs and tables welcomed by the reader, to aid in the full understanding of some of the data analysed. Finally, it is also the chapter with fewest references to the characteristics of *CETA*. The fact that the whole corpus is used, and that it is also compared to a non-specific corpus, makes it a very relevant contribution to the book and it might encourage other linguists not working specifically in scientific language to carry out similarly designed studies.

In the next chapter, 'A Corpus-driven Analysis of Complex Predicates in 18th Century Scientific Writings in *CETA*', Inés Lareo, another of the compilers of the corpus, unfortunately begins by describing, once again, the characteristics of *CETA*. The study concentrates on the eighteenth century, but the reasons for this limitation of the period are not explained. The inclusion of a map in Figure 5 (165) is extremely clarifying, as the

reader can locate places more easily than if presented in a table. However, she shows some inconsistencies in Tables 2 (158-59) and 4 (164) in relation to some of the dates of publication and the places of education. For instance, the date provided for Bonnycastle in Table 2 (159) is 1789, whereas in Table 4 (164) it is 1786; also, the place of education of Hill in Table 2 (158) is Westminster, while in Table 4 (164) it is Peterborough. Table 2, in fact, might have been omitted, since Table 4 includes the same information together with the figures relating to the author's study. Finally, the restriction to one century contributes to the lack of definite conclusions in some cases, as the author herself subtly indicates in stating that "further research on the 19th century *CETA* . . . will be carried out" (173).

Bethany Gray and Douglas Biber devote Chapter 9 to 'The Emergence and Evolution of the Pattern N + PREP + V-ing in Historical Scientific Texts'. This chapter also differs from others while sharing many features with Chapter 11, 'Thematic Structure in Eighteenth Century Astronomy Texts', by David Banks. Refreshingly, neither provides detailed information about the corpus. They include plenty of examples in their explanations, which contributes to a better understanding of the structures analysed. In addition, an extensive review of the literature regarding the constructions studied is provided. However, whereas Gray and Biber extract their data from the whole corpus, that is, the whole period is considered, Banks limits his analysis to the sub-section of the eighteenth century, as quite a few authors in the book do. The need for a manual—as opposed to a computerised—analysis is Banks' justification for his choice, restricted to five texts from the eighteenth century. Gray and Biber claim the usefulness of this particular corpus for analysing grammatical structures in scientific writing. As regards Banks' conclusions, the fact that only five texts have been analysed has clearly given the author the opportunity to carry out an in-depth analysis; however, this limitation does not allow him to reach general conclusions that could be applied to all the texts of the period, which suggests the need for further research.

Hedges are the object of analysis in Chapter 10, 'An Analysis of Hedging in Eighteenth Century English Astronomy Texts'. Francisco Alonso-Almeida presents an excessively lengthy explanation of "the concept of hedge" (201) before describing the characteristics of *CETA*. Again the reasons for the limitation to eighteenth-century texts only are not indicated. As in the case of Chapters 9 and 11, a substantial number of examples are provided, which, together with the tables included, helps the reader follow the development of the ideas presented. In the end, however, despite the "clear evidence of the use of hedging in eighteenth century astronomical texts" (218) claimed by the author, further research is still required, as he himself indicates.

The compilation of *CETA* has certainly opened new possibilities for linguists analysing scientific language, as shown in the case studies carried out here. This book is a good companion to the corpus as it offers useful insights for those using the corpus for the first time. However, it also presents some drawbacks. Many chapters are iterative in the description of the corpus. This is particularly remarkable in the chapters written by the compilers themselves. In addition, most of the case studies concentrate on the eighteenth

century, which explains some of the shortcomings in the findings. An explanation for this could lie in the fact that the *Corpus of Early English Medical Writing* (CEEM) does not extend beyond 1800 —the compilation of this medical corpus being incomplete as yet— and comparisons are easier to establish if the same time-span is used. It is also true that there is a lack of scientific corpora of the Late Modern English period, with the exception of CEEM, and certainly CETA is a novelty in this respect; however, there are other corpora of the eighteenth and/or nineteenth centuries that are hardly mentioned (e.g. CLMETEV, only referred to in one of the chapters) or even ignored, such as the *Corpus of Late Modern English Prose* or the *Corpus of Historical American English*. Despite not including scientific texts exclusively, their use might have contributed to understanding the evolution of some structures in scientific writing as opposed to non-scientific writing.

Notwithstanding these flaws, *Astronomy 'playne and simple'* is an illuminating book on a period of the English language which has not received enough attention, and it highlights the need for more research into both the scientific language and the sociolinguistic aspects of the period considered in the volume.

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