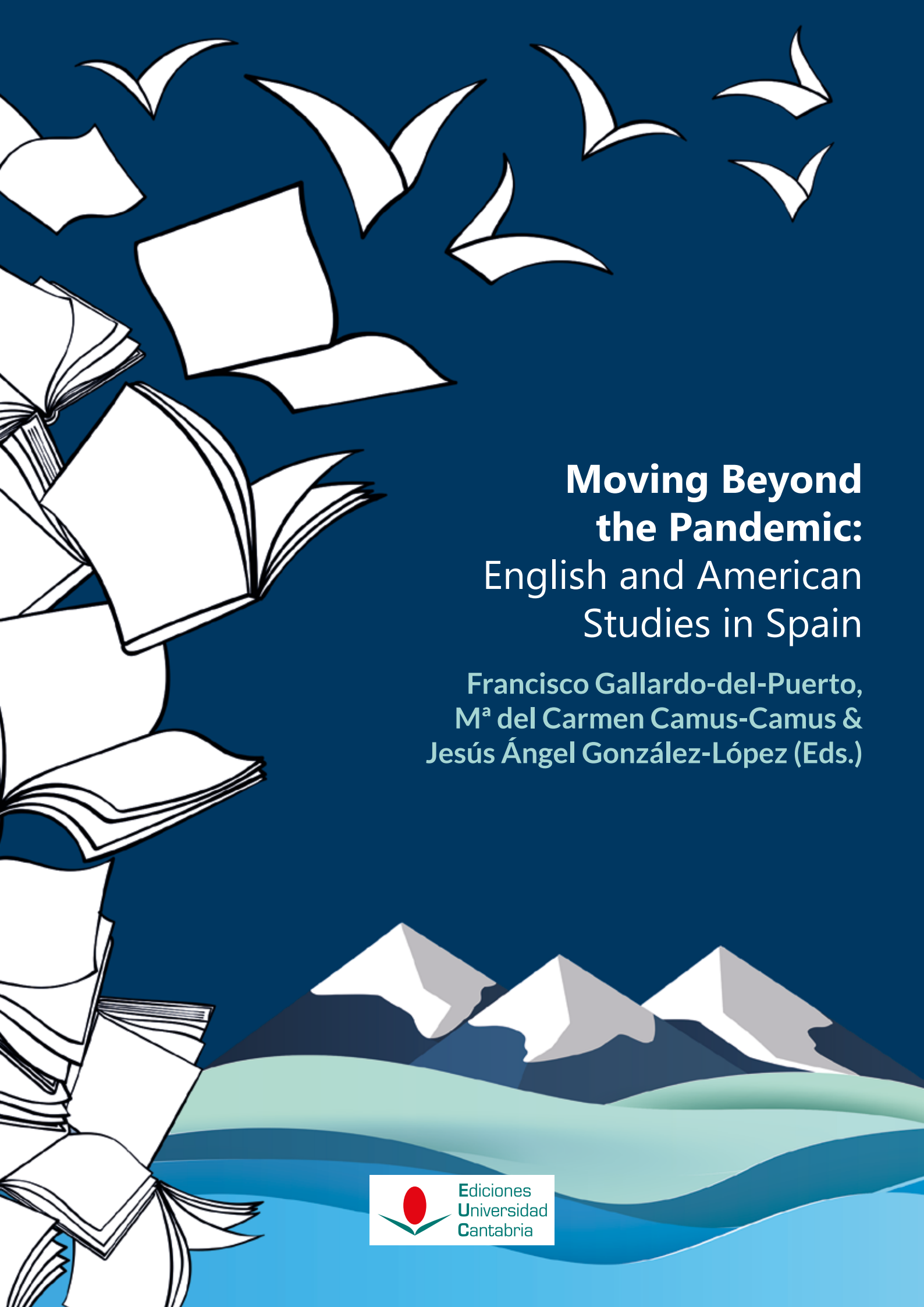

Moving Beyond the Pandemic: English and American Studies in Spain

Francisco Gallardo-del-Puerto,
Mª del Carmen Camus-Camus &
Jesús Ángel González-López (Eds.)

Ediciones Universidad Cantabria

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MOVING BEYOND THE PANDEMIC: ENGLISH AND AMERICAN STUDIES IN SPAIN

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MOVING BEYOND THE PANDEMIC: ENGLISH AND AMERICAN STUDIES IN SPAIN

Francisco Gallardo-del-Puerto, Mª del Carmen Camus-Camus and Jesús Ángel González-López

(editors)

Ediciones Universidad Cantabria

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Hecho en España-*Made in Spain*

Santander, 2022

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Preface

Hosting the 44th Conference of AEDEAN (*Asociación Española de Estudios Anglo-Norteamericanos*) at the University of Cantabria became a greater challenge than we had initially anticipated. The advent of the COVID-19 crisis in 2020 affected the work of the organizing committee to such an extent that we could not avoid referring to it in the title of the volume of selected papers delivered at the Conference —*Moving Beyond the Pandemic: English and American Studies in Spain*. The event should have been held in November 2020, but the restrictions imposed by the pandemic made it impossible to host the conference that year, and in 2020, for the first time in the history of AEDEAN, its annual conference had to be cancelled, in the hope that by November 2021 the situation would have changed. One year later conditions had not improved sufficiently and, as a result, 2021 witnessed the first online conference which both for its virtual mode and the number of participants has already became a landmark in the history of our association. Thus, the proceedings of the 44th AEDEAN Conference gather together a selection of papers derived from both the 2020 and 2021 Call for Papers.

It was a huge honour for the members of the English Section of the Philology Department of the University of Cantabria to host the 44th AEDEAN Conference from 24th to 26th November 2021. The editors of *Moving Beyond the Pandemic: English and American Studies in Spain* would like to express our most sincere gratitude to a series of institutions and individuals for their support as we put together this volume, as well as for their assistance before, during and after the Conference. We would like to thank the members of the AEDEAN Executive Board for the reliance they placed upon us and for the constant assistance they provided in the two-year-voyage to organize the conference. We would also like to acknowledge the invaluable work of the coordinators of the nineteen different thematic panels as well as the disinterested collaboration of the blind reviewers of the abstracts and proceedings. We are also indebted to the Vice-rectorate for Research and Science Policy, the Faculty of Education and the Philology Department of the University of Cantabria for their sponsorship and funding. We also take this opportunity to warmly congratulate *AFID Congresos S.L.* on their excellent work with the webpage and videoconferencing, which greatly contributed to the success of the first-ever online AEDEAN Conference. Needless to say, very particular thanks go to our fellow organizers in the Department of Philology for their enthusiasm and teamwork.

Moving beyond the Pandemic: English and American Studies in Spain is structured into four different sections: "Plenary Speakers", "Language and Linguistics", "Literature and Culture", and "Round Tables". The "Plenary Speakers" section includes papers written by two outstanding figures in the fields of Western Studies and Film Studies, respectively: Neil Campbell's *"An Inventory of Echoes": Worlding the Western in Trump Era Fiction* and Celestino Deleyto's *Transnational Stars and the Idea of Europe: Marion Cotillard, Diane Kruger.* The "Language and Linguistics" section includes eleven papers that tackle a variety of issues

concerning synchronic and diachronic phenomena in the English language of either native or non-native speakers at the phonetic, lexical, or grammatical level. These studies are indicative of the various current methodological approaches to research in subfields such as language teaching, contrastive linguistics, language contact or language variation, to name but a few. The "Literature and Culture Studies" section contains nineteen papers on topics as diverse as the field itself, ranging from Irish, Canadian, South African, Australian, American or English Literature to Film, Television and Cultural Studies. Finally, the "Round Tables" section comprises four round tables on Literature, Music, Film and Cultural Studies.

We firmly believe that the selection of papers and round tables included in this volume are a representative and significant sample of the quality of the research being carried out at present in Spanish Universities in the fields of English and American Studies. We would like to thank all the authors who have contributed to this e-book for making it a volume of outstanding quality. The contributions included in the volume are solid evidence that, despite the difficulties we have had to face —and are still facing—, the field of English and American Studies in Spain is moving beyond the pandemic and is in excellent health.

The Editors

PART I
Plenary Speakers

"An Inventory of Echoes": Worlding the Western in Trump Era Fiction

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Abstract
This chapter examines recent fiction of the US West as a site for the consequences of exceptionalism and closed borders in the Trump Era. As America turned inwards, so much western fiction seemed to reengage imaginatively with the world, challenging the dark side of globalization-as-reductionism. Consequently, the West is envisioned as a more diverse and relational space than its myths so often portray.

Keywords: Westerns, Fiction, Worlding, Trumpism, Errancy.

1. Introduction

My new book, *Worlding the Western: Contemporary US Western Fiction and the Global Community* (2022) examines fiction of the US West as a site for the consequences of exceptionalism and closed borders in the Trump Era. At a time of bounded individualism and new nativism where the potential for cooperation and international thought seem more remote than ever, I argue that it is the imaginative power of fiction that can *put worlds back*, challenging the dark side of globalization-as-reductionism. Therefore, *Worlding the Western* proposes *worlding* as a different and more open form of politics fundamentally opposed to the violence of western history's archive and its rhetoric inherited by contemporary politics in the United States.

There are both political and philosophical entries to the project which I will outline below, but before I do that, let me sketch out through two helpful definitions what I mean by worlding in this context. The first definition is from the critic Jimmy Fazzino, who wrote,

> Worlding is interested in transgressive acts, whether they involve borders internal or external, textual or otherwise; worlding seeks to be transgressive: that is to say, counterhegemonic, reading against the grain, writing against empire and globalization transcendent (2016, 26).

As my examples later will suggest, much of the fiction I examine is both transgressive and counterhegemonic in the ways it both recognizes the cultural power of western mythology as the creation story of the US, whilst unworking it to demonstrate its flaws and ideological damage.

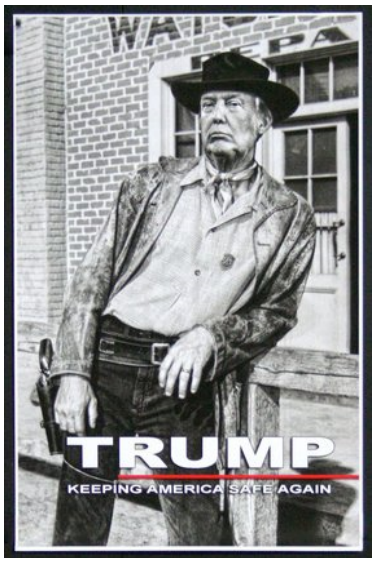
The second definition comes from Rob Wilson, one of the most influential critics of worlding who has been central to this project. He argues that worlding is a critical practice that "enacts openings of time and consciousness to other values and multiple modes of being, projection, and survival. Spatially, a worlded criticism seeks new and emergent connections to and articulations with region, place, area and trans-species forms" (2018, 8). Thus, for Wilson worlding is an active process of opening and becoming, driving beyond critique and towards

the projection and transmission of new and different, often disregarded voices within the American West. Through *worlded* western novels, in my case, authors use the western genre whilst subverting it to expose the consequences of its long, dark history.

The first entry point for this project was the implications of Trumpian exceptionalism, closed borders, and what we might think of as "*unworldliness*" in terms of the President's active withdrawal from multilateral treaties and organisations, whilst retreating behind his rhetoric of the "wall" and anti-immigration policies. To underline the point, I will use examples from the Trump years that demonstrate his deliberate evocation of western tropes and mythology to bolster his credentials. Campaigning in 2016 at the John Wayne Museum in Winterset Iowa, Donald Trump made a point of being photographed with Wayne's daughter Aissa with a life-sized cut-out of the Duke looking down. In the same year, Eric Bolling wrote about Trump in the *Washington Post*:

> Love him or hate him, agree with him or disagree, nobody can deny that The Donald has that swagger any cowboy of the Old West would recognize. He refuses to apologize for being a man, refuses to apologize for his opinions, and refuses to tone down or "feminize" his style … he blazes his own trail (2016).

Indeed, this was exactly how Trump wanted to project himself, like a political gunslinger protecting the country from outside forces and from enemies within (see Grandin 2019). As if to underscore this point, my final brief example is from the novelist Valeria Luiselli, who wrote an article about a trip to the O.K Corral Experience in Tombstone, where she noticed a large "poster of Donald Trump dressed as a cowboy, with a gun … and the slogan 'Keeping America Safe Again'" (2019a).



Against these political examples of the appropriation of western iconography and myth, I noticed an increased interest in fiction of the US West emerging, as if to directly challenge this tendency in political life. To understand this tension between political rhetoric and imaginative reaction, I turned to various philosophical voices who offered tools through which to comprehend the shifts I was noticing. In particular, if Trump was disengaging from the world, these philosophical ideas were about active and positive engagement with a process of worlding.

For the purposes of this chapter, I am focussing upon two key philosophers, Jean-Luc Nancy and Édouard Glissant. Nancy explained in *The Creation of the World or Globalization* that "the unity of the world is not one: it is made of a diversity, including disparity and opposition. It is made of it, which is to say that it is not added to it and does not reduce it. The unity of the world is nothing other than its diversity, and its diversity is, in turn, a diversity of worlds" (2007,109). As if directly challenging the Trumpian notion of enclosure and bordered lives, Nancy rejects one-voiced politics in favour of a healthier, if more complex sense of diversity, disparity, and opposition. These ideas structure his more open dynamic, creative worlding. As Nancy put it a year later,

> Our time is thus one in which it is urgent that the West—or what remains of it—analyze its own becoming, turn back … to examine its provenance and its trajectory, and question itself concerning the process of decomposition of sense to which it has given rise (2008, 30).

As I will argue in my examples below, this critical provenance and trajectory is precisely the critical landscape of the novels emerging in the Trump era. In other words, they both look back to understand how the US has become what it is, and, at the same time, look forward to suggest emergent values and ways of being that counter this archive.

Alongside Nancy, I want to also introduce Edouard Glissant's notion of errant thought, which further defines the ways in which the fiction I examine operates to break from the narrow confines of western mythology and follow new paths. Crucially for Glissant, errant thought or errancy, "challenges and discards the universal [or mythic]—this generalizing edict that summarized the world as something obvious and transparent, claiming for it one presupposed sense and one destiny" [as in the US West]—favouring instead opacity, relations, and diversity (1997, 20). Rejecting universalizing thought like that encompassed by western mythology, Glissant, like Nancy, favoured diversity and what he famously called the "poetics of relation."

Hence, to borrow a metaphor from Valeria Luiselli, the fiction of the West examined here becomes an "inventory of echoes", never repetitive, but errant, relational, and diverse, countering reductionist, narrow positions in a determined effort to re-open the world in all its variety and entangled complexity. For Luiselli, such an inventory is "a collage of environments and voices telling the story on their own, instead of a single voice forcing it all together into a clean narrative sequence" (2019, 97). In the two examples that follow, fiction proposes an alternative archive of the West, a messy one constructed of many Wests and many worlds rather than a convenient and clean narrative sequence.

2. Hernan Diaz, *In the Distance*

Diaz proposes an interruption to the "iconic," linear and progressive mapping of the American West, or Manifest Destiny, marked in contrast by verticality, discontinuity, and what I call, following Glissant, *errantry* and *relationality*. In the novel its central character Håkan, a Swedish immigrant in the West, experiences the region as an alien presence not as a dreamer. In writing the novel, Diaz "tried to make genre and even language itself feel foreign" so that the reader feels as disorientated as Håkan, emphasizing that, contrary to genre expectations, as he put it in an interview, "this is a very American story, which makes us remember that foreignness is part of the American experience to begin with" (Pinckney, 2017).

But the novel reverses the generic norm: travelling West to East, then circling around and digging into the earth, rejecting the rampant capitalism of westward expansion for an

appreciation of indigenous life ways, and an intimate relation to nature and the earth. Ultimately, Diaz takes the Western genre and deframes it. As he commented:

> I saw in the Western a slightly derelict genre that was ready to be taken over. And because of its ideological connotations, it seemed like hijacking the Western was a perfect way to say something new about the United States and its history. I wanted to write a book that relies on the Western tradition but ultimately subverts it (Pinckney, 2017).

Thus, *In the Distance* reimagines and enlarges the Western, *worlding* it, and so unleashing its potential, mixing the local and global to address complex questions about personal and national identity, belonging and ecology whilst boldly rethinking the West as non-exceptionalist and "worlded," bound into a global system of coloniality, capitalism, trade, and migration.

Håkan learns from a white naturalist Lorimer and an unnamed Indian healer a relational view of the world whereby, "each minuscule being has spokes radiating out to all of creation" (Diaz 2017, 81). Their shared ecological vision teaches that "man can no longer examine his surroundings [his world] merely as a surface scattered with alien objects and creatures related to him only by their usefulness," for to do so, is to imagine the world as something to be "grasped," "debasing nature by turning it into a storehouse, a symbol, or a fact" (81-2). Like so much of his journey, these interactions reveal worlding as lived experience. Eventually, these men teach Håkan a version of what Donna Haraway calls "response-ability" (2016, 36) – that is, the ability to respond to and entangle with the world as it is rather than as you might wish it to be. In other words, *worlding*.

Consequently, *In the Distance*'s great white giant is not the conventional colonial western hero on a migrant quest for power or redemption, but a vulnerable, "quiet, hesitant being" (Diaz 2017, 322) whose traumatic experiences teach him different "down-to-earth" values: to heal, to sow, to cook, and to empathize with others (Indians, women, insects, animals, and the earth itself), so often exploited or overlooked in the rush to conquest, modernization, and globalization.

3. Valeria Luiselli, *Lost Children Archive*

Like *In the Distance*, Luiselli's novel, although set in contemporary America, is also a layered and complex counter-text to the ideologies and mythologies of the frontier, Manifest Destiny, and internal colonialism that remain alive and active in US political culture today. As shown in Luiselli's comments on the OK Corral Experience mentioned earlier, the West is "a space where the past had been replaced by a peculiar, repetitive, and selective representation of the past," questioning "why some people get to have a name in history while others remain a generic category, why some identities are mapped into history and others are mapped out" (2019a).

The challenge of Luiselli's fiction is its insistence upon different narrators, narrative threads, symbols, temporalities, and histories, to create something closer to what the father in the novel calls an "inventory of echoes" as defined earlier. Rejecting any single, dominant voice, Luiselli creates a collagist novel which is part road trip, part Western with an unnamed family, like pioneers, travelling West in the 21st century, heading to the borderlands to document the crisis there.

Born outside the US, Luiselli, like Diaz, "foreignizes" (or *worlds*) these very American genres to reveal and investigate their ideological structures. As a translator herself, Luiselli

brings a foreign eye to the language of American myth and in so doing opens up the sealed archive of US Western History to new and different voices.

In the novel's complex, multiple structures, these are the voices of the living (adults, children, authority, politics) and the dead (other writers, myth, history etc.) intersecting as a series of echoes assembling a worlding / whirling alternative archive of the West. As she has said, "a writer starts from the fissures and the holes" (Luiselli 2013,78), in an interruptive process that unworks established, taken-for-granted viewpoints, challenging, as I said earlier both provenance and trajectory. As she explains, this echoing process is vital political work:

> while the story continues, the only thing to do is tell it over and over again as it develops, bifurcates, knots around itself. And it must be told, because before anything can be understood, it has to be narrated many times, in many different words and from many different angles, by many different minds (2017, 96-7).

So, the novel becomes a porous echo-world permeated by multiple forms, from photography, book lists, streams of consciousness, critical analysis, history, and storytelling, as well as incorporating temporal and spatial shifts, between past and present, East and West, far away and nearby. As a porous novel, it is as if the world flows through *Lost Children Archive*, deliberately transgressing borders of all kinds, as Fazzino said worlding must. As a result, Luiselli clarifies, "the novel is both the story and the archive of the story" (Floyd, 2019).

Ultimately, it is the "lost children" of the novel's title that create the most powerful archive (her friend Manuela's children wandering in the desert beyond the border; the detained and deported migrants; her own lost children who stray from parental control: and even the book she reads on her journey, *Elegies for Lost Children*). These various lost children create an affective and unvarnished archive, which, together with all the other voices within the novel's echoing structure forces readers to ask what it all means and how should it be read? Consequently, we stop and we question any assumed order, listening to many different voices rather than simply rely upon a univocal myth.

Just as Diaz does within *In the Distance*, Luiselli refutes the horizontal or linear narrative so dominant in the American tradition, favouring instead verticality, moving up and down and through, to represent a complex, multi-faceted relational world. In a sense, she *translates* from one archive into another, even shifting the narrator from mother to 10-year-old son in the second half of the novel. Consequently, the novel is *translating* established western myths into an imperfect affective future archive. Ironically, at one point in the novel their car is stopped by the border police enquiring as to the purpose of their trip. The answer given by the mother is that they are screenwriters "writing a spaghetti western" (130), and perhaps just like such an earlier twisting of the genre, the novel itself is "gesturing toward wider communities" to "construct a collective worldview" that refutes the terrible legacies of Manifest Destiny (Oliva 2019).

As a translator, Luiselli echoes Walter Benjamin's "The Task of the Translator" as summed up by Paul de Man:

> To put the original in motion, to *de-canonize* the original, giving it a movement which is a movement of disintegration, of fragmentation. This movement of the original is a wandering, an *errance* … (2002, 92).

Thus, de Man brings us back to the central argument of this chapter, that the *worlding Westerns* I consider cohere around the notion of *errancy* discussed earlier, a wandering,

questioning movement away from the original mythology of the West. This echoes too the child-narrator whose view of the world questions and interrupts that of his parents (as in Benjamin's writings)—upsetting what Luiselli calls "the scaffolding to his world" (Luiselli 2019, 161), unmasking the false appearance of things and the mythic facades that hold the adult observer enthralled.

In a sense, therefore, as readers, in both these novels, we become *errant translators* following the various layers, perspectives and "languages," thinking *through* the Western genre, questioning its deep-set values, and wandering into new, challenging perspectives. Returning to Jean-Luc Nancy with this in mind, is to understand why the notion of the inventory of echoes is such a useful phrase, underpinning the arguments of this chapter.

> When a voice, or music, is suddenly interrupted, one hears just at that instant something else, a mixture of various silences and noises that had been covered over by the sound, but in this something else one hears again the voice or the music that has become in a way the voice or the music of its own interruption: a kind of echo, but one that does not repeat that of which it is the reverberation (1991, 62).

To conclude therefore, following Nancy and Glissant, these worlding Westerns are not repeating reverberations from the past, like the myths and exceptionalism invoked by Donald Trump, since their newly created and interrupted "sounds" [or fictions] return changed and questioned in subtle and unpredictable ways. Consequently, these novels are transgressive, non-reductive, non-exceptionalist, dialogical, relational, and communal as all worlding texts should be. This inventory of fictional echoes of "westness" ultimately builds what we might call an *archive of errancy* telling alternative, worlded narratives of a diverse American West, amounting to a better, fuller, and hopefully, a more empathetic story.

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Transnational Stars and the Idea of Europe: Marion Cotillard, Diane Kruger

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Abstract

Certain contemporary film stars encapsulate the concept of transnational culture in particularly powerful ways. This is the case of Marion Cotillard and Diane Kruger. Both actors have crossed the Atlantic on many occasions through their film roles. Their star personae are constituted, to a great extent, as a result of these multiple journeys. In different ways, the two have become cinematic embodiments of the recent history of Europe and the centrality of borders and border crossings in the idea of Europe and the various crises undergone by the continent in recent decades. This talk focuses on the two stars' trajectories in the 2010s and frames the analysis within the concept of transnational cinemas and theories of the border.

Keywords: Cinema, Film Stars, Europe, Borders, Cosmopolitan Theory.

1. Introduction

This paper focuses on the trajectory of two contemporary film stars —Marion Cotillard and Diane Kruger— as embodiments of transnational cinema and transnational culture and, more specifically, as cinematic manifestations of the idea of Europe in the 21st century. For several decades, the study of film stars, or what is usually referred to as Star Studies, has been a prominent area of research within film studies and a powerful way of analyzing individual films or groups of films. The filmography of a film star is often as consistent and as meaningful as that of a film director. In a sense, we can describe stars as alternative *auteurs*. Since the pioneering work of Richard Dyer in the 1970s we have been aware that film stars are complex repositories of cultural meanings. Stars move from film to film, from specialized magazines to social networks, from studio publicity to TV interviews, and gather meanings around their star personae, cultural constructions formed by all the films in which they appear and all the extra-textual materials about them. Since the late 1910s, when the Hollywood studios realized the immense potential of beautiful and charismatic people to attract audiences to the cinemas, the star system has remained a central ingredient of mainstream cinema all around the world, as much in industrial as in narrative and cultural ways. For more than a century now, we have been fascinated by stars. For more than 40 years film scholars have incorporated that fascination into their writings. To quote Richard Dyer at some length:

> We are fascinated by stars because they enact ways of making sense of the experience of being a person in a particular kind of social production (capitalism), with its particular organisation of life into public and private spheres. We love them because they represent how we think that experience is or how it would be lovely to feel that it is. Stars represent

> typical ways of behaving, feeling and thinking in contemporary society, ways that have been socially, culturally, historically constructed. [...] Stars are also embodiments of the social categories in which people are placed and through which they have to make sense of their lives and indeed through which we make our lives —categories of class, gender, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, and so on. And all of these typical, common ideas, that have the feeling of being the air that you breathe, just the way things are, have their own histories, their own peculiarities of social construction (1986,17-18).

In a world that, in the course of the last thirty years or so, has been changed by global phenomena, transnational exchanges, experiences and identities have proliferated. The cinema itself has undergone a process of transnationalisation, both in industrial terms and in terms of the kinds of narratives it tells and the cultural meanings that it constructs. Given stars' continuing centrality in the medium, it is only logical that contemporary stars, particularly some of them, have accumulated some of these meanings —of what it is like to live in a transnational world— in their personae.

I would like to start by describing some of the differences between the terms global and transnational when applied to film stars. Global stars have a global reach and encapsulate cultural meanings that may be shared by a great number of people around the planet. They are globally readable and work as powerful points of identification and objects of desire for spectators around the world, even if those identifications and desires may vary significantly from one place to another. In other words, global stars are not only potent repositories of culture but adaptable and flexible to a variety of territories, histories and cultures, both singular and plural. Because of their global reach, they tend to be associated with Hollywood, the only truly global film industry. Since the rise of Hollywood, towards the end of the second decade of the 20th century, Hollywood stars have had global dimensions. Transnational stars, on the other hand, have a more limited reach, represent more localized mobilities and are more explicitly connected with border crossings and with the interplay between two or more national identities. For this reason, they exclude global modes of engagement. Instead, they offer more specialized, concrete meanings (see Durovičová 2010, ix). As we will see, the same star can be global and transnational at the same time, but, if they are, they are so in different ways and for different reasons. Transnational stars crisscross with the global but they resist the homogeneity associated with it. They highlight the continuing presence of national identities in our experience but also our growing familiarity with borders, borderlands and border crossings. They may bear strong marks of national identity as they cross borders and relocate to different geographies or they may inhabit an in-between territory in which national identities are debilitated.

Marion Cotillard and Diane Kruger are both global and transnational stars but they are so in different ways. They both came to international visibility in the first decade of our century but their screen personae and their celebrity status was established in the 2010s. In different ways, they both articulate meanings that locate them within "transnational culture".

2. Marion Cotillard

In films since the 1990s, Cotillard attained phenomenal success and global star status with *La môme* (*La vie en rose*, 2007). The film catapulted her across the Atlantic to Hollywood, although by then she had already crossed the ocean twice to appear in Tim Burton's *Big Fish* (2003) and Ridley Scott's uncharacteristic romantic comedy *A Good Year* (2006). Her performance as Edith Piaf won her, among other accolades, the first Academy Award for best actress in history for a French-speaking part. This part also cemented her acting method, which

critics described as "impersonation," "immersion" and "inner work," running counter to the traditional association of Hollywood stars with the predominance of the actor over the part. Jules Sandeau argues that she a very French icon whose Frenchness was readable for US audiences (2020, 6). This readability and her adaptability to Hollywood genres facilitated her integration in the Hollywood star system. At the same time, her Hollywood stardom turned her into a national icon in France, even an icon of Parisianness (Choulant 2016, 98). She joined the pantheon of French stars referred to by surname only: Bardot, Deneuve, Adjani, Cotillard. Therefore, in her case, the global and the national worked together, since her Frenchness became a central part of her global star persona.

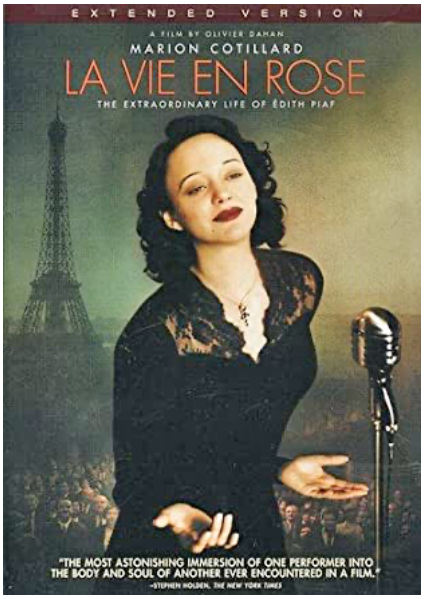

Figure 1: Marion Cotillard goes global in *La môme* (2007) (Légende)

And yet, even though she continued to work regularly in Hollywood, she hardly ever played protagonist parts, with the exception of *The Immigrant* (2013) and *Allied* (2016). For the rest, she has played mostly secondary parts that rely heavily on French and/or female stereotypes, like her two blockbusters of the early 2010s, *Inception* (2010) and *The Dark Knight Rises* (2013). It is symptomatic that in *The Dark Knight Rises* her character Miranda pales in comparison with that of Catwoman, played by fellow Hollywood star, homegrown Anne Hathaway. It is as if her stardom, highlighted mostly in magazines, TV shows, fashion-icon appearances and even music videos, has not really translated into the global cinema screens. Apart from *The Immigrant* and *Allied*, Woody Allen's *Midnight in Paris* (2011) and her moving, understated performance in the multi-protagonist *Contagion* (2011), a film that in many ways forecast Covid-19 almost ten years before, her most complex roles of the 2010s have come from films produced outside Hollywood: in France —*Les petits mouchoirs* (2010) and *De rouille et d'os* (2012), among others—, in Belgium —*Deux jours, une nuit* (2014)—, in the UK —*Macbeth* (2015)— and in Canada–*Juste la fin du monde* (2016). Ginette Vincendeau wonders whether there are two Cotillards: the American celebrity and the French actor (2018, 47).

Vincendeau explains that an important reason for her access to a global dimension is her proficiency in the use of English (46-47). This is linked to her engagement with intercultural communication, cosmopolitan attitudes and border crossings. *Allied*, for example, shows her ability to cross borders and navigate between cultures, but it is not just her English but the

panoply of different languages and accents that she activates in her films that often highlight her transnational dimension as a star. For instance, in *Blood Ties* (2013), she plays Italian-American prostitute Monica. Even though Cotillard reportedly could not speak the language, it was her choice to make her character Italian (Choulant 2016, 165). In the film she is equally effective when she speaks Italian as when she speaks English with an Italian New York accent. In *The Immigrant* she is Polish, which she apparently speaks with a faint German accent, because her character Ewa comes from Silesia (Choulant 160). This is part of her thorough approach to her job which, in cultural terms, translates into a performance of respect for diversity and a strong desire to make the Other visible and human, particularly in an environment, like the film industry, which has often reduced "foreigners" and migrants to demeaning stereotypes. An otherwise insignificant detail in *Assassin's Creed* (2016) gives a measure of her attitude: her character Sofia pronounces "Andalucía," where part of the action takes place, in perfect Spanish, whereas her father, played by Jeremy Irons, does not even bother. Not easily noticeable and certainly not part of the story, this little touch speaks of her approach to linguistic and cultural diversity, to highlighting instead of homogenizing difference. This ethical commitment to acknowledging the Other both as complex and as different may be linked with another common feature of her characters: their compassion. In *Macbeth*, her Lady Macbeth is not only ruthless and ambitious but also empathetic and intensely sensitive. In *Juste la fin du monde*, Catherine is often framed in close-ups that highlight her eyes, through which she transmits boundless sympathy and understanding towards the members of the extremely dysfunctional family to whom she is linked by marriage to one of the sons.

The diversity of her linguistic registers extends to her French-speaking roles. In the comedy *Rock'n Roll* (2017), she plays Marion, married to Guillaume (Guillaume Canet), a parody of the real-life couple. She spends much of the first part of the film speaking to her family with a French-Canadian accent in preparation for the shoot of her next film in Canada. This, like other elements of the film's plot, is a parody of her by then famous acting method. When she comes back from the shoot, she has dropped her Canadian accent and she complains about the director's decision to have the actors speak with their own accent. This is a direct reference to *Juste la fin du monde*, a film that was central to her career.

I would like to focus in some more detail on her starring part in *Deux Jours, une nuit*, a film directed by the Dardenne brothers. Jean Pierre and Luc Dardenne, universally acknowledged as members of the most exclusive pantheon of 21st-century European *auteurs*, are, in the words of critic A.O. Scott, "faithful chroniclers of a European working class in crisis" (2014). Their working method includes, with a few exceptions, using non-professional actors. In this context, the presence in the film of Cotillard, at the time one of the most popular European stars, is exceptional in the brothers' *oeuvre*. For her part as Sandra, a factory worker who is about to lose her job when her workmates vote in favour of her dismissal rather than lose a bonus, Cotillard takes off her star mantle and adapts her acting to the Dardennes' naturalistic requirements to convey not only the fragility that is the consequence of post-crisis precarity but also a stunning other-projection that leads her to constantly empathize with those that have decided to take her job away from her. The very firm sense of locatedness provided by the Dardennes' habitual space —the industrial areas of Seraing, their hometown in Southern Belgium— underlines that the film tells a transnational European story about the victims of savage neoliberalism. She honours the geography of the film by expanding her linguistic versality to Sandra's slight Belgian working-class accent. The character's empathy also resonates with the transnational issues mentioned before: attention to geopolitical specificities, acknowledgement of inequalities, and the desire to forge connections across borders through recognition and foregrounding of the other's difference.

Figure 2: Worker solidarity and celebration of difference in *Deux jours, une nuit* (2014) (Les Films du Fleuve)

Cotillard's part as Sandra speaks to a dimension of contemporary Europe and the bumpy process of European integration that often remains under the radar. She represents an extreme form of solidarity and an easy tolerance of diversity and otherness even when, as in *Deux jours, une nuit*, her job is on the line. For Sandra, the cosmopolitan values of openness, equality of rights and compassion (Appiah 1997, 635; Fine 2009, 20; Skrbiš and Woodward 2013, 40, 43;) are a given, and yet she becomes the victim of the dominant form of neoliberalism endorsed by the policy-makers in the union and ratified by many of its laws. The attention to diversity that has become an important ingredient of her star persona on both sides of the Atlantic is not explicitly exploited in the narrative but it is at the bottom of her unusual form of courage. Therefore, in her encounter with the Dardenne world, she becomes a potent signifier of both the most utopian aspects of the European project as well as the grim realities of its crisis.

3. Diane Kruger

Marion Cotillard's Frenchness is compatible, indeed an important part of, her transnational dimension which, as we have seen, concerns both repeated transatlantic crossings (both with the US and Canada) and the dream of a borderless Europe. The case of Diane Kruger is different: she was born in Germany, educated in London, she started and has spent much of her film career in France, and is a U.S. citizen. Her name may be pronounced differently depending on the circumstances, all the pronunciations compatible and equally recognizable as her. Less visible as a star than Cotillard, it may be argued that her invisibility is a crucial ingredient of her star persona and defines her as a citizen of the border.

Figure 3: Diane Kruger, the invisible transnational star

Kruger came to international attention playing Helen of Troy in the epic blockbuster *Troy* (2004), alongside stars Brad Pitt, Orlando Bloom and Eric Bana. The film does little to change the classical view of the mythological character as a blank recipient of male desire, the traditional object of exchange between men in which the object itself matters little (Sedgwick, 1985). Kruger was a model when she started her film career and, like Cotillard, remained an occasional model for well-known brands like Calvin Klein, Chanel, Martell Cognac and Nestlé. In fact, her modelling seems to have often predominated over her acting in public perception. Helen of Troy's generic beauty became attached to the model's generic beauty as the actor's trajectory continued to be marked by the genericity, even the lack of charisma, often associated with models.

In many of her films, she has a translucid quality that is not only the consequence of her embodiment of traditional notions of white femininity but often coincides with the absence of strong marks of national identity. In *Troy* heroes and secondary characters, including the other women, are firmly anchored in territorial identities —Menelaus of Sparta, Paris and Hector of Troy, Phthian Achilles. Helen, however, takes on the identity first of her husband as Helen of Sparta, and then of her lover as Helen of Troy. Born, according to *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*, of Zeus and Leda, she has no country. It seems fit that the filmmakers chose for the part the little-known actor that seemed to be from no place in particular. Much later, referring to her part in the TV series *The Bridge* (2013-14) critic Janet McCabe described her and the heroines of the original Danish-Swedish series *Bron/Broen* and the later Franco-British spinoff, *The Tunnel*, with their flaxen hair and flowing locks, fragile but unflinching, familiar yet enigmatic, as figures of the border (2019, 303). As Kruger's career developed and transnational-by-default parts proliferated, this borderliness became an essential part of her star persona, and approximated Kruger to Song Hwee Lim's description of transnational cinematic phenomena that do not arise from any single country and therefore erase the national (2019, 1). In the course of the 2010s Kruger became a signifier of the intensification of the transnational turn in cinema.

She appeared in *National Treasure* in the same year as *Troy*, playing a heroine who sounds American with, in the character's words, a Saxony German accent. In *Wicker Park* (2004), she has a Czech mother and a Californian father; in *Frankie* (2005), she is a model who was born in Germany and lives in Paris, speaks German to her mother on the phone, and French and English in the shoots; she is a Russian princess turned anarchist who speaks perfect French in *Les brigades du tigre* (2006); Austrian, although the film is spoken entirely in English, in *Copying Beethoven* (2006); South African speaking English with a South African accent in *Goodbye Bafana* (2007); and from nowhere at all since she is a figment of the male protagonist's imagination, a ghost that speaks both French and English, in *L'âge des ténèbres* (2007). In *The Hunting Party* (2007) she is a member of a Serbo-Bosnian militia and speaks English with a strong accent from the Balkans, as she does in *Unknown* (2011) as a Bosnian migrant in Berlin. She is a German film star in *Inglorious Basterds* (2009), speaking English with a German accent, and Austrian princess Marie Antoinette in *Les adieux à la reine* (2012). She is an alien in *The Host* (2013) and a caricatured Bavarian physiotherapist who manages, in a brief cameo appearance, to speak German, French and English with a German accent in *Les garçons et Guillaume, à table!* (2013). In *Maryland* (2015), she is German, lives in the Côte d'Azur, says home is London, and flies to Canada when she has to find a new home. In *Tout nous sépare* (2017) she was also born in Germany but is French, and she is a Belgian witch with a German accent in her cameo appearance in *Welcome to Marwen* (2018). To end the decade, in *The Operative* her character, Rachel, was born in London of a British Jewish father who hated Israel and a German mother who went to live in a kibbutz. She then lived in Canada for a while and is now living in Germany but working for Israel. In general, her persona is characterized by vertiginous border crossings and, like Cotillard, by her alternation between Hollywood and Europe. In the meantime, her acting style has evolved into a minimalist intensity that has made the most of her invisibility and her cultural iconicity as always a foreign woman without a country. Her part in *The Bridge* as Sonya Cross, a socially awkward but brilliant police detective living in El Paso and constantly crossing the border between Mexico and the US, showcased and consolidated her iconicity as a woman of the border, channelling the star's familiarity with borderlands and cross-border mobilities into the character's identity.

Sonya's affinity with her colleague Marco (Demián Bichir), from the Juárez police department, develops in the midst of the type of unspeakable violence associated with the border and showcases the radical doubleness of the border as both a site of cosmopolitan engagement with the other and social injustice and violence against the weak. In *Aus dem Nichts* (*In the Fade*, 2017), her first and so-far only German film and a film for which she was unanimously acclaimed, this borderliness acquires more tragic dimensions. As in *The Bridge*, an important part of her performance is related to her whiteness. In the DVD extras, director Fatih Akin explains that he wanted a very Aryan-looking woman for his heroine, underlining that her whiteness is ideological. It becomes part of a wide geopolitical canvas that, although centred in Hamburg, where German Katja lives with her Kurdish Turkish husband Nuri (Numan Acar) and their son Rocco (Rafael Santana), extends to South Eastern Turkey, where Nuri and his family are from, and Greece, where the film's final act takes place. This is a map of Europe marked by the inability of many people to see and operate beyond extremely racialized forms of nationalism but also by the willingness of a few to incorporate into their very personal experience the idea of transnational Europe. In Akin's film, it is Kruger's "immaculate" Aryan credentials that make her trajectory more visible and her decisions more compelling, as well as more tragic. After the early deaths of her husband and son in a terrorist attack by a neo-Nazi group, only she understands straight away who the authors of the attacks have been, while the police follow a racist logic in their investigation.

The intensity and narrative pervasiveness of her inner distress at the loss of her loved ones and her anger at the structural racism which is mortally wounding the European project that she has made her own make her transnationalism impossible to ignore for the spectator: she is all we have to look at in the story, and, given the actor's translucid persona, it is a particularly uncomfortable look. But Kruger's performance in this film goes beyond iconicity as she plunges the depths of her own identity. This is illustrated in two close-ups in the final section. After the young terrorist couple have been acquitted by the German court, she follows them to Greece, where they have fled seeking the protection of the neo-Nazi Greek group *Golden Dawn*. Katja is bent on revenge, has built a home-made bomb, has planted it in the trailer by the beach where the couple are staying and is waiting for their return to explode it, hiding behind a bush.

The sustained close-up of her face conveys her gradual realization that, in consummating her plan, she will be betraying the transnational rationale of her own identity and, therefore, will also be betraying the memory of her hybrid family. The piercing and subtly changing expressiveness of her eyes narrates her change of mind as she retrieves the bomb before the murderers arrive. Immediately after, we find her sitting outside her rented house, more relaxed, looking out at the sea. The camera follows her gaze down as her hand goes inside her trousers and she realizes that, for the first time since the terrorist attack, her period has come. The frame tilts up to focus on her face again, which now conveys the understanding that she cannot allow herself the return to the normality signified by her period. Without her hybrid family the transnational citizen is nothing, just as without tolerance and solidarity Europe, like the English title of the film, fades. For Katja there is no way back.

Figure 4: Katja considers the limits of her revenge in *Aus dem Nichts* (2017) (Warner Bros.)

Figure 5: The end of the European dream in *Aus dem Nichts* (2017) (Warner Bros.)

Aus dem Nichts represents a culmination of sorts for Diane Kruger who here manages to make her earlier anonymity the very core of a strong form of identity and, in the process, confirms the cultural relevance of the radical form of transnationalism that she represents. The marginal identity takes centre stage in this film. In the DVD extras, Kruger asserts that the story is about grief and that any other form of unbearable loss would have done, but in the film this grief has a specific environment, which could be described as the fall of Europe as a transnational project. This brings us back to Cotillard and *Deux jours, une nuit*, and more generally, to the cultural relevance and historicity of stars and star discourses. These two films, like other films in their respective careers, exploit the transnational dimension of Kruger and Cotillard as stars. In both cases, their transnationalism is used to construct narratives about contemporary Europe, the dreams and limitations, the hopes and disappointments attendant on the European project. Both actors play parts that embody what we might call the dream of Europe: Sandra's casual performance of solidarity, compassion and deep-rooted belief in hybridity, even when it works against her own interests; and Katya's choice of hybridity as a way of being European. In the films, their personification of cosmopolitan values is set against the strong forces of, respectively, neoliberalism and racism and hate of the Other. Their transnational pedigree is used by the films, which showcase them as potent and complex icons of the cultural and ideological forces that determine the lives, the hopes and frustrations of millions of European people. In their uniqueness and their radiance, stars are not only part of our lives but can also become signifiers of our social identity and of geopolitical realities.

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PART II
Language and Linguistics

Scribal Practices in the Prologue of *Prick of Conscience*: A Look into Cambridge, St John's College, MS D.5

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Abstract

This paper examines the palaeography of Cambridge, St John's College, MS D.5, a copy of the mediaeval poem *Prick of Conscience* written in a northern variety in the 15th century. My description is based on the analysis of the digitised item and the manual transcription of the Prologue, making use of XML/TEI tags and special characters. The article covers the study of the origin of the manuscript, physical features, the script and scribes, the use and distribution of figurae, abbreviations and also decoration. This copy, belonging to *Group II* of the versions of *Prick of Conscience*, is peculiar because of the lack of physical and ornamental features, unlike other manuscripts of the same poem (Albán-Barcia in progress).

Keywords: Codicology, Manuscript Studies, Middle English, Palaeography, *Prick of Conscience*.

1. Introduction

Prick of Conscience is a mediaeval religious poem of wide dissemination in different versions in the late Middle English period (Lewis and McIntosh 1982). To date, attention in the literature has focussed mostly on the study of the literary features or on the use of lexicon related to religion (e.g. Fitzgibbons 2012). However, relatively little attention has been paid to features in areas of palaeography or language, with the exception of, for instance, Carrillo-Linares's (2010) work on lexis and dialect. This article aims to fill the gap by offering a description of the manuscript known as MS D.5 with regard to its physical description (section 2) and palaeographical characteristics (section 3). Section 4 offers a brief summary of the study.

2. Origin and physical description

MS D.5 is held at Saint John's Library, University of Cambridge. This manuscript contains a complete copy of the medieval poem *Prick of Conscience*, from folio 1[a] to 118[a], followed by some *Articles Concerning London*, from folios 118[b] to 121 (Lewis and McIntosh 1982, 31-32)[1]. The estimated date of production is the fifteenth century (according to the library catalogue), and it is classified as written in a "northern" dialect (Lewis and McIntosh 1982; Benskin et al. 2013). The authorship of the poem is attributed to Richard Rolle of Hampole (c. 1300-1349) in

[1] Given the lack of foliation in this manuscript (see this section below), the library notation for the digital images is [a] for recto and [b] for verso.

the library catalogue and it is also echoed in Mooney et al. (2009), which has been the general trend for long, yet not without controversy (Allen 1910; Wolfgang 1999). This attribution is based on the fact that Hampole's name appears twice on folio 1[a], below the title and in a marginal note, and once more on folio 118[a] (Lewis and McIntosh 1982, 31-32).

The codicological description of the manuscript can be approached from various perspectives. For the purposes of this paper I will focus on (i) the material and ink used to produce the manuscript; (ii) the layout of the folios; (iii) the quiring formula and foliation; (iv) pricking and ruling; and (v) headings and colophons.

According to Lewis and McIntosh (1982, 31-32), the material in this manuscript is vellum, the quality of which cannot be fully described given that it has been severely damaged by different agents (notably liquids) and based on the observation that there is no uniformity in colour (Figure 1). The folios are sometimes torn (Figure 2) and the ink is damaged as well, faded at times; this can be inferred from the existence of multiple blots in different tones in some folios (Figures 1). The artefact is written in black ink, with no decorations either in black or other colours. The quality of the ink has also deteriorated and, as a result, the shade of colour varies across folios and also in the same folio (Figures 3 and 4).

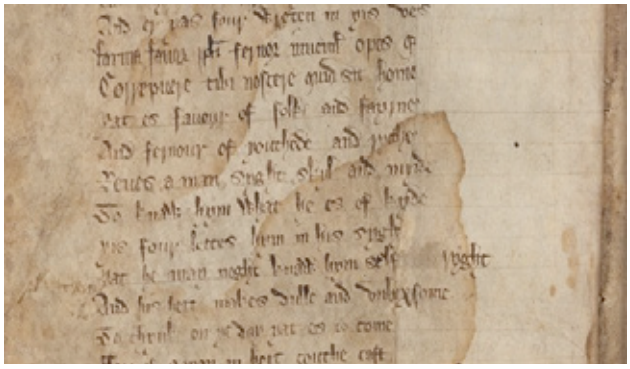


Figure 1: Variety of colours, folio 1[b]

Figure 2: Tear, folio 1[b]

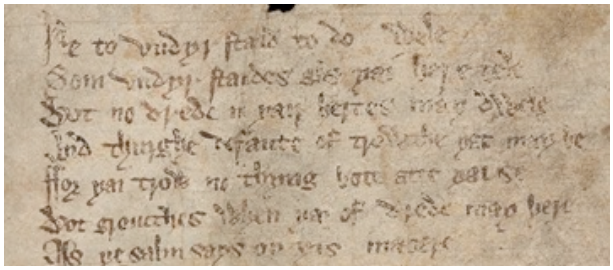


Figure 3: Ink at the beginning of folio 2[a]

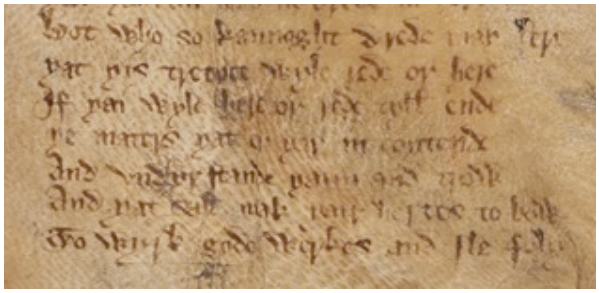


Figure 4: Ink at the end of folio 2[a]

Regarding layout, the poem is written in a single column and in verse. The number of lines to the folio varies depending on the hand responsible for the copying process; thus, according to Lewis and McIntosh (1982, 31-32), folios 1[a] to 26[b], by a first scribal hand, include between 32 and 41 lines per folio, while folios 27[a] to 118[a], by a second scribal hand, include between 35 and 44 lines per folio (on scribal hands in this manuscript; see further section 3.2 below). In contrast, the library catalogue takes note of 30 to 36 lines to the folio. In my examination of the images of the manuscript, I have counted 30 and 36 lines in folios 1[a] to 2[b] (as indicated in the library catalogue), while folios 3[a] to 7[b] include around 40 lines to the folio; besides, the part written by the second scribe includes approximately 37 lines to the folio. It seems that the difference in number of lines to the folio can be explained by a reduction in the interlinear space, for which compare Figures 5 and 6.

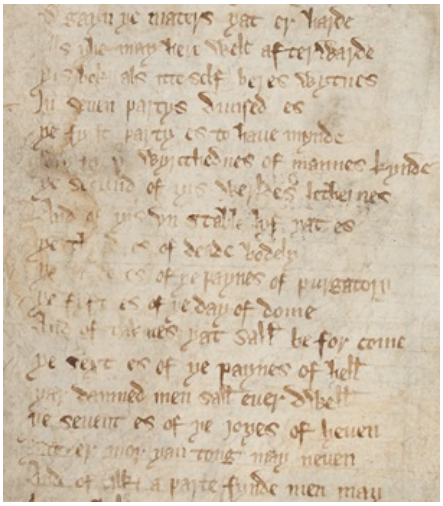


Figure 5: Interlinear space, folio 2[b]

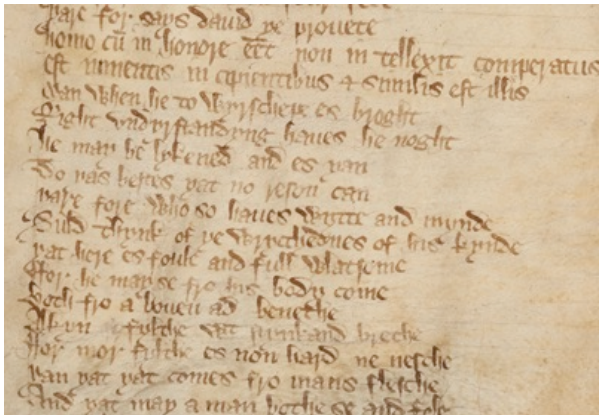


Figure 6: Interlinear space, folio 5[b]

The quiring formula of this artefact is not available given that it has not been foliated and that I have not been able to consult the manuscript in person (Lewis and McIntosh 1982). Besides, it is observed that there is no pricking, neither is there ruling visible in the Prologue section of the manuscript, possibly due to the low quality of the item. The rest of the folios beyond the Prologue do show some ruling practices to delimit the writing space.

This copy of *Prick of Conscience* includes various headings and a colophon. For instance, Figure 7 shows some traces of what might have been a title heading in Latin with the name of Hampole underneath, and some other parts of the poem display a title either in English or in Latin (Lewis and McIntosh 1982), which suggests that the space left in the margins was intended to fulfil that purpose, with the exception of parts two and five. According to Lewis and McIntosh (1982, 31-32), there is an explicit also at the end of the work in both Latin and English, namely: "Explicit trattus [sic] qui dicitur consciencie stimulus / Here endes þe tretice þat es cald þe key of knowing". Based on these characteristics regarding the content of *Prick of Conscience*, this particular version is known as the *Key of Knowing* and has been classified as part of *Group II* amongst the five versions identified by Lewis and McIntosh (1982, 5-15).

Figure 7: Imperfect title, folio 1[a]

As a final note in this section, it can be concluded that the copying process of this manuscript was consecutive, based on the lack of blank spaces between folios. The process whereby the headings of each folio were added is, however, dubious: they might have been included at the same time given that the handwriting and ink are very similar, but there is no certainty about it.

3. Palaeographical analysis

This section describes MS D.5 with regard to the script, the scribes intervening in the process of copying, handwriting practices concerning figurae and abbreviations, and decoration. It should be noticed that the study of these features concerns the folios of the Prologue only, which in particular expands just over folios 1[a] to 2[b]; see also Albán-Barcia in progress.

3.1 Script

The script has been identified as "idiosyncratic Anglicana formata" (according to Lewis and McIntosh 1982) and "current hands" (according to the library catalogue). My analysis of the Prologue confirms the former, while the latter is only partially supported.

In general, the folios in the Prologue lack ligatures joining letters (only **n**, **u**, **y,** and **k** are joined to the preceding/following figura) and the letters are written separately with neat visible gaps. It is also observed that the figurae do not present a *currens* style in that their position towards the line is straight. Minims are used for letters **i**, **m**, **n** and **u**, without pen lifts joining them to form the letters, which indicates a higher level of formality, known as *formata*.

The folios containing the Prologue are predominantly written in English verse (verse vs. prose and English vs. Latin). The family of the script is Anglicana, with characteristic features such as double-compartment **d** and **a**, double-l-3 **w** and the plain forms of **b** and **h** without flourishes on the ascenders. Besides, the straight position of the letters towards the line or the separation between the letters suggests a high level of formality, hence Anglicana *formata* (Figure 8). At the same time, there are some features of a *currens* script with a less formal style; for instance, **b** and **h** at times occur with flourishes on the ascenders, and double-compartment **k** with a flourish on the ascender.

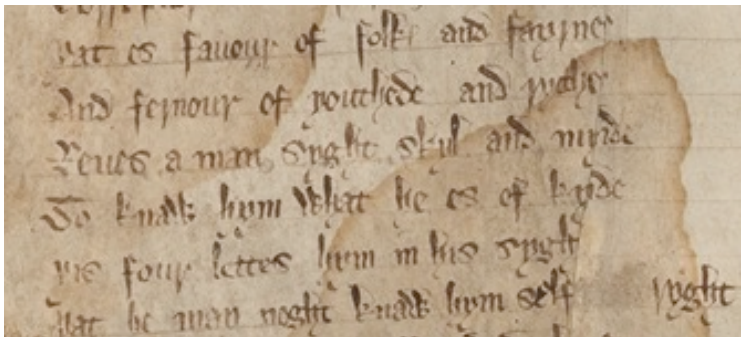


Figure 8: English verse, folio 1[b]

This copy of *Prick of Conscience* also displays Latin verse, which is likewise identified as Anglicana *formata* (Figure 9) with similar illustrative features as mentioned above. However, here the letters are written with a narrower space between them, although their position towards the line is straighter than in the English verse, and it is also observed that the letters of a *currens* style found in English verse are not attested in Latin verse; for instance, **b** and **h** with flourishes on the ascenders.

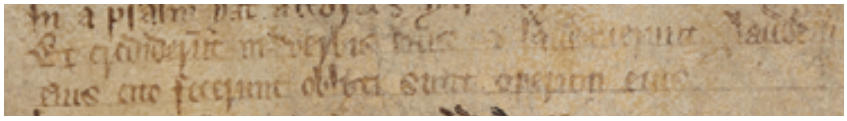


Figure 9: Latin verse, folio 2[a]

3.2 Scribes

As regards the hands involved in the production of the manuscript, Lewis and McIntosh (1982) conclude that there are two scribes responsible for copying the main text of the artefact, *Prick of Conscience*, namely a scribe for folios 1[a] to 26[b] and a second scribe for 27[a] to 118[a]. The folios under examination for this study (1[a] to 7[b]) concern the first scribe only. There is a third hand in charge of the *Articles Concerning London*, which is less formal (Lewis and McIntosh 1982; library catalogue). On the other hand, there is no illustrator, although there seem to have been plans for one: notes such as 'cc' were not followed up with rubrication, and there is neither penwork nor *litterae notabiliores* or ornamented initials (see section 3.4 below). Besides, in the folios of the Prologue there are no additions, although there are some deletions where the ink was removed from the vellum with some specific tool (Figure 10).

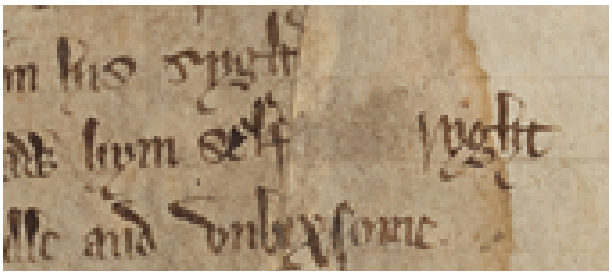


Figure 10: Ink removed from parchment, folio 1[b]

3.3 Handwriting and abbreviations

Broadly speaking, *littera* refers to the abstract notion of a letter, the combination of name (*nomen*), shape (*figura*) and sound (*potestas*). The focus in this section lies in the use of *figurae*, the variant spelling forms, traditionally rendered in angle brackets (Benskin 1997, 91 fn. 1; Laing 2013) Table 1 presents the patterns of distribution according to word position.[2]

IMAGE	FIGURAE	POSITION							
		Word-initial		Word-medial		Word-final		Consonant cluster	
		Types	Tokens	Types	Tokens	Types	Tokens	Types	Tokens
	<þ>	15	111						
	<th>	9	18	9	10	1	2		
	<y>	5	9						

[2] In this table, *type* refers to the different spelling forms of a figura, and *token* refers to the number of occurrences of the same spelling form.

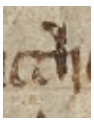
IMAGE	FIGURAE	POSITION							
		Word-initial		Word-medial		Word-final		Consonant cluster	
		Types	Tokens	Types	Tokens	Types	Tokens	Types	Tokens
	<g>	5	9	1	1			23	25
	<gh>							12	27
	<ȝ>	9	11	1	1			4	4
	<k>	4	12	8	8	2	7	18	31
	<ȝȝ>			1	1				
	<q>	1	1						
	<ȝh>			2	2	1	1		
	<ȝȝh>			5	5				
	<σ>	30	60	2	2	53	118	11	13
	<ſ>			3	3			21	27
	<S>	1	1	1	1				

Table 1: Distribution of figurae: raw numbers and word position (by type and token)

For present-day <th>, we find figura <þ> in word-initial position, exclusively, and only in frequent grammatical words, like *that* or *there*; compared to other artefacts of the same text, the use of thorn in MS D.5 shows a lower frequency and narrower variety in use (Albán-Barcia in progress). The figura <th> is also attested in every word position except for consonant

cluster;[3] overall it is less frequent than thorn but it is found in grammatical as well as lexical words (*thuɾgh*, *fatheɾ*). A third related figura is <y>, which shows interchangeability with <þ> resulting from its evolution. Here it is attested exclusively in word-initial position and in grammatical words, such as *the* or *that*.

Regarding present-day **g**, we find <g> in word-initial and word-medial position followed by a back vowel and in consonant clusters (*godneσ*, *gɾouζζheσ*). The <ȝ> is not attested in the folios of the Prologue, while <gh> occurs always in a consonant cluster with front and back vowels (*myghe*, *thoght*). Figura <g> occurs in a greater variety of contexts, but <gh> is more frequent in terms of tokens attested.

For present-day **c** several figurae are attested. Figura <ζ> occurs in word-initial and word-medial positions, followed by a back vowel, and in consonant clusters, most of which appear in word-initial position (*ζome*, *ζɾyft*). Figura <k>, the preferred variant of this scribe, is attested in every word-position, with front and back vowels (*σpeke*, *bok*). The folios under study show two other spelling forms, namely <ζζ> and <q>. The former is attested in a single occurrence in word-medial position followed by back vowel (*aζζoɾdeσ*), and the latter in a single occurrence in word-initial position followed by back vowel too (*queɾt*). In addition, figura <ζ> is found in <ζh> in word-medial and word-final positions (*leζheɾneσ*, *Riζh*), and <ζζh> occurs in word-medial position exclusively (*wɾyζζhedneσ*). We can also see that <ζh> and <ζζh> are always followed by a front vowel.

The next set of characters concerns present-day **s**, for which we find three figurae: sigma-s <σ>, long-s <ſ> and double-compartment-s in larger size <S>. Overall, sigma-s is the most frequent variant in number of tokens and in terms of the range of word-position, documented everywhere in the word (*σeɾe*, *whoσo*). Besides, it is found as an alternative to <sh> in word-initial position (*σaɬt*, *σould*) and in word-final position (*inglyσ*). For its part, long-s is the preferred choice in consonant cluster (*vndyɾſtande*), and double-compartment-s is only attested in the word *STIMULUS* in the title of folio 1ª (Figure 7).

The use of abbreviations in the Prologue of MS D.5 is very much limited to a single abbreviation attested on folio 2ª, illustrated in example (1). This is the use of the Tyronian symbol <&> for *and*, which occurs in verse-medial position; notice, in contrast, forty-two tokens of the expanded form. The lack of abbreviations is characteristic of the first scribal hand, but not of the second scribe: a random spot-check beyond the Prologue counts fourteen abbreviations in a single folio.

(1) Bot tytte þai had don **&** foɾgat (l. 86)
'But quickly they had done **and** forgotten'

3.4. Decoration

MS D.5 is peculiar in that it does not present any type of decoration. As suggested above with regard to the role of a potential illustrator, it seems to be the case that ornamented initials were planned to be added after the text was copied, on the grounds that when a new part starts, a blank space is left with three to five lines high for an illustrator to decorate the initial letter in that part (Figure 11). The task was never undertaken, and the reason remains unknown to us.

[3] Consonant cluster in this study refers to two or more consecutive consonants in writing, regardless of whether they belong to the same syllable phonetically.

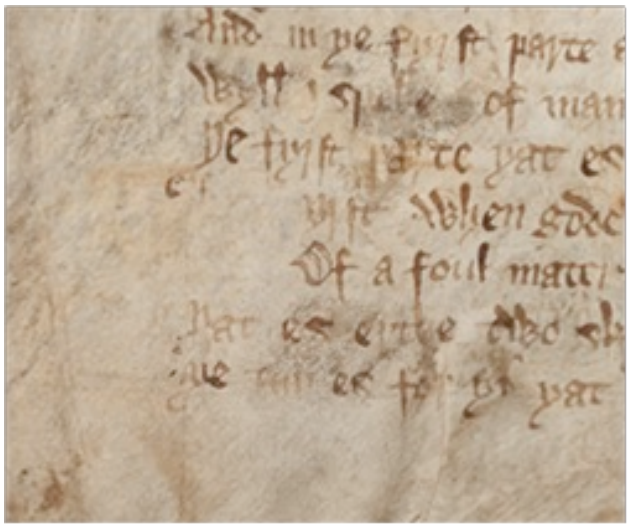


Figure 11: Space left for an ornamented initial, folio 2[b]

A decorative feature worthy of attention is the first line of some folios, which presents a more elaborated script with ornamented letters with flourishes on the ascenders; for instance, on folio 3[a] there is a difference in the script between the first line and the following lines (Figure 12). This might be due to the scribe's effort to improve the general appearance of the folio.

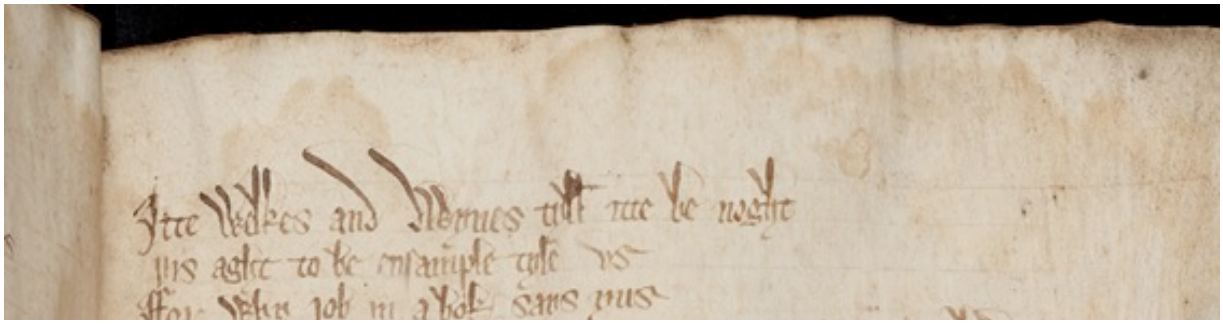


Figure 12: First line folio 3[a]

4. Concluding notes

In this brief overview of MS D.5, we have observed that the script of *Prick of Conscience* is Anglicana *formata*, with some elements of *currens* in English verse. The Prologue is written by a scribal hand only and no illustrator has been involved in the decoration of the artefact, although there are indications of plans for one. There are hardly any salient physical features to highlight: parchment, black ink, verse written in a single column with quite a consistent number of lines to the folio, severe damage, no quiring formula, or no foliation, but the folios do include some headings and a colophon. Overall, the production of the artefact seems to have been consecutive. For its part, the palaeographical analysis reveals the use of flourishes and a more elaborated handwriting. The scribe's use points to a preference for <th, gh>, and for <k> with both front and back vowels, while the preference for sigma-s <σ> is evident whereas long-s is mainly documented in consonant clusters. MS D.5 is very peculiar in that the folios of the Prologue include just an isolated instance of abbreviations.

In future work, it remains to be seen to which extent this copy resembles other versions of the poem, in particular with regard to the presence/absence of decoration and the trends in the use and distribution of spelling forms for present-day **c**, **g** and **s**; this will be discussed in detail in Albán-Barcia (in progress).

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Addressing gender in the English language classroom

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Abstract

The Organic Law that Modifies the Organic Law of Education of 2006 (LOMLOE, 2020) fosters the teaching of values through cross-curricular competences and so do the guidelines and objectives gathered in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (Council of Europe, 2001). This paper describes how a content-integrated didactic proposal to teach English from a gender perspective was used with a group of student-teachers in order to investigate their perception about addressing such content in the English language classrooms in Primary Education. The process of the classroom research and the methodology used to collect data, which were gathered through questionnaires, focus groups and semi-structured interviews with the participants, is also described. Although student-teachers show positive attitudes towards addressing gender in the classroom, there is a contradiction in the current educational system, as these key issues are neglected in the teaching of English as a foreign language.

Keywords: ELT; gender; cross-curricular content.

1. Introduction

The content-integrated didactic proposal and the subsequent classroom research carried out with a group of Primary student-teachers, both described in this paper, have a twofold origin.[1] On the one hand, our social responsibility as learning facilitators and/or language instructors, the influence we exert over our students and our contribution to provide them with a global, intercultural and egalitarian perception of the world. On the other hand, my belief that only through education can we eradicate the wrongs of a society in which news about sexual abuse and violence, bullying in schools, sexism, racism and gender and sexual discrimination appear in the media too frequently.

I consider that our duty as language instructors is not only to facilitate the learning of the target language, but also to contribute to create a more plural and egalitarian society. We should encourage our students to become more open-minded, critical and self-critical in aspects such as ethnic or cultural diversity, inclusion and plurality, or discrimination because of gender differences, geographical or social origin, and sexual orientation. In order to do so, it is crucial that we are aware of the impact of what we say in the classrooms, how we say it, and the materials we use and how we use them, has on our students.

[1] The term "student-teachers" is used to refer to prospective teachers of Primary Education.

1.1 Justification

The Organic Law that Modifies the Organic Law of Education of 2006 (or LOMLOE) passed by the Spanish Government in 2020 sets the principle of equity as an education priority. Equity is understood in terms of equality of opportunities for all people and effective equality between men and women. It also fosters the teaching of values through cross-curricular competences and so do the set of descriptors, guidelines and objectives gathered in the Common European Framework of Reference for Language (Council of Europe 2001).

However, I coincide with many other language teachers/instructors for whom the tools and materials we are provided with by textbooks and handbooks are scarcely sufficient, and the level-adapted exercises proposed in them hardly address cross-curricular aspects such as gender, diversity and interculturality. Thus:

> Many teachers complain that textbooks rarely include consideration of culture and intercultural communication, and when this happens, cultural information is usually considered as secondary to linguistic content and is presented in an arbitrary and artificial way. (González and Borham 2012, 109)

1.2 Objectives

Two main objectives are based on this content-integrated teaching proposal, which was implemented in a classroom intervention carried out with a group of Primary education student-teachers. These two objectives are interrelated in such way that the second evolves from and complements the first one. Thus, the first objective is to show that using gender as content in English language teaching is an effective content-integrated approach to teach both language and cross-curricular topics. The second objective is to supply student-teachers with the tools and academic training in their degree to teach Cross-curricular content when they become in-service teachers. The implementation and use of educational materials which address gender and diversity issues and prompt intercultural competence acquisition is inherent to the learning process of a language.

2. Theoretical foundation and research support

Many research publications provide the theoretical framework that support this didactic proposal design and implementation in the classroom. Among them I point out the following firstly, the research that supports the existence of a hidden curriculum embedded in textbooks, many of which are ideologically biased and very much oriented towards globalization and capitalism (Meddings and Thornbury 2009, 12). Several publications have previously pointed this out.

Thus, Professor Gilliam Brown referred to what she called Cosmopolitan English portrayed in textbooks and defines it as “a materialistic set of values in which international travel, not being bored, positively being entertained, having leisure, and above all, spending money casually […] in the pursuit of these ends” (1990, 13). Professor Claire Kramsch also referred to capitalist ideas embedded in textbooks, which “brought language use down to the functional level of streets and supermarkets, under the emulation of the authentic white middle-class native speaker” (2005, 548-49). Two more authors whose research goes in the same direction are Professor Bala Kumaravadivelu and Professor Alistair Pennycook. The former claims that English Language Teaching has become a global industry:

> Because of the global spread of English, ELT has become a global industry with high economic stakes, and textbook production has become one of the engines that drives the industry. (Kumaravadivelu 2003, 255)

The latter had gone even further and had identified such characteristic features of the culture and knowledge transmitted by textbooks as "essentially Western, capitalist, and neo-colonialist" (Pennycock 1994, 24).

On the other hand, research that shows the importance of education as a tool for transformation of society. It is in the early stages when gender roles are assimilated, making the work of Primary school teachers vital for their students. This makes providing student-teachers with tools and strategies to address these issues when they become in-service teachers, our responsibility. The power to transform our society relies on a type of education based on values such as freedom, equality, respect and communication to resolve conflict; a type of education that values difference, cultural and sexual diversity, and education that fosters gender equality and strives to eradicate all forms of violence and discrimination (Povedano et al. 2015).

Moreover, my perception totally coincides with that of, among many others, professors from the Faculty of Education Sciences, from the University of Granada Dr. Steff Barozzi and Dr. Juan Ramón Guijarro Ojeda for whom the English language classroom is the perfect setting to teach and work with cross-curricular topics that portray social, cultural and intercultural values. They perceive this setting as an ideal melting pot in which to create and implement materials and content with social and personal relevance for students (Barozzi and Guijarro 2016).

3. Content-integrated teaching proposal

The classroom intervention I designed combined a communicative approach with Task-Based (Nunan 2004) and Project-Based Language teaching methodology (Meddings and Thornbury 2009), in order to teach English language content integrated with gender content. I used a wide range of activities so as to address cross-curricular topics—gender issues—specifically, without forgetting the practice of the four basic language skills—listening, reading, writing and speaking—and including grammatical, lexical and phonetical elements. The four main audio-visual and textual real materials around which the didactic proposal revolved where Beyoncé's and Rihanna's songs "If I Were a Boy" (2008) and "Rudeboy" (2009) respectively, Chimamanda Adichie's *We Should All Be Feminists* (2012), both the book and TedTalk, and Rihanna's videoclip *BBHMM* (2015). Together with those, I used a variety of academic and journalist articles, blogs and interviews both on video and on paper, all of which were related to the four main materials.

The selection of materials was not arbitrary. I am well aware that I am not the only English language teacher who has come up with the idea that Beyoncé's "If I Were a Boy" (2008) is a much more engaging and appealing song for teaching second-type conditional sentences to students in their twenties than "If I Were a Rich Man" (Topol, 1967). At the same time, I am also aware that, at least two different Universities offer or have offered academic courses on Beyoncé and Rihanna: *Politizicing Beyoncé* was available at the Department of Women's and Gender Studies at Rutgers University, New Jersey; and the African & African Diaspora Studies Department, University of Texas, Austin, offers the course entitled *Beyoncé Feminism and Rihanna Womanism*. Nevertheless, in spite of the linguistic elements present in those songs –the use of the second conditional sentences in Beyoncé's "If I Were a Boy" and the use of phrasal verbs in colloquial English in Rihanna's "Rude Boy"- the main reason I based

my choice on was that they both cry for a change in the traditional roles of women in heterosexual relationships:

> Beyoncé's "If I were a boy" does not stand alone in questioning the differences between men and women in relationships, and even though they all have as a central theme what it means to do things like a boy, the artists do not limit themselves to just reducing male characters to stereotypes such as being aggressive, insensitive or unfaithful. Songs such as Ciara's "Like a Boy", Jessie J's "Do It Like a Dude" and Rihanna's "Rude Boy" […], also explore what it means to be a woman or a man in contemporary culture and society, questioning gender roles and identity politics, challenging audiences to free themselves from the assumptions taken for granted based on their gender identity. (Alonso Álvarez 2020, 159)

On the other hand, using Chimamanda Adichie's *We Should All Be Feminist* (2012), gave me the opportunity to present my students with the research of a feminist Nigerian writer and professor, who surprisingly enough, also had a connection with Beyoncé. In the 2014 MTV Video Music Awards, Beyoncé's performance of her song "***Flawless" (2014) was supported visually by huge screens behind the artist, projecting the word *feminism*, together with extracts from Adichie's book, including criticisms of sexism, and gender and sexual discrimination, demands for an egalitarian society, and a bold and straightforward definition of feminism. At the same time, extracts from Adichie's TedTalk, in her own voice could be heard in the background. At that time, Beyoncé had 113 million followers on Instagram, over 60 million followers on Facebook and over 15 million on Twitter, which gives us an idea of the enormous power of the artist to spread Adichie's message.

Regarding Rihanna's video clip *BBHMM* (2015), the hypersexual image the artist projects on the video clip is very controversial, as it might not help to challenge women's depiction as sexual objects, but rather reinforce it. Nevertheless, the opposite reading can be made, as it can be argued that female artists use those sexist looks imposed on them as a tool to claim their independence as female artists as well as in society. The negative sexual slang Rihanna uses on *BBHMM* can be interpreted in the same way: as a tool for challenging a world typically and traditionally ruled by men. This role appropriation can be seen as a "powerful way of rescuing themselves from their sexual victimization [but also as an attempt] to construct a new social identity that does not conform to traditional definitions of femineity" (Attwood 2007, 235-36).

4. Case Study and Methodology

In order to prove the effectiveness of the content-integrated teaching proposal I implemented a mixed-type methodology research in the classroom to collect data. The classroom intervention was carried out with a group of 31 participants, all of them students of the subject *Lengua Extranjera: Inglés. Destrezas Comunicativas Nivel Intermedio-Alto (B2)*, which is a compulsory subject in third year of the Degree in Primary Teacher Training (University of Oviedo) for those student-teachers who wish to become English Primary school teachers. A variety of theories endorse the mixed type methodology I used for data collection: mainly a combination of action research and classroom research framed the qualitative and quantitative tools I used for collecting the data.

I am well aware of the limitations of the study, as the sample I had was small and the results I obtained cannot be extrapolated to other corpora of students. For that reason, the methodological qualitative tools had more weight than the quantitative ones. The quantitative

tool I used was mainly a closed questionnaire, which students completed twice: before and after the classroom intervention. The qualitative tools included class observation and note-taking during the intervention and an open questionnaire and a focus group after the intervention.[2] Data analysis was carried out applying a descriptive statistic, test-retest technique (Creswell 2009) and the Grounded Theory methodology approach (Oktay 2012).

5. Discussion and Conclusions

The results discussed here address gender as cross-curricular content in the English language classroom. For other aspects such as intercultural content, diversity and racism, as well as the questionnaires used for data collection and a detailed analysis of the results, please refer to *Género y diversidad como contenidos trasnversales en el aula de inglés* (Alonso Álvarez 2020).[3]

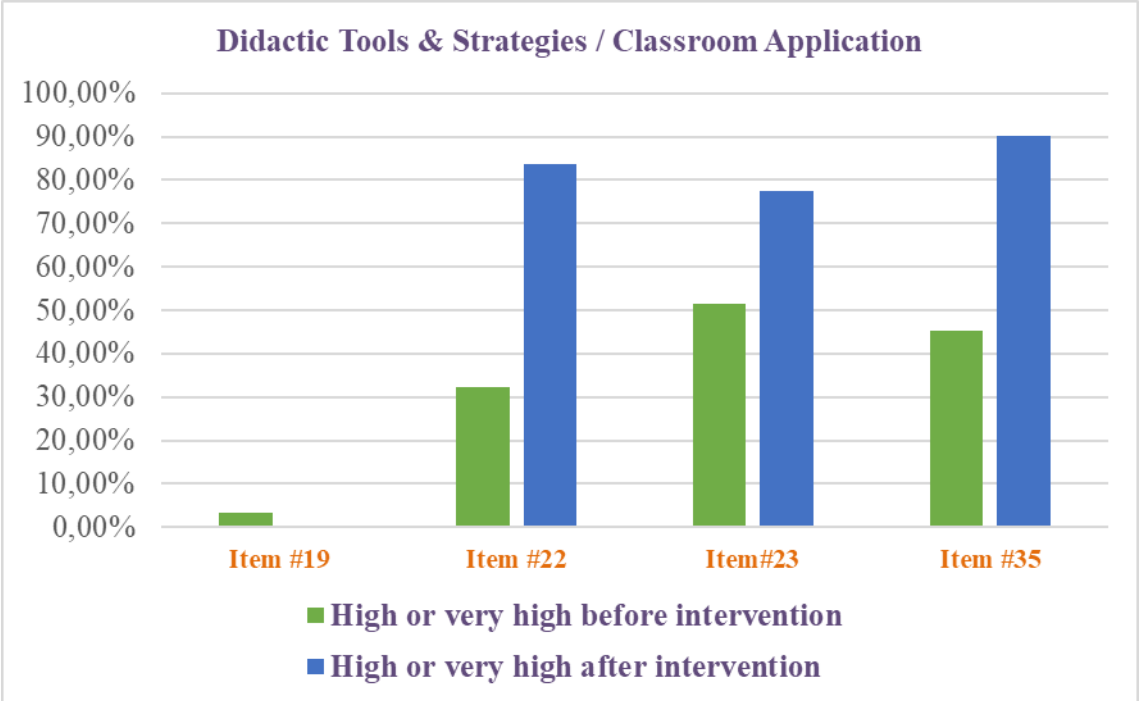

Figure 1: Students' knowledge of gender content and classroom application before/after intervention

The graph above shows the results issued by comparing data of the closed questionnaire before and after the classroom intervention with regards to student-teachers' knowledge of strategies, tools and materials to teach gender content in the English language classroom.

[2] Both questionnaires together with the outline used for the focus group were designed ad hoc by the author, and they were peer-revised and validated by two experts on Gender Studies and Education Sciences respectively.

[3] The complete closed questionnaire included 40 items in 6 different sections (Alonso Álvarez 2020, 129). Items selected on this paper have been selected for their relevance to gender content.

Thus, item 19 asked students whether the English language classroom should be used to teach language content exclusively, and although before the intervention, a very low percentage believed so, after the intervention it was clear for all participants that cross-curricular content should also be taught. The outcome after the classroom intervention proved the content-integrated teaching proposal to be an efficient tool to address gender content in the English classroom, as this graph shows. Item 22 referred to the strategies student-teachers had before and after the intervention; item 23 asked them whether or not they felt prepared to address gender content in their future classes; and item 35 asked them about their knowledge about materials they could use in their future classes to address gender content.

Based on the answers obtained both in the open questionnaire and during the focus group discussion, there are four main ideas on which most students agreed. The content-integrated didactic unit I implemented in class was described as very much needed and rarely seen in any subject throughout their degree, it provided participants with tools and ideas for their future teaching. After completing the project there was an overall feeling of empowerment among participants. Most of the participants even conceded that cross-curricular content should also be taught to parents through workshops, for instance.

Finally, class observation and note-taking throughout the intervention proved the didactic unit to be an excellent mechanism to raise awareness about the social construction of gender identities among the students participating in the classroom intervention, as it prompted the discussion in class on the social values that music portrays. It also proved to be a valuable tool to improve their English language competence.

In conclusion, despite the limitations of the scope of the sample, the classroom intervention—and now content-integrated didactic proposal—has proved the suitability of the English language classroom to teach cross-curricular topics such as gender; that teaching English through a gender perspective promotes the acquisition of the intercultural competence; both of which result in a higher English language competence acquisition.

This has led me—and other colleagues—into an on-going and ambitious project in which we aim to design an English language course based on social and civic integrated content. So far, we already have a selection of materials and ready-to-go activities that we have compiled from different sources in order to address topics such as identity, migration and ethnic discrimination. The aim of the course would be to develop a complete instructional design module with task-based activities, project-based assessment and a teaching guide with detailed lesson plans that can serve students as a model to create their own lessons.

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Long, *lust* and *thirst*: The Development of Impersonal Verbs of Desire in Early Modern English from the Perspective of Construction Grammar

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Abstract

The class of verbs of Desire comprises a few verbs, such as *long*, *lust* or *thirst*, whose syntax and semantics have undergone important changes in the course of the history of the English language. These three verbs are attested in earlier English as impersonal verbs, that is, verbs occurring in impersonal constructions characterised by the lack of a grammatical subject. Impersonal constructions began to decrease in frequency between 1400 and 1500, and their loss brought about profound changes in the grammar of verbs of Desire. In this paper, I explore the development of *long*, *lust* and *thirst* as prepositional verbs in the Early Modern English period (1500-1700), based on corpus data retrieved from *EEBOCorp 1.0*. Results show that, after the general loss of impersonal patterns, NP complements were superseded by prepositional complements. Within the framework of Construction Grammar, this finding may be interpreted as the result of a semantic mismatch between lexical and constructional meaning.

Keywords: Construction Grammar, impersonal construction, prepositional verb, syntactic change, verbs of Desire.

1. Introduction

This paper is concerned with the historical development of impersonal verbs of Desire in Early Modern English (1500-1700; henceforth EModE). In Present-day English (henceforth PDE), the class of Desire includes items such as *crave*, *dangle*, *wish* or *yearn* (Levin 1993, 194-5), several of which (e.g., *long*, *lust* or *thirst*) have been found to alternate between impersonal (example (1)) and personal use (example (2)) in the Old English (c. 500-1100) and/or Middle English periods (1100-1500; henceforth OE and ME, respectively).

(1) Þa cwæð he, **me** þyrst
Then said he me ACC/DAT thirst
Then he said, I am thirsty
(c1000, *Oxford English Dictionary* s.v. *thirst*, v. †1.)

(2) Cuoeð **ic** ðyrsto
says I NOM thirst
I said I thirst [i.e., I am thirsty]
(c950, *Oxford English Dictionary* s.v. *thirst*, v. 2.)

Impersonal verbs of Desire, such as *thirst* (< OE *þyrstan*) in example (1), are historically found in constructions lacking a grammatical subject, with the person that desires something being syntactically realised by a non-nominative pronoun (i.e., *me* in (1)), which has the

semantic role of Experiencer.[1] In example (2), conversely, *thirst* occurs in a personal construction in which the Experiencer role is realised by a nominative pronoun, *ic*.

According to the literature, the English impersonal construction began to lose frequency between 1400 and 1500 (van der Gaaf 1904, 142; Allen 1995, 279-83), although impersonal instances are marginally recorded until about 1600 (see Visser 1963, §§3-43; Möhlig-Falke 2012, 14-15). During the EModE period, therefore, impersonal verbs found themselves in the process of readjusting their argument structure to the new grammatical configuration of the English language. Previous studies, however, have paid comparatively little attention to EModE evidence, and the focus has rather been on the development and loss of impersonal patterns in OE and ME (e.g., Jespersen [1927] 1961; Fischer and van der Leek 1983; Allen 1995; Loureiro-Porto 2005; Trousdale 2008; Möhlig-Falke 2012; Miura 2015, among many others).

The overall aim of the present study is to elucidate the path of development followed by impersonal verbs of Desire in EModE, after the general loss of impersonal constructions. In particular, the study focuses on the impersonal verbs *long*, *lust* and *thirst* as case studies of the members in Levin's class which in PDE have prepositional uses (1993, 194-5). Based on corpus data retrieved from *Early English Books Online Corpus 1.0* (*EEBOCorp 1.0*), the specific aims are: 1) to determine when impersonal verbs of Desire effectively ceased to be documented with impersonal constructions; 2) to provide a diachronic overview of the personal complementation patterns which came to replace impersonal constructions in EModE; and 3) to assess which factors may have influenced the direction of the development of these verbs after they started to appear in personal use. With regard to objective 3, the study addresses the research question of why NP complements were superseded by prepositional complements. The possible motivations behind this development are laid out within the framework of Construction Grammar (Goldberg 1995, 2006), with a focus on the interaction between the lexical semantics of verbs of Desire and the semantics of the constructions in which they occur.

The remainder of this article is organised as follows. Section 2 focuses on the syntactic and semantic features of verbs of Desire. Section 3 discusses the data and methodology adopted in the present investigation. Section 4 presents the results obtained from the data analysis, and section 5 discusses the main findings and summarises the conclusions of the study.

2. Verbs of Desire

This section discusses the syntactic and semantic features of verbs of Desire. The individual verbs selected for analysis are *long*, *lust* and *thirst* which, unlike other members in the Desire class (e.g., *crave*, *dangle* or *wish*), are found in impersonal use in earlier stages of the English language (see example (1)). After the general loss of impersonal constructions, *long*, *lust* and *thirst* developed as so-called Experiencer-subject verbs (see Fischer and van der Leek 1983, 352-4; Möhlig-Falke 2012, 217-18), occurring in constructions in which the Desirer participant, i.e., the person that desires something, is encoded as the subject of the clause, whereas the Desired participant, i.e., the thing desired, is encoded as the object of a preposition, as in example (3).[2]

(3) **Leo** longs for **fame and fortune**
(*iWeb Corpus*, Davies 2018)

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1 For a formal definition of 'impersonal construction' see Möhlig-Falke (2012, 6).

2 The Desirer represents a more specific instance of the semantic role of Experiencer, while the Desired represents an instance of the Stimulus role.

As will be discussed in section 5, the syntactic development of verbs of Desire as prepositional is closely connected with the semantic properties of the participants involved in the event they designate (see Levin 1993, 1). In order to provide a semantic characterisation of participant roles, I follow Dowty's (1991, 576) concept of Proto-role, which is based on the assumption that semantic roles are prototypically structured categories formed by clusters of semantic features. Dowty (1991, 551) further postulates that the participant showing the greatest number of so-called Proto-agent properties will be encoded as subject, whereas the participant that shows the greatest number of Proto-patient properties will be encoded as direct object. Following Dowty's framework, the clusters of features that characterise the Desired are displayed in Table 1.

Proto-agent	Proto-patient
[-volitional]	[-change of state]
[+/-sentient]	[-incremental Theme]
[-causation]	[-causal affectedness]
[-movement]	[-lack of movement]
[+independent existence]	[-lack of independent existence]

Table 1: Semantic features of the Desired in PDE

The features that are of relevance for my study are the Proto-patient properties of change of state and causal affectedness.[3] Crucially, Table 1 shows that the Desired lacks both of these properties, such that in an example like (3) above, the desired entities, *fame and fortune*, do not undergo any change of state as a result of the emotion of desire, and are not causally affected by a transmission of force taking place between the participants involved in the event. In terms of a scalar conception of transitivity (Hopper and Thompson 1980), verbs of Desire may be said to fall in the periphery of the prototype of transitive event: the type of relation they encode does not entail two maximally opposed participants such that an active participant acts volitionally on a more passive participant which is highly affected in a physically perceptible way.

3. Data and methodology

The data are drawn from a subset of twenty million words extracted from *EEBOCorp 1.0* (c. 525 million words, 1470s-1690s, Petré 2013). This twenty-million-word subset consists of a random sample of 891 texts structured into four fifty-year subperiods covering the entire EModE period (1500-1700). Table 2 displays the number of selected texts and the wordcount per subperiod.

[3] Due to space constraints, it is not feasible to undertake a discussion of the semantic features of the Desirer participant, or of the full range of features displayed in Table 1 for the Desired. For a more detailed account the reader is referred to Dowty (1991, 572) and Castro-Chao (2021, 72-73).

Subperiod	No. of texts	No. of words
S1 (1500-1549)	201	5,004,310
S2 (1550-1599)	226	4,997,385
S3 (1600-1649)	230	5,003,071
S4 (1650-1700)	234	4,929,518
Total	891	19,934,284

Table 2: Number of texts and wordcount summary per fifty-year subperiod
S = Subperiod

The dataset of examples consists of 341 occurrences of the verb *long*, 273 of *lust* and 304 of *thirst*. The software tool used for data retrieval is *AntConc* (Anthony 2022). In a first step, I identified the array of spelling variants for these verbs in the *Oxford English Dictionary* (Simpson 2000) and then I checked them against a corpus word list generated with *AntConc*. The examples were subsequently retrieved and annotated for factors concerning the types of (im)personal patterns in which the verbs are found.

4. *Long*, *lust* and *thirst* in the EModE period

This section presents the findings obtained from the data analysis. With regard to impersonal constructions, the data reveal that the only verb attested in impersonal use is *lust*, as illustrated in example (4) with the Desirer realised by an objective pronoun, *hym*. Diachronically, impersonal patterns are restricted to the first half of the sixteenth century (eight tokens out of 273 total tokens of this verb, 2.93%). The verbs *long* and *thirst*, for their part, are never found in impersonal use in the EModE data analysed.

(4) God is and euer hath ben lorde of nature, conquerer of the deuyll, and can compel both when **hym** lusteth (1539, *EEBOCorp 1.0*)

With regard to personal patterns, the three verbs under scrutiny occur in constructions where a grammatical subject is present, as in examples (5)-(8). In personal use, the Desired participant can be expressed by means of four different types of complements: 1) a prepositional complement headed by *for* (example (5)); 2) a *to*-infinitive clause (example (6)); 3) a zero complement (example (7)); and 4) an NP complement (example (8)).[4]

(5) And as then, Christe […] thirsted **for oure saluation** (1549, *EEBOCorp 1.0*)
(6) I longe **to here the scriptures** (1534, *EEBOCorp 1.0*)
(7) Thou shalt not couet or luste (1538, *EEBOCorp 1.0*)
(8) But I hope that these are sufficient vnto them that thirst **the trueth** (1528, *EEBOCorp 1.0*)

[4] The label ‘zero complement’ makes reference to an argument that is not realised syntactically.

The frequency of occurrence of each of these complement types is displayed in Table 3. Overall, the most frequent variant is that with prepositional complements (46.26%, 421 tokens), followed by clausal (25.93%, 236 tokens), zero (23.96%, 218 tokens) and NP complements (3.52%, thirty-two tokens).[5] Prepositional complements stand as the most frequent variant with *long* (61.00%, 208 tokens) and *thirst* (48.35%, 147 tokens), and as the third most frequent one in the case of *lust* (24.91%, sixty-six tokens). Notice that, whereas prepositional, clausal and zero complements are attested with these three verbs, NP complements are attested only with *lust* and *thirst*.

Verb of Desire	Complement type					
	Prepositional	Clausal	Zero	NP	Other	Total
long	208 (61.00%)	122 (35.78%)	11 (3.22%)	—	—	341 (100%)
lust	66 (24.91%)	101 (38.11%)	91 (34.34%)	6 (2.26%)	1 (0.38%)	265 (100%)
thirst	147 (48.35%)	13 (4.28%)	116 (38.16%)	26 (8.55%)	2 (0.66%)	304 (100%)
Total	421 (46.26%)	236 (25.93%)	218 (23.96%)	32 (3.52%)	3 (0.33%)	910 (100%)

Table 3: Frequency of personal complementation patterns of *long*, *lust* and *thirst* in *EEBOCorp 1.0* (1500-1700; raw figures and relative frequencies)

Figure 1 presents the diachronic development of complement types distributed by fifty-year subperiod. The focus here falls on the rise of prepositional complements versus the decline of NP complements, which is of relevance for the research question posited in section 1 about why NP complements are superseded by prepositional complements in EModE. In this connection, it is remarkable that prepositional complements show a steady increase with *long* and *thirst*, from 54.81% and 37.29% in S1 (seventy-four and forty-four tokens, respectively) to 67.12% and 62.96% in S3 (forty-nine and fifty-one tokens). In S4, however, prepositional use recedes to 66.15% and 52.78% (forty-three and nineteen tokens), although a progression seems to be still at work since the values of S4 are higher than those of S2 (61.76% and 47.83%, forty-two and thirty-three tokens). In the case of *lust*, prepositional complements remain constant throughout the period except for a small increase from 27.59% in S2 (sixteen tokens) to 36.84% in S3 (fourteen tokens).

Turning to NP complements, these have a moderate presence with *thirst* in S1 (13.56%, sixteen tokens) and S2 (14.49%, ten tokens). With *lust* they are modestly attested in S1 (3.73%, five tokens), but then they disappear until the latest subperiod, when they occur again in an isolated instance (2.86%). Notice that the occurrence of NP complements is virtually confined to the sixteenth century, which leaves prepositional complements as the sole alternative for the (pro)nominal expression of the Desired from the sixteenth century onwards.

[5] The label 'other' in Table 3 includes examples which could not be classified due to the omission of morphosyntactic information in the original text.

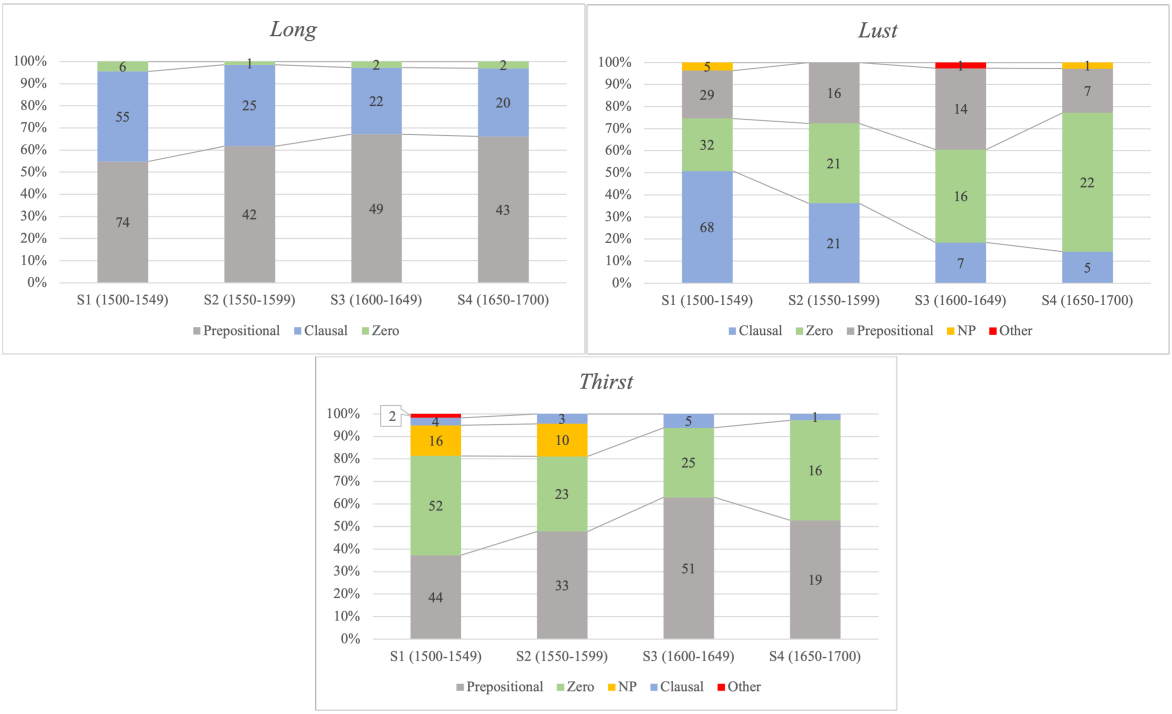

Figure 1: Diachronic distribution of personal complementation patterns of *long*, *lust* and *thirst* in *EEBOCorp 1.0* (1500-1700; raw figures and relative frequencies)

5. Discussion and conclusions

This section provides a discussion of the main findings and conclusions, offering answers to the objectives posited in section 1. With regard to objective 1, the findings obtained concerning the dates of disappearance of impersonal constructions are in line with the general account provided in previous studies: the shared assumption is that impersonal patterns begin to lose frequency between 1400 and 1500 (section 1). Given that impersonal instances with *lust* cease to be recorded after the first half of the sixteenth century, the evidence from the corpus can be said to be in broad agreement with the datings suggested in the literature.

With regard to objective 2, *long*, *lust* and *thirst* have been found to occur in personal patterns taking prepositional, clausal, zero and NP complements. Overall, prepositional patterns are the most frequent variant in the case of *long* and *thirst*, and the third most frequent one with *lust*. From a diachronic perspective, they tend to increase with *long* and *thirst*, and remain constant in the case of *lust*. In contrast, NP complements are found in the sixteenth century only with *lust* and *thirst*, and they virtually disappear in the seventeenth century.

Considering the research question about why NP complements became superseded by prepositional complements, there is one factor which concerns the interaction between the lexical semantics of verbs of Desire and the semantics of the construction with NP complements, which is here interpreted as an instance of the Transitive Construction represented in Figure 2 (see Goldberg 1995, 117).

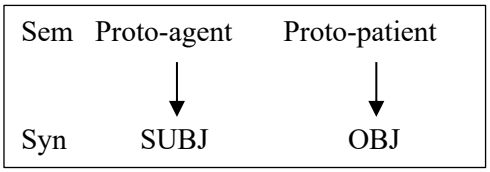

Figure 2: Schematic representation of the Transitive Construction (adapted from Goldberg 1995, 117)

As depicted by Goldberg (1995, 118), the Transitive Construction constitutes a form-meaning pair which semantically involves two abstract Proto-roles, namely the Proto-agent and Proto-patient roles: "a family of related meanings" can be assigned to this abstract representation, with "the prototypical 'transitive scene' […] being the central sense" (1995, 118). This central meaning entails two clearly distinct participants being involved in a causative action which is effectively transferred from one volitional entity to another, the latter of which is affected as a result.

In terms of Dowty's Proto-role properties (section 2), the Desired participant lacks the Proto-patient features of change of state and causal affectedness. On this assumption, a semantic mismatch arises between the semantic features of the Desired and the abstract Proto-patient role of the Transitive Construction: whereas the Desired acts as an unaffected entity which does not undergo any change of state, the Proto-patient role prototypically involves an entity that is causally affected by another participant (Dowty 1991, 572). This semantic mismatch, I believe, may (at least partly) explain why NP complements became disfavoured during the sixteenth century with *lust* and *thirst*—and were never attested with *long*. Taking into account that, as Dowty (1991, 576) suggests, non-subject arguments with the fewest Proto-patient properties often surface as prepositional rather than direct objects, it seems conceivable that the Desired would be preferably encoded by a PP for the expression of a relation that was inherently low in transitivity.

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An Analysis of Fragments in Present-Day Written and Spoken English

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Abstract

Corpus-based research on "fragments" (i.e. syntactically non-canonical expressions with a propositional meaning equivalent to that of a full sentence, e.g. *Well done to Giles*) is scarce and has mainly focused on their communicative function in spoken registers. This investigation comes to bridge this gap in the literature by reporting the results from a corpus analysis of sentence fragments in Present-Day English with data from the parsed British component of the *International Corpus of English* (ICE-GB). The results show that, although being more pervasive in spoken language, especially in unscripted monologues, fragments are not infrequent in written registers, particularly in correspondence and creative texts. In these texts, they occur more commonly as phrases (e.g. *no more of this conjecture*) and verbless clauses (e.g. *Back to Cambridge tomorrow*), while in spoken texts there is a greater incidence of clausal fragments, particularly insubordinate clauses (e.g. *If only it would!*).

Keywords: fragments, ellipsis, corpus, written and spoken discourse, parsing.

1. Introduction

Prior literature lacks a comprehensive account and a fine-grained classification of English fragmentary structures. In the broadest sense of the term, "fragment" can encompass a wide array of structures of a very diverse nature, including interjections, headings or lists, along with discourse markers, idioms and formulae. Therefore, fragmentary structures have been discussed under various labels:

- "fragmentary elliptical sentences or utterances" (Quirk et al. 1985; Merchant 2004).
- "irregular/minor sentences" (Kline and Memering 1977; Quirk et al. 1985; Huddleston and Pullum 2002).
- "nonsentential utterance types or units" (Fernández and Ginzburg 2002; Culicover and Jackendoff 2005; Progovac et al. 2006).
- "non-sentences", 'subsentences" (Stainton 2006).
- "non-clausal material" (Biber et al. 1999).
- "clause fragments" (Huddleston and Pullum 2002; Bowie and Aarts 2016; Hall 2019).
- "sentence fragments" (Morgan 1973; Biber et al. 1999; Goldberg and Perek 2019).

Sidestepping any debate on which term is most appropriate, here I use "fragment" to refer to any syntactic constituent which, despite its non-canonical syntactic structure, conveys the propositional meaning of a full clause or sentence. The underlined instances in (1) to (3) would then qualify as fragments:

(1) B: does she doodle a lot?
A: not that I've really noticed (S1A-017 #108:1:A).
(2) You must come & see us when you move[.] The earlier in term the better[.] (W1B-013 #117:3).
(3) it obviously wasn't in use. Another tangible sign of a stretched budget. (W2F-004 #055:1).

Previous research on these fragmentary structures has been mainly framed within the Generativist framework, with a particular focus on the syntactic derivation and interpretation of fragments as full propositional sentences. There are, however, two opposing views within this framework: (i) sententialist approaches claim the existence of a silent sentential structure that can be reconstructed via ellipsis (Morgan 1973; Hankamer 1979; Stanley 2000; Merchant 2004), as illustrated in (4) with the fragment underlined and the reconstructed silent structure between square brackets; (ii) non-sentential approaches argue that all fragments are subsentential expressions which are enriched pragmatically to full propositions within a given context, as examples such as (5) evidence that not all fragments can be claimed to derive via ellipsis (Barton 1990; Ginzburg and Sag 2000; Carston 2002; Barton and Progovac 2005; Progovac et al. 2006; Stainton 2006).

(4) A: Who did she see?
B: [She saw] Bob Dylan. (Harnish 2009, 252).
(5) Me first. [*Me am first] (Progovac et al. 2006, 2).

Empirical analyses and, more specifically, corpus-based syntactic accounts of these structures are scarce and mostly based on spoken discourse (Greenbaum and Nelson 1999; Bowie and Aarts 2016, 259; Cappelle 2020). This investigation contributes to this line of research by presenting a corpus-based and corpus-driven analysis of a wide range of sentence fragments in Present-Day English. To this end, data have been retrieved from the parsed British component of the *International Corpus of English* (ICE-GB) (Nelson et al. 2002), both from the spoken and the written components.

The paper is organised as follows: Section 2 describes the aims and methodology of the study, Section 3 reports the results from the corpus study and Section 4 presents some concluding remarks and some lines for further research.

2. Aims and Methodology

The main aim of the research reported in this paper is to provide a usage-based account of fragments in written and spoken Present-Day English by means of both corpus-driven and corpus-based analyses of constructions classifiable as fragments. In particular, this paper will explore marked trends and potential differences in the distribution of fragments in the written and spoken registers represented in ICE-GB and will determine the most frequent fragmentary constructions in each medium.

The data for the study were retrieved from the parsed version of the British component of the *International Corpus of English* (ICE-GB), which comprises over 1 million words (i.e. 1,061,263 words) from the period 1990–1993. For the written data, I used the whole written component, which amounts to 200 (printed and non-printed) texts and 23,935 syntactic trees. The spoken component comprises 300 texts and 59,470 syntactic trees.

To retrieve fragmentary structures in this corpus, it was necessary to make use of the *ICE Corpus Utility Program 3.1.1* (ICECUP 3.1.1) (Nelson et al. 2002), which allows grammatically specified searches to be performed. Inspired by Bowie and Aarts' (2016) study on fragments in spoken English, the data were retrieved by means of the syntactic nodes

"PU,NONCL" and "PU,CL(depend)". PU in these grammatically specified searches stands for "parsing unit", which refers to the topmost node in the parsed corpus, being roughly (although not necessarily) equivalent to a sentence or a turn. The first syntactic node, PU,NONCL, retrieves non-clausal parsing units, that is, freestanding non-clausal fragments such as (6) and (7). PU,CL(depend), on the other hand, stands for dependent clausal parsing units or, in other words, freestanding dependent clauses, such as (8) and (9):

(6) no wonder he was threatened with ulcers (W2F-018 #017:1).
(7) enough about me for the moment (W1B-001 #123:3).
(8) That a star, the brightest star in the heavens, should come to this (W2F-020 #110:1).
(9) if you put it that way (S1B-030 #014:1:B).

A total of 17,242 and 3,362 PU,NONCL were retrieved from the spoken and written components, respectively. In the case of PU,CL(depend), 907 instances were found in the spoken sample of the corpus but only 129 in the written component. Thus, the ICECUP programme retrieved a total of 21,640 potential fragments. In view of the high number of tokens of the node PU,NONCL in the spoken part, I restricted the analysis of PU,NONCL to a random sample of a 30% of the spoken component of the corpus (i.e. 18,141 syntactic trees), which yielded a total of 5,165 PU,NONCL. As a result, the initial database consisted of 9,563 potential fragments.

Following the definition of "fragment" and the taxonomy proposed in Fernández-Pena (2021), the scope of the investigation was limited to constructions complying with the following features:

- functionally stand-alone units (vs integrated in another clause), which therefore have a separate prosodic contour: e.g. *If you know what I mean* (S1A-063 #135:1:A).
- semantically and discursively equivalent to the propositional meaning of a complete clause: e.g. *well done to Giles!* [= 'Say well done to Giles'] (W1B-011 #116:3).
- syntactically and structurally reduced but independent units: e.g. *So, off to Mavrommati this eve*. (W1B-009 #168:5).
- non-formulaic, i.e. the structure allows for variation at least in one of its slots: e.g. *Thank you for existing/your letter/help* vs *Thank you*.

This definition thus excludes clauses which are loosely integrated into another clause, like parentheticals, appositions, dislocations and other displaced modifiers, as well as discourse markers and idioms.

Instances where clausal or sentential status is not intended, such as headlines or headings were excluded from the analysis. Fragments retrieved from instances of direct speech in creative texts were not included in the analysis either. Repetitions of the same fragment and fragments that complete another speaker's unfinished or interrupted turn were also disregarded. Finally, I also excluded short answers to both *wh*- and yes-no questions. After manually discarding all these instances, the total number of valid fragments in the database is set at 981.

3. Fragments in Present-Day English

Section 2 already hinted at the greater incidence of non-clausal fragments (i.e. PU,NONCL) over dependent clausal fragments (i.e. PU,CL(depend)) in ICE-GB. Table 1 provides a general overview of the distribution of these two types of fragments in the written and spoken registers

in ICE-GB. As can be observed, non-clausal fragments are remarkably more frequent, particularly in written English (91.01%), whereas the distribution of the two types of fragments in the spoken component is less marked.

	written	spoken
PU,NONCL	243 (91.01%)	451 (63.17%)
PU,CL	24 (8.99%)	263 (36.83%)
Total	267 (n.f. 11.16)	714 (n.f. 39.36)

Table 1: Raw, relative and normalized frequencies of fragments in written and spoken English

The table also displays the normalised frequency of the written and spoken samples analysed, which was normalised per 1,000 parsing units (PU). The data thus confirm that fragments are more pervasive in spoken language (n.f./1,000PUs: 39.36), but, most importantly, they also suggest that fragments are not uncommon in written registers, showing a normalised frequency of 11.16 (per 1,000 PUs).

Tables 2 and 3 explore these data in more detail by displaying the distribution of fragments across the different text types represented in ICEGB. In this case, the normalised frequencies were calculated based on the total number of parsing units per text type, as the text categories differ in size. As for written texts, the results in Table 2 evidence a remarkably higher incidence of fragments in both the texts in the "creative" text type (14.26) and, particularly, the "correspondence" category (37.33). This observation comes as no surprise in view of Biber et al.'s (1999, 225) claim on the use of sentence fragments to adopt a more "informal style" as well as to "mirror the stream of thought of a fictional character". By comparison, the incidence of fragments in the other text categories is considerably marginal.

Text type		raw frequency (%)	n.f./1,000 PUs per register
non-printed	correspondence	177 (66.29%)	37.33
	students	10 (3.75%)	4.77
printed	creative	47 (17.60%)	14.26
	informational	26 (9.74%)	2.53
	instructional	3 (1.12%)	1.18
	persuasive	4 (1.50%)	3.98
Total		267	11.16

Table 2: Raw, relative and normalized frequencies of fragments in written English per text type

Table 3 presents the results for the spoken component, where it can be observed that fragments are particularly frequent in unscripted monologues (71.08). This category comprises transcriptions from sports commentaries, where fragmentary utterances are very common (e.g. *Schofield again the short ball*, S2A-004 #274:1:A), which thus explains the great incidence of fragments in this text type. The distribution of fragments in the rest of the categories is quite even.

Text type		raw frequency (%)	n.f./1,000 PUs per register
spoken	scripted monologues	41 (5.74%)	22.56
	unscripted monologues	221 (30.95%)	71.08
	private dialogues	327 (45.80%)	36.77
	public dialogues	125 (17.51%)	28.93
Total		714	39.36

Table 3: Raw, relative and normalized frequencies of fragments in spoken English per text type

To finish the analysis of the data, let us propose a preliminary taxonomy of fragments that has resulted from the corpus-driven analysis. To start with, figure 1 displays the distribution of the three broad fragment types attested, which show remarkable differences. In fact, it can be observed that clausal fragments, such as (10), are the most common fragment type in spoken English, amounting to 60% of the whole sample analysed. In the written sample, by contrast, clausal fragments constitute just 38% of the total number of fragments retrieved, with phrasal fragments (i.e. fragments that lack clausal structure), such as (11), being the preferred fragmentary pattern (53%). *Wh*-fragments, which mainly consist of exclamatives or reduced interrogative sentences, as in (12), are very marginal in comparison in both spoken and written registers (8–9%).

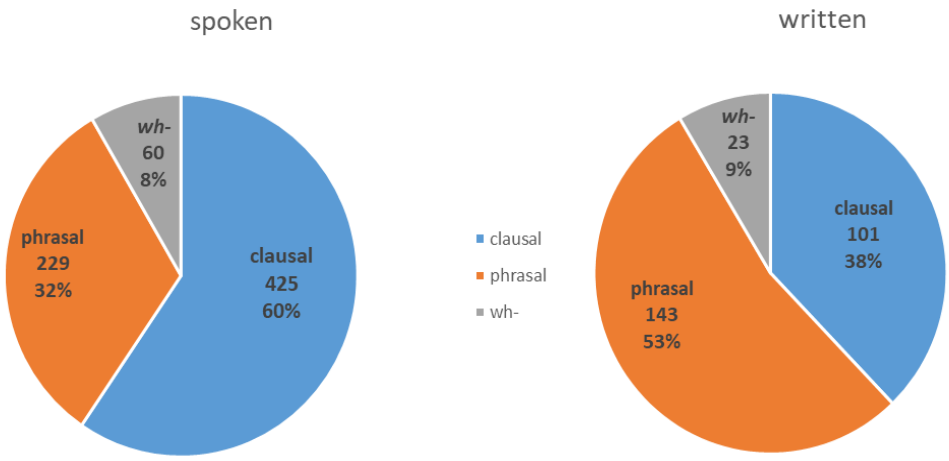
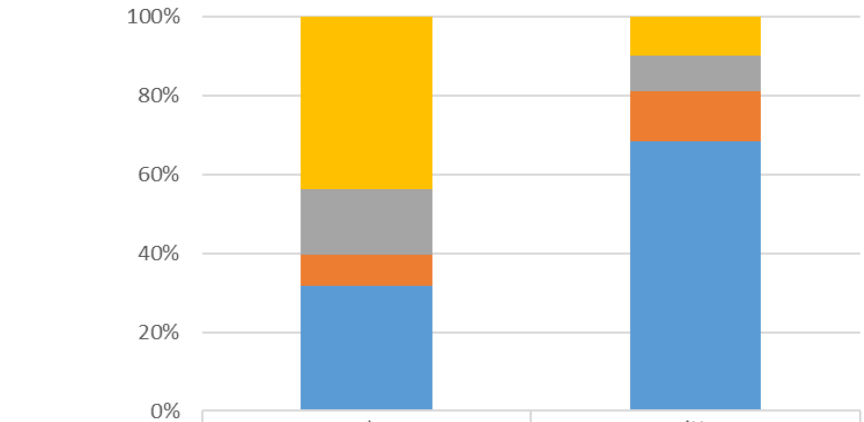


Figure 1. Distribution of the three broad fragment types

(10) The Voice of Free Iraq broadcasting from an undisclosed location (S2B-012 #161:1:H).
(11) No, no more of this conjecture (W1B-001 #015:1).
(12) But what about their distribution (S1B-006 #072:1:A).

Figures 2 to 4 analyse these data in more detail by exploring the distribution of the subtypes of these three fragment categories. Starting with clausal fragments, Figure 2 shows that, while in written texts there is a significantly higher incidence of verbless fragments (68.32%), as illustrated in (13), in the spoken sample there is a more even preference for two clausal types: verbless fragments (31.76%) and finite clausal fragments (43.76%)—also termed 'insubordinates'—as in (14). The other two categories, Small Clauses (15) and non-finite clauses (16), are considerably more marginal in comparison (8–16%).

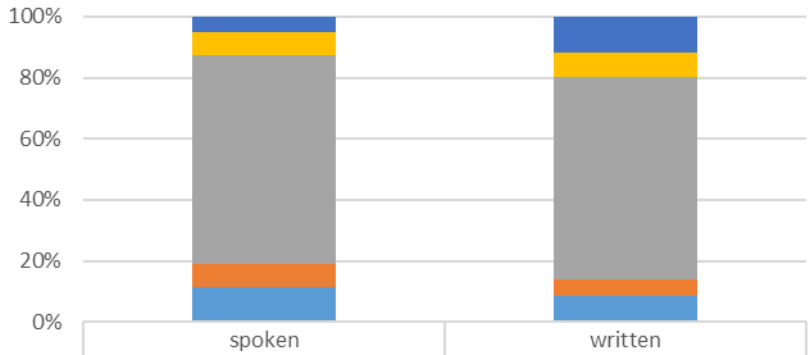


	spoken	written
finite clause	186	10
non-finite clause	70	9
Small Clause	34	13
verbless	135	69

Figure 2. Distribution of clausal fragments

(13) Back to Cambridge tomorrow (S1A-011 #149:2:A).
(14) She is lying. If only she would admit it! (W2F-008 #066:1).
(15) Better go now. Good old Hendon next stop. (W1B-003 #105:1).
(16) Good interception coming in from Enrique at the back (S2A-010 #018:1).

Concerning phrasal fragments, figure 3 reveals that there is a very strong preference for nominal phrases, such as (17), in both the spoken (68.56%) and the written (66.43%) registers. Adverbial (18), adjectival (19), prepositional (20) and coordinated (21) phrasal fragments proved very infrequent in comparison in both spoken and written texts (5–11%).



	spoken	written
coordinated	12	17
prepositional	17	11
nominal	157	95
adverbial	17	8
adjectival	26	12

Figure 3. Distribution of phrasal fragments

(17) Brilliant views of the bridge & bay. (W1B-011 #080:2).
(18) A: She might have been that kind of teenager anyway.
B: Quite likely. (S1A-031 #097:1:B).
(19) Lovely to hear from you. (S1A-098 #139:1:B).
(20) Debbie's got the clock! About 1 AM? (W1B-003 #046:1).
(21) a new era to my life- Quite frightening but exciting too. (W1B-014 #131:6).

Figure 4 displays the data for the least frequent fragment types in British English, *wh*-fragments. The results evidence that the vast majority of examples retrieved involve fragmentary questions (more than 60%), such as (22), and that the more conventionalised exclamative phrases, as in (23), are remarkably infrequent in comparison (16–34%).

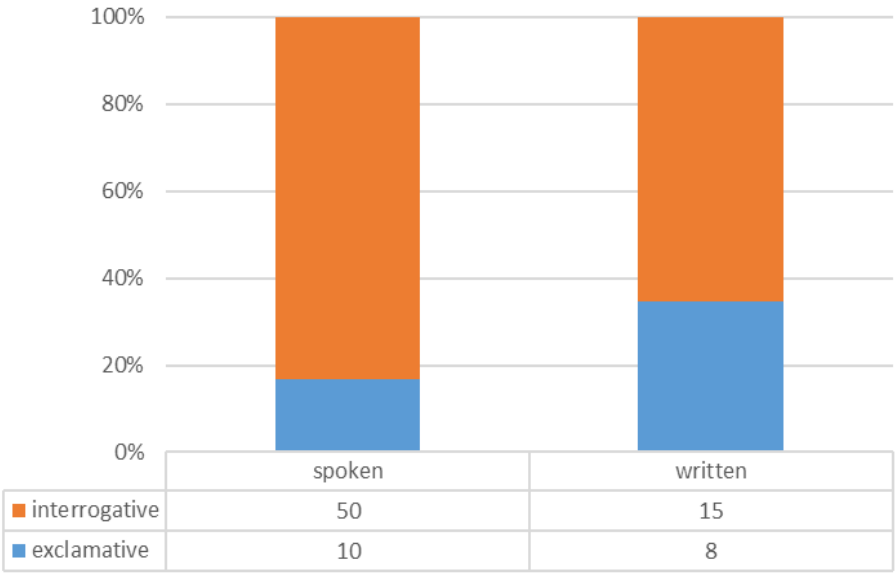


Figure 4. Distribution of *wh*-fragments

(22) the clock ticking its way to 1 A.M. So, why this at this hour of the morning (W1B-005 #016:2).
(23) A: We're going into Kingston.
B: <laugh> What a nice thought (S1A-036 #059:1:B).

4. Concluding Remarks and Prospects for Future Research

This paper has explored the distribution and typology of fragments in Present-Day British English. The results have shown that the independent non-clausal and dependent clausal fragments analysed here, despite being more pervasive in spoken language, are not infrequent in the written registers represented in ICE-GB. The analysis of the spoken texts revealed that fragments occur more frequently as clauses, particularly finite insubordinate clauses, as well as noun phrases. Although common in the four spoken text types in ICE-GB, unscripted monologues showed the greatest incidence of fragments by far. In the written sample, however, phrasal fragments proved to be the most common type, particularly noun phrases, with verbless clauses being the most common clausal fragment type. In keeping with previous literature, the written text types which show a greater incidence of fragments are "correspondence" and "creative texts".

In further research, it will be necessary to carry out statistical analyses, such as clustering and phylogenetic comparative methods, to determine which fragment types constitute statistically significant distinctive features of spoken and written English. To obtain further insights into the use of fragmentary expressions, future research needs to expand the corpus study by exploring larger corpora of contemporary English as well as other potentially determining factors such as colloquialisation (e.g. Fernández-Pena and Abalo-Dieste 2021).

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Unergative Cognate Structures across English and Romance

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Abstract

We review crosslinguistic variation in English, Catalan and Peninsular Spanish across patterns of unergativity in cognate constructions. On the basis of corpus data checked against native speakers' judgments, we contribute new empirical evidence that questions the unergative status of verbs like *dance, live* and *sing,* traditionally analyzed as unergatives. They further allow us to distinguish between the (non-)argumental condition of English cognate objects constructions (COCs), like *smile a beautiful smile,* and Romance prepositional cognate constructions (PCCs), like *sonrió con una bella sonrisa* '(he) smiled with a beautiful smile'. It is argued that this research may be taken as supporting evidence to the general characterization of Catalan and Peninsular Spanish as verb-framed languages, and relates their preference for PCCs, over COCs, to their ability to express manner in adjunct position. Results also support the typological characterization of English as a satellite-framed language and its ability to allow cognate objects (COs) to behave like incremental themes, e.g. *bake a cake*, with aspectual properties to change the telicity of the verb.

Keywords: cognate object, hyponymous object, unergativity, transitivity, eventivity, resultatives.

1. Introduction

In this paper, we discuss crosslinguistic variation in the domain of cognate structures in English, (Peninsular) Spanish and Catalan. These languages exhibit a contrast in cognate structures, that is, cognate object constructions (COCs), as in (1a), and prepositional cognate constructions (PCCs), in (1b), which has generally been overlooked in the literature.

(1)	a.	Susan	smiled	a	silly	smile.		(COC)	[ENG]
	b.	Susana	sonrió	con	una	sonrisa	pícara.	(PCC)	[SP]
		Susana	smiled	with	a	smile	cheeky		
		'Susana smiled a cheeky smile'							

We have examined the three main types of unergative verbs (Levin and Rappaport Hovav 1995), namely, prototypical unergatives e.g. *laugh*, *smile, cough* and *sigh* (2–3), unergative verbs of manner of motion, e.g. *jump*, *walk* and *run* (4–5), as well as verbs of emission, *e.g. scream* (6–7).

(2) a. She smiled a friendly smile. [ENG] (Google Books)
b. # María sonrió un sonrisa triste. [SP]
‘María smiled a sad smile.’
c. #Ella va somriure un somriure nou. [CAT]
‘She smiled a new smile.’

(3) a. */# He smiled with his friendly smile. [ENG]
b. Pedro sonrió con su eterna media sonrisa. [SP](CREA)
‘Pedro smiled his eternal half smile.’
c. Tino Costa somrigué amb un somriure forçat. [CAT] (CTILC)
‘Tino Costa smiled a forced smile.’

(4) a. I walked a walk that changed my life. [ENG] (Google)
b. #Caminó un camino corto. [SP]
‘He/She walked a short walk’
c. #L’Aida va caminar un camí tortuós. [CAT]
‘Aida walked a tortuous walk’

(5) a. */#We walked in a long walk. [ENG]
b. Los niños caminan por un camino estrecho. [SP]
‘The kids are walking a narrow path’
c. Ell va caminar per un camí estret. [CAT]
‘He walked a narrow path’

(6) a. Eloise screamed a small scream. [ENG] (Google Books)
b. #Celia gritó un grito desgarrador. [SP]
‘Celia screamed a heartbreaking scream.’
c. #El nadó va cridar un crit agut. [CAT]
‘The baby screamed a high-pitched scream.’

(7) a. */# She screamed with a terrifying scream.
b. Gritaba con su grito de guerra. [SP] (CORPES XXI)
‘S/He screamed his war scream.’
c. El meu pare em cridava amb un crit molt fort. [CAT] (CTILC)
‘My dad screamed a very loud scream.’

As discussed in previous literature, while English is productive in creating COCs, Catalan and Spanish appear to have cognate objects (COs) only with a reduced number of verbs, such as *dance* or *sing* and, to convey the same or rather similar meaning, they either resort to a PCC or a light verb construction, like *En Joan va fer un somriure* (‘Joan made a smile’). Whereas the latter is also available in English, PCCs are rendered as unacceptable by native

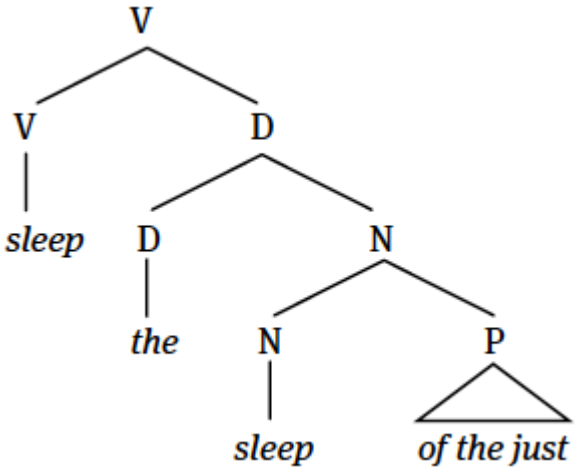
speakers of English.[1] A simple consultation of acceptability judgements was conducted among native speakers (n = 15; 5 for each language)[2] to confirm this contrast. Speakers agree in the acceptability of COCs in English and their unacceptability in Peninsular Spanish and Catalan. Likewise, the consultation has also reported sharp judgments on the unacceptability of PCCs in English and their acceptability in the two Romance languages.

While the COC has received much attention in the literature (e.g. Baron 1971; Eitelmann and Mondorf 2018; Horrocks and Stavrou 2010; Jones 1988; Kuno and Takami 2004; Macfarland 1995; Massam 1990; Pereltsvaig 1999; 2002; Real Puigdollers 2009; 2013, i.a.), the PCC found in Romance with unergative verbs has generally been overlooked and, to the best of our knowledge, its existence has only been mentioned in e.g. Real Puigdollers (2009; 2013). In the remainder of this introduction, we briefly review the notion of unergativity.

1.1 A Brief Note on Unergativity

Unergative verbs have been analyzed as underlying transitive structures consisting of a light verb and a nominal (Hale and Keyser 1993a), and even though this analysis has recently been challenged on the basis of some ergative languages (Niuean in Massam 2009, Basque in Preminger 2012, or Samoan in Tollan 2018), it is still largely assumed. In this framework, Hale and Keyser suggest that "under certain conditions, copies are realized overtly in both positions, that is, target and source" (Hale and Keyser 2002, 76), specifically when the lower copy, the source, appears in its extended projection, dominated by some functional category, as in (8) (cf. Haugen 2009 for a similar adaptation within Distributed Morphology).

(8)



As pointed out in Armstrong (2016, 191) "if all unergative verbs were truly denominal and left a copy in the complement position, we predict that cognate and hyponymous objects would freely appear for all unergative constructions." This is not the case, and only a few verbs seem to admit COs and hyponymous objects (HOs).

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[1] We do not consider here other PCCs that appear with transitive verbs like *butter*, as in *Kelly buttered the bread with unsalted butter* (Levin 1993, 96), because this study focuses on unergative verbs (2–7).

[2] According to Mahowald et al. (2016, 631), if five native speakers agree on an acceptability judgement "one can be 95% confident that at least 75% of people would agree with the intuition."

In the next sections we discuss cognate constructions and how the results obtained in the application of a number of tests to COs and PCCs call into question the unergative status of *dance*-type verbs, while at the same time their re-classification allows for a neater characterization of these languages along Talmy's (1985; 2000) typology.

2. On Cognitive Constructions

As has been extensively discussed in the literature, English has two types of COs, referential and eventive COs. As discussed in Jones (1988), Massam (1990), and Real Puigdollers (2009), among others, eventive COs show different properties from referential COs.

Eventive CO

(9) a. *A silly smile was smiled.	Passivization
b. *A silly smile, nobody smiled.	Topicalization
c. *Maggie smiled a silly smile, then her brother smiled it.	Pronominalization
d. *He smiled the smile for which he was famous.	Definiteness Restriction
e. *What did he smile?	Questioning
f. *He smiled a smile.	Modifier obligatory
g. *He smiled a grin.	Object necessarily cognate

Referential CO

(10) a. The Irish jig was danced by Bernadette Dooley.	Passivization
b. The Irish jig, nobody danced.	Topicalization
c. I danced a tango and then Tosca danced it.	Pronominalization
d. Fred danced the slow number.	Definiteness Restriction
e. What did he dance?	Questioning
f. She danced a dance.	Modifier obligatory
g. He danced a tango.	Object necessarily cognate

(adapted from Massam 1990, 164–65, Real Puigdollers 2009, 158)

Yet, despite these differences in their syntactic behaviour, they have all been assumed to be instances of COs.

Contrary to English, in Romance languages, the eventive reading is not available (11) and we only find referential COs with *bailar*-type verbs (12).

(11)	#María	sonrió	una	sonrisa	triste.	[SP]
	Maria	smiled	a	sad	smile	

(12) a. La rumba catalana fue bailada por Los Manolos.	Passivization
b. La rumba, nadie la bailó.	Topicalization
c. Bailé un tango y después lo bailó María.	Pronominalization
d. Fede bailó la lambada final.	Definiteness Restriction
e. ¿Qué bailó Juan?	Questioning
f. Lola bailó un baile.	Modifier obligatory
g. Mis padres bailaron un tango.	Object necessarily cognate

If they are all classified and analyzed as COs, it is unexpected that despite the inability of Romance to create COs, these languages are said to have COs, but then these would be highly restricted, appear only with certain verbs (12), and show the same referential properties and

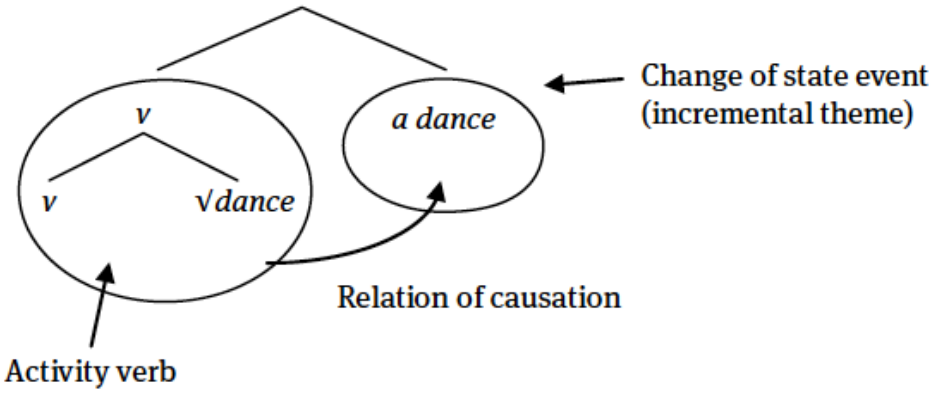
syntactic behavior of regular objects, rather than the properties of eventive COs. It is further unpredicted that Romance may take COs with essentially the same set of verbs that can have two readings in English, eventive and referential (13).

(13) She danced a beautiful dance. [ENG]
Eventive: 'She danced beautifully.'
Referential: 'She danced a dance that was beautiful.'

2.1 Previous Approaches to Cognate Object Constructions

Traditionally, COCs have been analysed as involving an event of causation or creation, where the CO is the result object created by the event (Höche 2009; Kuno and Takami 2004; Macfarland 1995; Massam 1990). For Marantz (2005), for instance, the CO is realized in the same position as incremental theme objects, which are built on an activity verb and are interpreted as a change of state event in that they measure out the event, as in (14).

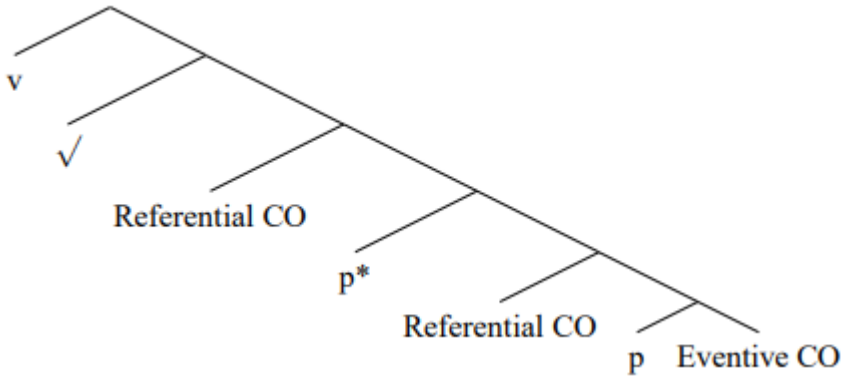
(14)



More recently, Real Puigdollers (2013) translates Marantz's proposal onto Hale and Keyser's model as developed in e.g. Mateu (2002) and Acedo-Matellán (2010) and categorises COCs as subevents of a change of state event in the syntax, understood as a change from non-existence to existence. In her model, this means that the verbal head takes a predicative relational structure in complement position, and the eventive CO receives this interpretation by being in the complement position of the head that denotes a change of state. In (16), this corresponds to the complement position of *p*, which is a PlaceP.

(15) John smiled a beautiful smile / beautifully.

(16)



According to Real Puigdollers (2013, 274), the referential CO interpretation is obtained by raising to the specifier position of PlaceP (the lower *p*), and from this position it can raise to the edge of *p*, the specifier of PathP or *p**, where the object "can be singled out from the event and a property is assigned to it," and receives all characteristic properties, i.e. referentiality, it can be passivized, and it can measure out the event.

Eventive COs are not possible in Romance languages, as shown by the contrast in (17). While English COs are ambiguous and can receive either a referential or an eventive interpretation, as mentioned above, Catalan and Spanish do not seem to have the eventive reading (cf. Rodríguez Ramalle 2003, 327–28).

(17) a. Juan bailaba tristemente un baile alegre. (Real Puigdollers 2013, 275)
Eventive: Not available
Referential: 'Juan was sadly dancing a merry dance.'
b. She danced sadly a merry dance. (Real Puigdollers 2013, 262)
Eventive: Contradictory interpretation
Referential: 'She was sadly dancing a merry dance.'

Real Puigdollers argues that there is no contradiction present in Romance languages, since the CO, and the adjectival modification more specifically, is not linked to the main event in the sentence, which is what we have in the eventive CO reading, but the only reading possible is the referential reading where the adjective exclusively modifies the cognate noun.

According to her, "Romance lacks the possibility of having a DP associated with an event of change of state that is not lexicalized in the verb." That is, "Romance does not license DP objects if there is not event identification between the event introduced by *v* and the sub-event of change of state to which the object is linked" (2013, 278).

The fact that Romance languages lack eventive COs is further linked to the crosslinguistic distribution of resultatives and similar constructions that are characteristic of Talmy's (1985; 2000) satellite-framed pattern.

(18) a. John smiled his thanks. [ENG]
b. John wiped the table clean. [ENG]
(19) a. * María sonrió sus gracias. [SP]
b. *María secó la mesa limpia. [SP]

Although we agree with her conclusion that the CO contrast must be related to Talmy's typological distinction between verb-framed and satellite-framed languages, her analysis is unclear with respect to the existence of COs in Romance and their structural position. If all COs are generated in the position of complement of a predicative relation, where they receive an eventive interpretation, and to obtain the referential one, they have to move to a higher position, it is unclear why they cannot stay in situ in Romance, where only the latter is available. The proposal that there is event identification (Kratzer 1996) in English but not in Romance is not further developed and whether it affects the structural analysis is unclear. Perhaps more importantly, the fact that English *dance a beautiful dance* is ambiguous, but *bailar un baile elegante* is not ambiguous but it is possible, despite the unacceptability of most unergatives with COs under any interpretation, like *e*stornudó un estornudo brutal*, and receives a regular referential interpretation remains unpredicted. In other words, this proposal cannot explain what distinguishes *dance, sing*, or *live* from other prototypical unergatives like *laugh, smile*, and *sigh* in all languages. The former give rise to two interpretations in English and build COs in Catalan and Spanish; the latter have only an eventive reading in English and do not accept a CO in Romance.

The next section reviews the properties of PCCs and how they contrast to COs in English and Romance, in an attempt to shed some light on the differences in COCs among unergative verbs.

3. Cognate Objects (CO) versus Prepositional Cognate Constructions (PCC)

Building on Jones (1988), who treats *dance*-type COs as transitivizing objects in English, we claim that referential COs, whether in English or in Romance, cannot be said to be instances of COs, but they should be analyzed as regular arguments in complement position. Cases of alleged COs in Spanish and Catalan should be treated as regular incremental objects, in all these languages.

That is, the very same fact that Catalan and Spanish have this kind of structure, despite being languages without COs as a productive process, must be taken as empirical evidence that there are no COs in Catalan and Peninsular Spanish (even if there may be some lexicalized cases), so that all COs in English are manner eventive COs. The generalization is then that there are no productive COs in Peninsular Spanish and Catalan, there are only PCCs.[3] A main argument for this position, already discussed elsewhere, e.g. Jones (1988), is that these verbs do not need the presence of a modifier, a must for unergative verbs like *laugh* (cf. *He laughed a laugh* vs. *He sang a song*).

Note that we refer specifically to Peninsular Spanish, as we have detected through corpus analysis that varieties of Latin American Spanish seem to allow COs of the type found in English more freely.

(20) a. Delia grita un grito mudo. [SP] (CORPES XXI, Argentina)
'Delia screams a silent scream.'

b. Gato sonríe una sonrisa hecha de músculos distendidos y orejas relajadas. [SP] (CORPES XXI, Mexico)
'Gato smiles a smile made of loose muscles and relaxed ears.'

[3] We leave aside Degree Cognates (Oltra-Massuet 2014) from the current discussion, as they exhibit different properties and can also appear with unaccusative verbs.

The Peninsular Spanish speakers consulted do not accept the examples in (20), so that while they deserve further analysis, they will not be considered here. They may be shown to pattern with English, and in fact they may represent some tendency towards a typological change in Latin American varieties.[4] As pointed out in Martínez-Vázquez (2014; 2016) reaction objects of the type in (21), from Puerto Rican (21a) and Venezuelan (21b) Spanish, are attested and more frequent than in Peninsular Spanish, where they are highly restricted. Martínez-Vázquez (2014, 214) suggests that a closer contact with English might favor a process of borrowing in Latin American varieties.

(21) a. Miss Susan sonrió su aprobación. [SP] (CREA)
'Miss Susan smiled her approval.'
b. ¡Ríen su alegría! [SP] (CREA)
'They laugh their happiness!'

We thus agree with Armstrong (2016, 194) when he states that verbs that take unspecified objects, which are traditionally classified as transitives with a missing object, could equally be classified as unergatives that can surface as transitives. Such a distinction does not seem to be necessary in neoconstructionist models that assume that roots devoid of any grammatical properties are merged in syntax and get their properties configurationally. Although we do not specifically endorse his analysis, we note that verbs like SP *bailar* "dance" or CAT *cantar* "sing" can be said to have an indefinite implicit object of the type found in verbs like *comer* "eat" or *leer* "read", as they show exactly the same syntactic behavior.

(22) a. John ate, but I don't know what ~~he ate~~. [ENG] (Armstrong 2016, 174)
b. María leyó pero no sé qué. [SP] (Armstrong 2016, 205)
'Mary read but I don't know what.'

(23) a. Juan bailó, pero no sé qué ~~bailó~~. [SP]
'Juan danced, but I don't know what.'

b. La Maria va cantar, però no sé què ~~va cantar~~. [CAT]
'Maria sang, but I don't know what.'

A piece of evidence that further supports the different status of these verbs comes from the empirical contrast between *dance*-type verbs and other unergatives in the PCC in Spanish and Catalan. As shown in (24), *dance*-type verbs cannot take a PCC, which is the regular way of expressing a manner adverbial of the type we find with English eventive COs. If *dance*-type verbs were regular prototypical unergatives, this would be unexpected, because in these languages all unergatives can take such a PCC in adjunct position. Interestingly, English does not allow this type of PCC with unergatives, which can only appear with a CO.

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[4] Luisa González-Romero's (2021) empirical data on the *way*-construction also seem to point towards the possibility that there might be an ongoing typological change along Talmy's classification in American varieties of Spanish. See also Fullana (in progress).

(24)	a.	*Ballar amb un ball tradicional. Dance with a dance traditional	a'.	Somriure amb un somriure forçat. Smile with a smile forced	[CAT]
	b.	*Vivir con una vida de pobre. Live with a life of poor	b'.	Caminar por un camino estrecho. Walk through a path narrow	[SP]
	c.	*Sing with a melancholic song.	c'.	*Scream with a terrifying scream.	[ENG]

Once we assume that *dance*-type objects are not COC's, we can restate the difference between Catalan and Peninsular Spanish lack of COs on the one hand, and English availability of COs on the other, as a more general difference that relates to the impossibility of resultative constructions in Romance and their availability in English. That is, the pattern found in COs in these languages correlates with and must be derived from Talmy's typological distinction between verb-framed and satellite-framed languages, i.e. from the fact that they pattern with typologically different frames, as has been done in the context of motion verbs and resultative constructions.[5]

As for PCCs in Catalan and Spanish, we suggest that they are to be analyzed as adjuncts, since they do not show the same properties as English eventive COs. In particular, the English CO delimits the event, it is a measurer that can transform the atelic activity event into a telic accomplishment event, (25a–a'), while this does not hold for the corresponding PCCs in Spanish & Catalan, as exemplified in (25b–b') for Catalan.

(25)	a.	She smiled {for/*in} 20 seconds.	[ENG]
	a'.	She smiled a beautiful smile {for/in} 20 seconds.	[ENG]
	b.	Va somriure {durant/*en} 20 segons	[CAT]
	b'.	Va somriure amb un gran somriure {durant/*en} 20 segons	[CAT]

Besides, the English CO in (25a') expresses a change of state in the sense of going from non-existence to existence, i.e. the creation of the smile, so that it has a result reading, in addition to the manner reading, which is not available in the Catalan PCC in (25b').

Further support for this proposal comes from Catalan and Spanish verbs of motion like *caminar* "walk", which can take a measure argument like "2 km" in the presence of the PCC, thus showing that they can co-appear because they occupy different positions. Whereas the measure argument would appear in object position (Real Puigdollers 2009), the PCC would be an adjunct. In English, since the CO is a measurer of the event, a measure argument cannot co-appear with a CO (26c); nor with a PCC (26c'), which are impossible altogether with the meaning *He walked a 2 km walk*.

(26)	a.	SP:	*Caminó 2 km un largo camino. (He) walked 2 kilometers a long walk	(Measure + CO)
	a'.	SP:	Caminó 2 km por un largo camino. (He) walked 2 km through a long walk	(Measure + PCC)
	b.	CAT:	*Va altar 2 metres un salt improvisat. (He) jumped 2 meters a jump impressive	(Measure + CO)
	b'.	CAT:	Va altar 2 metres amb un salt improvisat. (He) jumped 2 meters with a jump impressive	(Measure + PCC)
	c.	ENG:	*She walked 2 km a long walk.	(Measure + CO)
	c'.	ENG:	*She walked 2km on a long walk.	(Measure + PCC)

[5] That this classification just refers to main tendencies because languages have been shown to exhibit a certain degree of mixed behaviors does not affect the main point here.

A last piece of evidence that PCCs are to be treated as adjuncts is that VP adjuncts can be stranded with a verbal proform replacement with activity verbs (Cat. *ho*, Eng. *so*, Sp. *lo*) As shown in (27), Catalan and Spanish PCOs behave as syntactic adjuncts, whereas English eventive COs do not.

(27) a. Va somriure i ho va fer amb un somriure còmplice. [CAT]
'(S/He) smiled and he did it with a knowing smile.'
b. Sonrió y lo hizo con una sonrisa de película. [SP]
'(S/He) smiled and he did it with a Hollywood smile.'
c. *He smiled and did so a beautiful smile.

4. Conclusions and Further Research

We have shown that verbs like *dance, live, sing*, generally classified as unergative verbs, cannot be said to take true COs, but they must be analyzed as selecting regular objects, like *eat* or *write*, transitive verbs that can appear as activities when their object is left unexpressed. Their objects show the same syntactic properties as arguments, e.g. passivization or pronominalization, among others, and none of the restrictions typical of COs; specifically, they do not require their object to be modified. The fact that the corresponding verbs take the same kind of regular unrestricted objects in both Catalan and (Peninsular) Spanish, languages that do not show a productive process of cognate object formation, reinforces this position.

A small consultation among native speakers of English, Catalan and Spanish shows that the PCC available in Romance is deemed as unacceptable in English generally. It appears as impossible for *dance*-type verbs in Catalan and Spanish, as well, which supports the claim that they cannot be true unergatives with a CO. This means that true COs in English are reduced to so-called eventive COs, i.e. COs that express manner modification and can delimit the event. On the one hand, the interpretation of *John slept a deep sleep* is that 'John slept deeply'; on the other hand, a delimiting *in*-adverbial becomes fine in the presence of a CO and turns the predicate telic, i.e. *John slept {*in / for} ten minutes* versus *John slept a sound sleep {in / for} ten minutes*.

Our claim is that the general inability of Romance to build such COs would derive from the general characterization of these languages as verb-framed, as opposed to the satellite-framed typological status of English, also in relation to the fact that Romance languages express manner in adjunct position (cf. manner modification with motion verbs in Romance versus English). Since COs are incremental themes, they are assumed to be realized as specifiers of a PathP in Real Puigdollers (2013), where telicity is syntactically encoded, a configuration that is not available with these verbs, witness the fact that they can neither accept resultative constructions in Catalan or Spanish (e.g. Mateu 2002, Mateu and Acedo-Matellán 2011). To express adverbial manner, Romance must resort to adjuncts, in this case, PCCs. And being adjuncts, they cannot delimit the event.

A number of issues remain unexplained and new questions arise. Among the former, the exact details on the structural position of eventive COs, and the reason why this structure is not available in Romance as discussed in Real Puigdollers (2013) and reviewed in section 2. Moreover, the kinds of unergative verbs that may take a referential CO in English and Romance should be further investigated on the basis of corpora and a larger sample of acceptability judgments, since, in general, studies restrict themselves to *dance, sing, live*. Among the latter, the apparent oddness or unacceptability of PCCs in English with unergatives of the type in **He smiled with his beautiful smile* contrasts with transitive examples like *Kelly buttered the bread*

with unsalted butter (Levin 1993, 96). Also, the status of verbs like *dance*, *live* or *sing*, which have always been analyzed as prototypical unergatives that can take a CO or HO, and are here analyzed as transitive verbs which can appear with an unexpressed object needs further study, also in relation to transitive verbs that can appear in the unexpressed object alternation. Finally, the differences between Peninsular Spanish and Latin American varieties, which may be due to the influence of English, certainly deserve further analysis.

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The Evolution of Agent Prepositions: A Cross-Register Approach

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Abstract

This study aims to revisit previous work on the long-neglected topic of the evolution of agent prepositions and address one key question related to it: when did *by* emerge as the dominant agent preposition? For this purpose, data were extracted from philosophical texts, handbooks and sermons represented in the *Penn-Helsinki Parsed Corpus*, which allowed to contrast the results here with previous work (Peitsara, 1993). The resulting figures show that register and authorial differences are fairly frequent, making it cumbersome to provide a general answer to the research question and highlighting the need for further research on agent prepositions and their diachrony. However, it is clear that *by* was already the main agent preposition in Late Middle English, and by the final decades of Early Modern English its use was unrivalled by other alternatives.

Keywords: agent prepositions, Middle English, Early Modern English, register.

1. Introduction

Barring some works from the last century, limited to chronological outlines and semantics analyses (Green 1914; Fraser 1987), English agent prepositions have received scarce attention from a diachronic perspective. This leaves several essential questions unanswered, such as the role of register in their evolution and the time when *by* became the dominant agent preposition. The aim of this paper is to find a possible answer to these questions. To this purpose I conducted a corpus study of the philosophical texts, handbooks and sermons in the *Penn-Helsinki* family of corpora for Middle English (ME) and Early Modern English (EModE), two key periods for the evolution of agent prepositions, and contrasted my results with previous research. The three selected registers are characterised for being formal, instructional documents where the passive voice is expected to be used (Biber 1998, 228 and 247-269), thus allowing for the analysis of their agent phrases; in addition, one common feature among these text types is that they all represent different modes of speech rendered in writing. All the philosophical texts and several handbooks are portrayed as dialogic exchanges between a master and a student, while sermons were written to be delivered orally. Although it is not possible to say that they are faithful representations of the spoken word of the past, they constitute approximations to it, which is important considering that linguistic change tends to occur first in the spoken language (see, e.g., Rissanen 1989). The paper is structured as follows. Section 2 contains a brief review of the literature on the topic. Section 3 describes the methodology and corpora used. Section 4 presents and analyses the main results. Finally, Section 5 closes the paper with the most relevant conclusions.

2. Previous works on agent prepositions

Most works on agent prepositions so far are concerned with theoretical descriptions rather than based on real-use examples from a collection of texts (see, e.g., Green 1914; Mustanoja [1960]2016; Fraser 1987; Moessner 1994; Palancar Vizcaya 1997), Peitsara (1993) being the only instance of a corpus-based study with a focus on register variation. Early research on the topic is focused mostly on the different alternatives used in Old English (OE), ME and EModE, such as *through*, *from*, *with*, *by*, etc. (see Green, 1914). According to these descriptions, *fram* 'from' was the dominant preposition in OE, *of* in ME and *by* in EModE (Green 1914). However, instances of all these agent prepositions are attested until the 17th century and beyond, including sentences where, seemingly, no preposition at all is used, such as example (1), taken from Moessner (1994, 222).

(1) I am appointed him to murder you.

Regarding *by*, it is not yet known when it became the dominant agent preposition. According to Jespersen ([1927]1949, 317) *by* consolidated its agency-marking function in the first half of the 15th century, while Mustanoja ([1960]2016) delays this date until the late 15th century and the beginning of the 16th century, once it had undergone several semantic shifts involving metaphorical extensions and metonymy which changed the preposition's original directional meaning (Palancar Vizcaya 1997). Peitsara (1993) supports Mustanoja's claims with her corpus-based study on agent prepositions. Her data, extracted from the *Helsinki Corpus* (Rissanen et al., 1991), show significant differences regarding the use of agent-*by* between the innovative legal and official texts and other more conservative registers, such as instructional texts, where *by* became the main agent preposition in the 16th century.

Another topic frequently discussed in previous works is the possible influence exerted by French and Latin in the meaning changes undergone by agent prepositions. Authors such as Green (1914) and Fraser (1987) consider that intralinguistic factors alone can account for their development, whereas Mustanoja ([1960]2016) and Hornero Corisco (1997) posit that *by* and *of* in particular appear to have acquired certain patterns of use on the basis of their equivalence with Romance *par*/*per* and *de* respectively.

3. Corpus description

The data for this study were retrieved from the ME and EModE sections of the *Penn-Helsinki Parsed Corpus* (Kroch et al. 2000; 2004). The reason for this choice is twofold. First, the time range comprised by these two corpora corresponds to the periods where, according to the literature, it is possible to attest the decline in use of the preposition *of* to mark agency and the rise of *by* as the dominant preposition for this purpose. Second, the *Penn-Helsinki* corpora are expansions of the original *Helsinki Corpus*, so that the results obtained here can be compared with those of Peitsara (1993), this time with a larger sample of texts.

I opted for restricting the scope to three registers: philosophical texts, handbooks and sermons. These registers can be grouped under the umbrella category 'formal instructional texts'. All the philosophical excerpts correspond to translations into English of Boethius' *De Consolatione Philosophiae*, originally written in Latin. Handbooks are portrayed either as dialogues between a master and a student or as instructional monologues. Finally, sermons contain religious instruction and are characterised for being written types of texts designed to be read aloud. The total number of words included in my analysis as well as the different periods

considered are illustrated in Table 1. As can be seen, the selected registers are amply represented in the corpora, except for a gap in philosophical texts in ME4.

Register	ME3 (1350-1420)	ME4 (1420-1500)	EModE1 (1500-1569)	EModE2 (1570-1639)	EModE3 (1640-1720)
Philosophy	10,682		32,091	22,429	29,313
Sermons	125,737	11,544	30,713	31,546	31,676
Handbooks	19,487	14,633	31,981	37,514	35,945
TOTAL	155,906	26,177	94,785	91,489	96,934

Table 1: Total number of words per register and per subperiod of the *Penn-Helsinki Parsed Corpus*

In order to search for agent prepositions, first I looked for passive structures, and then I worked with their agent phrases. The examples were extracted from the corpora with *WordSmith 6* (Scott, 2012). Using the input [VAN] with the part-of-speech (POS) annotated files, I retrieved all the instances of past participles in the texts. Then, I distinguished between passive constructions with *be*[1] and participial adjectives in predicative position using the criteria laid out by Seoane (1993). This implied selecting only those examples which allowed for passive-active transformation, whose auxiliary verb was an appropriate form of the verb *be* and where the participle could not be premodified by intensifiers such as *very*. Once all the passives had been retrieved, following Peitsara's (1993) methodology, I selected the instances containing a possible agent phrase. I excluded the examples with inanimate nouns, since it is difficult to ascertain whether they function as agents or instruments. Thus, I mainly considered agent phrases with animate nouns for my analysis. I also included examples with pronouns, collective nouns and some initially ambiguous cases referring to an animate entity by means of metaphor or metonymy (e.g., *it being yet by the Hand of Heaven preserved safe*, boethpr-e3-p1). Differences in the number of words between the various sections of the corpora were considered for the analysis by normalising the raw data to 1,000 words.

4. Data and results

From the 6,002 possible passive sentences extracted from the corpora, only 449 contained a prepositional phrase with an animate agent that made them fit for analysis. The raw and normalised figures (per 1,000 words) of these examples are illustrated in Table 2.

Preposition	ME3 (1350-1420)	ME4 (1420-1500)	EModE1 (1500-1569)	EModE2 (1570-1639)	EModE3 (1640-1720)
by	36/0.231	16/0.611	51/0.538	57/0.623	104/1.073
of	84/0.539	9/0.344	44/0.464	30/0.328	10/0.103
with	3/0.019	-	-	3/0.033	-
to	1/0.006	-	-	-	-
among	1/0.001	-	-	-	-

Table 2: Raw and normalised frequencies (per 1,000 words) of agent prepositions per subperiod in the *Penn-Helsinki Parsed Corpus*

[1] *Get*-passives were not considered due to the chronology of the texts.

As reflected in Table 2, *by* and *of* are already the most frequent agent prepositions in ME3 (1350-1420), although *of* still outnumbers the instances of *by*-agents by a considerable margin. Prepositions such as *to* and *with*, which also had an agency-marking function in early stages of the language, are attested in the corpora, as evinced by examples (2), (3) and (4); this use is, however, anecdotal.

(2) […] how He was betraysede **with His disciple**. (mgaytry-m3)
(3) […] tyll pat same hond be gnawen **wyth dogges**. (cmmirk-m34)
(4) […] pei ben defamed **to hym**. (mwycser-m3)

In addition, I also found one ambiguous instance where the preposition *among* might be used to introduce the agent in a passive sentence (example (5)), which, to the best of my knowledge, had never been included as an agent preposition. If the context of the sentence is considered, the agentive reading is a feasible interpretation for this example, as well as the traditional meaning 'between more than two people'. Other archaic alternatives such as *from* or *at* are not attested in the corpora.

(5) [...] foly wordys and rybwady schuld not be nempnyd **among Godys pepull**. (cmmirk-m34)

Regarding frequency, by ME4 *by* appears to have replaced *of* as the most common preposition. In EModE1, a sharp increase in the frequency of the preposition *of* reduces the margin between the two competing prepositions and challenges the dominance of *by*; yet, in EModE2 *by* outnumbers *of* considerably once again –authorial differences play a key role in the results of these two subperiods. Finally, the use of *by* as the almost exclusive agent preposition is consolidated in EModE3. Overall, it seems that *by* became established as the main agent preposition in the late 15th century, since all the texts for ME4 in which it dominates date to this time, thus supporting Mustanoja's idea of a late consolidation of the preposition ([1960]2016, 374-375). Yet, the figures show some interesting results which call for a closer look at each register and deserve further analysis.

Figure 1 showcases the normalised figures across times for philosophical texts.

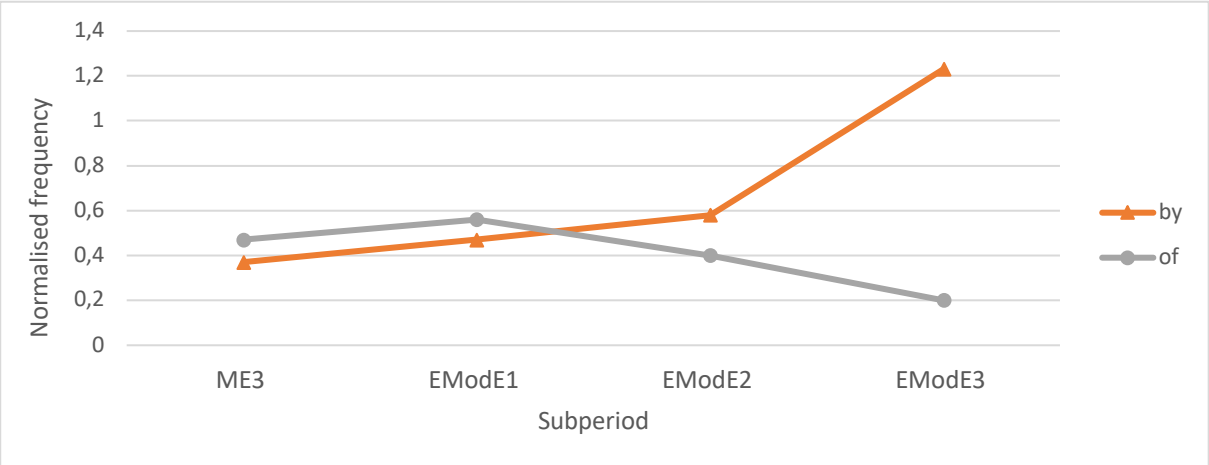

Figure 1: Normalised frequencies (per 1,000 words) of agent prepositions per subperiod in the philosophical texts of the *Penn-Helsinki Parsed Corpus*

Figure 1 evinces that *by* becomes increasingly more common over time in philosophical texts. *Of* dominates slightly in ME, but it experiences an increase in use in the first decades of the EModE period, only for *by* to outnumber it in EModE2. By EModE3, the use of agent-*of* is marginal. Comparing my results to Peitsara's (1993), I found two remarkable differences. First, in my data there are no instances of *with*-agents. This may be because the file included in the *Penn-Helsinki Parsed Corpus* for ME3, a translation by Chaucer, contains fewer words than the original text in the early version of the *Helsinki Corpus*. Second, Peitsara does not find any examples of agent prepositions in EModE1. Having checked the *Helsinki Corpus* files, all included in the *Penn-Helsinki Parsed Corpus*, I found instances of agent phrases with *by* and *of*, which leads me to be believe that there might have been some omissions while handling the data.

Figure 2 reflects the results for handbooks.

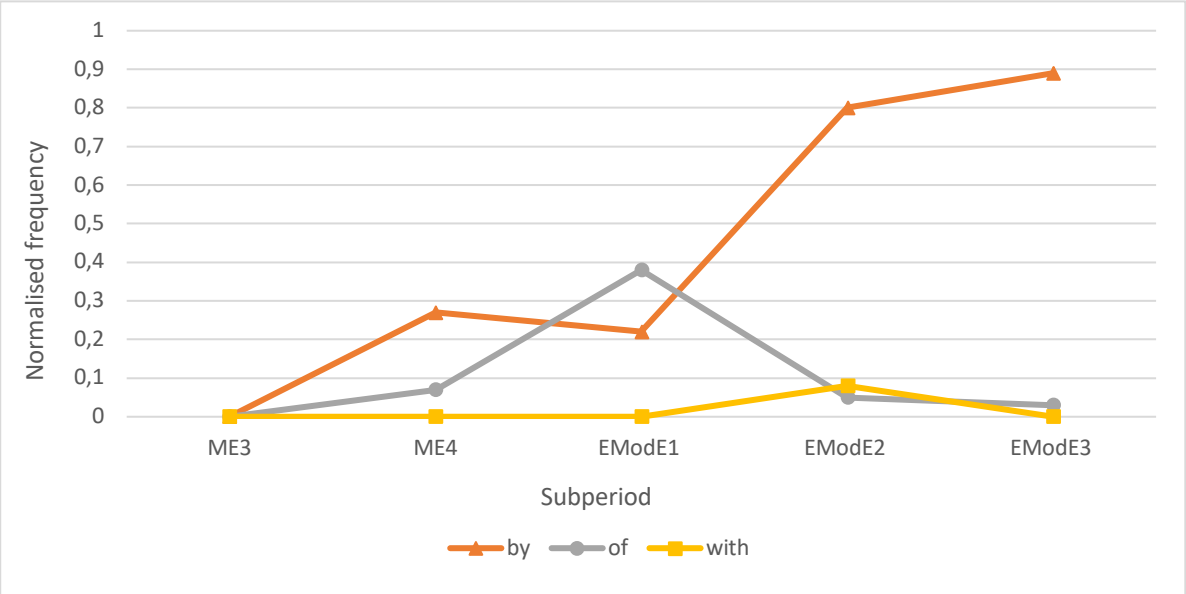

Figure 2: Normalised frequencies (per 1,000 words) of agent prepositions per subperiod in the handbooks of the *Penn-Helsinki Parsed Corpus*

As shown in Figure 2, there are no instances of agent prepositions in handbooks in ME3, which may be due to the low number of passives found in them. In the case of *by*, its data reflect the S-curve of language change (Labov 1994, 65-67): its consolidation takes place at a slow pace at first, then it accelerates at midpoint (between EModE1 and EModE2) and finally it slows again by EModE3, when it is the preferred agent preposition. Regarding *of*, it experiences a dramatic increase in frequency in EModE1 and becomes the main agent preposition of this subperiod, contrary to Peitsara's data (1993). Such an unexpected result could be due to some authorial differences reflected in the selected files. Most of the instances of *by*-agent come from one source, a handbook by John Fitzherbert, whereas all the *of*-agents are extracted from handbooks by William Turner. In the new excerpts from this author included in the *Penn-Helsinki Parsed Corpus* there are many instances of agent phrases whose head is *of*, which outnumber the agent phrases with *by* included in Fitzherbert's files. This calls for more sources to achieve representative results. Finally, I also found three instances where the archaic *with* was used to introduce the agent in EModE3, as shown in example (6).

(6) [...] his wife was haunted **with a fairy**. (gifford-e2-h)

It should be noted that all the agent prepositions in EModE3 come from dialogic handbooks (there are no instances of agent prepositions in monologic handbooks), owing to the large number of verbs used in the passive in the dialogues, a topic which deserves further future consideration.

Finally, Figure 3 depicts the results obtained for sermons.

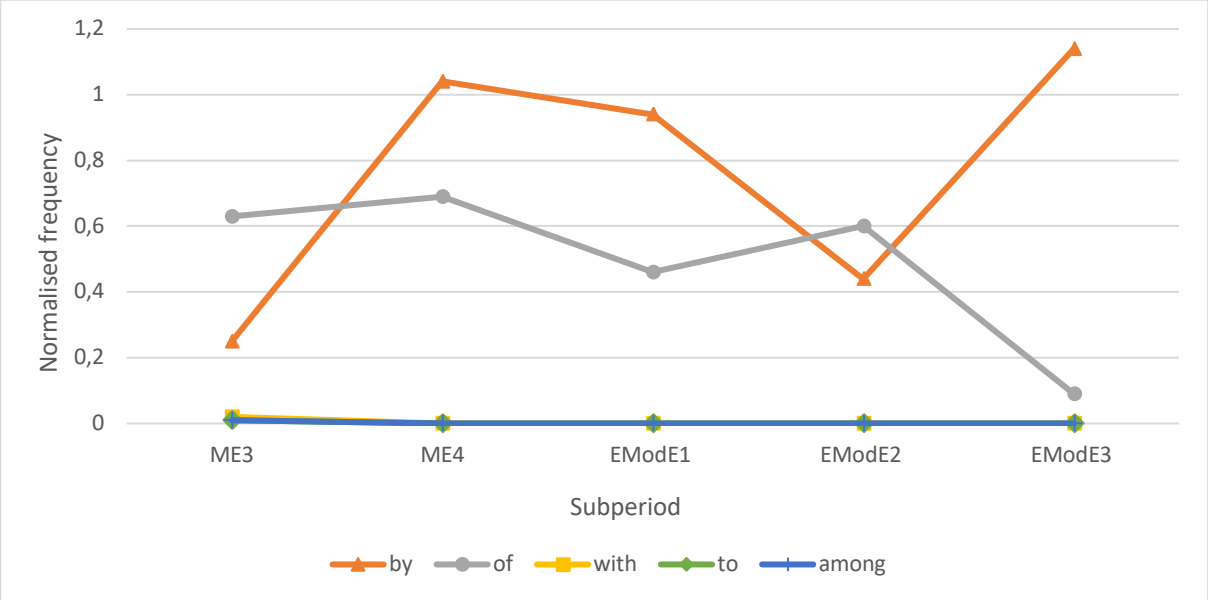

Figure 3: Normalised frequencies (per 1,000 words) of agent prepositions per subperiod in the sermons of the *Penn-Helsinki Parsed Corpus*

As seen in Figure 3, sermons exhibit the widest variety of agent prepositions of all the registers included in the study; *with*, *to* and *among* are still used with an agency marking function as late as ME3. In this period, *of* still remains as the principal alternative for the marking of agency. However, in ME4 *by* takes the lead as the dominant agent preposition. Its use shows a slight reversal in growth in EModE2, but it consolidates its dominance in EModE3. The high figures exhibited by *of* in EModE2 can be attributed to the personal style of one of the authors whose texts were included in the EModE2 subperiod, Henry Smith. An educated clergyman, Smith frequently employs archaic words and formulae in his sermons, which contain long sequences that repeat the same structures with passives and *of*-agents, as shown in example (7). Thus, *of* is most probably overrepresented in the results for this subperiod due to these repetitions.

(7) [...] be not deoured one **of another**. (Repeated twice; smith-e2-h)

The results shown here demonstrate the importance of register analyses and authorial preferences in the study of linguistic change. Considering all the registers together (see Table 2) it appears that *by* becomes the dominant preposition in ME4. However, zooming in on register distribution, this early consolidation is especially remarkable in sermons, which are close to spoken language, thus suggesting that language change may occur faster in oral registers.

5. Final remarks

This paper has aimed to cast some light on the diachrony of agent prepositions. A corpus-based study of several texts from the *Penn-Helsinki Parsed* corpora has highlighted that register analysis is essential to understand when *by* became established as the main agent preposition. Overall, it can be said that *by* became dominant in ME4, although some differences can be observed between philosophical texts and the more innovative registers: handbooks and sermons. According to the date of composition of the ME4 files, most of them date from the late 15th century and early 16th centuries, in accordance with Mustanoja's prediction. Additionally, although by EModE3 *by* is the indisputable agent preposition, other archaic alternatives were used sporadically. Further work should be carried out on this topic, using different corpora with a wider plurality of authors and texts for each register to contrast the results obtained here.

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"Rules to be Observed": A Look into Thomas Sheridan's and John Walker's Attitudes in the Late Eighteenth Century

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Abstract

This paper contributes to the growing body in the study of the standardisation of spoken English in the Late Modern English period, within the framework of Normative Linguistics. It presents an analysis of attitudes towards deviations in pronunciation in the late-eighteenth-century society with a focus on the works by the two main elocutionists at the time, namely Thomas Sheridan and his *A General Dictionary of the English Language* (1780) and John Walker and his *A Critical Pronouncing Dictionary* (1791). Pronouncing dictionaries were in high demand in this period and the authors' insightful views into the norms and use of the English language as portrayed in their prologues and prefatory materials consolidate them as reliable sources for the study of historical phonology. The relevance of these two dictionaries in particular lies in their popularity and influence at the time of publication and throughout the nineteenth century.

Keywords: Late Modern English, Normative Linguistics, Pronouncing Dictionaries, Standardisation.

1. Introduction

This article provides a comparative study of two highly influential pronouncing dictionaries published in the second half of the eighteenth century, Sheridan (1780) and Walker (1791), with a view to exploring their prefatory materials and thereby shed more light on contemporary attitudes towards "proper" and "improper" pronunciation of English. The research is framed within the field of Historical Sociolinguistics, and more specifically Normative Linguistics, the focus of which is the study of the codification of a standard variety. In particular, this study is concerned with the beginnings of the process of standardisation of spoken English and how this influenced the perception of phonological variation and change in the history of English.
This paper is divided into five sections: contextualisation of the need for a standard of spoken English in this particular period and the value of the study of pronouncing dictionaries; data under study; data analysis; and concluding remarks.

2. Context

The late eighteenth century is central to the development of a standard variety of spoken English, despite efforts having been made earlier, or at least called for (Dobson 1968). Beal and Sen (2014, 33) point out that one of the key reasons behind the boom in publication of works focussed on elocution, rhetoric and pronunciation was the standardisation of spelling and the increasing literacy rates in British society. The "market for correct pronunciation", as Beal

(2008, 23) labelled it, increased in order to satisfy the new middle-classes' need for a "proper" pronunciation which would differentiate them from the "laborious part of the people" (Spence 1775, preface).

Pronouncing dictionaries flourished in the second half of the eighteenth century and, according to Mugglestone (1995, 34–5), were "in a number of ways, to be of fundamental importance in furthering […] notions of 'proper' speech", which would be established more strongly in the course of the nineteenth century. This is relevant because in the study of historical phonology there has been a tendency to overlook the role of the eighteenth century: as Beal (1999, 13) rightly remarked then, "[w]here interest is shown in the eighteenth century, phonology is neglected, and where interest is shown in the history of English phonology, the eighteenth century is neglected". However, a number of studies carried out over the last decades have proven the value of pronouncing dictionaries and elocution guides in the context of the codification of spoken English and in the study of historical phonology in general (Beal 1999, Mugglestone 2003 [1995], Jones 2006, Sturiale 2014). It is crucial to be aware that eighteenth-century orthoepists not only prescribed what they considered "standard" through a set of rules to be followed and adhered to, but they also commented on deviations by both describing the variant sounds and making evaluative judgements about them; in Azad's (1989, 3) words, "to prescribe correctness was to describe usage". The proscribed items are as relevant as the standard itself, as they provide fruitful insights into regional and social variation at the time. For instance, the variety which was considered by most orthoepists most "proper" was that of the educated London speech and in this context Sheridan infamously stated that "[a]ll other dialects, are sure marks, either of a provincial, rustic, pedantic, or mechanic education; and therefore have some degree of disgrace annexed to them" (Sheridan 1762, in Crowley 2001, 68).

My study aims to contribute to this recent body of research centred on the value of pronouncing dictionaries, as spearheaded by Beal and associates (e.g. Beal 2009, Beal et al. 2020). The focus here lies in the orthoepists' attitudes towards a standard of spoken English, a first step for a more in-depth analysis of their views on language variation and change in the Late Modern English period (e.g. Trapateau 2017, Nieves-Fernández in progress).

3. Data and Methodology

Thomas Sheridan (1719–1788) and John Walker (1732–1807) stand out as key sources significant for scrutiny for various reasons: (i) their different regional background, since Sheridan was born in Ireland and Walker in London; (ii) the high popularity of their works in the late decades of the century, this being the heyday of pronouncing dictionaries; (iii) the rivalry between the two dictionaries and the authors themselves, since Walker overtly disagreed with Sheridan in many respects; and (iv) not only do these works provide phonological data but they also convey metalinguistic connotations about the English of their time.

The research is based on a close reading of the prefaces and other introductory materials included in the dictionaries, as the paratext of a book has been shown to be a rich informative source of the author's approach to norms and usage in the eighteenth-century context of codification and prescriptivism (Rodríguez-Álvarez and Rodríguez-Gil 2013, Fernández-Martínez 2016). Sheridan's *General Dictionary* contains a short preface, followed by a list of contents and seven other sections; at the end stands an appendix with "observations". For his part, Walker divided the introduction to his dictionary into different sections starting with a "Preface", like Sheridan, and with a similar aim: to contextualise the state of eighteenth-century spoken English and thus justify his attempt to establish the grounds for a spoken standard. To

this he adds a set of rules, some of which are quoted from Sheridan's dictionary, addressed to those speakers whose varieties differ most from what he deems "standard". The section "Principles of English Pronunciation" offers a careful examination of the sounds of English but, for reasons of space, this will not be discussed further in the present article.

4. Late-Eighteenth-Century Attitudes to Spoken English

4.1. Sheridan and the Introduction to the *General Dictionary* (1780)

Thomas Sheridan is known to have been born around 1719 in Ireland. He worked as an actor, but soon developed an interest in language and elocution which led him to become a teacher delivering lectures on elocution and rhetoric at various universities (see ECEP). He was taught the English of the metropolis by Jonathan Swift (1667–1745), who was well-known for his prescriptive views towards English.

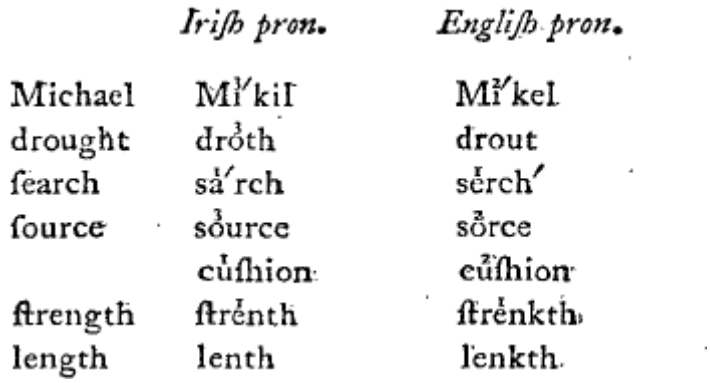
Given Sheridan's popularity, it is no surprise that his *General Dictionary* met with immediate success. There were, however, those who did not see Sheridan as an authority to tell others how to speak "properly", most notably the Scottish biographer James Boswell: "What entitles Sheridan to fix the pronunciation of English? He has in the first place the disadvantage of being an Irishman" (Boswell 1934, II.161, in Beal 2009, 166).

Sheridan states at the beginning of his preface that English is believed to be the most difficult language to learn, but argues that after close examination the grammar of English is relatively easy in comparison to other languages (1780, ii). He considers that the main obstacle for learning English in particular is the lack of a standard variety. He even goes as far as to assert that "nothing has hitherto been done, either by individuals or societies, towards a right method of teaching it" (1780, ii), and identifies the English folk as "savages" in this respect (1780, ii). He criticises the educated part of the English society for their excessive focus on the learning of classical languages instead of providing students with a proper education in English and education on the English language. The lack of attention towards pronunciation in the study of English is a major concern for Sheridan, for he sees pronunciation as "the most useful and pleasing art that can adorn and dignify human nature" (1780, v) and considers deviations from the speech of London as "perverted" and "corrupted" (1780, iv). He also comments on the tendency of speakers to consider good pronunciation as inappropriate for informal context, a fashion he thinks comes from individuals being inclined to "depreciate what they cannot attain" (1780, v), thus identifying the most proper variety of English with the higher ranks of society. His preface concludes with Sheridan's reflection on the benefits towards establishing a standard variety of spoken English. Among other services to the English culture, this spoken standard would raise the level of politeness, allow for an easier way of learning the language by both natives and foreigners, and would also unify the nation against the French hegemony of the time and the new German aristocracy that had arrived with the Hannover dynasty.

In the next section of Sheridan's introductory materials, entitled "A Rhetorical Grammar", he presents "the principles upon which our pronunciation is founded, and the general rules by which it is regulated" (1780, vi). Here Sheridan describes the "just" sounds of English as opposed to "provincial" forms which are uttered by those whose variants differ from the "best educated natives" (1780, 2). An example of this "provincial" pronunciation is the sound of the letter <d> among the Irish, the Scots and the Welsh who, he claims, pronounce it with a strong aspiration, as if *louder* were written **loudher* (1780, 15), a variant which he calls a "vicious pronunciation". Other attitudes he shows towards deviations involve the sound of <t> with a similar aspiration (**betther* for *better*), deemed "faulty", and also the reduction of unstressed

vowels into schwa, a mispronunciation which he encourages to "be cured [of]" (1780, 39). Likewise, Sheridan condemns as pedantic the mistakes in stress patterns and accentuation which result from adopting ancient Greek trends into English words, such as *phenomenon* and *endeavor* (1780, 40).

As a final addition to his prefatory material, Sheridan includes a set of rules to be followed by the speakers of Ireland and Scotland in order to improve their pronunciation. These rules, he believed, were unconsciously breached, as illustrated in Figure 1. Here he does not make use of emotionally-loaded terminology, but encourages speakers to improve their pronunciation as efficiently as they can. It is in this final section that he acknowledges the importance of analogy when the speaker encounters a dubious pronunciation, but noticing that, although "the lessening as much as possible the anomalies of any language will be a great advantage to it", analogy can sometimes be "a very uncertain director" (1780, 58).



	Iriſh pron.	*Engliſh pron.*
Michael	Mi′kil	Mi′kel
drought	dróth	drout
ſearch	sá′rch	sérch′
ſource	sóurce	sórce
	cúſhion	cúſhion
ſtrength	ſtrénth	ſtrénkth
length	lenth	lenkth

Figure 1: Sample words with incorrect pronunciation in Irish (Sheridan 1780, 60)

4.2. Walker and the Preface to *A Critical Pronouncing Dictionary* (1791)

John Walker (1732–1807), also known as "Elocution Walker", was a highly influential orthoepist, lexicographer and elocutionist from London (see ECEP). He published his *Rhyming Dictionary* in 1775, which enjoyed immediate success, and the publication of *A Critical Pronouncing Dictionary* in 1791 increased his popularity even more. This dictionary was not only successful in the late eighteenth century, but also served as a referent for nineteenth-century lexicographers such as Benjamin Smart (1836) (Beal 2009, 172).

Like Sheridan, Walker begins his work by introducing his views towards the English language spoken in the eighteenth century but, contrary to other orthoepists, he believed that "the greatest abilities in the nation have been exerted in cultivating and reforming [English]" (1791, iii); he is likely to be referring here to the numerous works published in the second half of the century with a focus on the use of language and with a prescriptive tone.

In this preface he also deals with the choice of variety used as a model for a spoken standard. As Trapateau (2016) noted, Walker distinguished three groups in society: the aristocrats, the educated and the common speakers, and he believed that none of them by themselves would have enough authority to establish what is deemed "proper". Instead, two of the three groups should be participant of a particular variant for it to be considered standard. When in doubt, Walker resorts to analogy as the driving force of language (1791, vi), going as far as to claim that "once Custom speaks out, however absurdly, I sincerely acquiesce in its sentence" (1791, vii).

He condemns the weakening of unstressed vowels into schwa, an "obscure indefinite sound approaching to short *u*" (1791, v), and exemplifies it with the word *tolerable*, also agreeing with Sheridan in this respect. Attached to his "Preface", Walker includes Sheridan's rules for the speakers of Ireland, Scotland and Wales, quoting from them but also adding some of his own, such as the "rough jarring" of <r> by the Irish (1791, x) or their pronunciation of the clusters <rm> and <lm> as if they constituted a syllable on their own; the latter is exemplified by means of the words *storm* and *realm* written as *staw-rum* and *real-um* (1791, xi). About the pronunciation of the Scots, he writes that "they are sufficient to puzzle Englishmen who reside at any distance from the capital, and to make [them] […] not unfrequently the jest of fools" (1791, 23). For the Welsh, he calls out their tendency to pronounce voiceless plosives as their voiced counterparts, pronouncing *Sommerset* as if written *Zommerset* (1791, xii). To these he adds rules for the natives of London, the Cockneys, whose faults he considered the worst in terms of taste, claiming that "the vulgar pronunciation of London, though not half as erroneous as that of Scotland, Ireland, or any of the provinces, is […] a thousand times more offensive and disgusting" (1791, xiv). These faults include the interchangeability of /w/ and /v/ in word-initial position, as in *wine* and *vinegar* with /v/ for /w/ and /w/ for /v/, respectively, and the pronunciation of wh-clusters as /w/ instead of /hw/, making *were* and *where* homophonous instead of the pronunciation with the aspirate /h/ sound "in its true position", as explained in the "third fault" by Cockney speakers illustrated in Figure 2.

THIRD FAULT.—*Not ſounding* h *after* w.

The aſpirate *h* is often ſunk, particularly in the capital, where we do not find the leaſt diſtinction of ſound between *while* and *wile*, *whet* and *wet*, *where* and *were*, &c. The beſt method to rectify this is, to collect all the words of this deſcription from a dictionary, and write them down; and inſtead of the *wh* to begin them with *hoo* in a diſtinct ſyllable, and ſo to pronounce them. Thus let *while* be written and ſounded *hoo-ile*; *whet*, *hoo-et*; *where*, *hoo-are*; *whip*, *hoo-ip*, &c. This is no more, as Dr. Lowth obſerves, than placing the aſpirate in its true poſition before the *w*, as it is in the Saxon, which the words come from; where we may obſerve, that though we have altered the orthography of our anceſtors, we have ſtill preſerved their pronunciation.

Figure 2: Third fault on <wh> in Cockney speakers (Walker 1791, xiii)

5. Concluding Remarks

Both Sheridan and Walker share the view about the benefits of a spoken standard and some of the features they argue will be part of a standard; for instance, the treatment of unstressed syllables and the importance of analogy to disambiguate obscure cases. On the other hand, their views differ with regard to the social groups which should be taken as a model for this standard: while Sheridan looks up to the higher ranks of society, Walker seems to take a new approach by establishing the importance of the three main sociolects. That said, if in conflict, "it is safer to be wrong with the polite than right with the vulgar" (1791, s.v. *mischievous*). The stigmatisation of "provincial English" is clear in both authors, and so are stigmatised those pedantic pronunciations resulting from the introduction of ancient Greek and Latin features into the English language. All in all, due to the ten-year gap that separates the two dictionaries, it is clear that Walker was aware of Sheridan's success in the field and considered him his rival, attempting to produce an improved version of his pronouncing dictionary addressing concerns which Sheridan might had overlooked or not been aware of at the time of preparing his work.

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How do L2 Learners Perceive their own Speech? Investigating Perceptions of Speaking Task Performance

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Abstract

L2 speech comprehensibility and accentedness have been habitually/generally assessed by asking native or non-native listeners (less frequently) to rate speech samples. Fewer studies have examined non-native speakers' evaluations of their own speech. The present study investigates the extent to which L2 learners' assessments matched the ratings of native and non-native listeners and explores L2 learners' own perception of task performance. L2 speech samples were elicited from seventy-five learners of English performing an oral narrative. They were asked to evaluate their own performance on the task by means of a questionnaire and to self-assess their own speech on nine-point scales for comprehensibility and accentedness. Non-native (*N*=30) and native English (*N*=7) listeners evaluated the speech samples for the same dimensions. The results indicate that the learners' self-ratings were moderately related to the listeners' ratings for comprehensibility, and not related for accentedness. No strong relationship was found between learners' self-assessments and their perception of task performance.

Keywords: accentedness, comprehensibility, L2 speech, pronunciation, self-assessment.

1. Introduction

Originally, much of the material for second language pronunciation teaching was developed with a native-likeness orientation. However, native-like L2 pronunciation has been reported to be very difficult to attain (Foote et al. 2010) mainly because L1-based perception hinders attunement to the phonetic features and distributional properties of L2 sounds (Kuhl et al. 2008). As a result, both teachers and researchers have emphasized the need for more realistic goals in L2 speech teaching and learning, such as comprehensibility and intelligibility, for successful L2 speech development (Levis 2005, 2020; Saito et al. 2017).

Recent L2 speech research has attempted to identify the pronunciation features that are important for achieving successful comprehensibility regardless of accentedness (Isaacs and Trofimovich 2012). Whereas comprehensibility refers to listeners' perceptions of how easy or difficult L2 speech is to understand, being linked to aspects such as pronunciation, fluency, grammatical accuracy, lexical accuracy and lexical richness, accentedness, or the listeners' perceptions of how close L2 learners' speech is to that of native speakers, is mainly influenced by segmental and suprasegmental production accuracy. Native listeners' perception of degree of accentedness in L2 learners' speech in the current study is meant to index the amount of non-native (L1-Spanish) accent in their English oral productions, a perceptual dimension of non-native speech commonly associated with differing levels of pronunciation accuracy and global pronunciation proficiency (Saito andPlonsky 2019).

L2 learners' degree of accentedness and comprehensibility has been examined mostly through native listeners' (NLs) ratings (Derwing et al. 2004), and less frequently through non-native listeners' (NNLs) judgments (Babaii et al. 2016). Nevertheless, fewer studies have explored learners' own insights on their own speech (e.g. Isbell and Lee 2022; Strachan et al. 2019, Tsunemoto et al. 2021), and how self-assessment contributes to raising learners' awareness of what makes their speech accented and difficult to understand.

Prior research on L2 speech self-assessment (Saito et al. 2020, Trofimovich et al. 2016) has found a mismatch between self- and NLs' assessments on comprehensibility and accentedness, which is consistent with the Dunning-Kruger effect (Dunning et al. 2004), whereby unskilled speakers tend to overestimate their performance and skilled speakers to underestimate it. This is attributed to learners being unable to identify the linguistic features that influence their comprehensibility and, consequently, misjudge themselves.

L2 speakers' inaccurate self-assessments are not likely to change or improve by mere task repetition, without specific training on L2 speech self-assessment (Kissling and O'Donnell 2015). Learners' self-assessments may become better aligned with raters' assessments by improving learners' metalinguistic knowledge of the linguistic features that underlie accentedness and comprehensibility. Some studies have done so by testing the benefits of a treatment on comprehensibility self-awareness skills through peer-assessment and tasks evaluating task performance (Tsunemoto et al. 2021). The effectiveness of these methods for improving speech self-assessment skills is still under-researched. In addition, little is known about learners' perception of task performance in terms of overall performance, anxiety, difficulty, and cognitive effort, as related to their comprehensibility and accentedness self-assessments.

Speaking anxiety is negatively related to global assessments of speaking performance (Cheng et al. 1999, Hewitt and Stephenson 2012, Woodrow 2006), assessments of speaking fluency and pronunciation (Baran-Łucarz 2011, Horwitz and Young 1991, Pérez-Castillejo 2019) and speech comprehensibility (MacIntyre and Gardner 1994, Nagle et al. 2021, Saito et al. 2018), but the relationship between speaking anxiety and comprehensibility and accentedness is largely unexplored. Measures of mental effort and task difficulty have been found to be sensitive to the cognitive complexity of the speaking tasks they were asked to perform (Révész et al. 2016).

2. The Current Study

The present study investigates L2 learners' assessments of their own speech for comprehensibility and accentedness. First, we examined the extent to which L2 learners' assessment of their own speech matched the ratings of non-native peers and native listeners. Secondly, we examined L2 learners' perception of task performance (i.e. overall performance, anxiety, difficulty, and cognitive effort) and how it might relate to their speech self-assessments.

The study seeks to answer two main research questions:

1. Do L2 learners' self-assessments of their own speech for comprehensibility and accentedness match the ratings of non-native peer listeners and native listeners?
2. Are learners' perceptions of task performance related to their comprehensibility and accentedness self-assessments?

2.1 Participants

Fifty-six Catalan-Spanish bilingual learners of English participated in the present study for course credit (see table 1 for demographics and proficiency level).

Measure	*M*	*SD*
Age at testing (years)	19.0	2.6
Age of onset of L2 learning (years)	6.1	2.2
L2 instruction (years)	13.2	0.3
Spoken L2 input / output (h/week)	18.7/ 4.9	23.2/6.7
L2 use [a] (h/week)	3.0	1.1
Vocabulary size (0-10,000 words) [b]	5895.5	1133.5
Self-estimated proficiency (1=very poor−7=native-like) [c]	4.8	0.9

[a] L2 use with native and non-native speakers in hours per week.
[b] Obtained through the X/Y Lex (Meara and Miralpeix 2017).
[c] Averaged self-estimated ability to speak spontaneously, understand, read, write and pronounce English.

Table 1: Participants' demographics

The speech samples were evaluated for comprehensibility and accentedness by fourteen experienced native English listeners (*Mage* = 33.5; *SD* = 8.03) and thirty-three non-native speakers of English (*Mage* = 19.3; *SD* = 3.5). All listeners were experienced EFL teachers and spoke either British (86%) or American (14%) English. They reported being very familiar with Spanish/Catalan-accented English (*M* = 8.15, *SD* = 1.67) on a 9-point Likert scale (1 = "not familiar at all"; 9 = "very familiar").

2.2 Tasks

Participants filled out a language background questionnaire and performed the X/Y Lex vocabulary size test (Meara and Miralpeix 2017) on their L2 learning history and English proficiency level.

A picture-based story-telling task, the suitcase story (Derwing et al. 2009; Trofimovich and Isaacs 2012; Saito et al. 2017) was used to elicit the oral narrative. Immediately after their speaking task, learners evaluated their overall task performance, level of self-perceived anxiety, task difficulty and mental effort on nine-point scales (1 = not anxious/difficult/mental effort at all; 9 = very anxious/extremely difficult/extreme mental effort).

Finally, L2 learners self-assessed their own speech for comprehensibility and accentedness through nine-point scales after listening to their full speaking performance twice. In this task, learners were first given a definition of comprehensibility and then asked to rate their own speech sample (1 = "very difficult to understand"; 9 = "very easy to understand"). The same procedure was used to obtain accentedness self-assessments (1 = "no foreign accent"; 9 = "very strong accent"). Accentedness scores were recoded for subsequent analyses so that higher scores represented lower accent.

All listeners performed a rating task in *Praat* (Boersma and Weenink 2020) to evaluate the L2 learners' oral productions. Three speech samples were presented for practice and fifty-six speech samples of approximately one minute each were rated twice, first for comprehensibility and then for accentedness. Listeners were able to maximally play each speech sample three times.

2.3 Procedure

Participants completed a language background questionnaire, the X/Y Lex vocabulary size test, the story-telling task (recorded in a sound-proof booth) and the task performance questionnaire. One week later, learners received their own recording, and were asked to do the self-assessment task for comprehensibility and accentedness in *Praat*. Students completed the task in fifty minutes on average. Peer undergraduate NNLs as well as English NLs evaluated the learners' full productions for the same dimensions through the same interface (60-90 minutes).

3. Analyses and Results

Inter-rater reliability was high for both NLs' and NNLs' ratings of comprehensibility (NLs: α = .935; NNLs: α = .950) and accentedness (NLs: α = .937; NNLs: α = .969). Consequently, comprehensibility and accentedness scores were computed for each learner by averaging across listeners' judgments.

To examine relationships between comprehensibility and accentedness, *Pearson-r* and *Spearman Rho* correlation coefficients were computed for NLs and NNLs, for learners' self-assessments, RESPECTIVELY. As expected, comprehensibility ratings were negatively related to accentedness for both NLs (r = -.748, p < .001) and NNLs (r = -.835, p < .001), so that speech samples that were found to be easier to understand were also those that were the least accented. This relationship was much weaker for learners' self-assessments (r = -.210, p = .121), suggesting that the level of accent they perceived in their own speech was unrelated to how easy to understand they found their own speech to be (figure 1).

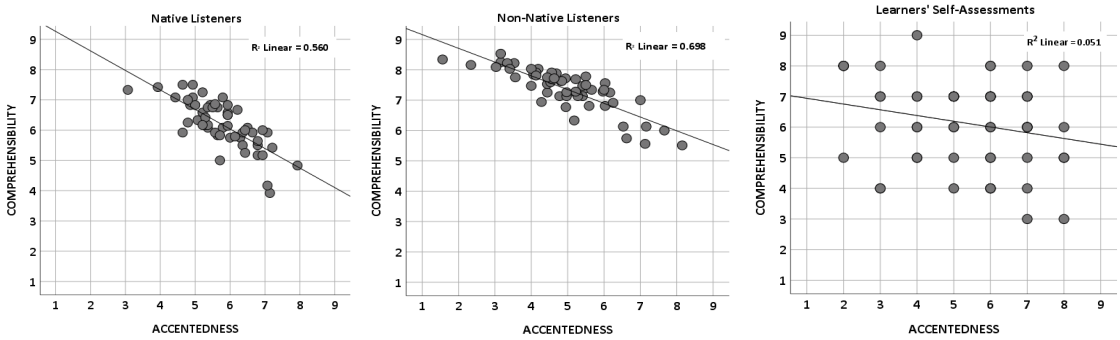

Figure 1: Relationship between comprehensibility and accentedness (NLs, NNLs, Learners)

Following previous research (Trofimovich et al. 2016; Saito et al. 2020), we computed overconfidence scores for each learner and dimension. These were computed by subtracting, for each participant and dimension, the listeners' assessment score from the learners' self-assessment. In this way, positive scores were self-ratings that overestimated the learners' performance, negative scores described self-ratings that underestimated the learners' performance, and scores around zero corresponded to assessments on which listeners and learners agreed. In addition, we computed a proportion measure of alignment of self-assessments with NLs' and NNLs' ratings (0-1) independent of under- and over-estimation, where 0 represents complete alignment (identical learner's and listeners' ratings) and 1 complete misalignment (i.e. maximum difference of 8 between learner's and listeners' ratings).

3.1 Self-assessment of Comprehensibility and Accentedness

The first research question asked for the extent to which learners' self-assessment for comprehensibility and accentedness matched NLs' and NNLs' evaluations. The analyses revealed that self-assessments and NLs' and NNLs' evaluations were moderately related for comprehensibility (NLs': $r = .40$, $p = .002$; NNLs': $r = .37$, $p = .004$), but not for accentedness (NLs': $r = .19$, $p = .147$; NNLs': $r = .09$, $p = .457$). We also checked whether listeners' groups differed in how they rated comprehensibility and accentedness. Correlations were strong and significant (comprehensibility: $r = .77$, $p < .001$; accentedness: $r = .86$, $p < .001$), suggesting that the ratings from both groups of listeners were consistent. In addition, a paired-samples t-test showed that for both dimensions NLs were significantly stricter ($M = 6.19$, $SD = .77$ / $M = 5.7$, $SD = .89$) than NNLs ($M = 7.3$, $SD = .69$ / $M = 4.9$, $SD = 1.28$); $t(55) = -15.31$, $p < .001$ / $t(55) = -8.89$, $p < .001$. NLs had more difficulty in understanding learners' productions and perceived a stronger accent than NNLs.

We did not observe a clear Dunning-Kruger effect when plotting overconfidence scores as a function of NLs' assessments for comprehensibility, which suggests that learners who were judged to be very comprehensible did not underestimate their performance more than they overestimated it, and the same applies to learners judged to be difficult to understand. However, a Dunning-Kruger effect was found for accentedness: most learners who were rated as having a strong accent, judged their own accent to be weaker than NLs did (figure 2 right). In fact, correlational analyses showed a much weaker inverse relationship between overconfidence scores and NLs' evaluations for comprehensibility ($r = -.271$, $p = .043$), than we found for accentedness, where the negative correlation is moderate and significant ($r = -.410$, $p = .002$).

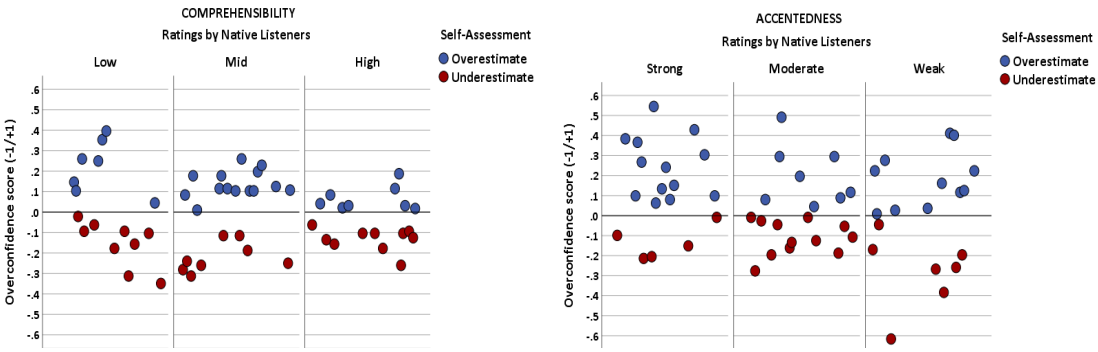

Figure 2: Relationship between learners' overconfidence scores and NLs' evaluations for comprehensibility (left) and accentedness (right)

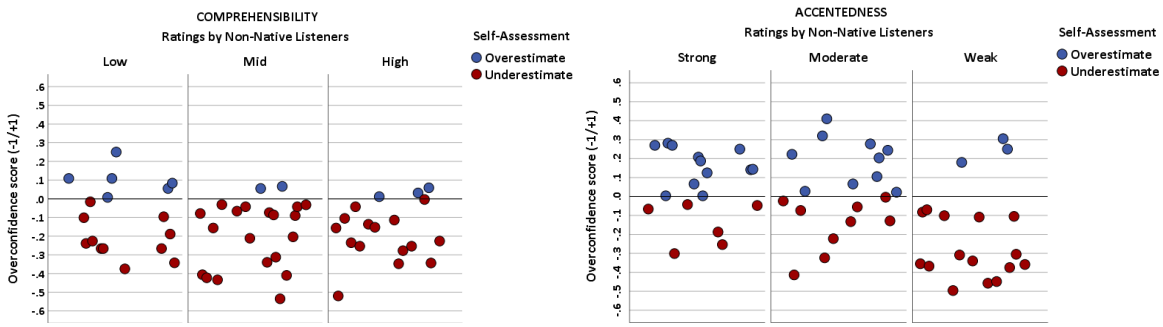

Figure 3: Relationship between learners' overconfidence scores and NNLs' evaluations for comprehensibility (left) and accentedness (right)

Using NNLs' evaluations, learners found their speech to be less comprehensible than their peer NNLs did. However, for accentedness, a Dunning-Kruger effect similar to the one we found using NLs' evaluations was observed (figure 3 right). Correlations showed a moderate-to-strong inverse relationship between overconfidence scores and non-native peer listeners' evaluations for accentedness (r = -.568, p = < .001), but not for comprehensibility (r = -.192, p = .156).

3.2 Self-assessment of Task Performance

Our second research question asked whether learners' perception of task performance was related to their self-assessments of comprehensibility and accentedness. Correlational analysis did not reveal any strong associations or any consistent pattern of results. However, some weak relationships involved comprehensibility: those learners who reported having performed the task better judged the comprehensibility of their speech to be higher (r = .370, p = .005), and those reporting being more anxious during task performance self-assessed their speech to be more difficult to understand (r = .269, p = .045). As expected too, mental effort was found to be related to task difficulty (r = .479, p < .001) and anxiety (r = .407, p = .002).

4. Discussion and Conclusion

The present study shows that the mismatch between self-assessments and listeners' ratings (both native and non-native) was such that more comprehensible and less accented learners under-rated themselves and less comprehensible and more strongly accented learners over-rated themselves, as found by Trofimovich et al. (2016) and Saito et al. (2020). Additionally, NNLs' evaluations were found to be more lenient than NLs' evaluations both for comprehensibility and accentedness.

Our data analyses did not uncover any consistent trend or relationship between learners' self-assessments and their perception of task performance. This suggests that when learners self-assess their own speech, they tend to be unbiased by how they felt when performing the task and by how difficult or effortful they found the task to be.

Our study suggests that training in speech self-assessment may be important for learners to align their own assessments with the assessment of others (for example their teachers' evaluations). Practice in self-assessment may also lead to improvement via raising pronunciation awareness. Thus, speakers who self-assess their speech over time could improve in fluency, pronunciation and vocabulary use, among others.

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Collocation as a Measure of Semantic (Dis)similarity: Revisiting the Concept PLEASANT SMELLING

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Abstract

This paper sets out to delineate and compare the diachronic evolution of the collocational preferences of five adjectival near-synonyms denoting the concept PLEASANT SMELLING in American English. A multiple distinctive collocate analysis is conducted by zooming in on the semantically modified nouns of the adjectives (e.g., *soap* in *scented soap* and *the soap is scented*). Previous analyses of the synonym set identified significant differences between them regarding the semantic category of nouns that they tend to collocate with (e.g., TEXTILE/CLOTHING and PLANTS/FLOWERS), thus uncovering their semantic preferences. In this contribution, the focus is on the synonyms' idiosyncratic collocational patterns, as it has been demonstrated that even within particular semantic categories, related lexical items may exhibit more fine-grained collocational differences. The results uncover further distinctions between the members of the synonym set and thus shed valuable light on the development over time of the concept PLEASANT SMELLING.

Keywords: Near-synonymy, collocation, PLEASANT SMELLING, multiple distinctive collexeme analysis.

1. Introduction

The notion of *collocation* has been prominent in linguistics ever since Firth (1957) and Sinclair (1966) brought it to the fore. Firth's (1957, 11) well-known claim "you shall know the word by the company it keeps" highlights the importance of analyzing the contextual relations of words to uncover their meaning. Since the middle of the twentieth century, developments in corpus linguistics have led to the emergence of rigorous investigations into the role of collocation on various linguistic phenomena, including synonymy (e.g., Taylor 2003; Liu 2010), the semantic relation object of study in the present contribution. Due to these developments the term *collocation* has also been interpreted in different ways: for instance, Sinclair (1991) establishes several levels of co-occurrence, in which he includes semantic preference and individual collocates, among others. Semantic preference refers to the semantic features that the collocates of a particular node share with one another (e.g., *number* and *scale* are collocates of the adjective *large* and they both designate amounts/sizes).

Pettersson-Traba (2020, 2021) analyzed a set of adjectival near-synonyms from the olfactory domain (e.g., *fragrant*, *perfumed*, *scented*) by categorizing their noun collocates into semantic categories such as TEXTILE/CLOTHING (e.g., *glove*) and PLANTS/FLOWERS (e.g., *blossom*). By doing so, she discovered a division of semantic labor between the adjectives, with some being used mostly to denote natural smells and others being more common to designate artificial aromas. Moreover, she identified a change over time, whereby the adjectives became

increasingly more common to refer to synthetic scents as time progressed. Nevertheless, Pettersson-Traba (2020, 2021) did not consider the individual collocates of the adjectives and the collocational preferences uncovered in her studies reflect only coarse-grained differences. The present contribution therefore constitutes a continuation of the line of research initiated in Pettersson-Traba (2020, 2021) by focusing on the idiosyncratic collocational behavior of the same synonym set. As such, it focuses on *fragrant*, *perfumed*, *scented*, *sweet-scented* and *sweet-smelling*, which designate the concept PLEASANT SMELLING, in nineteenth and twentieth century American English. The main objective is to delineate and compare the diachronic evolution of their collocational preferences. In particular, the focus is on the semantically modified nouns of the adjectives as it has been demonstrated that the best way to reveal the nature of the semantic content of adjectives is to examine the nouns that they co-occur with (e.g., Geeraerts 1986; Gries 2001, 2003). For instance, in examples (1)–(3), the word *flower*(*s*) is considered to be semantically modified by *fragrant*, *sweet-scented* and *sweet-smelling*, respectively:

(1) The piano was good, the **flowers** were **fragrant**, the dress was misty white. (*COHA*, 1998)
(2) We studied the rocks –rugged children of flame– and **sweet-scented flowers**, and the field whence they came. (*COHA*, 1887)
(3) He had the reddest lips I ever seen on a guy. Like a **flower** –**sweet-smelling** and soft. (*COHA*, 1991)

2. Data and methodology

The occurrences of the adjectives were extracted from *COHA* (Davies 2010–), which covers the period 1810–2009.[1] The instances were then annotated for the nouns the adjectives modify semantically and the period in which they occur, distinguishing four 50-year periods: 1810–1859 (Period 1 or P1), 1860–1909 (P2), 1910–1959 (P3) and 1960–2009 (P4). Lastly, the data was submitted to multiple distinctive collocate analysis (DCA), conducted using the Gries' (2007) script. In this study, multiple DCA was used because the synonym set examined comprises five members, rather than just an alternating pair. The difference between DCA and what can be labeled simple collocate analysis (SCA) is that whereas SCA simply identifies the words that occur with one single node more often than expected by chance, DCA identifies the collocates that occur with one expression as opposed to other competing expressions. To illustrate this point, in a DCA analysis one would not ask which collocates occur with the near-synonyms *powerful* and *strong*, but rather which words are more likely to co-occur with *strong* than with *powerful* and vice versa. In this way, it is possible to draw the conclusion that *strong support* is a significantly more likely collocation than *powerful support* (cf. Church et al. 1991). One advantage of using DCA when studying synonyms is that a specific collocate might turn out to be a significant collocate of more than one synonym but still be more *distinctive* of one of them.

The results of multiple DCA consist in a series of collocational strength values for each synonym examined in each period and it shows which modified nouns are attracted to or repelled by the adjectives as compared to the other adjectives and themselves in other periods. Table 1 shows the first four rows of the results of the multiple DCA for *fragrant* and *perfumed* across the four periods distinguished.

[1] The analysis in this contribution is based on the pre-2021 version of *COHA*.

	FRA_P 1	FRA_P 2	FRA_P 3	FRA_P 4	PER_P 1	PER_P 2	PER_P 3	PER_P 4
acolyte	-0.07	0.65	-0.06	-0.05	-0.01	-0.03	-0.02	-0.02
action	-0.07	-0.11	0.91	-0.05	-0.01	-0.03	-0.02	-0.02
admirer	-0.07	-0.11	-0.06	-0.05	1.48	-0.03	-0.02	-0.02
advertisement	-0.07	-0.11	-0.06	-0.05	-0.01	-0.03	-0.02	-0.02

Table 1: Results of multiple DCA for *fragrant* and *perfumed* across periods (four first collocates)

The values in the columns represent the collocational strength between the collocates and the synonyms in the different periods. Values higher than ±1.31 indicate that a collocate is attracted to or repelled by one adjective in one specific period as opposed to the other adjectives and itself in other periods. This means that *admirer* is significantly attracted to *perfumed* in P1 as opposed to *fragrant* in all periods and *perfumed* in periods 2, 3 and 4. Positive values indicate that a collocate is significantly attracted to the adjectives, whereas negative values indicate that a collocate is repelled by them. In this way, it is possible to resort to multiple DCA to track diachronic changes in the collocational preferences of one and the same adjective and not just between different adjectives.

3. Results

Tables 2 and 3 display the collocates attracted to and repelled by *fragrant*, respectively. Due to the large number of attracted collocates of some synonyms in some of the periods distinguished, the tables provided throughout this section only display the ten most distinctive collocates of each adjective in each period. Some tendencies can be identified upon close inspection of the noun collocates in Table 2.

P1 (1810–1859)	P2 (1860–1909)	P3 (1910–1959)	P4 (1960–2009)
flower	*odor*	*night*	*food*
breath	*memory*	*coffee*	*bread*
hour	*flower*	*smoke*	*stew*
plant	*pink*	*liquid*	*aroma*
blossom	*branch*	*kitchen*	*tree*
rose	*bed*	*fire*	*smell*
bower	*draught*	*place*	*steam*
sigh	*bunch*	*garden*	*juniper*
wreath	*pass*	*mass*	*sauce*
lip	*English*	*street*	*omelet*

Table 2: Attracted collocates of *fragrant*

First, in P1 and P2 many distinctive collocates correspond to nouns which denote plants, namely *blossom, bower, branch, flower*, *pink*, *plant*, *rose* and *wreath*, but also *bed* and *bunch*, highlighted in blue in Table 2, as they often refer to plants when collocating with *fragrant* (cf. examples (4)–(5)).

(4) And the tips of the branches used to make a **bed**, which was more **fragrant** than soft. (*COHA*, 1870)
(5) Pluck from the lilac hedge a **fragrant bunch** wet with the morning. (*COHA*, 1886)

In P3, however, the picture seems to change somewhat, since nouns designating plants no longer dominate. Instead, a more mixed and heterogenous range of collocates can be observed, with some culinary and food-related terms entering the picture, such as *coffee* and *kitchen*, highlighted in light grey. Finally, in P4, nouns referring to food account for the great majority of distinctive collocates of *fragrant*, although some nouns designating plants are still distinctive (e.g., *tree*, *juniper*).

The repelled nouns of *fragrant* across time also point to the change this adjective has undergone over time from denoting mostly plants in the earlier periods to modifying more food nouns (cf. Table 3). This is so because, the basic-level words *flower* and *food* are repelled in different periods, with *food* being repelled in periods 1–3 and *flower* in periods 3 and 4. Another conclusion that can be drawn is that *fragrant* is mostly used to denote natural smells since many nouns repelled by *fragrant* in several periods denote synthetic aromas; these nouns are highlighted in light pink in Table 3 (e.g., *candle*, *handkerchief*, *soap*). Examples (6) and (7) illustrate this difference in nuance of meaning of the adjectives, which depends on the types of nouns that they modify:

(6) His back was towards her […] and his thoughts soaring into those blue heavens, at which he gazed through a net-work of woodbine and **fragrant roses** now in full bloom. (*COHA*, 1857)
(7) For years Italy led in perfuming; it supplied the rest of Europe with sweet bags, perfume cakes for throwing on fires, **fragrant candles** and **cosmetics**, scented gloves and pomanders. (*COHA*, 1946)

Whereas (6) exemplifies an instance of *fragrant* in the natural sense as the modified noun (i.e., *roses*) can emit an aroma on its own, (7) shows an occurrence of the same adjective in the artificial sense given that the nouns *candles* and *cosmetics* denote entities which can only acquire a sweet scent via infusion by a synthetic substance.

P1 (1810–1859)	P2 (1860–1909)	P3 (1910–1959)	P4 (1960–2009)
air	*bath*	*breath*	*atmosphere*
bath	*candle*	*flower*	*breath*
candle	*flavor*	*food*	*candle*
food	*flesh*	*note*	*flower*
grass	*food*	*soap*	*handkerchief*
hair	*forest*	*water*	*soap*
handkerchief	*hair*		
night	*handkerchief*		
note	*letter*		
oil	*liquid*		

Table 3: Repelled collocates of *fragrant*

In the case of *perfumed*, it seems as if its distinctive collocates are of the same type throughout 1810–2009 (cf. Table 4). First, many nouns denoting textile/clothing items can be observed, especially in periods 2 and 3: *cambric*, *glove*, *garment* and *sail*; these are highlighted in yellow in Table 4. Second, nouns referring to people or to body parts, highlighted in green, are also commonly modified by *perfumed* in all periods. Examples of such nouns include *lock*, *gallant*, *skin*, *blonde* and *whore*. Nouns denoting people are particularly common in P3 and P4 as there seems to be an increase in such nouns from P2 onwards. Finally, nouns denoting cleaning/cosmetic products are also distinctive of *perfumed*, especially in the last two periods, where nouns such as *powder* and *soap*, highlighted in orange, emerge.

P1 (1810–1859)	P2 (1860–1909)	P3 (1910–1959)	P4 (1960–2009)
flavor	*glove*	*garment*	*woman*
cambric	*handkerchief*	*sail*	*letter*
flesh	*tress*	*handkerchief*	*embrace*
lock	*gallant*	*skin*	*mother*
note	*limb*	*powder*	*soap*
chamber	*napkin*	*blonde*	*boy*
cherry	*narhileh*	*salon*	*cotton*
medicament	*spell*	*towel*	*whore*
atmosphere	*whisper*	*girl*	*sea*
billet	*man*	*snuff*	*handkerchief*

Table 4: Attracted collocates of *perfumed*

Interestingly, *perfumed* shows the opposite tendency of *fragrant*, being common to denote artificial rather than natural smells and occurring commonly with nouns that designate synthetic aromas (e.g., *powder*, *soap*, *handkerchief*). In fact, some of these nouns were repelled by *fragrant* (i.e., *handkerchief*, *soap*, *letter*). This tendency of *perfumed* being rarely used to denote natural smells can be observed also when examining its repelled collocates, namely *flower* and *blossom,* which both belong to the domain of plants.

P1 (1810–1859)	P2 (1860–1909)	P3 (1910–1959)	P4 (1960–2009)
	flower	*blossom*	*blossom*
		flower	*flower*

Table 5: Repelled collocates of *perfumed*

In the case of *scented*, many of the nouns attracted to it belong to the semantic domain of earth, atmosphere and weather, especially in the first three periods, where examples such as *gale*, *wind*, *slope* and *hillside,* highlighted in purple, are found (cf. Table 6).

Many nouns denoting cleaning/cosmetic products also appear as distinctive, especially in P3 and P4. Examples of such nouns include *soap*, *powder* and *bath*. Although *water* is highly polysemous, it is often used with *scented* to refer to artificial aromas such as those emanated from either cleansing/cosmetic products, thus occurring in the specialized sense ‘alcohol plus essential oils’.

P1 (1810–1859)	P2 (1860–1909)	P3 (1910–1959)	P4 (1960–2009)
fop	*grass*	*soap*	*candle*
gale	*soap*	*cigarette*	*geranium*
vale	*grape*	*envelope*	*soap*
kerchief	*nightwind*	*lace*	*bath*
ground	*fountain*	*hillside*	*water*
leather	*lime*	*sheet*	*oil*
wind	*handkerchief*	*powder*	*man*
apolyon	*fan*	*variety*	*rice*
ayrshire	*slope*	*air*	*tissue*
coronal	*box*	*boudoir*	*notepaper*

Table 6: Attracted collocates of *scented*

In general, over time *scented* seems to be mowing away from denoting more natural aromas to more artificial ones, with early examples being of the type exemplified in (8) and later ones being of the type illustrated in (9). Whereas in (8) many natural elements are present (e.g., *sunbeams wind*, *gale*), in (9), only synthetic products of different types are mentioned (i.e., *candle*, *bath*, *suds*).

(8) The softened sunbeams pour around A fairy light, uncertain, pale; The wind flows cool; the **scented ground** Is breathing odors on the gale. (*COHA*, 1831)

(9) She lit **scented candles**, filled the bathtub with hot water and bubble bath, and sank down into the suds. (*COHA*, 1997)

Interestingly, some of the nouns attracted to *scented* are the same as those of *perfumed*, namely *soap*, *handkerchief*, *man* and *powder*. This means that these nouns are distinctive of more than one adjective, although sometimes in different periods. For instance, while *man* is a distinctive collocate of *perfumed* in P2, it is significantly attracted to *scented* in P4.

Table 7 shows the repelled nouns of *scented*. The nouns in this table again point to similarities between *scented* and *perfumed*, as these two adjectives also share several repelled nouns, namely *flower* and *blossom*. This fact probably points to *scented* and *perfumed* being more semantically similar to one another than they are to *fragrant*.

P1 (1810–1859)	P2 (1860–1909)	P3 (1910–1959)	P4 (1960–2009)
	flower	*blossom*	*breath*
		flower	*flower*
		rose	
		smoke	

Table 7: Repelled collocates of *scented*

The last two adjectives, *sweet-scented* and *sweet-smelling*, are low-frequency items (198 and 253 occurrences attested in *COHA*, respectively) and therefore the results need to

be taken with caution. In fact, none of the collocates of these two adjectives were repelled by them according to the multiple DCA. Moreover, some nouns which the test identified as being significantly attracted to these adjectives co-occur with them only once or twice in the corpus. This is the case of *stock-gillies*, *porch-climber*, *hiding-nook*, *dilettante*, *collyriuln* and *balderdash* for *sweet-scented* and *brilliantine*, *barricade*, *cleansingpowder*, *Ulla*, *candlewax*, *pine-quill* and *hay-mow* for *sweet-smelling*. In such cases, DCA is not very effective given that these collocates may well be due to speakers' individual lexical choices rather than to actual collocational preferences of the adjectives.

Despite this fact, some general tendencies can still be identified. Table 8 exhibits the distinctive collocates of *sweet-scented*. This adjective displays some similarities to *fragrant* since it is used mostly to denote natural smells, being attracted to nouns which designate plants, especially in P1 and P2: *herb*, *flower*, *meadow*, *shrub*, *gum*, *apple-tree*, *corn-field*, *chaparral*, *lemon-grass* and *clover*. Although such nouns also appear in the last two periods (e.g., *grass*, *gardenia*, *vine*), in P3 several nouns referring to people emerge (e.g., *doctor*, *burglar*), which seems to point to a rise of *sweet-scented* with such nouns.

P1 (1810–1859)	P2 (1860–1909)	P3 (1910–1959)	P4 (1960–2009)
herb	*chaparral*	*grass*	*dilettante*
flower	*lemon-grass*	*ball*	*marble*
meadow	*parish*	*banner*	*gardenia*
shrub	*path*	*being*	*stuff*
gum	*clover*	*burglar*	*vine*
apple-tree	*shrub*	*collyriuln*	
bottle	*balderdash*	*doctor*	
Brennus	*hiding-nook*	*eddy*	
confectioner	*sand*	*enclosure*	
corn-field	*stock-gillies*	*porch-climber*	

Table 8: Attracted collocates of *sweet-scented*

In Table 9 the distinctive collocates of *sweet-smelling* are shown. As happened with *scented*, there might also exist a move in the case of *sweet-smelling* from denoting natural smells in the early periods, where nouns such as *vineyard*, *herb* and *clove* appear, to designating more artificial ones (e.g., *sponge*, *cologne*).[2] Moreover, just as in the case of both *perfumed* and *sweet-scented*, *sweet-smelling* seems also to increasingly co-occur with nouns referring to people. This is evident particularly in P4, where several such collocates emerge, for instance, *girl*, *cowboy* and *Ulla*.

[2] This general move towards an increased use of the adjectives in the artificial sense could be caused by societal developments throughout the period analyzed, namely industrialization and modernization (cf. Pettersson-Traba, forthcoming).

P1 (1810–1859)	P2 (1860–1909)	P3 (1910–1959)	P4 (1960–2009)
savor	*incense*	*needle*	*Ulla*
fame	*savor*	*spice*	*flesh*
vineyard	*herb*	*vapor*	*girl*
name	*flower*	*barricade*	*hay*
tobacco	*pine*	*brilliantine*	*candlewax*
	clove	*buttery*	*cleansingpowder*
	cologne	*commonplace*	*cowboy*
	hay-mow	*dirt*	*crate*
	pine-quill	*farmhouse*	*darling*
	sponge	*fat*	*gas*

Table 9: Attracted collocates of *sweet-smelling*

4. Conclusions

This paper has delved into the collocational preferences of *fragrant*, *perfumed*, *scented*, *sweet-scented* and *sweet-smelling* over time in American English by conducting a multiple DCA. The results are in line with previous studies (e.g., Pettersson-Traba 2020, 2021), as a division of semantic labor emerged, especially between *fragrant* and *sweet-scented*, on the one hand, and *perfumed* and *scented*, on the other. While the former two primarily designate natural aromas, the latter two are mostly used to denote artificial ones. In the case of *scented*, this is true particularly in later periods (i.e., P3 and P4), as there seems to be an increase of this adjective with nouns denoting synthetic substances (e.g., *candle*, *soap*). Something similar to *scented* seems to occur also with *sweet-smelling*. Despite the existence of some diachronic tendences over the period 1810–2009, namely a move towards more artificial aromas and an increase with people nouns, which can be observed in the case of several of the adjectives, the five near-synonyms do overall display highly idiosyncratic collocational preferences given that there are not many nouns which are distinctive of more than one of the adjectives. In this sense, Firth's (1957, 11) quote mentioned in Section 1, namely, "you shall know the word by the company it keeps", seems to be an adequate description of this synonym set.

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On the Development of Mirative Readings: A Contrastive Study on English and Spanish

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Abstract

Mirative meaning —i.e., the linguistic expression of surprise and related senses like unexpectedness and counterexpectation— may emerge from an array of sources. The present paper focuses on one such source: culminative or resultative meaning, which often develops mirative nuances (completion/ end result > surprise). To explore this path of semantic change, this paper zooms in on two mirative verb constructions: English [*end up* V*ing*] and Spanish [*acabar* V*ndo*], both of which are strikingly similar in form and function. The paper contrasts the diachronic developments of both constructions, focusing on their semantic change. Data for this corpus-based study have been drawn from several diachronic and synchronic corpora: COHA and COCA for English and CORDE and CORPES for Spanish. My results show that, alongside their conclusive meaning, both verb constructions have acquired semantic mirative extensions related to unexpected information and counterexpectation via subjectification and pragmatic enrichment.

Keywords: mirativity, subjectification, pragmatic enrichment, semantic change, [*end up* V*ing*], [*acabar* V*ndo*].

1. Introduction

Mirativity, the linguistic encoding of surprise and related meanings (DeLancey 1997; 2001; 2012; Aikhenvald 2012), can rise from diverse sources in the world's languages. The present chapter aims to explore one such pathway: the semantic change whereby meanings expressing completion or end result acquire mirative nuances. To do so, two similar constructions are examined: (a) [*end up* V*ing*] in American English and (b) [*acabar* V*ndo*] in Peninsular Spanish, illustrated in (1)-(2) below:

(1) In 1992, Cuomo **ended up delivering** the nominating speech for Bill Clinton at the Democratic convention in New York. (COCA:2015, in Serrano-Losada 2020, 105)
(2) Sin embargo, la experiencia dice que así es como suelen hacerse las listas negras que un mal día [...] alguien **acaba utilizando** para cometer una barbaridad. (CORPES:2016)

These constructions are strikingly similar: both take gerundial complementation and express conventionalized mirative meaning in the form of counterexpectation and unexpectedness. In these examples, the outcome expressed in the gerund complements contravenes the speakers' expectations (the verbs can be dubbed as "contrary to what is expected").

The diachronic data demonstrate that, despite ostensible differences in their developments, both mirative constructions share an underlying pathway of semantic change: alongside their conclusive meaning, both verb constructions have acquired semantic mirative extensions related to unexpected information and counterexpectation via subjectification and pragmatic enrichment. This paper aims to provide evidence for a seldom explored, cross-linguistic tendency whereby conclusive, resultative and change-of-state related meanings give rise to mirative readings. My findings contribute to the study of this pathway, attested not only in lexical expressions (e.g., Spanish *al final*; Dutch *uiteindelijk* 'in the end'), but also in grammaticalized constructions like the ones examined in this paper.

In what follows, I first provide some background knowledge on mirativity as a crosslinguistic category (Section 2). Then, I turn to the English (Section 3) and the Spanish (Section 4) case studies proper. For each of these, I briefly examine their present-day usage and provide an overall account of their historical developments, with a focus on their semantic developments. The chapter finalizes with an overall comparison between the two constructions and a discussion on the diachronic emergence of mirative nuances (Section 5).

2. Mirativity from a crosslinguistic perspective

MIRATIVITY, a grammatical category found in several languages, conveys sudden discovery, surprise, and unprepared mind of the speaker, the audience or the main character of a story, with overtones of counterexpectation and new information (Aikhenvald 2012: 435). Since this category deals with *information* –new, unexpected information–, it has been often likened to EVIDENTIALITY –the linguistic expression of *source of information* (Aikhenvald 2004). The typological data, however, seems to suggest that there is enough crosslinguistic evidence to consider evidentiality and mirativity as independent, though closely related categories. The example under (3) illustrates a typical mirative marker:

(3) Tarma Quechua (Adelaar 2013, 102)

chawra-qa	cha:-qa	ka-ku-**naq**	alqu
then-TOP	that-TOP	be-CUST-3.A/S.MIR	dog

'So it turned out that he was a dog [not a human being as he had appeared to be]'

The suffix *-naq* in Tarma Quechua has been described as a "sudden discovery tense marker" (Adelaar 1977, 96), a dedicated verbal clitic with "the exclusive function of denoting the surprising nature or unexpectedness of an ongoing event or situation" (Adelaar 2013, 95). By using *-naq*, the speaker is signaling that the outcome of the event (the creature being a dog) challenges the speaker's expectations (that the creature was human), thus expressing overtones of sudden revelation, surprise, and counterexpectation.

While an important number of languages express evidentiality and mirativity morphologically, the Germanic and Romance languages tend to express them lexically, e.g., *apparently*, *evidently*, *surprisingly*, *unexpectedly* (cf. Diewald and Smirnova 2010a; 2010b). However, this does not mean that such categories are not expressed in more grammatical terms. Take the examples under (4):

(4) a. Ecuadorian Highland Spanish:
El año que viene **ha sido** bisiesto
'(I just realize) next year is a leap year.' (Hengeveld and Olbertz 2012, 493)

b. European Spanish:
¡**Tendrá** cara el tío!
'This guy has got a lot of cheek!' (Escandell-Vidal and Leonetti 2021, 167)

Contact language varieties like Andean Spanish, are said to frequently encode such categories due to the influence of the substrate language. The present perfect in (4a), used in conjunction with the future temporal expression "el año que viene", might seem puzzling to speakers of other varieties of Spanish. The reason is that this present perfect is not used as a tense marker, but as a mirative marker signaling the surprise of the speaker. Such use is attributed to contact with Quechuan varieties which have dedicated morphological mirative markers. While mirative and evidential uses are common in contact varieties, non-contact varieties are prone to developing such senses as well –see, e.g., (4b), in which the future tense is not signaling tense but functions as a mirative marker.

Spanish and English have a myriad of strategies to convey mirative senses, ranging from intonation to specific grammatical uses such as the ones illustrated in (1)-(2) and (4). These mirative strategies can emerge from a wide array of sources. Among others, indirect evidentials or future meaning, as shown in (4b). The Turkish evidential suffix *-mIş*, for instance, has acquired mirative uses (Aksu-Koç and Slobin 1986). Mirative future tenses like (4b) are well documented in Romance (Squartini 2018; see Escandell-Vidal and Leonetti 2021 for the case of Spanish mirative futures in particular). In what follows, I provide an overview of two case studies: (a) the rise and development of [*end up* V*ing*] and (b) the rise and development of [*acabar* V*ndo*]. Both constructions can be said to exemplify an intermediate stage between grammatical and discourse-pragmatic realizations of mirativity. These constructions have undergone an analogous semantic change, from conclusion to surprise.

3. Case study 1: *end up* V*ing*[1]

As reported in Serano-Losada (2020, 98), phrasal *end up*, which first emerged in the late-nineteenth century, underwent an abrupt increase in frequency from the 1950s onward (see Figure 1) and is now pervasive across registers. The abrupt development of mirative *end up* has been explained in terms of analogical modeling after similar constructions. As argued in Serrano-Losada (2020, 113), its development "cannot be understood in isolation, without taking into consideration other mirative constructions. In fact, its emergence seems to be closely related to mirative *turn out*, a raising verb with which it shares multiple semantic and syntactic traits." Data for this specific study were drawn from COCA and COHA. The COCA query yielded 31,581 tokens for PDE, out of which I selected a randomized 500-token sample to carry out the PDE description of mirative *end up*. The LModE data, used to trace its historical development, include 5,392 instances of the verb.

3.1 Conventionalized mirative meaning

In PDE, this phrasal verb occurs in two main constructions: the copulative construction (e.g., *he ended up dead*) and the raising construction illustrated in (1). Mirative meaning in the latter construction can be considered *non-parasitic* (Serrano-Losada 2020, 107), as it is a core semantic property of the construction and not a mere pragmatic inference: as illustrated in (1′) with a simple entailment test, the mirative meaning cannot be easily canceled:

[1] The present section builds on data reported in Serrano-Losada (2020).

(1′) Cuomo **ended up delivering** the nominating speech for Bill Clinton, # *not that this is newsworthy, unexpected or surprising.*

Canceling the mirative meaning in (1′) is problematic: to do so, one would have to omit phrasal *end up*: "Cuomo delivered the nominating speech…" (cf. Serrano-Losada 2017a; 2017b for mirative *turn out*).

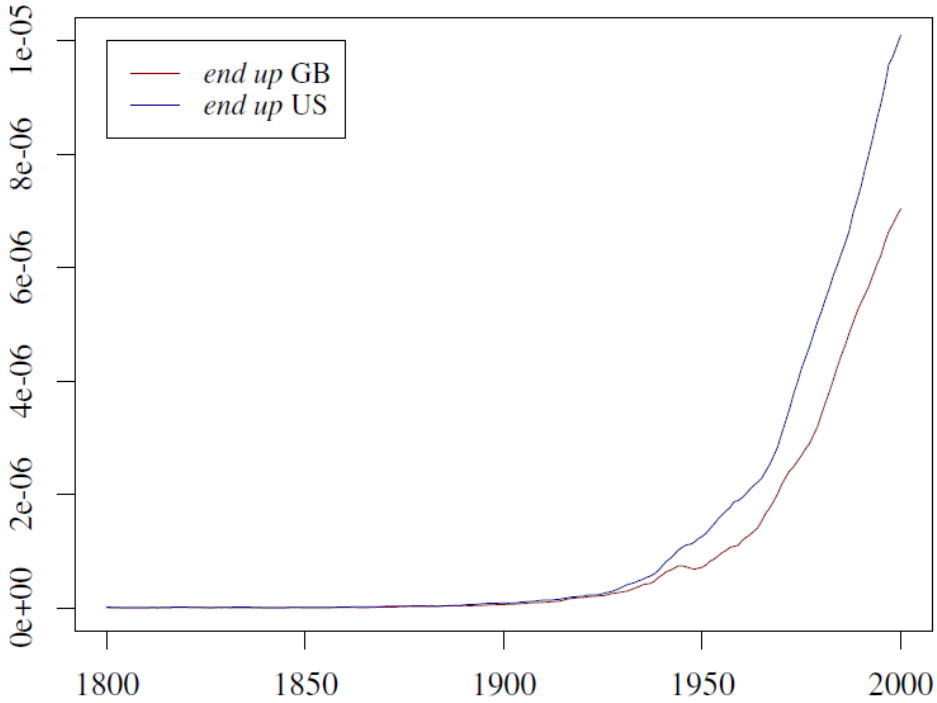

Figure 1: Phrasal *end up* in British and American English in Google Books (Serrano-Losada 2020, 102)

3.2 Origins of mirative *end up*

Phrasal *end up* has its origins in the mid-nineteenth century. Originally meaning 'to carry through to the end; to finish, complete' (OED, s.v. *end*, II), the verb's resultative sense was reinforced by means of the particle *up*, meaning completion, an element that was grammaticalized as a verb particle in the course of history (Denison 1985). As shown in Table 1, the different intransitive senses for *end* recorded in the OED are helpful when trying to trace the development of phrasal *end up* as a mirative verb.

In its first sense, (a), *end* expresses terminative aspect and is quasi-synonymous with *finish*. In its second sense, (b), it conveys resultative aspect and its meaning is closer to PDE copular *end up*. The third sense, (c), expresses speaker evaluation. In the example in (c), *end up* functions as a copula, taking an obligatory manner predicative adjunct. The verb in this last instance expresses mirativity as a result of a sudden or unexpected realization or discovery as regards the proposition (Serrano-Losada 2020).

Table 1. Intransitive *end* senses in the OED (s.v. *end*, II)

Sense	Example
a. To come to an end. Also colloq. to *end up*.	Moon, Mrs. Myers, Marvin, and William Leland all signed the articles of capitulation, and the affair **ended up** with a grand ball at the Clarendon. (COHA:1872)
b. To issue or result *in*.	You're both always telling me about your domestic happiness, and every time I see you, you **end up** in a quarrel. (COHA 1879)
c. Of persons, Const. *in*, or *by*, with gerund: To come ultimately to (do something).	All this cast a gloom on the beginning of the day; but it **ended up** brilliantly. (COHA 1878)

The diachronic data show that the emergence of mirative overtones is the result of a subjectification process triggered by a process of pragmatic enrichment, as erstwhile pragmatic inferences became conventionalized as semantic meaning (Serrano-Losada 2020, 111). Therefore, mirative readings emerge in a process whereby the speaker reinterprets an objective, externally observed change in terms of their own (internal) perceptual or cognitive evaluation (Traugott 1989). The speaker's perspective is thus expressed in the proposition by means of surprise or counterexpectation. (5) below schematizes the semantic change experienced by *end up*.

(5) Semantic change of *end up* (Serrano-Losada 2020, 111)
'to come to an end' → 'to come to do something unexpectedly'
conclusion/result → *mirativity*

This semantic shift from conclusion or result to surprise is not uncommon across languages. In fact, the next case study illustrates a very similar development in Spanish.

4. Case study 2: *acabar* V*ndo*

Present-day data for this case study were drawn from CORPES XXI (2001-2016). Given the number of instances (10,167 tokens), I sampled the two most recent years and analyzed 627 tokens belonging to Spain alone. The historical data were drawn from CORDE. A total of 1,007 instances were examined after manually pruning the data (1,441 tokens). The diachronic data include both instances of [*acabar*] [V*ndo*] and periphrastic [*acabar* V*ndo*].

4.1. Conventionalized mirative meaning

Periphrasic [*acabar* V*ndo*] is a conclusive periphrasis used to express both the end result of a process and counter-expectation. As illustrated in (6), this construction can potentially have ambiguous readings between lexical (6a) and periphrastic (6b) interpretations:

(6) Mamá acabó bajando la vista. (CORPES:2015)
a. Mamá acabó [su intervención] bajando la vista / Mamá acabó así
b. Mamá bajó la vista

As with [*end up* V*ing*], mirative meaning is conventionalized in the case of [*acabar* V*ndo*]. Take (7) below, summarized as (7′) to carry out some simple cancelation tests:

(7) Sacamos también un segundo libro, y como ella se había situado muy bien en Francia con muchos padrinos, **acabó sacando** una película de la obra. Malísima. (CORPES:2015)

(7′) Acabó sacando una película
a. Acabó sacando una película, # *aunque esto es lo que esperaba.*
b. Acabó sacando una película, # *pero esto no es algo ni inesperado ni sorprendente.*

The cancelation tests under (7′) evidence the counterexpectation meaning of [*acabar* V*ndo*], as this dedicated construction is used not only to express end result, but to signal that the outcome (the making of a film) contravenes their expectations.

4.2 A historical overview of [*acabar* V*ndo*]

The first instances of *acabar* with gerundial complementation date back to the late-thirteenth century. A polysemous verb, *acabar* has both transitive (8) and intransitive (9) uses:

(8) **Acabo** [esta carta] **rrogando** a Nuestro Señor guarde y prospere Su Reuerendisima y muy Yllustre persona y estado. (Croy:1516)
(9) ¿Qué me dirás de aquel Macas de nuestro tiempo, cómo **acabó** [= murió] **amando**, cuyo triste n tu fuiste la causa? (Celestina:c1499)

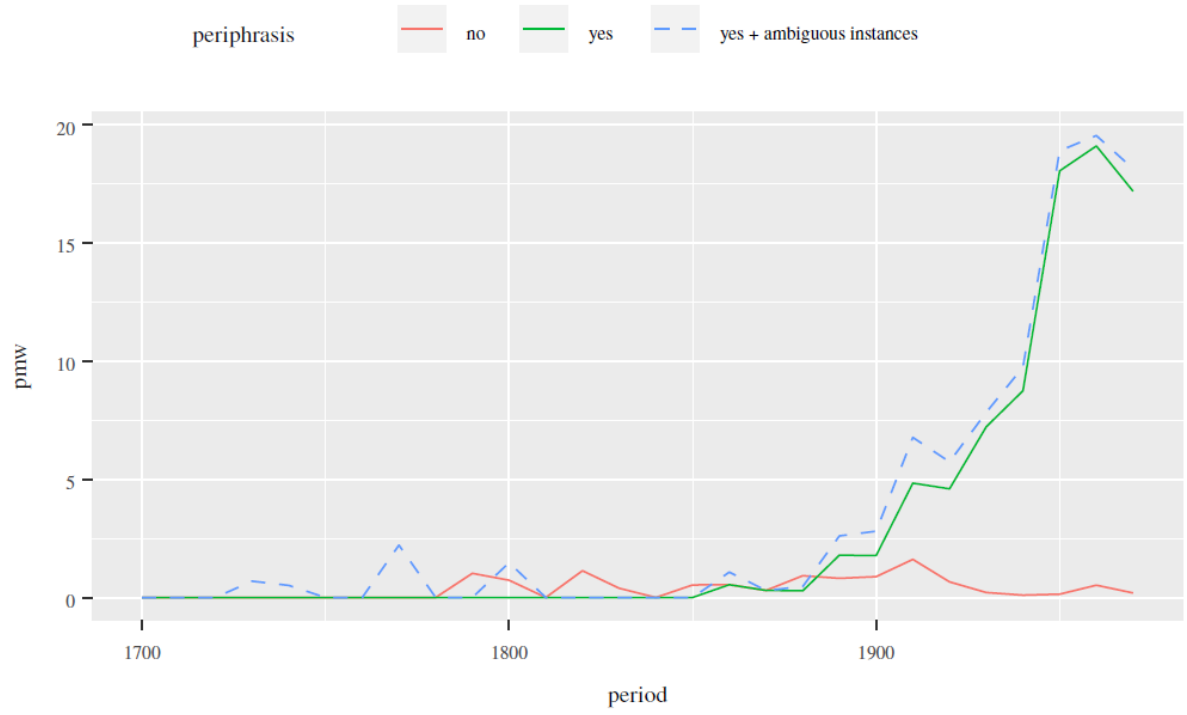

Figure 2: A diachronic overview of *acabar* V*ndo* in Spain

The data allow us to posit three different stages in the historical development of [*acabar* V*ndo*]. During Stage I (1600-1850), intransitive *acabar* appears in a lexical construction (meaning 'to finish') with gerundial clauses expressing a temporal relation (seventeenth century onwards). Such instances are scarce until the nineteenth century, although ambiguous readings are documented from early on.

(11) No se reduce á un silvido: no sé explicarla sino diciendo, que comienza con un pí alto: que á los 8 segundos de tiempo dá otro, y á cada segundo ménos repite, hasta que apresurando así, **acaba trinando**, y en seguida dice dos ó tres veces chororo. (CORDE 1802)

In instances like (11), [*acabar* V*ndo*] is used to designate the actual end of an event/process.

During Stages II & III (1850-1970) there is an increase in ambiguous instances, which begin to grow in frequency from the 1850s (see Figure 2). Such semantic ambiguities might have arisen as "invited inferences" (cf. König and Traugott 1988; Traugott and Dasher 2002) alongside the more established and central sense of the linguistic expression in particular contexts. Thus, these ambiguous instances of [*acabar* V*ndo*] function as so-called "bridging contexts" which enable the emergence of a new meaning which eventually becomes conventionalized.

In this way, Stage II is characterized by the reanalysis of the source lexical construction: *acabar* starts designating the moment in which the situation described by the gerund changes, not the actual event (semantic generalization). The first unambiguous instances are documented in the 1860s, but it will not be until the 1900s that there is an exponential growth of the periphrasis. Stage III coincides with the conventionalization of mirative extensions (i.e., the semanticization of erstwhile pragmatic meaning).

(12) ¿Sabes lo que te digo? Que si tuvieses un amante, dadas las circunstancias, aunque no quisieras, por la fuerza brutal e incontrastable de las cosas, **acabarías marchándote** con él, pero franca, pública y escandalosamente. (CORDE 1890)

In examples like (12), *acabar* no longer refers to the actual end of the event; it has now come to designate the moment in which the situation actually changes. The semantic change of [*acabar* V*ndo*] shows a parallel path to that of mirative *end* up, schematized in (5) above. That is, a process of subjectification triggers the semantic shift from conclusion or end result of a process to surprise. It is this subtle semantic change that allows the grammaticalized construction to acquire mirative extensions, in an analogous way to the subjectification process undergone by mirative *end up* (Section 3).

5. Discussion: from conclusion to surprise

The tendency whereby conclusive, resultative and change-of-state meanings acquire semantic mirative nuances, especially counterexpectation, via pragmatic enrichment and subjectification is observed crosslinguistically (see González Fernández and Maldonado 1998; Serrano-Losada 2017a; 2017b). The present study puts forward evidence for two such processes in English and Spanish. Both constructions, English [*end up* V*ing*] and Spanish [*acabar* V*ndo*], seem to have undergone a similar semantic change whereby conclusion or resultative meanings acquire

mirative readings. Thus, senses related to 'coming to an end' are reinterpreted as 'coming to do something unexpectedly.'

Despite their similarities, the semantic changes analyzed in this study have occurred at different speeds. The grammaticalization of periphrastic [*acabar* V*ndo*] is a process spanning centuries that consolidates during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Throughout its development, a construction involving *acabar* and a gerundial complement is reanalyzed into a periphrastic unit expressing conclusive meaning. This conclusive periphrasis acquires mirative extensions via subjectification that ultimately become conventionalized. The development of [*end up* V*ing*], explored in more detail in Serrano-Losada (2020), takes place in the twentieth century over an incredibly short period of time. The semantic pathway that leads to the development of mirative readings, however, is analogous to that of Spanish [*acabar* V*ndo*]. Thus, both constructions undergo subjectification processes which result in the encoding of mirative senses. This study has aimed to provide further evidence for the grammatical linguistic expression of surprise, which has been largely overlooked in the Germanic and Romance languages, often believed to express mirativity only as a lexical strategy.

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Lexical Specificity and Allostructional Variation: Subject Pronoun Omission in World Englishes

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Abstract

The aim of the present paper is to measure the degree of lexical specificity of the omitted subject pronoun construction and its competing variant, the overt subject pronoun construction, across varieties of English. Four different indexes of lexical specificity are computed by resorting to the family of collostructional analyses and regression modelling strategies. Following previous claims in the literature, the study tests whether there exists a correlation between a variety's developmental stage in the Dynamic Model and how substantive or schematic its constructional representations are. The results shed light on the adequacy of different methods to measure lexical specificity and show that, for competing constructions, it is necessary to employ methods that rigorously account for syntactic variation.

Keywords: lexical specificity, subject pronoun omission, allostructions, varieties of English, collostructional analysis, regression analysis.

1. Introduction

Variation between dialects of English has been usually connected to their degree of nativization, which, according to Schneider (2007, 6), involves "the emergence of locally characteristic linguistic patterns" at different linguistic levels. Besides completely new forms or structures, these local linguistic patterns may also take the form of subtler quantitative differences at the lexis-syntax interface, for which Mukherjee and Gries (2009) coined the term collostructional nativization. Mukherjee and Gries found that the more advanced a variety is in Schneider's (2007) Dynamic Model, the more dissimilar it is to British English in terms of the preferences shown by certain verbs for certain verb complementation patterns. Therefore, the association between words and constructions is a dimension of variation that should not be overlooked, and, in fact, it is an area of research that has received considerable attention in recent years (Hoffmann 2014; 2019; 2020; 2021; Brunner and Hoffmann 2020). Hoffmann (2014; 2021) proposed the Dynamic Model Productivity (DMP) hypothesis, which claims that speakers of varieties of English in earlier developmental stages of Schneider's Dynamic Model tend to rely more on so-called meso-constructions, that is, constructions that are partly lexically filled, rather than on completely abstract or schematic constructions (called macro-constructions). Given that English is used in fewer contexts and domains, speakers of less advanced varieties are exposed to English less frequently than speakers of varieties in later phases of the Dynamic Model, so their constructional representations are more substantive, that is, more tightly connected to specific lexical items. Hoffmann (2014; 2019; 2020; 2021) and Brunner and Hoffmann (2020) examined a series of constructions to test the DMP hypothesis, including the comparative correlative construction (Hoffmann 2014; 2019), the *way* construction (Brunner

and Hoffmann 2020), the V *the* N_{taboo} *out of* construction (Hoffmann 2020), and the *as* ADJ *as a* N construction (Hoffmann 2021). Overall, the findings of their analyses provide support for the hypothesis, thus showing that differences between varieties of English at the lexis-syntax interface follow well-established cognitive principles.

One dimension of variation that has not been considered in the studies mentioned so far is that of the alternation between related syntactic patterns. Syntactic alternations, such as the genitive and dative alternations, have figured prominently in the field of World Englishes. The term *allostruction* has been proposed in the literature on Construction Grammar to capture the functional connection between two syntactically different patterns (Capelle 2006; Perek 2012). Allostructions, that is, "variant structural realizations of a construction" (Capelle 2006, 18), are claimed to be part of speakers' constructional representations and should therefore be integrated into a constructional account of the Dynamic Model. To my knowledge, the only study examining the role of allostructions at the crossroads between Construction Grammar and World Englishes is Grafmiller and Röthlisberger (2015). They examined the dative and particle placement alternations and found that, despite some mixed results, less advanced varieties in the Dynamic Model show overall stronger associations of specific lexical items with certain constructional variants.

The present study builds on this line of research by examining the subject pronoun omission alternation across varieties of English with respect to its lexical specificity, that is, how strongly associated the variants of the construction are with specific lexical items. Two allostructions can be distinguished, namely, the omitted (1) and the overt (2) subject pronoun variants.

(1) [philosophy]i is good general background for all sorts of things [Ø]i Doesn't give one skill like many of the courses here. (ICE-GB: S1A-033)
(2) [My agent]i called me in this morning to tell me how good [he]i was. (ICE-GB:W1B-003)

The omitted subject pronoun variant can be schematically represented as [(SU) + VERB], with (SU) signaling the omitted subject pronoun and VERB the verb phrase of the clause. Similarly, the overt subject pronoun allostruction can be represented as [SU + VERB], the absence of parentheses around SU indicating that the subject is overtly expressed. Four methods are employed to measure the degree of lexical specificity of the alternation: three of them are based on the family of corpus-based collostructional methods developed by Stefanowitsch and Gries (Stefanowitsch and Gries 2003; 2005; Gries and Stefanowitsch 2004), while the remaining method employs regression modelling strategies (Tamaredo et al. 2020). The main aim of the study is to test Hoffmann's (2014; 2021) DMP hypothesis but integrating allostructional variation. However, the focus of the present paper is also methodological, namely, to compare different methods to measure lexical specificity.

2. Data and Methodology

Instances of omitted and overt subject pronouns were retrieved from the *International Corpus of English* (*ICE*). Due to the difficulty of automatically extracting all relevant occurrences of omitted pronouns from the corpus, which had to be manually identified (see below), only three *ICE* national components were examined, namely, the British, Indian, and Singaporean subcorpora. These varieties were selected because they are in different developmental phases of the Dynamic Model: British English (BrE) is a Phase V variety, Indian English (IndE) a

Phase III variety, and Singapore English (SgE) a Phase IV variety (e.g., Schneider 2007, 153–173). In addition, only a sample of 40 text files from each subcorpus was analyzed.

The data was retrieved from this sample of *ICE* using the following extraction process. First, examples of omitted subjects were manually identified by reading the files included in the sample. This process resulted in a total of 364 instances of omitted subject pronouns in BrE, 324 instances in IndE, and 540 instances in SgE. Then, random samples of 364, 324, and 540 examples of overt subject pronouns, respectively, were extracted from the subcorpora. Finally, two separate databases were created. Database A contained only examples of omitted pronouns in the three varieties, which were annotated for the pronouns that would have occurred in the (SU) slot of the construction had they been overt and the verb lemmas in the VERB slot of the construction. Database B, on the other hand, included all cases, that is, both omitted and overt subject pronouns, which were similarly annotated for the pronouns and the verb lemmas in the (SU)/SU and VERB slots of the construction.

The databases were subsequently submitted to a series of analyses, from which four lexical specificity indexes were computed as follows. Three of the indexes were based on the family of collostructional analyses. The output of these analyses is a series of collostructional strength values showing the degree of association between words and constructions. The first method employed was collexeme analysis (Stefanowitsch and Gries 2003), which calculates which words occur significantly more frequently than expected in a given slot of a construction. In the present study, collexeme analysis was used to measure the degree of association between verb lemmas and the VERB slot of the omitted subject pronoun variant. The second method employed was covarying collexeme analysis (Stefanowitsch and Gries 2005). This method can be used to identify whether there are words that co-occur within a construction significantly more frequently than expected. Here, we measured the degree of association between omitted pronouns in the (SU) slot and verb lemmas in the VERB slot of the omitted subject pronoun variant. Neither collexeme nor covarying collexeme analysis consider allostructional variation, that is, none of them take into account that the omitted pronoun variant is in competition with the overt variant. Therefore, these two methods were applied to database A, which only contained instances of omitted subject pronouns.

The last collostructional method employed was distinctive collexeme analysis (Gries and Stefanowitsch 2004). Contrary to the collexeme and covarying collexeme approaches, distinctive collexeme analysis integrates allostructional variation into the computation of significant collexemes, as it identifies the words that significantly occur with one allostruction as compared to a competing allostruction. Therefore, this method was used to identify the verb lemmas in the VERB slot that significantly occurred with the omitted rather than with the overt subject pronoun variant (and vice versa). The final method employed differed considerably from those in the family of collostructional analyses and required further data annotation. It also focuses on the competition between the omitted and overt pronoun variants, thus integrating allostructional variation, but measures lexical specificity as a function of how much variation in the data is explained by lexical items after the effects of other probabilistic constraints are calculated (Tamaredo et al. 2020). First, a logistic regression model is calculated for each variety including only a series of probabilistic constraints. Then, a mixed effects regression model is calculated for each variety including the same probabilistic constraints but also the effects of lexical items on the choice between the competing allostructions. Finally, lexical specificity is calculated as the increase in the models' predictive capacity when lexical items are also considered, which represents how important these lexical items are as determinants of the alternation between the competing allostructions. The lexical items

included in the second set of models were the verb lemmas in the VERB slot of the constructions.

Database B was employed for the last two methods, namely, distinctive collexeme analysis and regression modelling. However, further data annotation was necessary for the regression modelling method, given that, besides the verb lemmas in the VERB slot, instances of omitted and overt pronouns had to be annotated for a series of probabilistic constraints capturing other dimensions of variation. The selected constraints are shown in table 1, together with the levels distinguished in each variable (Tamaredo et al. 2020).

Constraints	Levels
Clause position	Initial vs. non-initial
Clause type	Main vs. subordinate
Coordination	Coordination vs. no coordination
Pronoun-verb frequency of co-occurrence	Co-occurrence frequency of pronoun and verb (counts per million words)
Verb class	Lexical vs. modal auxiliary vs. non-modal auxiliary

Table 1: Probabilistic constraints included in logistic regression models

Four lexical specificity indexes were computed from these methods:

- Index 1 (collexeme analysis): Number of significant verb collexemes in the VERB slot of the omitted subject pronoun variant divided by the number of instances of the variant per variety.
- Index 2 (covarying collexeme analysis): Number of significant pronoun-verb combinations in the omitted subject pronoun variant divided by the number of instances of the variant per variety.
- Index 3 (distinctive collexeme analysis): Number of significant verb collexemes in the VERB slot of the omitted and overt pronoun variants divided by the number of instances of the omitted or overt variant per variety.
- Index 4 (regression modelling): increase in predictive capacity from a model with only probabilistic constraints to a model with both probabilistic constraints and verb lemmas in the VERB slot of the omitted and over pronoun variants per variety.

3. Results

Table 2 displays the values of each of the four lexical specificity indexes per variety.

	BrE	IndE	SgE
Index 1	0.357	0.458	0.287
Index 2	0.140	0.068	0.069
Index 3	0.016	0.021	0.022
Index 4	0.017	0.025	0.022

Table 2: Lexical specificity indexes per variety

The values are to be interpreted as follows: the higher the value, (a) the more lexically specific the omitted pronoun variant is in each variety (in indexes 1 and 2), or (b) the more the alternation between omitted and overt subject pronouns depends on specific lexical items in each variety (in indexes 3 and 4). The following clines of varieties emerge from indexes 1 and 2 on the basis of the lexical specificity of the omitted pronoun variant, where '>' means 'more lexically specific than':

- Index 1: IndE > BrE > SgE
- Index 2: BrE > SgE > IndE

The results of index 1 are almost the expected ones according to Hoffmann's (2014,;2021) DMP hypothesis: IndE, the least advanced variety, emerges as the variety where the omitted pronoun variant is most lexically specific, so the one where speakers rely the most on concrete lexical instantiations of the construction rather than on abstract macro-constructions. However, in BrE the allostruction seems to be more lexically specific than in SgE, which is unexpected given that the former is a Phase V variety and the latter a Phase IV variety. Even more unexpected are the findings of index 2: the order of varieties is exactly the opposite to the hypothesized one. Thus, in BrE, the most advanced variety, the omitted pronoun variant is most lexically specific, followed, in this order, by SgE and then IndE. Therefore, so far only index 1 provides results that match Hoffmann's (2014; 2021) DMP hypothesis.

The following clines of varieties emerge from the results of indexes 3 and 4, the indexes that consider allostructional variation:

- Index 3: SgE > IndE > BrE
- Index 4: IndE > SgE > BrE

As can be observed, the clines of varieties resulting from indexes 3 and 4 closely match the expected order of varieties according to Hoffmann's DMP hypothesis. In both cases, it is in BrE, the most advanced variety in the Dynamic Model, where speakers rely the least on specific verb lemmas in the VERB slot of the allostructions to choose between omitted and overt subject pronouns. In the cline based on index 4, IndE and SgE are ordered as expected, with the former being less lexically specific than the latter, but the order of these two varieties according to index 3 is again the opposite to what we would have expected. On the whole, however, the allostructional indexes 3 and 4 seem to outperform indexes 1 and 2, at least in terms of how closely the results match Hoffmann's hypothesis.

4. Conclusions

The four indexes of lexical specificity calculated in this study have provided diverging clines of varieties that might seem at first sight difficult to interpret and reconcile with previous studies. After all, no clear patterns emerge: it is not the case that the indexes that consider allostructional variation (i.e., indexes 3 and 4), on the one hand, and those that do not account for it (i.e., indexes 1 and 2), on the other, result in the same clines of varieties. Similarly, the indexes that measure lexical specificity by focusing only on verb lemmas in the VERB slot of the constructions (i.e., indexes 1, 3, and 4) all provide slightly different rankings of varieties. Therefore, how can we make sense of the results of the present study? The only index that generated the expected order of varieties on the basis of the lexical specificity of the pronoun omission alternation was index 4, calculated on the basis of regression modelling strategies.

Indexes 1 and 2 (i.e., collexeme and covarying collexeme analysis, respectively) both resulted in clines of varieties that did not match Hoffmann's (2014; 2021) DMP hypothesis. Interestingly, these two indexes are the ones that do not consider allostructional variation, as they focus on individual constructions in isolation. The constructions investigated by Hoffmann (2014; 2019; 2020; 2021) and Brunner and Hoffmann (2020) are all constructions that do not seem to be in competition with others, namely, the comparative correlative construction, the *Way* construction, the V *the* N_{taboo} *out of* NP construction, and the *as* ADJ *as a* N construction. In none of these cases is there a clear competitor, that is, a syntactic variant of the constructions that occupies a similar functional space. It could be the case, then, that the non-allostructional indexes 1 and 2 are only adequate metrics of lexical specificity for constructions that do not exhibit allostructional variation, which is not the case of the pronoun omission alternation.

Index 3 (i.e., distinctive collexeme analysis), on the other hand, is a metric of lexical specificity that considers allostructional variation. However, the cline of varieties resulting from this index was also not the expected one: SgE emerged as the variety in which the pronoun omission alternation was most lexical specific, even though the least advanced variety in the Dynamic Model was IndE. It is not surprising that out of the allostructional indexes, index 4 outperformed index 3. After all, the method employed to calculate index 4 is more complete in that it isolates the variation in the data that can be explained by probabilistic constraints, which typically play a major role in syntactic variation, and the variation that can be explained by lexical items, verb lemmas in this case. On the other hand, distinctive collexeme analysis, the method underlying index 3, only examined the degree of association between verb lemmas and either the omitted or the overt pronoun constructions, thus not accounting for the influence of other factors in the choice between the variants. All in all, it seems that index 4 is the best choice to measure lexical specificity of competing constructions, but index 3 cannot be completely ruled out as it might be a good alternative to index 4 (and a much less time-consuming one) to measure the lexical specificity of other syntactic alternations. However, to shed further light on this and other issues raised by the present study, additional research examining more syntactic alternations in more varieties of English is required.

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PART III
Literature and Cultural Studies

Root Identity-Relation Identity in Inga Simpson's *Understory: A Life with Trees*

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Abstract

Inga Simpson's memoir *Understory: A Life with Trees* (2017) illustrates significant changes in contemporary life writing that align it with transmodern thought and its turn to the relational. I here argue that these changes become apparent when reading *Understory* alongside Édouard Glissant's distinction between root identity and relation identity (*Poetics of Relation*). In generic terms, the memoir confirms the growing openness to different sets of conventions, in this case those of the botany treatise and the nature essay. Moreover, the work expands limits on a further thematic level by foregrounding Simpson's affinity with trees and how it provides a true map of her story of living in a forest in Queensland for ten years. With this other-than-human perspective, Simpson reveals the interpenetration between the two types of identity theorised by Glissant, opting for a complex relational view that does not rule out roots and which makes especial sense in the context of post-Mabo developments in Australian writing.

Keywords: autobiography, transmodernity, relationality, nature writing, Indigenous Australians.

1. Introduction

This paper analyses Simpson's memoir *Understory: A Life with Trees* as an instance of transmodern writing of the self, based on the challenge it poses to Glissant's distinction between root identity and relational identity within a postcolonial frame. My main thesis is that in *Understory* Simpson presents her self as essentially relational even when she aspires to the condition of trees. This conception of the self as always already open to the natural world, trees in particular, has implications for the writing of her memoir which I suggest align it with some forms of transmodernity. Transmodernity is a global mind change that entails a rethinking of priorities in the consideration of the connections between self and world. It heralds the shift from postmodernity to a new phase of modernity which discards grand narratives but revisits some of the contributions of the Enlightenment that are still functional as regulative ideals (Rodríguez Magda 2011, 7). It can be envisioned as a reaction against the excesses of patriarchy, post-industrialism, post-capitalism and the technological revolution.

Transmodernity has brought about significant changes in the conception of identity. In broad lines, the transmodern self has veered away from the modern emphasis on autonomy, self-sufficiency and territoriality at the same time that it means to avoid the postmodern tendency to solipsism, acknowledging the inextricable connection with other human beings and with the environment. In the footsteps of Marc Luyckx (1999; 2010) and Irena Ateljevic (2013), I regard transmodernity as an other-oriented way of being in the world, still in the

offing. According to Luyckx, we are witnessing the first light of a new, more relational consciousness (1999, 974) characterised by values such as "respect for Mother Nature, care for communities, for family relations, for internal growth, for other cultures" (2010, 40). Perhaps the term that best describes the transmodern idea of the self is "ecological", that is, embedded in and depending on a mesh of relationships with the human and the other-than-human that corrects the established view of nature as opposed to culture.

In her memoir, Simpson describes the experience of living among trees for ten years in the Sunshine Coast hinterland of Queensland. In generic terms, *Understory* confirms the growing openness to different sets of conventions and expectations that characterises transmodern writing, in this case those of the botany treatise and the nature essay. Her affinity with trees is reflected in the title and the structure of her work. The title plays with the homophonous term "understorey", meaning what lies under the canopy of a forest. Significantly, the memoir is divided into three parts representing the main layers of vegetation in the wood: Canopy, Middlestorey and Understorey. Each section features a series of chapters, most of them named after a particular tree currently growing in Australia. The chapters provide the Latin name, a precise, almost scientific description of the tree which includes jargon, the place in Australia where it grows, the fauna that benefits from it, together with traditional human uses of the tree both by Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. As the pun in the title hints, this is a lived landscape entangled with the personal story of the author, both at momentous times in her life and when engaged in everyday activities. The trees trigger memories of Simpson's childhood at the family farm at the same time that they root her in the forest cottage she moved to with her partner in 2007 in order to consolidate her career as a nature writer.

Understory expands limits on a further thematic level by trying out an unconventional approach. Although relationships with family, friends and acquaintances—the staples of the classical memoir—are not absent from Simpson's work, it is the affective significance of her bond with trees that provides a stronger map of her story and a key to her identity. Besides, it is trees that help her find her voice as a writer, both of fiction and non-fiction. In the following quotation Simpson acknowledges the transformation she underwent in her forest cottage:

> I remember that night, that feeling of first finding my way in my new home, my new life—how exited, confident and full of wonder I was. Nothing has turned out how I imagined, and I am no longer that person, but I am at home in this place, and I have it to thank for who I have become (Simpson 2017, 229).

Simpson's transformation through her engagement with trees can be analysed as a move towards a transmodern stance, better understood in the light of Glissant's theories on identity in his *Poetics of Relation* (Glissant [1990] 2010).

2. Root Identity–Relation Identity

This paper examines Simpson's memoir by drawing on Édouard Glissant's distinction between root identity and relation identity (Glissany [1990] 2010, 143–44). As a postcolonial author and critic, Glissant recommends the latter over the former, that is, the interdependent and nomadic over the possessive and territorial. With the addition of an other-than-human perspective, Simpson reveals the interpenetration between the two types of identity, opting for a complex relational view that does not rule out roots and that I argue is typical of the transmodern subject.

Understory provides instances of Glissant's conception of identity as territorial, common in a settler colony like Australia. In fact, some of Simpson's Scottish forefathers settled in the country as miners and farmers (Simpson 2017, 49). The author's attachment to her family farm as well as to her new cottage and the surrounding piece of forest somewhat echo the territorial possessiveness of early colonisation. As for nomadism, it is alluded to in connection with the traditional way of life of Indigenous Australians. In addition, Simpson's moves from New South Wales, where she grew up, to Canberra, Brisbane, the Sunshine Coast hinterland and back to New South Wales, thus highlighting itinerancy. It is, however, relationality rather than the nomadic that constitutes the centrepiece of the memoir. My analysis reveals that Simpson's connection with trees ends up undoing Glissant's clear-cut distinction. At the heart of *Understory* lies the radical transformation of Simpson's identity, which starts as a quest for roots and culminates in the experience of relations as both rooted and renewed by nomadism, paradoxically inspired by her fondness for trees.

At the end of the process, as revealed by the analysis of the text both alongside and against the grain of Glissant's theories, Simpson has made a number of important discoveries:

1. That trees are at the same time rooted and relational beings.
2. That her form of environmental activism requires some readjustment.
3. That she needs to undo the latinising of botany terms and learn the indigenous names of trees before she can learn the language of the forest.
4. That human exceptionalism and anthropocentrism have to be put in perspective;
5. And, finally, that lone trees grow taller but die younger.

I will next briefly illustrate these points with significant quotations and draw some conclusions.

2.1 Trees: Rooted and Relational

Simpson learns from Peter Wohlleben's *The Hidden Life of Trees* that trees have social needs and are capable of communicating among themselves through fungi in what he calls the "wood wide web" (Wohlleben [2015] 2016, 10–11). In parallel, Simpson strives to put down roots in her forest cottage after the 2008 global financial crisis has made the situation untenable and she and her partner are faced with mounting debts. At one point in the memoir, Simpson states that her friend Jonathan, now dead, would be pleased with her new life in the forest. "He always said I needed earthing" (Simpson 2017, 189), she reminisces. Trees provide the author with a sense of earthing which avoids the dangers of possessiveness and reveals the full potential of roots. From trees she learns to be patient, to be still, to breathe (2017, 214). Also, that she is part of a whole and carefree. She visits a forest of ancient Bunyas, a special place for Indigenous Australians, and experiences an epiphany: "For a moment, I drift into geological time, conceiving the millions of years of memory in these trees' DNA. All the things that I worry so much about fall away. I am nothing, and yet, part of everything. The clarity, while beautiful, brings me to my knees" (2017, 229). By the end of the memoir, Simpson is able to affirm that she has put down roots of her own (2017, 262) and now sees reality in a different way that equips her to transcend her attachment to place: "My eyesight is not improving, but I am learning how to see. And there are ironbarks, a species of eucalyptus, all around, anchoring me to the world" (2017, 258).

2.2 A Different Form of Environmental Activism

Simpson is very committed to the defence of the environment. She recounts her angry fight against an electric company that is planning to build some power lines close to her cottage. In a workshop with the US nature writer Rick Bass, she is invited to keep a balance between her writing and her activism in order to avoid the "'fungus' of depression that can come with caring too much" (Simpson 2017, 154). Simpson reflects on the activism of trees. On the one hand she mentions Hourns, the slow-moving trees who help save Middle-Earth in *Lord of the Rings* and wishes to see "Australian trees on the move" (2017, 180). On the other hand, she admits that she has "never felt anything as quick as anger from a tree, although they would have good cause" (2017, 180). Instead, "trees impart only stillness, quiet. They gentle [her], trying to teach by example patience and acceptance—the art of taking the long view" (2017, 181). This does not mean that she abandons "doing" but that she realises the importance of "being", associated to the rootedness of trees. She also finds out that nature has its own ways to heal itself without the need for human intervention: "All my efforts planting, with so few seedlings surviving, and here was the forest remaking itself better than I could ever hope to" (2017, 245). I do not think this can be interpreted as a call to passivity and defeatism but more as an invitation to balance activism with a form of wisdom that allows her to perceive the complexity of things.

2.3 From Latin to Indigenous Names: Learning the Language of the Forest

I would like to argue that in *Understory* Simpson takes on a postcolonial perspective in the context of post-Mabo developments in Australian writing. Back in 1992, the Mabo case overturned the doctrine of Terra Nullius and recognised Indigenous people's land rights. Along the process of adapting to life in the forest, Simpson reflects on her difficult position as a white Australian on a land usurped from its rightful inhabitants. Progressively, she starts using the Latin names of trees she picks up from botanists more sparingly and turns instead to the indigenous names, which she believes render trees in a different light and make communication with them easier. She feels this is the first step towards learning the language of trees:

> I come across the Wiradjuri word for ironbark, magga. […] I could learn the vocabulary of Wiradjuri country, where I grew up, and of Kabi Kabi country where I ended up. Not with the intention of trying to speak the language, or to claim anything more than I really have that isn't mine, but to at least learn the proper names for these trees and plants and birds and animals. It makes a whole lot more sense than Latin (Simpson 2017, 194)

Simpson finds that the grammar, syntax and sounds of the indigenous words manifest the quality of "the places and people that shaped them, and the relationships between things" (2017, 194), resulting in a more organic approach to the environment. Even though she is careful not to incur in appropriation, perhaps she could be charged with a certain degree of essentialism. However, I would like to read this within the current turn to indigenous wisdom that characterises the transmodern paradigm. Again, this could be an ambiguous phenomenon, but I believe transmodernity is promoting a more horizontal web of knowledge where world views and cosmologies which were looked down on by modernity for being primitive are now recognised as having important contributions to make to a more meaningful and ethical way

of life. The openness to indigenous thought-worlds that characterises Simpson's memoir is also an important feature of some forms of transmodernity.

2.4 Challenging Human Exceptionalism and Anthropocentrism

Despite the fact that some descriptions of Simpson's special identification with trees are contaminated by anthropomorphism, by the end of the memoir, Simpson is more fully aware of her place in the natural world and of the inseparability between nature and culture. She goes a long way to reversing the centrality of the human being, in line with Timothy Clark's description of material ecocriticism as refusing the "lingering assumptions of human exceptionalism and sovereignty" (2019, 113). The following quotation is revelatory of her new regard on the forest:

> The roof needs replacing, along with so many other things. And I'm less and less certain of my right to impose myself on the landscape. If that is what the forest decides, it's fine by me. It's just a house. A box full of things. Even with me inside, it's not worth nearly as much as these trees (Simpson 2017, 274).

To be sure, Simpson's concerns and sensibility echo those of Australian ecocriticism in that they combine a critical engagement with binaries like nature and culture (Neumeier, 2020, 2), common to ecocritical approaches across countries, with a characteristic postcolonial stance that associates environmental degradation with the dispossession of the Indigenous peoples (Bergthaller et al. 2014, 269–70, quoted in Neumeier 2020, 1), as hinted at in the previous section.

2.5 Lone Trees Grow Taller but Die Younger

In her memoir, Simpson relates the crisis she underwent when she was abandoned by her partner. Alone in the forest cottage and cut off from the community, she turns inwards and finds comfort in picturing herself as a lone tree: "A tree out in its own grows much stronger than one in the shade of others. It has to fend for itself, put out root systems strong enough to withstand winds and rain from all directions" (Simpson 2017, 171). However, by the end of the process, she fully realises the importance of the community: "Lone trees may grow stronger roots and enjoy more space, but they don't live as long on their own as they would among others. There is strength and wisdom in numbers, and the richness of a whole forest" (2017, 266). Eventually, she comes to terms with the idea that she can no longer afford to go on living in the cottage on her own and must move to a new place, "closer to old friends and family" (2017, 254).

3. Conclusion

Briefly concluding, in *Understory* Simpson develops an identity anchored in a new relational idea of roots inspired by the wisdom of trees. As she admits on the last page of the memoir, she will carry her forest with her wherever she goes while, at the same time, she is leaving a little of herself behind (2017, 279). There, she learnt a new way of seeing closer to that of Indigenous Australians, which emphasises inseparability and relationality: "Aboriginal languages afford trees sentience, not insisting on such a division between us and them. The grammar shows relationships—between humans, the land and other species" (2017, 276). On

the whole, as an instance of transmodern writing of the self, Simpson's memoir encourages generic hybridity, partakes in a very special way of the growing empathic awareness of the natural world, stressing the continuity between nature and culture, turns to indigenous knowledge systems and puts forward a view of the subject as integral to the ecosystem, affecting and affected by the natural environment.

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Wilderness, Garden or Exercise of Power? Images of Nature and Human-Natural Relationships in the USA

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Abstract

The arrival of colonists in American lands changed radically the human-natural relationships in the continent and, later, the conquest of the west (promoted by the Frontier Myth) and the development of industrial society established highly destructive connections (violent domination and exploitation) with the environment. In these historical moments Americans saw nature differently, but their specific ideas shaped their ways of interacting with the world and their values until today. The aim of this paper is to examine these ideas, from an ecocritical perspective, mainly focusing on the wilderness/garden dichotomy. In addition, the utopian idea of the garden will be questioned, based on the opposition to nature-domination manifested, for example, in works by Melville, Hawthorne and Thoreau. Thus, as a result of the analysis, it will be shown that nature-domination is a deeply-ingrained value in the American mindset, although opposition to this domination existed already in the nineteenth century.

Keywords: nature, ecocriticism, Frontier Myth, Industrialization.

The arrival of European colonists in America was an undeniable turning point for the history of the continent and of its peoples. The well-known atrocities committed against the native inhabitants of this land are the most violent consequence of the arrival of colonists in what they considered a new continent. However, although the impact of this colonization is most obvious in the case of native human populations, the arrival of Europeans also had radical implications regarding the natural world and the ways of interacting with it. As Richard Slotkin explains, "where the settlers could only see chaos and wilderness, the Indian's eye and mind could construe an order, a kindred intelligence in all things" (2000, 27), that is, two opposite worldviews clashed when Europeans set foot in American lands. The transformation of human-natural relationships, which was, in fact, an intrinsic part of the colonizing process, conditioned the future of both humans and nature until the present day. Native Americans lived in direct contact with nature and developed close bonds with it, but these worldviews and lifestyles were crushed by the European mindset, which came to dominate the continent and the ways in which humans interacted with the environment. Thus, among other aspects, material growth, geographical expansion, technological progress and the exploitation of resources were established as the new values that would govern the life in America from then on.

The expansion of the colonists to the geographical west was promoted by the Frontier Myth and by its promise of wealth, opportunities and freedom, but at the same time, it also promoted a relationship of power over nature and a desire for the accumulation of seemingly infinite resources. The expansion to the west could never have been merely an adventure to explore the continent due to the fact that the Myth portrayed wilderness as an evil to be subjugated. This idea was deeply-ingrained in the minds of the colonists and it led them to

exploit and destroy wilderness as they encountered it all through their conquest of the west. The fact of considering wild nature as antagonistic to the developing American civilization was a driving force for the violence committed against the land and the natives themselves (who were considered part of this wilderness). Indeed, Slotkin argues that this violence, and not the efforts to establish a democratic nation, were the true foundations of the United States of America. For him the founding fathers were those who "tore violently a nation from the implacable and opulent wilderness – the rogues, adventurers, and land-boomers; the Indian fighters, traders, missionaries, explorers, and hunters who killed and were killed until they had mastered the wilderness" (Slotkin 2000, 4). Thus, violence against the natives and against wild nature can be considered the true origin of the modern USA and a driving force through all its history. So, the American civilization can trace its roots not only to the new beginning of colonists in the continent but especially to the violence against wilderness that characterised their mindset and actions.

The civilization European colonists started developing in American lands was, from the very beginning, synonymous with war against nature. For those colonizing this wild continent and its peoples, wilderness was incompatible with (and a threat to) the new society that was to be established. According to Marshall, not only this modern civilization, but any civilization "as we know it depends on the domination and exploitation of every type of 'resource' (whether living or habitat for the living) and cannot exist without such exploitation" (2003, 35). That is, the existence of civilization is intrinsic to the domination of nature and to violence against it and the American civilization could not be an exception to this. Nevertheless, the idea that wilderness was an evil to be subjugated, an enemy to be killed, was not the only one in the mind of those building a new society. In fact, as Manes explains, civilization also promoted the thought that "the undisturbed processes of nature are somehow stagnant or defective or detrimental and must be improved by human intervention" (1990, 40). Thus, humans (more precisely colonists) thought they had the duty of changing the imperfect nature around them and of transforming it according to their wishes. So, on the one hand, colonists destroyed wilderness to obtain resources and to continue with their expansion and growth and, on the other hand, transformed it to create a tame environment. In both cases, nature was violently dominated and this radical transformation of human-natural relationships, which led to the exploitation of the land, the accumulation of resources and technological developments, paved the way for a new stage of American civilization—industrial society.

In the nineteenth century, with the development of industrial society, the violent attacks against the environment continued and even increased in number and impact. The highly destructive human-natural relationships did not end in this period, but there were significant changes in the American mindset (now industrial mindset) and the ways of thinking about nature and interacting with it were transformed again. The rapid development and evolution of American society led to significant tensions between the rural/natural spaces and the industrial ones and these materialized in the collective mindset. The fact that, at this time, natural spaces and rural lives coexisted with factories and industrial cities resulted in changes regarding the ideas about nature and material exploitation ceased to be the only thing nature could offer to Americans. Nature started to be seen as a source for regeneration, as a kind of healing for all the tensions and changes suffered during the rapid transformations of society. As Marx explains, "the regenerative power is located in the natural terrain: access to undefiled, bountiful, sublime Nature is what accounts for the virtue and special good fortune of Americans" (1964, 228). Thus, for the first time since colonists arrived in America, the idea of nature as a positive force entered the collective mindset. Nevertheless, as these sources of regeneration were part of the dominated or tamed nature controlled by Americans, the relationship was still one of power

over the environment. In any case, this was an important step for the subsequent transformation of human-natural connections.

The already mentioned tensions between the natural and the industrial worlds not only dominated the lives and minds of Americans, but also the literature of that time. As a representation of the society of the nineteenth century, the literary realm could not ignore these tensions and, this is why, the image of the machine became so significant in American writing. Writers usually portrayed idyllic situations in contact with nature, but these experiences were suddenly disrupted by the noise of machines. These machines (especially the locomotive) symbolized the rapid development of American society but also interfered in the connections between humans and nature. So, nineteenth century writings usually portrayed the clash between rural felicity and the dislocation created by machines, which was a significant characteristic of industrial society. Thus, in the literature of that time two USAs that seemed completely opposite coexisted: the industrial one and the pastoral one. Marx explains that "it is industrialization, represented by images of machine technology, that provides the counterforce in the American archetype of the pastoral design" (1964, 26), which implies that the USA of the nineteenth century was a combination of both spaces, of both worlds. The fact that the natural/rural world and the industrial world were part of the same reality makes clear how, during the industrial era, the relationships between humans and nature became increasingly complex and intricate.

In the period of industrial development the majority of the wilderness of the country was already dominated and the control over nature changed its form. The exploitation of the land was no longer carried out as during the expansion to the west and the conception Americans had about nature ceased to be that of an evil wilderness. Now nature started to be seen as a garden, as a piece of nature controlled by humans to serve their purposes. As Marx explains, "to describe America as a garden is to express aspirations still considered utopian—aspirations […] toward abundance, leisure, freedom, and a greater harmony of existence" (1964, 43), so nature was considered a kind of tool to achieve the utopian goals of Americans. The idea of America as a land of freedom, opportunities and abundance had always existed and these concepts guided the colonists during the conquest of the west. However, during this conquest the mentioned values were to be achieved through the exploitation of the land and in industrial times nature started to be used as an embodiment of the very same values. That is, the goals to be achieved were still the same but the approach and the relationships with nature changed. The garden was a piece of nature transformed by humans that existed within industrial civilization and, in addition to being an embodiment of the desires and aspirations of American society, its function was to offer a rest from industrialization. Thus, in the increasingly complex American society, the garden, as a positive force, offered a peace and a separation from machines that became necessary for human existence. Moreover, the creation of the garden really illustrates the fact that the USA was moving in two directions, which seemed opposite but belonged to the same reality. American society was looking, at the same time, for progress and nature.

This nature, transformed by humans to create a utopian space, came to be seen as a new Garden of Eden, as an earthly paradise that had nothing to do with the evil wilderness encountered when colonists arrived in America. According to Marx, "the garden image brings together a universal Edenic myth and a particular set of American goals and aspirations. So with the machine" (1964, 164), which means that technology, like the garden, was used to create this Eden and embody the American spirit. In fact, both the garden and the "machine" were tools to create the American paradise. These two apparently opposite worlds became inseparable and reconciled in a "middle landscape" in which the machine "improved" nature.

This idea of improving the "defective" nature already existed but, at this time, it reached an unprecedented level in the form of the garden. So, with the union of nature and technology, a kind of balance was achieved in the American industrial society and this was accepted in the collective mindset.

Although the idea of a balance between nature and technology was widely accepted by American society, not everyone agreed with it, due to the fact that a balance in which humans were clearly over nature was still considered an act of domination. Talking about Marx's idea of a balance, Perlman expressed that "I readily admit that it is no easy task for me to imagine a 'balance' between a wild rose and iron; I picture the flower firmly held in a vise; in human terms, I imagine an individual, gifted with life and thought, encased in armor" (1992, 9). That is, for Perlman, a balance cannot exist when nature is controlled, oppressed and dominated for human purposes and neither nature nor humans can benefit from this situation created by industrial society. In fact, in Perlman's view, this subjugated nature could only be positive for the Industrial USA, not even for its citizens. Due to this, Perlman opposed the idea of the garden as a utopia and regarded it as, rather, another example of the domination of nature, which implied another negative transformation of human-natural relationships.

Marx's idea of a "happy balance" was inconceivable for Perlman because he saw the negative consequences of the creation of the garden but could not see the benefits it supposedly brought. In reference to this, Perlman expressed that "the devastation of the 'raw' forests, valleys and prairies, are carried through with unmatched energy. But the promise of the machine in the garden is not realized" (1992, 17). That is, the development of industrial society implied a huge destruction of natural spaces but could not keep the promise of a utopian place that embodied the American spirit and that offered people the happy life they looked for. Although the garden could offer a kind of rest and separation from machines, industrial USA was a source of the exploitation of workers, alienation, unrest and pressures American citizens had never known before. Thus, the supposedly balanced industrial society of the garden proved to be flawed and highly detrimental for nature as well as for humans. The society of the garden, which seemed to put people in closer contact with nature, had the opposite effect and human-natural relationships were transformed again. Americans became more distanced from the true natural world and the environmental impact caused by the industrial powers continued with destruction as the norm for interacting with nature. At this point, there seemed to be a significant change in the minds of some people and two opposite paths opened, one towards progress and the values of industrialization and the other, towards a life in nature. The latter defied the values of industrial civilization and some examples of this tendency and worldview can be found in nineteenth century literature.

Such iconic writers as Herman Melville, Nathaniel Hawthorne and Henry David Thoreau showed, in some of their writings, this mindset of separating from the path established by industrial society and of looking for a life in close contact with nature. Melville's *Typee* (1846), Hawthorne's *The May-Pole of Merry Mount* (1836) and Thoreau's *Walden* (1854) are examples of this mindset. Based on Melville's own experiences, *Typee* describes what life was like among the natives of an island in the Pacific Ocean. The author favoured the lives of the islanders (in close contact and balance with nature) over the work and lives of missionaries who tried to impose civilization, that is, a system intrinsic to the destruction of nature. *The May-Pole of Merry Mount* portrays a society that lives happily in a natural environment and that enjoys dances and festivities. However, this happiness ends when Puritans interrupt them in another example of civilization's disruption of human-natural bonds. Finally, *Walden* reflects on the author's real retreat to nature trying to distance himself from nineteenth century American society. Thoreau's close contact with nature in his experience is the key for his inner

development and he is able to establish and develop strong connections with the natural environment.

All these works share a common thread in that, in industrial times, they choose the path of trying to live a life in which humans are surrounded by nature and develop positive and strong bonds with it. Against the idea (deeply-ingrained in the American mindset since early colonists' time) of nature domination, these works present the possibility of going back to nature and of escaping from industrial civilization. They do not consider the garden as true nature and oppose what Marx called the "middle landscape." In these works, traditional ideas associated to nature are defied by seeking lifestyles in which humans and nature can coexist in real balance. Thus, these writers offer alternative human-natural relationships outside the society of the garden, outside the idea of a dominated nature that is inseparable from machine technology. Therefore, already in the nineteenth century, American citizens developed ideas that clashed with the industrial USA and its values of nature domination.

Considering all that has been explained, it can be concluded that the domination of nature is an idea deeply-ingrained in the American mindset from the earliest stages of the development of its society. This has been perpetuated through all the stages of American civilization, always shaping the ways in which its citizens interacted with the natural environment. Whether in the form of an evil wilderness or of a utopian garden, subjugated nature has always occupied an important place in the collective mindset, but, all in all, Americans have dominated and separated themselves from it. Nevertheless, the complexity of industrial society led to significant changes that made people want to go back to nature and develop closer bonds with it. Thus, in the nineteenth century, ideas that opposed the domination of the environment developed. These offered alternatives to a violent system and tried to bequeath a worldview in which humans could really live in balance with nature.

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Transculturalism and the 2021 Report of the UK Government's Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities[1]

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Abstract

Taken as a process of cultural melting and mediation "whereby cultural forms literally move through time and space where they interact with other cultural forms and settings, influence each other, produce new forms, and change the cultural settings" (Lull 2000, 242), transculturalism has come to be seen as a fundamental feature of contemporary British society. Focusing on the release of the British Government's Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities' Report on March 31, 2021, this overall cultural studies-oriented paper broadly draws upon critical discourse analysis (CDA) to undertake a preliminary study attempting to determine to what extent transculturalism is considered in the Report. The examination of the document, as well as the controversial political and media reactions in various contexts after its publication, leads to a discussion of results stressing the existence of 'competing discourses' evincing underlying tensions concerning ideologically-based conceptions of multiculturalism in recent British politics.

Keywords: transculturalism, cultural studies, 2021 British Government's Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities' Report, UK, CDA.

1. Introduction: Transculturalism and British society today

Transculturalism has been conceived as a process of cultural melting and mediation "whereby cultural forms literally move through time and space where they interact with other cultural forms and settings, influence each other, produce new forms, and change the cultural settings" (Lull 2000, 242). Often derived from the transit of people between geographic locations, for instance, via migrations, it "produces the fusing of cultural forms" (Lull 2000, 243). Recent debates on the subject in the UK contend that transculturalism "has long since become a constitutive feature of cultural transformations in Britain" (Schulze-Engler 2009, xi).

With a focus on the recent release of the British Government's Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities' Report issued on March 31, 2021, this overall cultural studies-oriented paper broadly draws upon critical discourse analysis (CDA) methodologically to undertake a preliminary study attempting to determine to what extent and in which ways—if at all—transculturalism is considered in the Report.

[1] The present contribution is part of the "Aesthetics, Ethics and Strategics of the New Migratory Cartographies and Transcultural Identities in Twenty-First-Century Literature(s) in English" research project (ref. PID2019-109582GB-I00, Ministry of Science and Innovation, Spain).

2. Theoretical and methodological issues

Bearing in mind the conception of transculturalism referred to above, this piece theoretically adheres to cultural studies' central concern with transculturalism inasmuch as it "acknowledges the instability of cultural formations, discourses and meaning-making processes" (Lewis 2002, 437). Partaking of academic interest in "the general relation between discourse (ordinary or disciplinary) and culture" (Shi-xu 2005, 42), this paper draws specific attention to how "social-power abuse and inequality are enacted, reproduced, legitimated and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context" (van Dijk 2018, 466), which is a basic tenet of critical discourse analysis (CDA), an analytical perspective methodologically drawn upon for cultural studies in general (Barker 2002; Barker and Galasiński 2001) and for the examination of issues of transculturalism in particular (Downes and Kim 2018). Fairclough's (2015) sociocultural-change-and-change-in-discourse CDA approach is specifically employed in this paper, given its focus on discourse and social change (Fairclough et al. 2011, 362). As Fairclough puts it somewhere else, "discourse, and any specific instance of discursive practice, is seen as simultaneously (i) a language text, spoken or written, (ii) discourse practice (text production and text interpretation), [and] (iii) sociocultural practice" (1995, 97). Taking into account the preliminary-analysis character of the present study, limited attention is paid to the textual and interactional (i.e. discursive practice) dimension of discourse, greater importance being attached to the social-action dimension of discourse and its ideological facet; based on the results of this preliminary analysis, ensuing research will procced to more thoroughly delve into the text and discourse-practice dimensions of the Report as an instance of discourse. Such initial attention to ideology is consistent with work in CDA in general (Flowerdew and Richardson 2018), in Fairclough's (2018) CDA framework in particular, and indeed in cultural studies on the whole (Barker 2004). At any rate, it would not have been feasible for a contribution of this type to examine the textual and discursive-practice dimensions of the Report in detail due to space constraints.

3. Analysis of the 2021 British Government's Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities' Report: Preliminary results and discussion

Supported by the Race Disparity Unit of the UK Government, the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities was established by PM Boris Johnson in 2020 "in the wake of anti-racism protests following the death of George Floyd" (BBC News 2020, n.p.) within the context of the global Black Lives Matter social movement. Tony Sewell (manager of the 'Educating Genius' British educational charity) was appointed to chair the Commission.

In the Report's Forward, Sewell stresses that PM Boris Johnson had commissioned this Report, as "he felt that the UK needed to consider important questions about the state of race relations today, and that there needed to be a thorough examination of why so many disparities persist […] to work out what can be done to eliminate or mitigate them" (CRED 2021, 6)[2]

Building upon previous reviews on racial and ethnic disparity in Britain commissioned by successive governments since 2010, the Report examines four key areas: (1) education and training; (2) employment, fairness at work and enterprise; (3) crime and policy; and (4) health, as intersecting with "some of the most pertinent causes holding back equality of opportunity, namely: ethnicity; socio-economic background; geography; and culture and degree of

[2] CRED will be employed as an acronym for the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities of the British Government.

integration" (CRED 2021, 10). In the document, the Commission upholds "that most of the disparities we examined, which some attribute to racial discrimination, often do not have their origins in racism" (CRED 2021, 11). In this respect, the Report makes as many as 24 recommendations grouped into four broad themes, that is: (1) build trust; (2) promote fairness; (3) create agency; and (4) achieve inclusivity, which "cover the aspects of change that the Commission believes will catalyse the most effective way to meaningfully address disparities and inequalities for all those affected" (CRED 2021, 12). As a key conclusion of the Report, the Commission maintains:

> We do not believe that the UK is yet a post-racial society which has completed the long journey to equality of opportunity. […] Outright racism still exists in the UK. […] But the evidence reveals that ours is nevertheless a relatively open society. The country has come a long way in 50 years and the success of much of the ethnic minority population in education and, to a lesser extent, the economy, should be regarded as a model for other White-majority countries (CRED 2021, 9).

Echoing cultural studies theorist Lawrence Grossberg's (1994: 4) advocate on the subject, the "radical contextualization" of the document as a cultural product—including its production and reception—points to the existence of, as it were, underlying tensions regarding ideologically-based conceptions of multiculturalism in recent British politics, chiefly "since David Cameron spoke openly about the failure of multiculturalism in 2011 and, thereafter, his and subsequent governments instead adopted approaches that stressed Britishness and British unity" (Dargie 2018, 201). This was to be followed by PM Boris Johnson's establishment of the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities in July, 2020. In fact, the Commission's Report somehow confirms Johnson's assumption with regard to the *presumed* failure of multiculturalism in Britain:

> Creating a *successful* multicultural society is hard, and racial disparities exist wherever such a society is being forged. The Commission believes that if these recommendations are implemented, it will give a further burst of momentum to the story of our country's progress to a *successful* multicultural community – a beacon to the rest of Europe and the world (CRED 2021, 8; italics added).

This claim seems to be consistent with what Ali Rattansi has described as a widely held contention that "multiculturalism seems now to be regarded by governments, intellectuals, and large sections of the national populations as either disastrous or at least a serious wrong turn in the response to immigration by non-white populations" (2011, 143). Rather than validating the failure of multiculturalism subtly acknowledged in the Report, Rattansi draws attention to the policy and ideological shift throughout Europe since the 2010s—in his view, this "is not always a move away from multiculturalism; sometimes it is a transformation beyond multiculturalism into forms of what might be called 'interculturalism" (2011, 151), where "the key point […] is that instead of the celebration of diversity and different cultures as in versions of classic multiculturalism, what is involved […] is the positive encouragement of encounters between different ethnic and faith groups in the setting up of dialogues and joint activities" (Rattansi 2011, 152). The recommendations of the Report somehow hint at the need for intercultural dialogue to avoid ethnic disparities in the UK—such aims are thus:

- to build trust between different communities and the institutions that serve them
- to promote greater fairness to improve opportunities and outcomes for individuals and communities
- to create agency so individuals can take greater control of the decisions that impact their lives
- to achieve genuine inclusivity to ensure all groups feel a part of UK society (CRED 2021, 9).

Nonetheless, interculturalism is never actually mentioned as such in the Commission's Report's recommendations. Quite as importantly, if no more, the Report's recommendations revolve around disparities alone without considering, let alone stressing, how transculturalism might contribute in the future, or might even have contributed up until now, to mitigating and eliminating racial and ethnic disparity in Britain—if only bearing in mind the emergence of "cultural hybrids–the fusing of cultural forms" (Lull 2000, 243) resulting from contact among different ethnic groups.

It is not by chance that the discourse of mitigation of certain racial and ethnic inequalities in some parts of the Report caused significant social and political dissension when the Commission issued the document on March, 2021—the BBC even suggested that the "government [had] set out to cause controversy with an investigation into racial disparity in the UK" (Watson and Scott 2021, n.p.). Critics in the country included the anti-racist think tank Runnymede Trust, the Trade Union Congress, employers' groups from the NHS, different politicians, and people involved in the Black Lives Matter protests (Watson and Scott 2021, n.p.). The Commission itself was controversial since its inception, as its twelve members had been recruited by British Government Adviser Munira Mirza, who, according to *The Guardian*, had "cast doubt on the existence of institutional racism and condemned previous enquiries for fostering a 'culture of grievance'" (Walker et al. 20201 n.p.). In this sense, no sooner had the Report been published last 31 March than—according to *The Guardian*—Downing Street was

> accused of rewriting much of its controversial report into racial and ethnic disparities, despite appointing an independent commission to conduct an honest investigation into inequality in the UK […] [with] significant sections of the report […] not written by the 12 commissioners who were appointed (Iqbal 2021, n.p.).

It is, by all means, subject to debate whether this controversy was intentionally provoked by Boris Johnson to serve his electoral interests, but media attention to the issue may not be frowned upon.

4. Concluding remarks

With a special focus on the interplay between discourse (as a social practice) and culture, the examination of the Report of the UK Government's Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities is proof of how controversial the issue of multiculturalism in Britain is today, especially in connection with racial and ethnic inequality in the country. The recent publication of the document has led to political discrepancies on race and ethnicity discrimination, and to strong social reactions echoed by the media. And yet, despite its recommendations, the Report somehow acknowledges the failure of multiculturalism in the country. Perhaps more significantly, no consideration is given by the Commission to interculturalism—at least explicitly—and especially to transculturalism to eliminate, or at least mitigate, the race and ethnic disparities focused upon in the Report. This is particularly noteworthy, as various authors

have highlighted the positive effects of promoting interculturalism (Rattansi 2011, 164) and indeed transculturalism (Lewis 2002, 437-38) to address issues of racism and ethnic inequality in areas like those drawn attention to in the 2021 Report of the UK Government's Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities (i.e. education, crime policy, employment, or health)—this has been similarly stressed by experts (e.g. Casinader 2019) discussing the success of transculturalism in achieving racial and ethnic equality in a globalized world. This lack of attention is particularly remarkable in the context of Britain today, since transculturalism has come to be regarded as a fundamental feature of contemporary British society, where it "does not have to be minoritarian, diasporic or dissident, but rather is a constitutive feature of the culture at large" (Lange and Wiemann 2008, 6). Failure to consider transculturalism in the Report of the UK Government's Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities in the country is even more significant bearing in mind that, as underscored by Schulze-Engler in his analysis of transculturalism in Britain today, "the dynamics of contemporary 'transculture' can no longer be understood in terms of classical dichotomies such as colonizer vs. colonized or centres vs. peripheries" (2009, xi). It is certainly beyond the scope of this paper to determine whether such disregard of transculturalim in the Report is to be equated with a challenge to transculturalism on the part of the UK Government's Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities. However, it is indicative of the existence of what may be taken to be 'competing discourses' (Lee 1992) evincing underlying tensions regarding ideologically-based conceptions of multiculturalism in recent British politics.

In an attempt to shed light on the ideological debates resulting from the release of the 2021 Report of the UK Government's Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities, CDA has been employed as a methodological instrument for a wider cultural studies-oriented reading of the document as an instance of discourse, focusing on the socio-cultural-action dimension of discourse in Fairclough's (2015) CDA framework. Based on the findings of this preliminary study, subsequent research should consider how specific elements of language usage in the Report feature in the textual dimension of discourse. Although some initial notes have necessarily been made regarding the Report's production and reception, further research should similarly focus on specific aspects of the discourse-practice dimension of the Report as an instance of discourse. Such avenues of research might help to illuminate the reasons why the failure of multiculturalism in Britain—alleged by the Report's authors—is never accompanied by their consideration of the effects—be it positive or even negative—that transculturalism might have in connection with race and ethnic disparities in Britain.

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(N)evermore: The Musical Afterlives of Edgar Allan Poe's *The Raven*

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Abstract

This paper analyzes the transfer of poetic language into music, focusing on Edgar Allan Poe's celebrated poem "The Raven" (1845), which proves to be an interesting case study due to its enduring presence in music in its many different genres. For that purpose, I examine different pieces of music directly inspired by Poe's lines, all of them ranging from different music genres, analyzing the literary and musical devices and how they are employed. These musicians and composers re-present Poe's "The Raven" by using musical devices similar to those employed by Poe in this poem in their attempt to appropriate and reinterpret the poet's words.

Keywords: E.A. Poe, music, poetry, adaptation, transmediation.

1. Introduction

Poetic language has been frequently transferred into other artistic means such as music and visual arts. This "creative transposition" is ubiquitous in English literature. In this paper I analyze the transfer of poetic language into music focusing on Edgar Allan Poe's poem "The Raven" (1845), which has been adapted into music multiple times, focusing here on vocal music, most especially rock adaptations and other genres. Popular culture has been indeed haunted by Poe, both as author and as figure. Musicians and composers have also been strongly influenced by Poe, his life, and his works. The musicality of Poe's poetry and the Gothic qualities of his works have inspired many musicians, since it is Poe's aesthetics of resistance through the motives of madness, perversity, and Gothic horror which have attracted several musicians (Duarte 2010, 154). These adaptations, or more precisely, transmediations, are not vampiric on the source text; rather, they add something new, they actualize ideas. Elleström (2014, 14) defines transmediation as the "repeated mediation of equivalent sensory configurations by *another* technical medium," i.e. the transposition of nonmusical features (poetry) into a musical piece. The musical compositions to be examined here, therefore, take Poe's poem and they transmediate it into musical pieces of different genres. Interestingly, Poe's "The Raven" is a very musical poem, as the poet carefully designed the rhyme scheme and rhythm of the poem, which is full of repetitions, alliterations, assonances, etc. In brief, Poe employs different literary devices with musical purposes in mind.

2. Tales of Rock and (Re-)Interpretations

The first case study in this genre is that of British rock band The Alan Parsons Project, who released in 1976 their debut and experimental studio album entitled *Tales of Mystery and Imagination (Edgar Allan Poe)*. The whole concept album is a tribute to Poe's universe, as the lyrical and musical themes are a retelling of his horror stories, but also of his poetry. Woolfson

regards Poe "as probably his greatest musical inspiration" due to his works and life (*The Alan Parsons Project*). One of the songs which features in the album is "The Raven" – released in 1975 –, which presents changes in the lyrics to the original poem. The duo devised many sound effects for the tracks featured in the album and they experimented with what they had at their disposal to create those effects. In the song, there is a constant repetition of "nevermore," which is given more emphasis at the end, where it is repeated several times with a bombastic tone to highlight the climax. There are other repetitions, some with variation, such as the use of refrain ("quoth the raven…"), or "That I shall hear *for evermore*"/ "And I must hear *for evermore*". These repetitions, together with the repetitions in the music itself, emphasize the mood of the track. The band also employs literary devices such as the anaphora for musical purposes: in "*And* still… / No matter… / No words… / No prayer… / *And* I must…", to name a few examples; they also employ alliteration, as in "And still the raven remains in my room", with fewer instances when compared to the source poem. The metrical pattern has been changed to pentameters followed by octameters in verses.

Mood is in this track built around the lengthening of "or" sound, the repetition of "nevermore" and repetitions in music, which is in A minor – again, another transmediation set in the minor mode –, and, most importantly, through the use of vocoder and choir as background. Vocals are at some points distorted by an EMI vocoder, which infuses an aura of mystery and surrealism to the song. According to the band, "The Raven" is, in fact, the first rock song to use a digital vocoder to distort the vocals of Alan Parsons. This gives the song a dream-like quality, which sounds uncanny to the ear. In addition, there are important changes in the content of the lyrics, for we have a new and shorter text where the music takes precedence. The narrator is already sleeping and, in his sleeping, hears and sees the raven in his room. It seems, therefore, to be almost a dream. Although there is no reference to the lost beloved, the feeling of desperation remains. In this modern reinterpretation of the poem, through modern popular culture devices – vocoder, electronic music, etc. –, we can find an emotional crescendo through the music and vocals, which gains strength and intensity by the climax.

Our last example in this section will be American musician Lou Reed, who released in 2003 an experimental concept album entitled *The Raven*, which, moreover, features a song called "The Raven." As a concept album, the tracks have a central theme: the stories and poems of Poe, and it ranges from different musical styles. The album is a revision based on the opera devised by Robert Wilson and Lou Reed in 2000 entitled *POEtry*. It also included new versions of some of Reed's old classic songs, imitating somehow Poe's habit of variating and recycling his materials and presenting similar texts in new and different places. Part tribute, part artistic interpretation, in this album Reed collaborated with guest vocalists such as David Bowie or actor Willem Dafoe, who features in the track "The Raven". This is not the first time that Reed adapted literature into music, as adaptation and appropriation were "defining characteristics [of Reed] as a musician and lyricist" (Smith 3) in his creative process.

The track entitled "The Raven" is a dramatic reading of Poe's poem, as it is a spoken-word piece, but filtered through Reed's mind, that is, there is in the lyrics a focus on alcohol, loss, loneliness, sex, drugs, and guilt. As a spoken-word piece, music does not play an important role in his adaptation, where instruments are used as background, with a stronger emphasis on words, retaining the literary qualities of Poe's poem. In general, both album and track are more faithful to the spirit of Poe's writings than to the words themselves, as there are several alterations to the original texts. It is an experimental exploration of the same obsessions for both musician and poet, as Reed declared to have found in Poe "a kindred spirit, a psychological analog for the preoccupations of his whole career" (Rachman 30). There is, therefore, a resolve for actualization, to make Poe's words fit Reed's present reality, to interpret Poe in the twenty-

first century. That is why Reed employs contemporary language, even vulgar at times, which gives listeners a clue as to the mood of the song. Reed skips parts of the poem and adds his own lines, but always maintaining the original rhythm of the poem. In an interview, Reed highlighted the importance of rhythm when adapting a literary source for musical purposes (Reed). He saw the potential of Poe's texts due to their musicality, but struggled with the vocabulary of the poet, as he employs a serious, difficult, and arcane lexicon. Therefore, he decided to "translate" those words into modern English and rewrite the poems according to his own contemporary purposes. Reed, hence, appropriates Poe's texts, filtering them through common themes, in what could be termed a postmodern effort, or *pastiche* (Rachman 33), so as to explore the human psyche and its darkest emotions. Reed plays with and creates new rhymes and uses stylistic devices such as alliteration ("Askance, askew, the self's sad fancy smiles at you I swear", for example), which also plays an important role in Poe's poem, as we have seen. In order to maintain the rhythm of the source, Reed inserts new and original parts which fit the original meter. Rhymes and alliteration are also here important to form rhythm, as well as internal rhymes.

There is a change in the mood in this track, compared to Poe's poem. Melancholy has turned here into bitterness and almost anger, for the text seems full of aggressive self-loathing. As pointed out before, vulgar words add to this mood. While in Poe's poem the beloved is remembered with love, here she is remembered with hate. The lyrics, therefore, help to create the mood, but also Dafoe, with his sharp voice and how he plays with tempo, accelerating and raising his voice at certain moments, in contradiction with the slow tempo of the musical background. The emotional crescendo is seen, then, through Dafoe's voice, which gains intensity and loudness at intervals by the climax. The climax is reached when Dafoe says, "I love she who hates me more", as before that moment his voice is calm, but at the climax it rises again, giving strength to the climactic moment by repeating the words. The musician interprets the poem and transforms it to fit his own persona, rendering it full of irony and bitterness. The content is, therefore, updated, since as an adaptation and interpretation the need for variation was greater.

We see the great impact Poe has had on different musicians, as these rock renditions are all included in concept albums. His works and life have inspired them to create whole albums in which to pay tribute to the author and poet. These musicians have modified and transformed the words of "The Raven" in diverse manners, but always striving to maintain the original strong rhythm of the poem, as well as keywords such as "nevermore". Notwithstanding the modifications to the content, the feeling of desperation is retained, for these musicians have built their compositions around repetition and variation, just as Poe composed his poem. In their interpretations, they have adapted Poe through modern cultural devices, sometimes even including sound effects, as in the case of The Alan Parsons Project, updating, thus, the poem to fit a new reality.

3. Poe at The Crossroads of Genre Borders

The musical adaptations based on Poe's "The Raven" belong to a greater diversity of genres. Such is the case of American organist and composer Kristen Lawrence, who released her fourth album in 2012, entitled *The Raven*. Her music is quite eclectic, oscillating between rock, classical, gothic, and folk. In her album *The Raven*, Lawrence sings the whole poem in pure soprano as if she were the ghost of Lenore, without changing the verses. For the composition of the music in E minor played by pipe organs and keyboards, Lawrence meticulously studied Poe's essays "The Philosophy of Composition" and "The Poetic Principle." That is why

repetition and variation are used as structural elements in the music, since there are musical themes which repeat themselves with some variations. We can distinguish four themes: one represents Lenore, a heartbeat theme to show the narrator's fears, a yearning theme with a melancholic air, and the Raven theme. The keyword "nevermore" is retained, and so are the repetitions, variations, original rhythm, rhymes, etc., of the poem. Lawrence varies tempo, which increases throughout the eleventh stanza, for instance, to mirror the narrator's agitation.

On her official website, it is explained how "[e]ach verse was composed as a musical vignette to illustrate the growing madness as Poe's character is tormented by the presence of the raven" (Lawrence). She aimed to create specific "voices" in the musical composition, that is, she uses musical language to give voice to the narrator, to the raven, etc. The combination of her ethereal soprano voice and the dreamlike and gothic pipe organ creates an eerie mood for the piece. Moreover, in its use of dissonance and chromatism, the music conveys an uncanny mood, and, as it is set in E minor, the melody has a melancholic and dark feeling. The use of the pipe organ adds to this eerie effect, as the organ has been frequently associated with terror in the Gothic. Hence, Lawrence retains the original poem without modifications, while at the same time the music strives to reflect in itself the content of the poem, as if it were a musical ekphrasis. As such, the original climax of the poem is reached in the sixteenth stanza, which has more musical and vocal intensity.

As has already been analyzed by Sederholm, heavy metal has been drawn to Poe's portrayals of violence and madness. It is no surprise, then, that we can find examples of heavy metal settings of Poe's "The Raven." German heavy metal band Grave Digger released in 2001 their tenth album, entitled *The Grave Digger*, dedicated to Poe and featuring some tracks based on poems and tales, such as "The Raven" and the "Fall of the House of Usher." There is a modification of the source material in the lyrics of "The Raven", but the keyword "nevermore" and the feeling of desperation remains. The mood of the track is dark and gloomy, as it is set in D minor, and we observe a constant use of repetition and variation as principles of construction. Other examples are German back metal band Agathodaimon, who integrated "The Raven" in their song "Les Possedés" for their album *Higher Art of Rebellion*, released in 1999, and Norwegian gothic metal band Tristania, who included a track called "My Lost Lenore" in their album Widow's Weeds in 1998 – again, keyed in E minor. This song was inspired by the poem, without using the poem directly as lyrics. American deathcore – an extreme metal subgenre – band Conducting from the Grave also based the lyrics to their song "Nevermore" off of Poe's "The Raven", setting it in F minor. The track is included in their second studio album entitled *Revenants*.

Gathering here all the musical adaptations of Poe's "The Raven" is out of the scope of this article, for its impact on music has been everlasting, from the song "Nevermore" (1974) by English glam rock band Queen to Japanese pop star Utada Hikaru, who released an English-language album called *Exodus* in 2004, featuring the song "Kremlin Dusk", inspired by Poe's poem. Yet let us finish with two last examples from two different genres. First, neocelt pagan folk band Omnia, based in the Netherlands, set "The Raven" to music on their album *Alive!*, released in 2007. "The Raven" is a long song set in D minor where there are subtle changes in the lyrics and some stanzas are omitted. Musical rhythm is adapted here to the literary rhythm, maintaining original repetitions and variations, literary devices, rhyme, and climax. The mood of the track is mainly melancholic and gloomy. Lastly, and most interestingly, American trombonist and bandleader Buddy Morrow recorded a jazz album with his orchestra based on Poe's works, entitled *Poe for Moderns*, which was recorded by the jazz ensemble at Webster Hall in New York in 1960. In the style of the big band, it features Poe's poems and tales, including "The Raven", with vocals by The Skip-Jacks. In comparison with the other musical

adaptations of this poem, this track sounds almost happy, and it becomes a tune that could be danced to. There is, therefore, a change of mood, unlike the other musical adaptations examined. Besides that, the track is built around repetition and variation in the music, which is, in fact, at the very core of jazz, and it plays with intensity and rhythm to reach the climax.

9. Final remarks

Poe, who was a true craftsman and musical poet, strived for the kind of popular success that he enjoys today. He tried to render his work pleasing to his audience – he wrote of "The Raven" that he had composed it to "suit at once the popular and the critical taste" (Poe "The Philosophy of Composition"), and he did this by incorporating the vogues and popular culture of his day – Gothic fiction, technology (balloons, telegraph…), etc. Similarly, several of the musicians whose compositions have been here examined incorporate modern popular culture devices, such as the EMI vocoder in The Alan Parsons Project, among others. These transmediations, thus, not only transpose Poe's literary devices with musical purposes, but also his eclectic methods. Likewise, through the examples we have seen, we can conclude that Poe is still relevant in our popular culture, and that his words and works can still be modified to fit our current reality. As we have observed, these artists interpret Poe while challenging established forms, Reed being an illustrative example of that. In brief, Poe continues to fascinate because in his writings he anticipates several of the concerns of our current culture, such as self-destructive impulses. Many of these artists found in Poe a reflection of themselves, a kindred spirit in his aesthetics of resistance; such is the case of Lou Reed in his search for the uncanny. Interestingly, many of the tracks studied are featured in concept albums on Poe, which, once again, points to the influence of the author and poet on popular culture.

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"Under the Sign of Trauma: An Analysis of William Faulkner's 1929-1936 Novels"

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Abstract

North-American canonical author William Faulkner (1897-1962) is known for his deployment of events whose unruliness, more often than not, exact psychological and moral agony on his main characters. The claim undergirding this study is that the Southern author situates his work under the sign of trauma while dramatizing the tension between an event-based and a cumulative approach to traumatic shock. This essay aims to offer a schematic overview of the potentialities of a trauma-assisted reading of Faulkner, especially in what concerns the clinical dimension of traumatic suffering. Thus, I will first provide a very succinct account of the traumatic sources found in the novels published between 1929 and 1936, hailed by criticism as the most accomplished works of the author. Second, I will briefly discuss the strategies through which trauma is aestheticized in the author's *oeuvre*. The concluding remarks will emphasize the interrelatedness of Faulkner and trauma discourse.

Keywords: William Faulkner, Trauma Studies, North-American literature.

1. Introduction

My paper engages with a phenomenon at the core of William Faulkner's fiction, namely the notion of suffering and its relentless encroaching in the author's narrative architecture. The Southern writer's lapidary promise of subjecting his characters to flood and fire, and his interest in endowing his literary progeny with the capability to endure (Blotner 1991, 249), account for his envisaging of suffering as a dimension both constitutive and characteristic of human subjectivity. This aspect is refracted in the novelist's central body of work through emblematic traits of Faulknerian fiction. Throughout his work, the author displays an interest in rhapsodizing the reverberations of an unclaimed past and its crippling aftereffects; a penchant for an imagery plagued by ghosts, repetitions, and insanity; and a reliance on stream of consciousness which enacts the metabolization of an open wound. My aim is to look into how Faulknerian suffering occurring in the wake of personal and collective shock acquires a pathologic dimension, being subsequently transmogrified into traumatization. Specifically, I seek to parse how psychic pain is not only man-made in its inception, but also in its reception, as (mal)adaptation to suffering is ultimately exhibited in the form of deviancy and pathology.

In order to articulate the concept of trauma and understand its complex manifestations, I have adopted an interpretive method which relies on the interrelation of literature, psychology and cultural studies. Intersected by these tripartite fields of inquiry, the contemporary discourse of trauma, articulated by the Yale School (Caruth 1995, 1996) bequeaths a powerful framework for the interpretation of Faulkner's fiction. This project also recruits the latest insights and reworkings of the theory crystallized in the pluralist current seeking to bypass the

irretrievability and subsequent irrepresentability associated to trauma—encroaching the Caruthian model (Balaev, 2014; Onega and Ganteau, 2014). With a deep psychological substratum, trauma theory attends to three aspects relevant to this study: the phenomenon of psychical disturbance, the imbrication of said disturbance in larger social and cultural structures, and the tortuous representation of events or practices which shatter consciousness. In this way, the discursive field of trauma helps to attend with suppleness to the clinical—psychiatric and psychological—dimensions of mental fracture found in Faulkner, providing the tools for a deficit-free assessment of said subjectivities. Ultimately, trauma studies enable an interrogation of Faulkner's engagement with morbidity from a clinical perspective, flanked by social implications. In so doing, this work seeks to challenge the espousing of Faulkner's characters' pathology with the notion of deviance or abnormality. Thus, in the first part of this essay we will summarily illustrate how the clinical foundation of the theory aids to go beyond the figurativeness of mental trouble, providing instead potential psychiatric or psychologic assessments. Equally important, a trauma-oriented reading facilitates a synchronized response to Faulkner's capacious reservoir of stylistic and narrative strategies, as we will discuss in the second part of this essay.

2. They endured: Faulknerian sources of deviancy

The psychodrama of Faulknerian characters is concentrically wrought into the author's body of work in a multilayered verticality ranging from inward subjective fragmentation, to outward domestic drama, to the pressure exacted by larger societal structures. At the roughly inaugural stage of Faulkner's career, the subject's disturbance is rhetorically accented as a phenomenon inflected by the Imaginary and Symbolic field alike. That is, at this stage of authorial creation, trauma is an entity that retains an eminently psychoanalytical dimension. Faulkner's first major novel*, The Sound and The Fury* (1929) is amenable to such an analysis wherein psychic pain is premised upon the main character's imbricate affiliation with the Other. Expanding the Caruthian programmatic reading, this novel formulates trauma as a diffuse phenomenon arising from the intrapsychic violence that enjoins the Ego into subjection, and an anxiety-filled relation with a linguistically-mediated reality. Specifically, Faulknerian hero Quentin Compson's psychical malaise springs from an impossible alignment with the larger social—linguistic—categories of masculinity and sexuality, ultimately driving him toward committing suicide.

Our reading brings to the fore the fact that, from a psychological perspective, Quentin's suicide has a material dimension oftentimes overlooked. For seminal author on suicidology, Edwin Schneidman, suicide is a multi-valent condition, which does not admit simple profiling. The author argues that psychological pain "pushes [the suicidal person] into a special qualitative state [...] deemed unbearable" (1988, 248). Quentin's suicide is thus linked to a flagrant obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD), especially in what concerns the presence of "recurrent and persistent intrusive and unwanted thoughts" as well as "stereotyped mental processes" linked to an incestuous drive towards his sister (APA: 147-8). In this sense, Quentin's self-destructive tendencies arise from specific clinical stressors such as "guilt, shame and humiliation" (Schneidman, 1988, 248) which are conducive to suicidal ideation. The character's *psychache* is externalized through Quentin's stream of consciousness, wherein the reader has an unparalleled vantage point into the mind of the obsessive individual's affliction.

If Quentin Compson anticipated the psychic strain enacted by societal and familial dictates upon the ego, *As I Lay Dying*'s (1930) Darl Bundren and *Sanctuary'*s (1931) Temple Drake are victims of material (punctual) stressors such as war combat and sexual abuse,

respectively. Moreover, Temple is subjected to long-term captivity leading to entrapment trauma; while Darl is victim of a pernicious, unmourned death. As such, both subjectivities epitomize the interplay of an accretive and a punctual model of shock. Consequently, both characters benefit from a reading informed by clinical and theoretical insights on complex traumatization (Herman, 1992). A victim of multifold noxious factors, Darl, for instance, is first exposed to an attritional process of maternal abandonment prompting a subsequent defective symbolic thinking. This leads not only to a trauma-prone sense, but to a difficulty in healing (which explains why Darl is the most vulnerable of his siblings). Such a compromised self is further attacked by his belatedly disclosed participation in the "war in France" triggering the condition of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Darl's nadir, however, is reached upon the death of his mother and the impossibility of grieving a corpse paraded through the Depression-ravaged city of Jefferson.

In conjugating Darl as a chronically traumatized individual, we can claim that his erratic characterization and his psychological unraveling in the final scenes of the novel, are but the *proportionate* response of the victim's facing nefarious, long-term stress. Why, then, the character ends up violently belted in a train to Jefferson's state insane asylum on accounts of his madness? Trauma diagnosis intersected by Foucauldian insights on the communally construed notion of madness aid to decode the way in which the ideology of the *psychonorm* prompted the construal Darl's abjection, a condition upheld by both family and the immediate community. In other words, the young boy's arguable departure from the socially sanctioned behavior led to his construal as a deviant character whose expected outcome at the time was the confinement in a mental asylum. Most importantly, Darl's systematic reading by criticism as insane or the imbuing of his madness with an essentializing metaphoricity is deeply questionable, and shows a reluctance to question the perpetuation of a diagnosis which invisibilizes the character's complex agony.

With *Light in August'*s (1932) Joe Christmas and the duo Quentin Compson-Thomas Sutpen (*Absalom, Absalom!,*1936) we reach the outer layer of Faulknerian traumatization, with a clear emphasis on the outward agents—culture, history—exacting wrenching tension upon the individual. Attending the material conditions of their creation, Faulkner's characters' internal disturbance is undissociated from the economy of loss and decay characterizing the Southern post-Civil war and post-Depression landscape they are set against. Given the particular tragic events that have shaped individual and common imaginary South as a terrain "saturated by loss and haunted by history" (Hinrichsen, 2015, 219), Faulkner offers a rhetorical heightening of traumatizing silences conflating around racial tensions and slavery, and their deeply unsettling individual and communal consequences.

Joe Christmas' traumatogenic racialization encapsulates the pernicious effects of racial colonization of the psychic space. As such, the character is an archetype of accretive trauma. Blackness, a notion ideologically construed, is introjected as a noxious element and sets in motion a defective dynamics of identity formation. Joe finds himself as a racially overdetermined, liminal character situated at a racial threshold. The polluted nature of an individual whose unabashed (race-mediated) deviancy leads to societal rejection, initiates, in turn, a process of insidious self-effacement contributing to further traumatization. From a psychological perspective, Christmas deploys the expected outcomes linked to race traumatization: "vacant esteem […] ever-present anger, and racist socialization" (Gump, 2010, 49). Superposed to the psychological dimension, Faulkner meditates on the damnation of all aspects of life due to racial dictates insofar as, in Christmas' case, subjective effacement is only paralleled by the precluding any type of affection. In murdering his black fetishist mistress,

Christmas is an example of a "Black antiblack" for whom "the most basic forms of interrelationality, that is, language and love, are distorted" (Maldonado Torres, et al. 2021, 246).

Finally, Faulkner moves beyond the domestic and individual sphere and reflects upon a (trans)historical dimension of trauma. As attested by previous titles, including the above discussed *Light in August*, the author's work is undissociated from the pathology of a past deployed as a noxious entity coming to haunt next generations in the guise of transhistorical trauma. It is, however, in *Absalom Absalom*! that the Southern writer deploys in full force the structural dimension of trauma as constitutive of not only individual subjectivity but of the psychic life of a nation. Faulkner is thus aligned with the Freudian-Caruthian (1996, 10-25) tenet of history as an atavistic entity founded by an unassimilated traumatic past—as is the case of the ramshackle South. In line with Anne Whitehead's claim that "a traumatic event which is experienced by one individual can be […] replayed in another individual one or more generations later," (2000, 22) Quentin Compson is besieged by a hereditary pathogenic identity. As the heir of slave-owner Thomas Compson's (hi)story, Quentin is the "pool […] attached by a narrow umbilical water-cord to the next pool which the first pool feeds" (2014, 413). Thus, Quentin is born under the sign of trauma, a signifier which acquires unmanageable dimensions in what concerns psycho-emotional stress, subjective identity, and interrelationality.

3. The aestheticization of trauma

Mapping the aesthetic dimensions of traumatic disruption in Faulkner's narrative pursues an understanding of how trauma is mediated by fiction, and how the author's literary terrain is mediated by trauma. Faulknerian prominent stylistic, narrative, and thematic features can be subsumed into a trauma-oriented framework, as specific narratorial strategies deployed by the author are summoned and dictated by the need to illuminate a given character's disturbance. In other words, Faulkner's modernist practice, understood as a "phenomenon simultaneously sociologic and aesthetic," (Weinstein, 2006, 6) privileges paradigmatic behaviors of shock-stricken characters. William Faulkner's creative project, then, is keenly attuned to the representation of an entity whose spectral phenomenology and imbricate manifestation poses significant problems to the task of representation. The psychic pain in the aftermath of inducing a trauma response is narratively tracked in Faulkner through signifying economies of lack and excess; of gaps and repetitions. In so doing, the author's work is interpellated by both classic and revisionist approaches to trauma representation.

On the one hand, Faulkner is affiliated to pluralist proponents of trauma which go beyond an orthodox, event-based envisaging of trauma, understood as an aporetic event subsumed by what Balaev calls the "shattering trope" (2018, 368). For some of the characters scrutinized, the traumatic phenomenon is all too present. This strategy sustains *Absalom, Absalom!* and is deployed in *The Sound and The Fury.*[1]Psychic compulsiveness, in these works, is narratively signified by syntactic and imagistic repetition which hearkens back to a tentacular trauma that is essentially omnipresent. To render Quentin malaise visible Faulkner employs an oversaturated syntax which mimics the compulsive's individual "associative irradiation" and

[1]Quentin's obsessive incestual coupling with his sister is a paradigmatic case of Lacanian traumatic jouissance wherein the desired object is "fascinating yet overwhelming" (Fink, 1995, preface, xii). What is important to remark is that his psychotic split occurs over the consummation of something which never takes place. Diegetically, then, Quentin acts out what narratologist Gerald Prince calls "the disnarrated" "events that do not happen, but nonetheless are referred to (…) by the narrative text" (1988, 3).

"reticulated arborescence" (Rapaport 2014, 42). We can track Quentin's uncontrolled verbiage and argue that he is operating at a two-tiered, split, discourse, wherein conscious and unconscious elements give rise to an arborescent associationism that allows Quentin to repeatedly claim and articulate the source of his traumatic disturbance. Remarkably, Faulkner bypasses the aporetic nature of trauma encoding, insofar as the traumatic is not only present but obsessively so.

On the other hand, Faulknerian trauma representation is also connected to the classical Freudian-Caruthian understanding of trauma as a "break in the mind's experience of time" (Caruth 1996, 61). As Edouard Glissant in his *Faulkner, Mississippi* aptly remarks, the thrust of Faulkner's writing was the "revelation diferée" (1996, 20) or deferred revelation of a (psychic) secret. It is precisely through this belated disclosure that Faulkner enacts at a macrostructural narrative level the displacing of a horrid event at the margins of the (personal and literary) *récit*. Thus, the duration of Faulkner's leitmotif of endurance and suffering is almost systematically and simultaneously differed—both prolonged and postponed. *Sanctuary* and *As I lay Dying*, written almost simultaneously, are befitting examples of this tenet insofar as the source of traumatic assault is delivered in the closing scenes of the novels—paralleling the victim's expelling of such an event at the margins of consciousness. The character's experiencing of dissociative episodes at the heart of their respective complex traumatization dictates the fictional delivery of their experiences. The traumatic event—rape and combat trauma—are structurally encoded through proleptic dynamics of accretion (immense allusive foreshadowing) and dissociation-ridden mechanisms (ellipsis). Insofar as the traumatic episode is strenuously foreshadowed but eventually circumvented, it can be considered that the text's architectonics mirrors the character's consciousness.

4. Final remarks

The ongoing aim of this project is that of tracking Faulknerian disturbance aided by a theoretical lens that can attend to its socio-clinical dimension, and its aesthetic encoding. Due to space limitations this essay has been concerned with hinting at the ramifications that traumatic disturbance adopts in William Faulkner's selected novels. Thus, we have tasked ourselves with briefly discussing the extent to which a trauma-guided reading can illuminate the trauma-ridden substratum of Faulkner's work. Starting with the first novel under scrutiny, the author concentrically progresses from a psychoanalytic model of trauma, to a more physical, empirical agony materialized in psycho-neurologic disorders. Alternatively, the last novel discussed attests to a shift from material drama, to the structural scarification an individual undergoes by virtue of his being inscribed in an unavoidably traumatogenic and traumatizing history. In what concerns its representation, Faulknerian treatment of shock is linked to the Southern author's experimental drives. In this vein, Faulkner's deployment of hallmark narratorial strategies, especially in what concerns temporal arrangements and characters' psychic voice, materialize psychological shock. Importantly, in resorting to a psychological reading of trauma, we have sought to propose a reading that eschews the metaphorical dimension of psychic suffering besetting the characters under scrutiny. To this end, we have summarily proposed nomenclatures which, albeit not exempt of critique[2], have an empirical foundation.

[2] These disorders are listed in the fifth edition of the Disorders Statistic Manual or DSM-V (2013). Moving beyond a psycho-clinical reading, Allan Young (1997) offers a forceful critique of the phenomenon of PTSD, and Ruth Leys (2000) is a strong critical voice taking aim against the Caruthian reading of trauma.

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The Short Story (1948) Revisited: Sean O'Faolain's Blueprint for Irish Writing

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Abstract

The recent publication of Sean O'Faolain's *The Short Story* (*El relato corto*) in Spanish translation provides an opportunity to reassess this seminal text in the field of short fiction scholarship. The origin of O'Faolain's study lies in a series of articles on the craft of short story writing published by the author in the influential journal *The Bell*, of which O'Faolain was editor between 1940 and 1946. The list of authors who found an outlet for their writing in *The Bell* constitutes a collection of the most accomplished literary artists of the time and, in this sense, his role as cultural agent cannot be underestimated. The aim of this essay, however, is to consider his treatise on the short form as a blueprint for wider concerns, namely, his ideas on a cultural agenda for Ireland.

Keywords: Sean O'Faolain, *The Short Story*, short fiction criticism, contemporary Ireland.

The current essay is a response to the recent publication in Spanish of Sean O'Faolain's influential treatise on the genre of short fiction, *The Short Story*, originally published in Britain in 1948 by Collins. Never previously translated into this language, *El relato corto* was published in 2020 by Edual, the press of the University of Almería. The book was rendered into Spanish by Leticia de la Paz de Dios, and I am responsible for editing it. Naturally, we hope that it will be useful for students and teachers of literature as well as for readers in general. As Santiago Rodríguez Guerrero-Strachan wrote in his review of the book:

> *The Short Story* may seem a piece of historical criticism with little contemporary interest for some readers. This is far from the truth [...] O'Faolain's opinions on the short story, and his analysis of both authors and specific stories, shed valuable light to a genre which, despite being scarcely 200 years old, has already led to a variety of masterpieces. (2021, 234)

The translation of *The Short Story* into Spanish is the perfect excuse to revisit the text and to explore its contents and themes, not least because it deals with far more than just literary matters. My contention is that the text is relevant not only in that it reflects the author's views on writing, but also because within its pages he sets out his ideas on a cultural project for Irish society. In a way, literature can be seen here as complementary to this project, an indirect means of addressing other topics.

I will first make some brief comments on Sean O'Faolain himself, before moving on to discuss the context of *The Short Story*, in particular the historical and social environment in which it was written.

Sean O'Faolain (1900–1991) was an Irish author, born in Cork, and known largely as a short story writer and as an influential cultural agent in Ireland in the central decades of the twentieth century. However, he also wrote novels, biographies, studies on the Irish people, and an autobiography. Like many intellectuals of his generation, he took an active part in the fight for Irish Independence by joining the Irish Volunteers as a young student. During the Civil War that ensued, he took sides with the Anti-Treaty camp, becoming director of propaganda for the IRA. Again, like many other intellectuals of the time, he became disillusioned with the outcome of the war and with the administration that took charge of the country, and thus he turned his energies towards the pursuit of an education. "He went back to university and took an M.A. in Irish Literature; he taught at a school and then took an M.A. in English literature to improve his job qualifications" (Grundmann 2007, 320). He was awarded an international grant and studied at Harvard. After a brief period in London, he returned to Ireland in 1933 to become a writer. His first two collections of stories, *Midsummer Night Madness* (1932) and *A Purse of Coppers* (1937), perhaps contain his most memorable pieces. At the center of these stories there is usually a young man who is forced to adapt himself to a mediocre and prosaic reality, far from the ideals of this youth. These early stories, O'Faolain would later recall, were tainted with excessive romanticism, but he did not dare to rewrite them:

> A story is like a picture, caught in the flick of a camera's trigger, that comes nearer and nearer to clarity in the bath of hypo which is the writer's blend of skill and imagination […] Then the experience, complete or incomplete, is fixed, forever. You can rewrite while you are the same man. To rewrite years after is a form of forgery (O'Faolain 1970a, 10–11).

During these years, he had already voiced his opinions on social and political matters in numerous articles in newspapers and magazines, but his significance as a cultural agent lies in being the founding editor of the journal *The Bell* in 1940. And within this periodical publication we find the object of the present study, in that here we can see the origins of *The Short Story*. He counted on the support and assistance of Peadar O'Donnell as manager, and O'Donnell himself became editor after 1946 when O'Faolain resigned (the magazine would continue to be published until 1954). Under O'Faolain's editorship, *The Bell* became the most influential cultural magazine in Ireland during the 1940s. As Maurice Harmon explains, it published articles on current issues and theme-based pieces, but also sections in which writers could expand on their favourite readings, memories of childhood, etc. It also carried reviews of art exhibitions, theatre plays, films and books and, from time to time, excerpts from unfinished projects (1994, 133). Sean O'Faolain was the mastermind behind the journal and he left his mark on every aspect of it. He would commission articles, select topics, look for writers and even provide them with an outline of how their articles should be structured. He had a clear vision of the kind of publication he wanted. "In his hands" writes Harmon, "the magazine was restrained, constructive, rational and documentary" (1994, 132). Above all, he avoided parochialism and Celtic myth, and strove to offer a picture of real Ireland: "In every contribution the essential ingredient was realism and actual experience, the more gritty and specific the better" (1994, 133).

The project was carried out during The Emergency, a period of special measures implemented by the government due to the breaking out of the Second World War in Britain and in continental Europe (Teekell 2018). Besides a number of restrictions on civil liberties, the government of Eamon de Valera imposed severe censorship on all printed media. The government was allied to the Catholic Church in the extension of a conservative, religion-oriented ethos in all aspects of life, such as education, health provision and culture. In this

context, to edit a high-quality journal with an international range such as *The Bell* was almost heroic: It was "an effort to combat Ireland's isolationism and raise the level of intellectual debate in the country" (Ingman 2009, 160). As the person responsible for the literature that was published in the pages of *The Bell*, in this area O'Faolain took a keen and earnest interest: "He sought new writers, encouraged them when he found them, taught them by frequent re-editing and established in them a rare professionalism" (McMahon 1997a, 9). His advice to young writers was directed towards the consolidation of a new way of writing short stories, pushing the form in new directions far from the old tale so characteristic of Irish folklore. In his editorial interventions and comments on manuscripts, he would reject any recourse to cliches or sentimentality and emphasized the value of indirect allusion instead of explaining everything. He advocated an economy of language, loathing as he did gimmicky tricks such as astounding revelations at the end of a story. Heather Ingman notes that he turned "this aspect of his editorship into what amounted virtually to a creative writing course on the short story" (2009, 161).

In the first half of 1944 "he published a series of articles […] all of them filled with practical advice and all of the advice based on and illustrated from specific literary sources" (Harmon 1994, 138). These articles would be the embryo of *The Short Story*. It is, then, a book based on his own experience as a writer; it is not an academic book and nor is it a manual for writers of short stories, although it might indeed help fledgling authors here with interesting ideas and practical tips. It is, rather, a book about writing, and one of a highly personal nature: the author, it is true, was an expert practitioner of short fiction, a successful writer and a seasoned editor of stories, and his own opinions here go hand in hand with his preferences, literary sensibility and temperament.

The book begins with a foreword in which O'Faolain sets the standard for the whole volume: "The essentials of a good short story are indefinable" (O'Faolain 1951, ix), which is a promising start for anyone who picks up this book with the intention of learning about short fiction. This surprising statement is followed by his views on the genre of the short story, which are expressed immediately: "The things that I like to find in a story are punch and poetry" (1951, ix). Technique, for him, is a mere accessory, acting as an efficient sewing machine, but without the force of personality the final product will be unremarkable as literature. The rest of the book develops these ideas, mainly in the first chapter, "On Keeping the Lines Clear". Three subsequent chapters are devoted to the discussion of three authorities of the short form: Alphonse Daudet, Anton Chekhov, and Guy de Maupassant, with Chekhov identified as the indisputable master. As a concession to would-be-writers, he devotes four short chapters at the end of the book on practical issues with the form: "On Convention", "On Subject", "On Construction" and "On Language."

O'Faolain's engaging tone and informal style has a particular impression on readers, in that we feel as if, more than consulting a manual on how to write short stories, we are attending a class on literature given by an interesting teacher. Indeed, at the beginning of the book he recalls a class that he gave on writing at an Evening Institute in London, where he found that "of a very large class […] only two or three really wished to write. It was for those, in theory the core and justification of the class, that I could do least of all. I soon found out that what they really needed was not instruction in the art of writing but in the art of living" (1951, 3).

The main thesis of the book revolves around the idea that personality is what counts in a writer, and hence that, if an individual is able to find the tone and subject matter that fits their personality, then this is when good writing emerges. All a writer needs to do is to maintain a fluent current and their personality will flow smoothly onto the blank page. Thus it is that he states: "The short story is an emphatically personal exposition" (1951, 30). To support this

theory, he turns to some basic, almost pedestrian, metaphors of a completely unacademic nature, but which are very effective in conveying precisely what he means. The most surprising of these involves plumbing. It may be shocking at first, but on a second reading it makes perfect sense to use metaphors of plumbing for the activity of a writer. The argumentation runs along these lines: if good writing happens when the force of one's personality "seems to flow like an unchecked stream" (1951, 11), then the work of a writer should be similar to that of a plumber, who needs to keep pipes free from obstacles so that the water can flow freely and reach its destination. Consequently, he adds, "there is a lot of plumbing to be done, from time to time, between the source and the jet" (1951, 12). Contrary to the myth of a writer's inspiration, the moment when the muse touches the artist and transmits her grace, O'Faolain stresses the importance of constant effort; the craft of the writer involves working on a text, tinkering, correcting, polishing, rewriting, etc. until the result is satisfactory. This notion of the art of writing is based on O'Faolain's own practice. Joseph S. Rippier has studied his technique as a writer, revealing that when he prepared his stories for second editions, he would continue to polish the texts: "The changes consist largely in excisions, re-arranging of paragraphs, replacement of certain words, different spellings, altered punctuation, some few additions, and the removal of the original section markings" (1976, 16). This, then, is the real plumbing work, the kind of practice that he considers essential in the activity of a writer.

In an Irish context, the metaphor of plumbing also has a wider significance, one which relates to the mentality of the nation. O'Faolain is effectively advocating a kind of utilitarian mentality, one very much at odds with what was commonly perceived as the stereotypical Celtic imagination, drawn as it was towards notions of poetic subtlety. The abyss between utility and the aesthetic stems from "Ireland's early and traumatic experience of modernity and modernization" (Rubenstein 2010, 19), which generated an aversion to public works. With his practical approach to fiction, O'Faolain is trying to redress this antinomy and thus to overcome old traumas of the past. I believe that in doing so he was attempting to extend this hands-on attitude to Irish society at large. When he describes the task of the writer as an exercise in self-management (for example, establishing the conditions for good writing by avoiding distractions), when he defends professionalism and personal dedication, or when he compares the task of the writer to that of a plumber, he is also making the case for a modernization of Irish cultural life, an escape from centuries of obscurantism and backwardness by acquiring a real sense of who writers are and, by extension, who the Irish are.

There is a clear parallelism between his first editorial for *The Bell* (October 1940), a sort of manifesto for a new Ireland, and references to his fellow citizens in his book *The Short Story*. In this first editorial, O'Faolain voiced an impatience with the old symbols that had defined Ireland in the past and expressed the need to create new meanings based on "the Here and Now" (O'Faolain 1940, 13). The first step towards building a productive, decent, thriving society, he wrote in this first leading article of the journal, was to ground one's ideals in the reality of Ireland as Irish citizens experienced it: "This Ireland is young and earnest. She knows that somewhere, among the briars and the brambles, there stands the reality which the generations died to reach […] We are living experimentally. Day after day we are all groping for that reality" (1940, 15). These thoughts from the first issue of *The Bell* are continued in the pages of *The Short Story*, when he writes, for example:

> I have grown up in a country where young men and women are daily taught and have obediently imbibed […] that every large problem has been settled long ago and that there is no need to ask any more questions, because our two divinely appointed spiritual plumbers, the Church and Cathleen ni Houlihan, will look after all that *in vitam aeternam, amen* (1951, 23).

Here, as in other similar passages, Sean O'Faolain is clearly arguing that Irish people need to take their destiny in their own hands, just as he recommends that aspiring writers grapple with their texts and work hard on them until their true personal experience is reflected in the words. By stating his views on writing in *The Short Story*, then, he was indirectly pointing to an anti-dogmatic and inspiring vision of Irish society that few could have envisioned in those uncertain times.

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The Figure of the Subaltern in Zoë Wicomb's *Bowl like Hole*

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Abstract

During the Apartheid era, the South African population was divided according to diverse cultural matters, taking the linguistic gap as one of the most significant divisions. South African author Zoë Wicomb explores throughout all her novels the different social obstacles that coloureds have to cope with, including linguistic disparity. This paper will analyze the figure of the subaltern and to what extent the subaltern figures are allowed to speak for themselves in Zoë Wicomb's short story "Bowl like Hole" in her collection *You Can't Get Lost in Cape Town* (1987). In order to do this, I will use Gayatri Spivak's theory *Can the Subaltern Speak?* (1988), and an adaptation of Michael Bakhtin's dialogism and monologism theory (1981). This paper aims to clarify whether the subaltern subjects in this short story can speak for themselves and whether their discourses belong to either a dialogic or a monologic dialogue.

Keywords: post-colonialism, South African literature, language, cultural relations, racism.

1. Introduction

Zoë Wicomb is a well-known South African writer born in Western Cape in 1948. She explores throughout all her novels the different social obstacles that coloureds have to cope with, including linguistic disparity. As a coloured woman born and brought up in South Africa, her writing is a suitable connecting link to achieve a broader understanding of the experiences of coloureds. This paper will analyze the figure of the subaltern in Zoë Wicomb's short story "Bowl like Hole" in her collection *You Can't Get Lost in Cape Town* (1987). This short story presents the use of language struggle in post-colonial times.

"Bowl like Hole", the opening story of the Wicomb's first collection, is the story of a coloured family and English speakers in a South African village. Before presenting the characters it must be said that we only know the family surname, Shenton, and Mr. Weedon's name, a British man. The fact that Frieda Shenton, the narrator, is here presented with her full name anticipates that she will appear later in the collection as an adult. The father, Mr. Shenton, is the only one in the village who has a high level of English. He is responsible for helping Mr. Weedon, the owner of the village's gypsum mine, when he comes to see how his mine is progressing because the British landowner does not speak his workers' language. Finally, the mother, Mrs. Shenton, is obsessed not only with the acquisition of English, but also in general to assimilate as much as possible the English culture and all it entails. The story takes place during a visit from Mr. Weedon and deals with the different interactions among characters.

This paper aims to investigate to what extent the subaltern figures are allowed to speak for themselves in Wicomb's short story "Bowl like Hole". In order to do this, both Gayatri Spivak's theory *Can the Subaltern Speak?* (1988) and an adaptation of Michael Bakhtin's dialogism and monologism theory (*The Dialogic Imagination*, 1981) will be used.

> From the Latin roots *sub-* ("below"), and *alternus* (“all others”), *subaltern* is used to describe someone of a low rank (as in the military) or class (as in a caste system). Subalterns occupy entry-level jobs or occupy a lower rung of the “corporate ladder.” But the term is also used to describe someone who has no political or economic power, such as a poor person living under a dictatorship (online dictionary).

Firstly, this paper will examine different points of Spivak’s *Can the Subaltern Speak?* (1988). In her study, the author suggests that the socially marginalized individuals do not have their own voice, it is the voice of a person belonging to a higher social position. For Spivak, one of the downsides of this relation formed between the white individual and the “Other” is that it is usually romanticized by the former and that this relation is articulated with the use of hegemonic vocabulary. Actually, the fact that the reader only knows Mr. Weedon’s name (the only Englishman in the story) and neither the family members nor the miners have a name suggests that Spivak was right to assert that subalterns do not have their own voice but one given by a racially or economically superior subject.

Spivak (1988) describes the figure of the subaltern as always in a subordinate position and she places them in an in-between position among the superiors and the feared natives. This subaltern figure is usually ambiguous, irretrievably heterogeneous and never adopting a dominant point of view because of this liminal space (1988, 79). Furthermore, the study explores the way in which the hegemonic power challenges the notion that human individuals are sovereign subjects with an autonomous agency over their consciousness so their discourses of power situate the individuals in particular positions and relations. In this sense, there is an attempt from the outside—the hegemonic power in this case—to grant the collective speech.

Subsequently, what Spivak (1988) aims to clarify are the ethical problems of investigating a different culture based on universal concepts and frameworks. The usual practice of white men talking about coloureds is, for the author, not objective enough and distorts the real situation of the subaltern figure. After the analysis, she concludes that subalterns cannot speak and that representation has not withered away (1988, 104). Despite being beyond the scope of this study, it would be appropriate to mention some works on South African subaltern culture. Following the same line of thought, Clifton Crais argues how colonizers and Apartheid leaders shaped the South African folklore into a subaltern culture (2002). Furthermore, Premesh Lalu “When was South African history ever postcolonial?” (2008) proposes a South African “subaltern study that targets the process of the subjection of agency as it posits the potential for a critique of disciplinary reason, and in so doing offers a postcolonial critique of apartheid” (2008, 281).

Secondly, Bakhtin believed in two different modes of dialogue: monologism and dialogism. The first defends a single-voice speech, unitary, with a centralized power system and taken as the only truth. Dialogism, on the other hand, supports the idea of two or more voices engaged and in this mode the truth is negotiated: it implies multiplicity and different points of view and sets of social relations. This second kind of dialogue would be more descriptive of cultural reality than then first monologic dialogue, which supports the idea of a hegemonic use of language.

For Bakhtin, these dialogues are formed through a sequence of utterances and he proposes three different factors that determine these utterances. The first factor is the relation that exists between the content of the dialogue and its object and meaning for the speaker. The second factor to take into account is the expressiveness the speaker uses, that is to say, if the relation between content and speaker is emotional or axiological. The third and last factor is the relation between the speaker and other’s utterances (1981, 280).

The author also includes the study of intonations and accents. The struggle with alien expressions is usually derived from the socio-cultural clash among races or classes. Thus, each individual can create his or her own utterances depending on their relation to the topic discussed and can pronounce these utterances according to their social group, so a single word can be pronounced one way by someone and differently by another.

Dialogues, according to Bakhtin, can contain what he called "double-voiced words" (1981, 320), that is, the words used for irony. These words have, on the one hand, a monologic meaning, a definition. But, on the other hand, they have a dialogic meaning which depends on the socio-cultural relation of the speakers. Finally, for Bakhtin, in a dialogic conversation there are, firstly, different understandings of the matter debated and, secondly, an infinite continuation towards a perfect understanding of the utterance. Bakhtin believed in dialogism, in the idea that there is always room for arguing because not every individual adopts the same meaning for a word or a topic: "Every human being likes to resist, confront and make personal meaning out of social interactions" (Nesari 2015, 643).

2. Analysis

One of the things Spivak (1988) suggests is that the relation the white individual has with the other is commonly articulated with hegemonic vocabulary. In Wicomb's short story, we can find how Mr. Weedon includes in the same category "sheeps, goats or servants" (2018, 11). However, as Spivak (1988) suggests in her study, colonialists often romanticized the "Other" and saw themselves as well-intentioned and an example of this can be found in "Bowl like Hole" when Mr. Weedon tells the miners "I'm very happy with things, marvelous job are doing" (Wicomb 2018, 17) or "how well they looked" (2018, 16). Mr. Weedon always presents himself as a kind and sympathetic man despite his indifference for anyone or anything. There is another example of the generosity he boasts about when he gives cigarettes to the miners (2018, 18) for the good job done instead of offering better conditions after seeing the state of the work place. Inside the story, the reader can find the characters of Mr. Shenton and Mr. Weedon speaking on behalf of the miners. The main voice they have, Mr. Shenton, could not be considered white but he is definitely racially and socially superior to the miners. Mr. Weedon, for his part, does not only speak for his workers but he also assumes their needs, preferences or desires. These are the ethical problems of a voice speaking for a totally different part of the population, as Spivak (1988) proposes.

Moreover, Spivak (1988) describes the subaltern figure as always in a subordinate position, ambiguous, never adopting a dominant point of view and irretrievably heterogeneous. One of the characters that best reflects description is the mother. Mrs. Shenton is presented as an introverted woman relegated to the house work. She does not want her family to be associated to Boers or non-English speakers, whom she considers to be in a lower position due to the linguistic gap. However, she resists believing that because of their colouredness they belong to an in-between category. I would like to highlight the fact that she hardly speaks throughout the short story but every time she does, it is to make a language comment. She highlights Mr. Weedon's pronunciation, how her daughter should articulate some words or wonders about the spelling of a word, these being her contributions to the story. She praises and imitates the British language and culture and, in fact, Wicomb describes her situation as "the opposite worlds she occupied" (2018, 14). Actually, Spivak mentions women's role in relation to colonial times: "if, in the context of colonial production, the subaltern has no history and cannot speak, the subaltern as female is even more deeply in shadow" (1988, 83). This aptly reflects Wicomb's representation of the mother's character.

Another issue Spivak (1988) mentions in her study is that the discourses of power situate the individuals in particular positions and relations. In this sense, we have the character of the father. He is the person selected for the position of "translator", the person in charge of the communication between Mr. Weedon and his workers. In fact, as the story presents, he is the only way Mr. Weedon has to communicate with the miners, because he would not learn Afrikaans (Wicomb 2018, 12). Accordingly, it could be said that the father accepts what his social superiors consider to be his due, regardless of his economic status. The gypsum miners, in this case, are left in a position of relegation and subordination and they are compelled to queue methodically (2018, 17) or to speak properly (2018, 18). The support for western economic interests seems obvious when the mine chief is a white man and actually the only white man to appear in the story.

As regards the Bakhtin study and his two types of dialogue, we would assert that the relationship Mr. Weedon has with the other characters and the impact Mr. Weedon has on others is mainly monologic. One of the reasons is the use of English as the best way to communicate and, of course, Mr. Weedon accurately represents the English language and culture. Also, it could be said that the character of the mother represents what monologism entails. She does not symbolize that "on-high position" that Bakhtin argues to be the only truth; rather she epitomizes adaptation to and assimilation of such oppressive discourse. Mrs. Shenton seems to agree with everything that comes from Mr. Weedon and trusts his assertions: "he must be right" (2018, 19). One of the reasons for Mrs. Shenton's vigor in encouraging the family members to improve their English could be her ambition to appear to occupy the highest social position possible despite their belonging to a middle-low class. She tells her daughter not to be in contact with Boers and she depicts them as impolite, or needing to learn from Englishmen (2018, 13).

There are several situations in which Mr. Weedon imposes his language, for example when, at the mine, he is called "baas" (boss in English) and he asks not be called that (2018, 18). The fact that he is resists being called "baas" exposes his disregard for his workers' language, not because of a matter of disparate spellings—both words are almost spelled in the same way. This relates to what Bakhtin (1988) called "double-voiced words." These words have a literal meaning ("boss", for instance) and a dialogic meaning that involves the relation between speakers. This second meaning can transform the understanding of the listener and, in this case, Mr. Weedon could consider that the word "boss" (a word that refers, in fact, to a position of high power) must be well pronounced so it does not lose its powerful meaning.

Additionally, another issue that Bakhtin takes into account are intonations and accents. There are several examples where we can find the different pronunciations the characters have, such as how the children of the village waiting for Mr. Weedon pronounce "co-omes" (2018, 19). This particular utterance is connected to Bakhtin's idea of how intonations are connected to particular social groups, in this case probably Boers. As mentioned, Wicomb also highlights the mother's appreciation of the pronunciation of words, especially that of Mr. Weedon—who is seen by the mother as "a gentleman, a true Englishman" (2018, 12)—noticing Mr. Weedon's perfect pronunciation of the "r", "without the vibration of tongue against the palate" (2018, 13).

The last conversation in the story is of a couple arguing about the pronunciation of bowl (/ˈbəʊl/), like howl (/ˈhaʊl/) or like hole (/ˈhəʊl/) because Mr. Weedon mentioned the word before. The mother, representing the Bakhtinian third and future voice, in spite of her doubts about the word's articulation, concludes Mr. Weedon must be right (2018, 19), creating again a monologic dialogue in which there is no space for debate. This relates to the idea of continuously learning a language that Bakhtin proposes and to the mother's obsession with pronouncing everything in correct English. Thus, the short story's title "Bowl like Hole" would

not only symbolize the process of language acquisition but also of culture, values, ideology and the submission some of the subalterns have towards the power system and its members.

3. Conclusions

With the collected information and the subsequent analysis we would say that, regarding Spivak's study (1988), the subalterns cannot speak for themselves. First of all, we see the character of the mother, whose interest in English language and manners suggests a subjugation to the English natives, Mr. Weedon in this case. Then, there are the miners, whose only interventions were "baas" and "bye Sir" (Wicomb 2018, 18), which can also relate to Spivak's idea of subaltern figures unable to speak for themselves since they already have a superior voice that speaks on their behalf, Mr. Shenton's voice. The idea of Westerners as well-intentioned who romanticized the "Other" is also presented with the miners and how Mr. Weedon naively describes them and talks about the good work they are doing. This could be considered part of the attempt that Spivak (1988) mentions of Westerners to grant subalterns a collective speech so the higher hierarchies speak on behalf of the subalterns instead of allowing them to do it for themselves. Both the characters that represent the concept of the subaltern figure and Mr. Weedon as the representation of western economic interest coincide with Spivak's theory that multicultural societies are stratified due to the combination of all socio-cultural factors and that this stratification is always guaranteed by those pertaining to the higher classes.

Because of the respect and admiration Mr. Weedon generates in others and the fact that the English language is the only way of communicating among the characters of this story because of him, we would assert the dialogue in this short story is mainly monologic. Mr. Weedon accurately represents the Bakhtinian monologism with his single-voiced speech, creating a unitary way of speaking that the rest of the characters must follow. If we focus on his interventions throughout the story, we can appreciate that they are only assertions, and that he does not leave room for discussion at any time or regarding any context, so both himself and the other characters consider his truth as the only one possible. In fact, the only time in the short story where dialogism can be found is in the last paragraph, with the couple's debate on the pronunciation of "bowl". It is only at this time that a discussion on utterances is open, but even in this dialogue in which Mr. Weedon takes no part, the truth pronounced by a person belonging to a higher social position still prevails over Mr. and Mrs. Shenton's thoughts. "He's English, he ought to know" (2018, 19) is one of the last sentences in Wicomb's short story, which suggests that the subaltern figure of the mother is still dominated by Mr. Weedon truth, even when he is not present. Accordingly, and despite the situations in which dialogism can be found and analyzed, this text can be considered monologic.

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Emotional Scars and Embattled Relationships in Liane Moriarty's *Big Little Lies* (2014)

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Abstract

In the 21st century, the presence of complex female characters in crime fiction seems to be stronger than ever. Although it has been traditionally regarded as a male-dominated genre, in the last decades, women have been crime fiction's unquestionable protagonists. This, together with the existing tendency of the genre to put the focus on the psychology and mental life of the characters rather than on the crime itself, has caused the number of complex female characters within the genre to significantly increase over the years. These multi-layered characters frequently engage in equally intricate relationships with other of the same kind. In this paper, I propose psychoanalyst Jessica Benjamin's intersubjective theory to study this type of bond in Liane Moriarty's novel *Big Little Lies* (2014), a novel which was adapted to the small screen in 2014 and which has become one of HBO's greatest hits of the last years.

Keywords: contemporary literature, crime fiction, intersubjectivity, recognition, female bonds.

In the 21st century, the presence of complex female characters in crime and mystery fiction seems to be stronger than ever. Although it has been traditionally regarded as a male-dominated genre, in the last decades, women have been crime fiction's unquestionable protagonists. The popularity of female characters, together with the existing tendency of the genre to put the focus on psychology and mental life rather than on the crime itself, has led to an increase in the number of complex female characters within the genre over the years. These multi-layered female characters frequently engage in equally intricate relationships with other characters of the same kind. In this paper, I propose psychoanalyst Jessica Benjamin's theories to study this type of bond in Liane Moriarty's novel *Big Little Lies* (2014). Due to its subject-subject approach, Benjamin's theory of intersubjectivity, based on the processes of *recognition* and *destruction*, presents itself as a potentially enlightening framework to analyze the relationship that this paper aims to examine.

To this end, I will first carry out an overview of Jessica Benjamin's theory of intersubjectivity, as well as of the concepts of *recognition* and *destruction* as regarded by her, and then I will move on to the analysis of the five main female characters of *Big Little Lies* (2014) and how they relate to each other.

The popularity of crime fiction with women as lead characters goes back to the 1980s, a decade which Sally Munt regards as the "heyday" of feminist crime fiction. To this day, the popularity of the genre remains increasing, not only in literature but also in the shape of movies or television series, which attract an immense amount of public. Such is the case of Moriarty's *Big Little Lies* (2014), a novel which was taken to the small screen in 2017 and has become one of HBO's greatest hits of the last years.

Liane Moriarty (Sydney, 1966) has written a total of nine novels and a book series for children. Her fifth novel, *The Husband's Secret* (2013) became a #1 New York Times bestseller within two weeks of being released in the US, and *Big Little Lies* (2014) debuted at number one on the New York Times bestseller list. Critic Janet Maslin described it as a "seemingly fluffy book [which] suddenly touches base with vicious reality, in ways that may give *Big Little Lies* even more staying power than *The Husband's Secret*" (Maslin 2014). Both *Big Little Lies* (2014) and Moriarty's last novel, *Nine Perfect Strangers* (2018) have been adapted for television series.

Jessica Benjamin's theory of intersubjectivity, which I will use as a critical framework for the analysis of the novel, stems from the object relations theory, which identified as an object everything that was not inherent to the self. Consequently, other subjects were also identified as objects, and their mental life was neglected. Jessica Benjamin notices this issue and proposes intersubjectivity, which reorients the conception of mental life from happening from a subject to an object to happening between subjects. Along these lines, intersubjectivity affirms that "the other must be recognized as another subject in order for the self to fully experience his or her subjectivity in the other's presence" (Benjamin 1995, 30). This entails that we, as subjects, have both the capacity and the need for mutual recognition (recognizing the other and being recognized by the other in return). Recognition is defined by Benjamin as "to affirm, validate, acknowledge, know, accept, understand, empathize, take in, tolerate, appreciate, see, identify with, find familiar, …love" (Benjamin 1988, 20).

Our need for mutual recognition leads to the emergence of a paradox. Recognition from the other stems from a response of said other which makes the subject's feelings and actions meaningful and, thus, allows the self to become aware of their own, individual agency. However, this response can only arise from a subject whom the self recognizes as another subject with their corresponding agency and individuality (Benjamin 1988, 16). The emergence of a tension between asserting ourselves and recognizing the other is therefore inevitable, since recognizing the other becomes an indispensable condition to achieve the assertion of our own identity. To explain this tension, Benjamin draws on Hegel's description of the process in *The Phenomenology of Spirit* (1807), in which he defines it as a conflict between the independence (the wish for absolute autonomy) and the dependence (the need for recognition) of the self (Benjamin 1995, 36). Without recognizing the other, the self will not be able to assert themselves. In doing so, they are compromising their absoluteness, as in recognizing the other as a subject they are, at least, opening to the possibility that they are as absolute and independent.

From the point of view of the intersubjective theory, this paradox should continue to exist as a perpetual balance between recognizing the other and asserting the self. Nevertheless, this tension will eventually break down. The first (original) breakdown of the tension takes place in infancy and, far from being something negative, is an inherent feature of intersubjectivity. What matters is how this event is handled and whether the self succeeds in restoring the balance of mutual recognition (Benjamin 1995).

To explain what underlies this breakdown, Benjamin relies on Winnicott's idea of destroying the object. At one point, the subject is overcome by the desire to assert themselves as omnipotent and consequently neglects and denies everything outside their mental absoluteness. Winnicott and Benjamin refer to this process as *destruction*. Destruction is what allows the subject to go beyond recognizing other subject through identification, projection and other processes in order to use them and label them as an object. When the self destroys and objectifies another subject, they learn whether the other's subjectivity survives or not. When it does survive, the self becomes capable to understand and interiorize that the other is real (and

not a mental product) and exists as an independent entity. This way, the mutual recognition balance is restored. As Winnicott argues, it is therefore this procedure which allows us to carry on a relationship with another subject who is objectively perceived as one who exists as independently as the self (Winnicott 1971, 89-91). The culmination of this process summarizes the core feature of intersubjectivity: identifying the difference in the other at the same time that we recognize in them the similarity of inner experience. This purposeful negotiation of difference is what Benjamin calls *thirdness* (Benjamin 2018), which entails the feeling of really discovering the other and allows the self to experience love (Benjamin 1995, 40).

Moriarty's novel *Big Little Lies* (2014) deals with the story of five women (Madeline, Celeste, Jane, Bonnie and Renata) whose children go to the same school and whose lives become closer after Renata accuses Jane's son of bullying her daughter. Not long after, they all become embroiled in a murder investigation.

Bonnie, Madeline's ex-husband new wife, remains in the background for the most part of the story. Nevertheless, she is one of the most interesting characters from a psychoanalytical point of view. At the end of the novel, we learn that Bonnie had suffered from child abuse when she was little. As a consequence of the abuse, in the original breakdown (in infancy), Bonnie is likely to have carried down the destruction of the other only at a fantasy level, as in this kind of situation, the infant does not dare to really test if the parent will survive (Benjamin 1988, 73). Bonnie's absence of a feasible other is likely to have had a negative impact on her capacity for self-assertion. For this reason, she ends up believing that she will never be recognized as an individual in her own right.

She is always depicted as a good girl, excessively empathic and eager to please, to the point where her own self is frequently lost. She has no problem in recognizing others, but she fails to assert herself. Even when others treat her badly, she continues to be kind to them. What Bonnie's insecurities and eagerness to please reveal is the ambiguity between the reproduction of a childhood frustration (the belief that the self will never be recognized) and a profound longing for change.

Her most interesting bond in the book is probably the ambivalent one she shares with Madeline, her husband's ex-wife. Bonnie recognizes Madeline, but Madeline struggles to recognize her in return and she goes back and forth:

> "You probably will make friends with Bonnie," said Madeline. "She's impossible to hate. I'm very good at hating people, and even I find it difficult. I really have to put my heart and soul into it." […] "When Bonnie hears I've hurt my ankle, she'll bring me a meal. She just loves any excuse to bring me a home-cooked meal. Probably because Nathan told her I'm a terrible cook, so she wants to make a point. Although the worst thing about Bonnie is that she's probably not actually making a point. She's just freakishly nice." (Moriarty 2014, 32)

As for Celeste's character, she is described as extraordinarily beautiful and rich and is hence perceived by the others as superior, although she feels inferior to everybody and not recognized by the other, probably as a result of the physically and emotionally abusive relationship that she maintains with her husband. As Benjamin argues, the denial of recognition often results in the thwarting of the individual's attitude to self, consequently shaping their sense of self-love, self-esteem, and self-cohesion (Benjamin 1988, 22). Like Bonnie, she fails to assert herself and feels insecure. However, in Celeste's case, the fear that the self will not be recognized by the other reveals itself as second-guessing and intrusive, anxious thoughts: "Did I just laugh too loudly? Did I forget to laugh? Did I repeat myself?" (Moriarty 2014, 33). Celeste's thoughts suggest a profound longing for recognition. Other people, who usually see

her as superior and therefore "different", do frequently fail to recognize her as a similar subject: "'What's she got to be flustered about if she's tall, blond and beautiful?', said Jane" (Moriarty 2014, 27).

At the beginning of the novel, the only person who seems to recognize her, is Madeline: "Madeline saw Celeste and her face lit up. One of the nicest things about Madeline was the way her face transformed when she saw you, as if there were no one else in the world she'd rather see" (Moriarty 2014, 33). In fact, Madeline is the only person around whom she seems to feel comfortable. She feels recognized and seen, to the point that her constant intrusive thoughts stop and she can be herself for once: "Her personality felt intact when it was just the two of them" (Moriarty 2014, 33).

As the story progresses, Jane and Celeste also start recognizing each other. Jane, like Celeste and Bonnie, struggles with assertion, although seemingly, not as hard. She has also suffered from abuse (in this case, sexual abuse) and feels unworthy of recognition. When Jane and Celeste first meet, they are not able to achieve thirdness because the former feels that the latter belongs to a completely different world: Celeste is stunningly beautiful and rich, and Jane has barely enough money to get by and is not deemed pretty. Nevertheless, not long after, they start going on walks together and are able to recognize each other and find their sameness. At one point, Celeste reflects on the fact that "[i]f she left Pirriwee, she'd miss her morning walks around the headland with Jane. For the most part they'd walk in silence. It was like a shared meditation. If Madeline had walked with them, they would have all three talked the whole time, but it was a different dynamic when it was just Jane and Celeste" (Moriarty 2014, 205). The two seemingly opposed women are able to achieve thirdness and find their sameness in common experiences and personality traits.

At the end, Celeste and Bonnie, who remain unconnected to each other for the most part of the novel, share an instant of recognition when the latter decides to confess having involuntarily killed the former's abusive husband: "'I would have lied for you,' said Celeste. 'I can lie.' 'I know you can.' Bonnie's eyes were bright. 'I think you're probably very good at it too.' She stepped forward and put her hand on Celeste's arm. 'But you can stop now'" (Moriarty 2014, 362). The two women find their sameness and bond over their shared experience with abuse.

Out of the five women, Madeline is the one who is the most successful at maintaining the tension between assertion and recognition with the rest of the characters. She can be a little self-centered at times, but not to the point where she is unable to recognize the other. She does struggle both with recognizing the other and with being recognized (because her moderate egocentrism is nothing but a reflection of her longing for recognition) but, according to Benjamin, it is "by tolerating the inevitable interactive shifts from alignment to misalignment and back" (Benjamin 2018, 4) that we are able to achieve thirdness. Madeline does so both with Celeste and Jane, and, sometimes, even with Bonnie. She does admit to like Renata at some point of the novel, but, throughout most of the story, she just destroys her and sees her as her competitor, as an object to her subjectivity.

Finally, Renata is a mostly flat character which functions mainly as the villain of the story: she is not able to recognize any of the other women and, generally, none of the others are able to recognize her either. Only Bonnie seems to get a glimpse of recognition from Renata. In the television adaptation, her character is rounder and even evolves to a point where she achieves thirdness with the rest of the women. In the novel, however, she remains unable to do so. Her relationship with Madeline is especially difficult. They are ruthless to each other and constantly destroy the other. And their feud is actually bigger than the two of them: it comes to be the so-called "career moms" (those who have a full-time job), represented by Renata, against

the stay-at-home moms (those who do not have a job or have a part-time one), represented by Madeline, which simply reveals the deep-rooted (and gender-related) frustration to not be able to combine a professional career with being a devoted mom that both of them feel.

In conclusion, Jessica Benjamin's theory of intersubjectivity, as well as her interpretation of the concepts of *recognition*, *destruction* and *thirdness*, certainly provides with an enlightening framework for the analysis of the selected novel. The five characters struggle, at some point, with recognizing others or with asserting themselves (or with both). Renata struggles, mostly, with recognizing the other, and those who have suffered from abuse (Bonnie, Celeste and Jane) struggle the hardest with self-assertion, but they still manage to achieve thirdness at least in some of their relationships. And so does Madeline, who sees herself constantly challenged by the others' individuality but still manages to maintain the mutual recognition tension, something that matches Benjamin's claim that recognition in interaction is not a steady-state or stable condition but an ongoing process involving shifts in and out of thirdness.

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Adapting Jane Austen's *Mansfield Park* for a New Digital Generation

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Abstract

Adaptation studies have significantly evolved during the past decades and moved from traditional fidelity discourses to analyses that take into account new filters and dimensions which go beyond the book/film dichotomy. Moreover, media have also evolved. Due to the technological development, different sources are used in order to create stories—or recreate them. The main aim of this paper is to present an analysis of *From Mansfield with Love* (Foot in the Door Theatre, 2014-2015), an independent transmedia web series that modernises Jane Austen's *Mansfield Park* and adapts it for a new digital generation. The story is retold through videos in YouTube and entries in different social networks such as Twitter, Tumblr and WordPress. In conclusion, this analysis will evidence how transmedia and adaptation can be combined to adapt a classic novel in a new innovative way, which can open a new path in adaptation studies.

Keywords: Web series, Transmedia Storytelling, Adaptation Studies, Transmedia Adaptation, Jane Austen.

1. Introduction

Nowadays, the way we consume audiovisual productions has changed. It is not limited to television or cinema anymore as social media platforms have developed and offer us new ways of entertainment. The main aim of this paper is to present an analysis of *From Mansfield with Love*, a transmedia web series that adapts and modernises Jane Austen's *Mansfield Park.* Web series are very interesting adaptations and should be studied as they take advantage of modern platforms such as social networks in order to adapt classic stories to a completely new context. Moreover, they may also attract younger audiences due to the use of the aforementioned platforms. In order to introduce this analysis, I will firstly present a brief theoretical framework to frame my research and discuss some of the theories used to carry it out. As it is an interdisciplinary research, different aspects will be considered in this section. Then, both the original novel and the web series will be introduced. Some previous adaptations will also be mentioned. Finally, the adaptation process and the transmedia strategy followed by creators will be addressed and examined to show how the story has been adapted to this new format.

2. Theoretical framework

This research is mainly framed within adaptation studies. This field has considerably evolved during the past decades in order to overcome the traditional book/film dichotomy and classical fidelity discourses. Nowadays, many researchers advocate for approaches that consider new elements. On the one hand, Cartmell and Whelehan affirm that extra-cinematic factors such as

current trends or historical events must be taken into account to adapt a novel (2007, 29). Cardwell agrees with them as she states that other factors such as previous adaptations, the context or even the target audience influence an adaptation (2002, 72). On the other hand, other researchers such as Stam support intertextuality. He actually suggests "intertextual dialogism" as he considers that texts are "inversions of other texts" (2000, 64) so their relationship and influence should be addressed. All these theories encourage researchers to go beyond traditional analyses and take into consideration elements that used to be overlooked in fidelity discourses.

Nevertheless, my research is interdisciplinary; therefore, other fields should also be taken into account in order to carry out this analysis. First of all, transmedia storytelling has been considered. According to Henry Jenkins, transmedia makes reference to "stories that unfold across multiple media platforms, with each medium making distinctive contributions to our understanding of the world" (2006a, 293). He even affirms that it "refers to a set of choices made about the best approach to tell a particular story to a particular audience in a particular context depending on the particular resources available to particular producers" (2011). This means that creators take advantage of the different platforms to divide the content, so viewers can create their own path and design their own experience. Nonetheless, other authors such as Pratten question this traditional definition of transmedia as it focuses on "the *how* of transmedia storytelling and not the *why*" (2015, 2). According to him, we use multiple platforms to tell stories "because no single media satisfies our curiosity and no single platform our lifestyle" (Pratten 2015, 4). Therefore, transmedia has been analysed through different perspectives and some researchers such as Scolari et al. have attempted to create classifications based on the strategies followed by creators (2012, 146).

Then, we cannot forget the importance of fan studies and the influence that the audience has on this type of productions. For example, Hernández and Grandío (2014, 15-16) or Guerrero (2014, 261-262) have classified fans according to the role they perform. These classifications are related to transmedia storytelling as this phenomenon encourages active roles.

Finally, Jane Austen has become a field of study herself. She is one of the most influential British writers in history and her novels are still read by thousands of people each year. Moreover, these works have been adapted to film and television several times, which unleashed a fan phenomenon: the so-called Austenmania. This phenomenon, which was compared to Beatlemania (Hummel 1997, 735; quoted in Rodríguez Martín 2003, 332), was provoked by some of the famous adaptations released during the 1990s, especially *Pride and Prejudice* 1995, starring Colin Firth as Mr Darcy. However, it did not disappear when the decade ended and continued during the new millennium as new adaptations and fan-related creations were broadcast.

3. *From Mansfield with Love*

Mansfield Park is one of Jane Austen's most controversial novels. Since it was published in 1814, readers have either loved or hated it due to its unconventional heroine: the shy and quiet Fanny Price. Fanny is a poor girl, the offspring of an inconvenient marriage, and moves to Mansfield Park because her rich relatives decide to take care of her (although she is not considered a full member of the family even though she lives there). However, Fanny's character is not particularly appealing as she spends most of the novel reflecting about the moral behaviour of the rest of the inhabitants of Mansfield and does not particularly stand for herself until the end of the book.

Adapting this story has been, therefore, a challenge. Some of the adaptations include the 1983 TV series produced by BBC or the 2007 TV film, which was broadcast during the so-

called "Jane Austen season" on ITV. Nevertheless, the most famous *Mansfield Park* adaptation is certainly Patricia Rozema's 1999 version, which was not exempt from polemic as the director decided to include some elements from Austen's letters and early works and mixed the author's and Fanny's personalities so that she could create a more appealing main character. Due to all these changes, the film was not particularly praised and had a poor reception (Parrill 2002, 171)

However, in this paper I am going to focus on a new transmedia adaptation that modernises the plot of the story and adapts it to 21st century UK. *From Mansfield with Love* is a transmedia web series released by the independent company Foot in the Door Theater in 2015. This series presents Frankie Price, a young woman who, due to her family's financial situation, works in a hotel owned by her mother's friend. Frankie has been working there for years and is considered part of the family by some members even though she is only a worker.

3.1. Adaptation process

In order to create this adaptation, producers had to take into consideration a series of elements, filters and references to translate the story to a new context. First of all, different filters were applied so that the novel could be adapted to the 21st century. As it was mentioned in the previous section, some extra-cinematic elements should be taken into consideration when an adaptation is planned (Cardwell 2002; Cartmell and Wheleham 2007). In this case, these elements are even more important since they do not only have an indirect influence but a direct one as filters are applied to adapt the story to this context. On the one hand, we should consider filters related to time as they are essential to implement these changes. For example, as it was stated in the previous paragraph, Frankie is not the poor niece anymore, but a worker in a hotel as nowadays it is not common for rich families to adopt the children of their poor relatives. Therefore, Frankie works to get some money because her family is going through hard times and stays at Mansfield because it is part of her job. Moreover, other characters have also been adapted to our century. For example, Edmund Bertram, who became a clergyman in the original novel, becomes a History teacher in *From Mansfield with Love*, which does not please his girlfriend, the antagonist Mary Crawford, as she wants him to have a more profitable profession. Moreover, the Bertrams do not own plantations in the West Indies as they do in the original story, but a chain of hotels. Finally, there is even a modernisation inside the modernisation as *Lover Vows*, the play that the characters in the original novel rehearse, becomes an indie film in this new version and, even though the film is never finished, we can get to see the trailer.

On the other hand, filters related to place are also important. Though the web series is also set in England, the setting is completely different due to the fact that Mansfield Park is not anymore a house owned by a rich family but a hotel. It is actually explained during the web series that 200 years ago, another Thomas Bertram decided to transform the family house into a hotel as they had lost all their properties abroad and were facing bankruptcy. Thus, instead of a regular house the main setting is a luxury hotel. On the other hand, real places are mentioned and some episodes are actually recorded in Brighton or Portsmouth; therefore, we can get to know the current version of these places.

Finally, intertextuality (Stam 2000) is also very important as Frankie mentions many books and movies during the series. She is a bookworm so she talks about both classic and contemporary novels. This is especially relevant as many of these productions did not exist when the original *Mansfield Park* was written. Furthermore, casual references to popular well-known franchises such as *Harry Potter* or *Doctor Who* were made during the series. Nonetheless, other references were even clearer and actually had an impact on the plot. For example, Frankie wants to go to the cinema with Edmund, but he cancels it as he has a date

with Mary, who wants to watch *50 Shades of Grey*. This is relevant as it shows how Edmund, who hates those films, is willing to watch it because of Mary.

3.2. Transmedia strategy

From Mansfield with Love is a transmedia web series; therefore, creators did not only develop the adaptation process as they also had to design their own transmedia strategy in order to divide the content through several platforms and promote fan participation (Jenkins 2006a, 2011; Pratten 2015; Scolari et al. 2012). In order to do this, they focused on two elements. First of all, they created several accounts on different social network platforms so they could spread the content. Five platforms were used: YouTube, Twitter, Tumblr, Pinterest and WordPress. The main episodes were uploaded to YouTube, to Frankie's personal account. These videos were part of a videoblog that she was recording for her brother Will, who was in the navy. They were supposed to be private so only Will could watch them. However, she forgot to adjust the privacy settings so they were public and anybody could watch them. Nevertheless, this was not the only YouTube account that was created as Mary Crawford also had her own. She started her videoblog while she was at Mansfield to communicate with her friends and tell them all about her new life. These videos allowed us to get to know more about her and her brother Henry Crawford and find out what they were doing when Frankie and the Bertrams were not around. In fact, they were particularly interesting as we could eventually see Mary's downfall and the reasons why Edmund broke up with her. Moreover, we also got to know more about Henry's plan to conquer Frankie as he talked to her sister about it in these videos.

Furthermore, all characters had their own accounts on social media platforms so they could update their followers about their daily lives and what they were doing between episodes. Actually, these accounts were created taking into consideration the characters' personalities so, for example, Rhea Bertram, who got married during the web series, had a Pinterest account where she posted ideas for her wedding and Mary Crawford had her own WordPress blog (although she later changed it for the aforementioned videoblog). There is even a wedding photo album with pictures taken during Rhea and Rory's wedding that fans can access. Apart from these specific accounts, all characters had their own profile on Twitter. This is particularly relevant as, due to the use of all these platforms, viewers had the possibility to choose their own path: they could just watch the main episodes or move from one platform to another to discover the whole puzzle.

Secondly, interactivity was promoted by creators; thus, viewers could feel part of the story and even interact with it. Characters talked to each other through social networks, but especially through Twitter. They tweeted each other so viewers could read these interactions and find out more about them. In fact, they could even like these messages and answer them. However, their influence was limited as they did not actually have a real impact on the conversations or the course of the story.

4. Conclusion

Transmedia web series allow creators to modernise and adapt classic stories to completely new settings in a very innovative way because they take advantage of new platforms and media. Even though the adaptation process is complex, as different filters must be applied and creators must be aware of any possible intertextual reference, this format allows us to go beyond traditional adaptations and create new versions of old stories. Moreover, web series may appeal

a younger audience as social networks are used to retell the original stories, so they can interact with the content and the characters and feel that they are part of the story.

From Mansfield with Love is a good example of this phenomenon as its creators took advantage of all these innovations to adapt one of Jane Austen's most controversial novels. Two different processes have been addressed in this article to analyse the series. On the one hand, the adaptation process has been examined. Different filters were applied in order to translate the story to the 21st century. Characters became real young adults who navigated modern life and had problems that the audience could easily understand. That's why in this series Frankie is a working class girl who works in a hotel and not just the poor relative who lives with her rich aunt and uncle, and also why Edmund becomes a History teacher in a high school instead of a clergyman. Moreover, creators also decided to include intertextual references to well-known franchises, films and books to appeal to a younger audience who was probably familiar with them. On the other hand, the transmedia strategy has also been examined. Creators made the most of the possibilities offered by social networks, so they distributed the content through different platforms such as YouTube or Twitter. This strategy allowed viewers to move from one medium to another and designed their own experience as they could decide whether they just wanted to watch the main episodes or to expand their knowledge of the world and characters. Moreover, viewers had the opportunity to interact with the content through social networks.

Therefore, we could affirm that this transmedia web series translated *Mansfield Park* to a completely new setting and gave viewers the opportunity to become part of the story. Jane Austen's novels were written more than 200 years ago, but might still attract a young digital generation thanks to adaptation and the use of new media platforms.

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Aiming for the Stars, Getting the Earth: Outer Space, Borders, and the Astronaut as an Agent for Cosmopolitan Aspirations in James Gray's *Ad Astra*

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Abstract

This article presents *Ad Astra* (James Gray, 2019) as the culmination of an emergent group of outer space films that have shown a growing concern for a future of space exploration that reveals terrestrial anxieties about space exploration and exploitation. The film looks back on mythic representations of the American west to transform outer space into a landscape where the Earth's global threats are exposed. Consequently, the article focuses on how the film recycles the figure of the astronaut from its former role as space cowboy to its new image as vehicle for cosmopolitan aspirations. Through the theoretical framework of cosmopolitanism and border studies, the article presents *Ad Astra*'s interplanetary voyage to the last frontier as a metaphor for a journey to the heart of darkness, an opportunity to look back at ourselves.

Keywords: *Ad Astra*, science fiction, outer space film, astronaut, cosmopolitanism, global threats, borders.

1. Introduction

Pandorum (Christian Alvart, 2009), *Moon* (Duncan Jones, 2009), *Oblivion* (Joseph Kosinski, 2013), *Elysium* (Neill Blomkamp, 2013), *Gravity* (Alfonso Cuarón, 2013), *Interstellar* (Christopher Nolan, 2014), *The Martian* (Ridley Scott, 2015), *High Life* (Claire Denis, 2018), *First Man* (Damien Chazelle, 2018), and *Ad Astra* (James Gray, 2019) are part of an emergent cycle of outer space media that have shown a growing concern for global and transnational phenomena over the last decade. This cycle depicts a future of space exploration full of terrestrial anxieties about the geopolitical approaches of current worldwide spatial dynamics.

These films draw upon the cultural popularity of space narratives and the familiar iconographies of NASA and the figure of the astronaut. In these films, however, the popular image of the astronaut is recycled and adapted in order to reflect contemporary anxieties about global and transnational phenomena. Furthermore, these anxieties are contextualized within the framework of worldwide spatial dynamics to identify current geopolitical practices. At the same time, this recent group of science fiction films revisits the traditional conventions of outer space exploration including the fear of the unknown, otherness, and biotechnological power to provide new perspectives on global markets and borders. Kirk Boyle and Dan Mrozowski have indicated that the current outer space media cycle transforms "outer space into a stage for the contradictions of neoliberal globalization and

anthropogenic climate change" (2019, 344). Consequently, even when these movies reproduce the hegemonic discourse of imperial expansion, they also raise concerns about a future geopolitical role of the powers that have shown interest in exploring and exploiting outer space. In this regard, this cycle of outer space films reflects this new era of space exploration represented by the tension between the universal idea of a shared cosmos and the private interests of multinational corporations.

2. Outer space as bordering process

Although audiences' fascination with outer space decreased after the Apollo program, recent news about the success of privately funded space missions has sparked new interest in space exploration. Analyzing the consequences of the Apollo program's achievements, Alexander Geppert identifies three different readings by later generations: Firstly, he observes that some interpret the landing on the Moon as a starting point for discovering new worlds; secondly, others fear a growing sense of "cosmic claustrophobia" as humankind has progressively become aware of the possibility of being alone in the universe; finally, a third group suggests that "the truly alien planet and the only newly discovered frontier [is], indeed, planet Earth itself" (2018, 9). The fact that the highest point of the Space Age paved the way for a more Earth-centered consciousness is what Geppert calls "the post-Apollo paradox." He considers the photographs of planet Earth 'Earthrise' (1968) and 'The Blue Marble' (1972) the epitome of this reversed perspective of looking, not at space, but from space, and the definitive unfolding of the process presently known as "globalization" (9-12).

In this sense, this ongoing cycle of outer space films not only resumes the interest, expectations and anxieties created by the Apollo missions, but also turns our attention to the landscapes of outer space to understand our engagement with the cosmos and, ultimately, to reflect on ourselves from the vantage point of outer space. Science fiction has always been preoccupied with otherness and borders, physical, constructed and imagined, and this tendency seems more consistent in outer space narratives. As Lucie Armitt argues, recurrent allusions to "borders and frontiers have always been the staple discourse of outer space fiction" (1996, 8).

According to director James Gray, the real inspiration for *Ad Astra* is Homer's *The Odyssey* despite the obvious similarities with Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* and *Apocalypse Now* (Francis Ford Coppola, 1979). Set in the late 21st century, the film starts with a series of "power surges" which is threatening life on Earth. U.S. Space Command suspects that their source is located near Neptune, the site of a lost mission led by famed astronaut Clifford McBride (Tommy Lee Jones), who went AWOL à la Colonel Kurtz. His son, Major Roy McBride (Brad Pitt), travels to the edge of the solar system in search of his father, whose expedition to find intelligent life has remained silent for sixteen years. *Ad Astra* combines visual and thematic elements from the current cycle of outer space media with numerous references to classic space narratives including the first space classic *2001: A Space Odyssey* (Stanley Kubrick, 1968) and *Solaris* (Andréi Tarkovski,1972). The film's interplanetary voyage emulates the former in its presentation of outer space as experience in and of itself. *Ad Astra* relies on its impressive visuals contrasting the tiny spaceships against the vastness and beauty of the celestial bodies. However, this effect is in stark opposition with what we see when the astronauts set foot on the Moon and Mars. Thus, the film resorts to the narrative technique of depicting two parallel and complementary journeys: firstly, the external interplanetary voyage, Roy's mission, whose first stage shows

how humanity has expanded beyond Earth, setting up colonies on the Moon and Mars. The film imagines a near future of space exploitation where Earth-like borders have been relocated and multiplied to the benefit of state and corporate interests. When Roy McBride lands on the Moon and sees the Subway restaurants, casinos, and photo booths all in the service of distracting humanity from the mining of the Moon's resources, he just says: "we're world eaters". The second stage of our hero's external journey is illustrated by the film's stunning images of space exploration emphasizing the vastness, beauty and loneliness of outer space as a borderless landscape which is, precisely, nothing but the Earth's border.

Secondly, *Ad Astra* presents Roy McBride's inner journey through his relationship with others and his own thoughts in voice-over. The notion of outer space as a bordering process is constructed by the tension between the affective and the technological. We can see the evolution of Roy's self from the cold and detached astronaut who leaves the Earth on a mission to the man who confronts his father and learns the truth and, like Odysseus, wants to be recognized at home. His wife (Liv Tyler) plays a brief role, but she opens and closes the film. In the opening scene, she abandons the "compartmentalized" hero astronaut immune to human emotions and ready to travel to the last frontier. In the last scene she meets Roy, a vulnerable man eager to reconnect with those closest to him, to give him a second chance. The fact that she only appears on Earth connects her image with notions of home and humanity, underscoring the film's message: outer space is presented as the Earth's border, a mirror image from which to look at ourselves. Mars facility director Helen Lantos (Ruth Negga) is the other relevant female role. She shows Roy that the Lima project members mutinied, and his father killed everyone including her parents. Helen anticipates one of the motifs of the film: she was born on Mars, but the film presents her as homesick for an Earth-like world she had once visited as a child. She represents the ghostly loneliness of outer space – the thought that we are alone in the universe – and the idealization of our planet as our home and the need to preserve and take care of it.

In this sense, Grays's film proposes a cosmopolitan consciousness of space colonization by underscoring the idea of outer space as the Earth's border and turning our planetary concerns into an opportunity to reflect upon our planet. According to many theorists, the cosmopolitan imagination is characterized by border processes, specifically border crossings (Beck and Sznaider 2006, 1). Maria Rovisco points out that cosmopolitanism should not be understood as a desire to remove all borders and proposes seeing borders as sites for cross-cultural engagements (2013, 150). Similarly, Anthony Cooper and Chris Rumford consider that the proliferation of borders, rather than a borderless world, is one of the results of globalization as these borders become "engines of connectivity" (2011, 262). Roy's interplanetary journey, not to the last frontier but through the border that outer space represents, makes him more and more earthbound as he distances from Earth. This idea is anticipated by the first scene: when trying to repair the antenna that connects us with the unknown universe, he falls back to Earth. This also seems to illustrate Beck's famous formulation, "[t]o belong or not to belong – that is the cosmopolitan question" (2003, 454). In this line of argument, *Ad Astra* relies on the idea of space as a border from which to look at Earth, an opportunity to "look from the border" and "see like a border" (Rumford 2014, 39-43). In so doing, the film's dual journey conveys the idea of outer space as a metaphor for the process of being aware of one's own identity and belonging, transforming space into a landscape of cosmopolitan concerns.

3. The astronaut as agent for cosmopolitan aspirations

In the middle of the accelerated processes of globalization, outer space exploration transforms the ideal of a "borderless" world into a real possibility. *Ad Astra* recuperates the figure of the astronaut to explore this possibility. The astronaut's revered position as an icon of the 20th century is inculcated culturally as much as historically. Innumerable media representations have contributed to an intertextual mythology which constructs the astronaut as an ideal embodiment of American identity. Like the cowboy and the war hero, the astronaut has become an archetypal protagonist in film, reflective of a specific social and political context, yet indicative of assumptions about the intrinsic nature of masculinity, individualism, patriotism, family values and even religious morality. *Ad Astra*, however, tries to remake our image of humankind through the popular image of the astronaut. As space exploration increasingly becomes a vehicle of global desires and anxieties, astronauts convey ideas about our collective future and affirm the prospect of outer space as a "province of mankind," as envisioned by the Outer Space Treaty from 1967 (United Nations, 2002). *Ad Astra* confronts the traditional image of the Apollo astronaut represented by the figure of "space cowboy" Tommy Lee Jones with a recycled astronaut image embodied by Brad Pitt, whose initial detachment makes him feel barely human, but as the film progresses, he becomes consciously human.

The film initially presents an image of outer space as a frontier that is explored and exploited, reflecting the theory of American Manifest Destiny. However, when Roy leaves Mars in search of his father, we can only see him alone surrounded by the massive distances and sizes of space and the sound of his thoughts. This last stage of his trip turns the idea of space as the last frontier into a bordering process to reflect on the moral geographies of outer space. As Oliver Dunnett observes, "The concept of 'moral geographies' can be usefully employed as a conceptual framework for further understanding the cosmos as a geographical space to which moral and ethical values can be assigned" (2021, 149). Dunnett builds this idea from C.S. Lewis, one of the most important critics of human space exploration in the 20th century, who criticized this modern conception of empty, blank "space", with all its imperial connotations, in favor of an earlier, medieval understanding of the cosmos as a realm of harmony and spirituality. Astronaut Roy McBride embodies this transformation. The film depicts gorgeous landscapes in a vast universe unravelling right before our eyes as if it were a sort of sacred place destined to be observed as a guide to our place in the universe. In this regard, James Gray seems to agree with C. S. Lewis, who viewed space exploration as a moral transgression and thought that the vast astronomical distances represented "God's quarantine regulations" (Lewis, 1983, 73). Asked about the possibility of future widespread travel in space, Lewis confessed that the idea of coming into contact with other inhabited planets horrified him because we would bring our sin and our greed to establish a new colonialism. Thinking about his inevitable encounter with his father, Roy says that "in the end, the son suffers the sins of his father." However, Lewis continued, "once we find ourselves spiritually awakened, we can go to outer space and take the good things with us" (Lewis 2014, 294). Roy's interplanetary voyage in *Ad Astra* reflects Lewis' spiritual awakening through the astronaut's inner transformation toward a new cosmopolitan perspective. Thus, *Ad Astra* inverts the notion of Turner's Frontier Thesis and invites us to look at Earth from space.

The climax of the film comes when Roy finally faces his father. This father figure is an absent yet omnipresent, and thus God-like, presence. His son's vital mission is to discover himself in his father's eyes, to know the truth. Roy soon realizes that his father has

disconnected himself from humanity to the degree that he has no interest in coming home. This is precisely the point where Roy is overwhelmed by the feeling of returning where he belongs. Father and son grapple in space, arms locked, Clifford trying to get away and Roy trying to retain him. Roy eventually lets go of him in a scene that resembles Michelangelo's Creation of Adam. The metaphorically newborn astronaut becomes the everyman who can be conceived as agent and even site of articulation, adaptation, and contestation of ideas, identities, and belonging. Although Clifford's attempts to find extraterrestrial intelligent life have failed, he refused to accept it and never ceased to work on the project. Where the father only sees the possibility of extending the frontier further by "winning wilderness", the son sees "like a border," a mirror image:

> He captured strange and distant worlds in greater detail than ever before. They were beautiful, magnificent, full of awe and wonder. But beneath their sublime surfaces, there was nothing. No love or hate. No light or dark. He could only see what was not there and missed what was right in front of him. (Gray, 2019)

Conclusion

To socialize the extra-terrestrial space, *Ad Astra* tries to transform space into humankind's domain, turning the notion of space as border into a bordering process through the figure of the astronaut as representative of humanity's cosmopolitan aspirations. Both Roy's trip to the galaxy's final frontier and the confrontation with his father work as mirrors in which the Earth is physically and symbolically reflected, calling our attention to Dr. Snaut's words in *Solaris*: "We don't want to conquer space at all. We want to expand Earth endlessly. We don't want other worlds; we want a mirror."

Ad Astra imagines outer space as site of struggle, but also of resistance, a bordering process that not only amplifies the Earth's global threats, but also proposes a metaphorical journey to the stars, from whence we can look at ourselves, as an opportunity to make us aware of the fragile and lonely beauty of our home planet.

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Humanizing the Immigrant Experience in Angie Cruz's *Dominicana*

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Abstract

Angie Cruz's *Dominicana* (2019) tells a moving story that both confirms and subverts many of the cliches and stereotypes found in immigrant narratives, thus somehow "humanizing" the genre. Ana Canción, the protagonist and main narrator of the story, leaves her homeland (Dominican Republic) at the tender age of fifteen, soon after marrying a man more than twice her age and perceived by her family as the last hope to escape their declining farm. The book relates Ana's coming-of-age adventures in the alien context of Washington Heights, New York, during the turbulent mid-1960s. Despite the protagonist's dreams and her tremendous courage, she has to fight forces (some economic, others sociocultural, and still others related to gender) that make her vulnerability increasingly evident. My analysis of Cruz's novel concentrates both on those elements of Ana's experience that may turn it into a conventional immigrant narrative and others that can be said to be very idiosyncratic of her immigrant story.

Keywords: immigrant fiction, Angie Cruz, *Dominicana*, humanizing immigrants.

1. Introduction

Much has been written and debated lately about the effects that immigrant narratives (as constructed in the media, political discourse or academic circles) may have both on receiving societies and on the immigrants themselves. In a recent TED talk under the title of "What's Missing from the American Immigrant Narrative," Elisabeth Camarillo Gutiérrez spoke at some length about the biases in stories that simplify and idealize the immigrant experience. In her presentation, Camarillo referred to different stereotypes of the immigrant (such as the exploited laborer, the marginalized neighbor or the success story) as a pernicious influence on the minds of mainstream Americans and the newly-arrived alike. According to her, many of these narratives tend "to celebrate one particular type of immigrant, while villainizing the others" (Camarillo Gutiérrez 2020, 03:30). The ultimate effect of these narratives is to segregate those migrants whose experiences do not fit into those preestablished patterns and to create anxieties if their lives take other directions. Indeed, as the webpage myimmigrationstory.com clearly illustrates, the variegated and complex trajectories of immigrants in the United States can hardly be encompassed in narrative molds that predefine the process and the outcomes of such experience rather too narrowly. As the opening lines on this webpage state, "Statistics do not tell the story of immigration [neither do 'canonical narratives']. People do" (Ramos y Sánchez 2005, par. 1).

Angie Cruz's *Dominicana*, published in 2019, relates a story that both confirms and subverts many of those cliches and stereotypes that are common in immigrant narratives and, as a result, manages to "humanize" the immigrant experience. Ana Canción, the protagonist and main narrator of the novel, leaves her homeland (Dominican Republic) at the young age of

fifteen on New Year's Day of 1965. She does so soon after marrying Juan Ruiz, a man much older than herself and who is regarded by her mother as a last hope to escape their fading farm in Los Guayacanes. The book describes Ana's coming-of-age experiences in the baffling context of Washington Heights, New York, during the turbulent times of the mid-1960s—with protests against the Vietnam War, the assassination of historical figures and much political turmoil in the DR. Despite the protagonist's immense courage and sacrifices, she is compelled to fight forces (some economic, others sociocultural, and still others related to gender) that will make her vulnerability increasingly patent and bring her close to disaster:

> Two weeks have passed since I last saw Marisela [Ana's closest friend]. The ache in my body, the heaviness in my chest is so bad I fear my heart will stop, that the baby will die of sadness. Marisela has one payment left, according to Juan [Ana's husband]. Mamá will be disappointed. I trusted someone. I lost my secret stash [of money] for my necessities. Now I can't help the family. All my hard work is gone just like that. Gone. For this last payment, I borrow from Juan's emergency stash, which I recently discovered rolled tightly and stuffed inside a pill bottle. If I don't replace the money Juan will definitely kill me. (Cruz 2019, 158)

Trapped in an abusive marriage, double-crossed by friends, alone in an alien neighborhood, and pressed by her family to support them economically, Ana's existence becomes more and more suffocating. However, an unexpected turn of events will allow this young Dominican woman to show her resilience and true potential when she is no longer obliged to live under her husband's shadow. As Julie Azzam has remarked: "without Juan's shadow over her, Ana blossoms, exploring the city, taking English classes, and selling Dominican food" (2019, par. 8)

My dissection of Cruz's novel will center on both those aspects of Ana Canción's story that may turn it into a fairly predictable immigrant narrative and those others that can be said to be very particular of her immigrant experience. When the author's mother learnt that Angie was writing a novel based on her early experiences in Washington Heights in the mid-1970s, her reaction was: "*Who would be interested in a story about a woman like me? It's so typical*" (Cruz 2019, 321; italics in original). However, Cruz countered that although ordinary, her mother's tribulations were rarely represented in mainstream fiction. Illuminated by the work of scholars such as Ferrero (1993), Graziano (2013) or García-Peña (2016), this article will unpack some of the themes and incidents that make Ana Canción's struggle to survive in the new land both prototypical of the immigrant experience but also very different from other narratives in this tradition. Ultimately, the article is an attempt to show that Cruz's novel, while responding to some of the expectations we have about immigrant narratives, also manages to disrupt some of those conventions by creating an unusual heroine in a decidedly inhospitable context.

2. Current Debates and "Fossilization" Process of Immigrant Narratives

There is little question that immigrant narratives have gained great visibility in the U.S. these last four or five decades with authors such as Edwidge Danticat, Sandra Cisneros or Junot Diaz winning important literary awards and their novels becoming bestsellers. One could even argue that these narratives have become a literary genre in their own right (cf. Walkowitz 2006, 5–6), since they have developed some recognizable patterns and archetypes that seem to be innate to this type of writing. Ferrero claimed that these novels are often perceived as "the poor stepsisters of a benighted realist family: stereotypical in plot and characterization, assimilationist in drive, contestable even as social evidence, and of interest only to group

members and historians" (1993, 1). Of course, things have changed notably since he made this observation three decades ago; however, there is still much dispute about the arguably formulaic character of the genre and its degree of predictability—not to mention the undesirable effects that it may have on its readers (Camarillo Gutiérrez 2020, 04:10). Several scholars and writers have been warning us that immigrant narratives may be undergoing a process of "fossilization," particularly when they are reproduced in social media and political discourses (cf. De Fina 2003, 2–3). Nevertheless, while this may occasionally happen to any genre, other critics have been quick to notice that there are numerous immigrant stories that represent clear departures from conventionality and show great creativity and imagination. Bolaki, for example, argues that the immigration stories she analyzes in her volume "collide with normative conventions of the genre and grate against its naturalized assumptions, bending and stretching the form so that it reveals its multiple patterns and figures hidden under the generic 'carpet' […]" (2011, 11–12).

In the end, like most other fictional genres, immigrant narratives usually seek to strike an unstable balance between elements easily appreciated as belonging to a particular genre or fictional tradition and others that attempt to stretch the boundaries in different thematic and aesthetic ways. This negotiation is especially important in the case of immigrant narratives because, as Rothe and Pumariega have recently shown, besides running parallel to the immigrant experience, they may also serve as a convenient therapeutic tool, for they help immigrants work through the social and identity challenges that the migration process usually implies (2020a, 183–85). Angie Cruz's *Dominicana* could be said to pursue this aim since it is replete with sociological insights about her mother's (and other immigrant women's) vexing experiences in the fictionalized Washington Heights of the mid-1960s. Not only that but, as Trevino and others have maintained, Ana's narrative is beautifully written and emotionally compelling as she grapples with exigencies often beyond her control (Trevino 2019, par. 2–3). Little wonder, then, that the novel earned Cruz the ALA/YALSA Alex Award and was also shortlisted for the prestigious Women's Prize for Fiction in the UK.

Daniela Pujols has also praised *Dominicana* in the *Diario Libre*, highlighting that the book encompasses such urgent topics as the civil rights of immigrants, female empowerment or love (2021, par. 1). Surely, one of the strengths of Cruz's novel is to represent the trials that many young Dominican women must have experienced when they first traveled to the Big Apple in the 1960s and 70s (Pujols 2021, par. 4). The book is not unlike other coming-of-age, immigrant stories in that it focuses most sharply on the tribulations of a girl confined in a squalid apartment, in an unfamiliar neighborhood, where she becomes the target of her erratic husband's changing moods:

> His fist is directed at my face. I cringe. His face turns beet red, and it's as if he has been waiting all day to find something to hit, to hurt, to yell at. Instead, he flings me on the sofa. I slip from under him and jump on his back, and my fingers press on his eyeballs. Blinded, Juan swings his body around. I hold on like a tick. He trips over the coffee table, catches himself with his hands against the wall. I let go and run to the bathroom. But before I close the door, he grabs me by the waist and carries me like a football, my legs kicking, my arms punching. He throws me on the bed (Cruz 2019, 94–95).

As most critics and reviewers have agreed, Ana's problems begin even before she abandons her homeland, when by getting married to Juan Ruiz she becomes the object of a transaction between her own family and the Ruiz brothers: "Juan is the ticket for all of us to eventually go to America" (Cruz 2019, 25). Capó Crucet rightly notes that Ana's heartbreaking story offers a detailed portrait of the often economically driven trials of "womanhood and

citizenship for most first-generation Americans" (2019, par. 2). The reader experiences this child bride's feelings of confinement and oppression mostly through the private workings of Ana's still immature and troubled psyche. Herebelow are her impressions right after Malcolm X is assassinated in the Audubon Building, right across the street from their sixth-floor apartment:

> The crowd on the street below amplifies the sound of the TV in the living room. Behind the dead man on the stretcher onscreen is the dental-supplies store and the small park where Juan and I sometimes sit on a bench and share an ice cream. There it is, our Broadway, making the news! The 168th Street subway entrance, the emergency room sign. Our building! The bright Salt and Pepper sign from the restaurant downstairs. The small rectangle in the midst of it all. Our red window curtains! There, a silhouette—is that me? (Cruz 2019, 78).

Like many other immigrant and diasporic narratives, the concise chapters recounting Ana's befuddling adventures in Washington Heights are interspersed with nostalgic episodes from her childhood in the DR countryside. These sections often function as a counterpoint and relief to her disorienting experiences in New York: "There's a price to pay when messing with the pretty flowers. This Mamá says after Lenny [Ana's brother] gets stung and hops on one foot in pain. / When a bee stings she pops her own heart. Did you know this Lenny? At least you're alive to tell the story, Mamá laughs while Lenny cries" (Cruz 2019, 178). In the opinion of several reviewers, the Dominican sections of the book are typically filled with the lively colors, tastes, and sounds that Ana's life in her country of adoption lacks (see Anderson 2020, par. 5).

3. A Thoroughly Researched Novel and its Original Elements

Although it is a fact that *Dominicana* resorts to some well-known tropes (confinement, lack of communication, emotional deprivation, etc.) and commonplaces in immigrant stories, it also manages to capture many of the peculiarities of the main character's hardships. Graziano observes that migratory experiences are "idiosyncratic, chaotic and poorly suited to fixed systems that purport to explain motivation structurally and statistically. Migrants are social beings whose collective individual actions are transforming the very structures that mobilize them, […]" (2013, 2). In this regard, Ana Canción's sensations of vulnerability, frustration, ambition, flight, compulsion, and loss, while reminiscent of those experienced by other immigrant women, also reveal the power to bend the generic precincts of this type of narrative. Most likely, this power derives from Cruz's intensive work of interviewing and gathering photographic documentation about the Dominicanas of her mother's generation (see the "Acknowlegments" of the novel). As the author admits, her project of bringing Ana's unique story to life would have been impossible without the assistance of all those women "who took the time to answer my questions about their lives and who opened their photo albums so I could bridge the gaps in all the silences in the telling, often painful" (Cruz 2019, 321).

The author has declared in several interviews that, unlike her two previous works of fiction, "this novel actually took fourteen years to write! I started working on it in 2005 and, arguably, I started working on it before. For *Let It Rain Coffee*, I was already doing a lot of interviews with my family in order to understand the Dominican experience" (Irizarry 2020, 67). To fully grasp the "fluidity" of that experience of living between two places, she had to build an archive that informed about what it was like to move back and forth between two equally turbulent settings in the mid-1960s. As she explains, "That is why I love writing fiction; in fiction I'm able to sort and fill in the gaps. Fiction lets me string along the truth of an

experience that can convey the complicated ways memory is fluid" (Irizarry 2020, 67). Indeed, most reviewers have underlined that what is most alluring in *Dominicana* is precisely Ana Canción's "receptivity and capacity to observe and be impressed by all the happenings occurring around her" (Adubato 2021, par. 3). The heroine is constantly filled with awe and wonder when she witnesses the dynamics of the lives and events taking place in her neighborhood:

> People wait for their turn, cars wait at the spotlight [sic]. All the litter is stuffed into trash cans. So much order. Phone booths and blue mailboxes on every other corner. Convenient. Efficient. No green to speak of. Trees naked and gray like the cement of the sidewalks. Across the street from our building is the parking lot for Columbia Presbyterian Hospital (Cruz 2019, 59).

Cruz has insisted in conversations that, besides telling her mother's and other Dominicanas' stories through Ana's experiences, she was also interested in showing how this particular neighborhood in New York was changing in the mid-1960s as a result of the arrival of new migrants and the eruption of the civil rights movement (see Pujols 2021, par. 6). The protagonist becomes a silent witness from the window in her apartment of the protests against the Vietnam War and the assassination of Malcolm X. Not only that but, when Juan is obliged to return to the Dominican Republic to sort out some family business in the second half of the novel, Ana is finally allowed to enjoy a new freedom—helped by César, Juan's brother—by visiting places like Coney Island and the World's Fair downtown. Her metamorphosis from a passive girl into a resilient and even confident woman late in the novel takes place against the background of several important historical occurrences both in the U.S. and in her country of origin after the end of the Trujillato.

To conclude this section, two other original elements in Cruz's novel are more closely related to its aesthetic and stylistic stature. Readers and reviewers have rightly noticed that the novel shows a skillful use of symbols that usually serve to conveniently convey some of the feelings experienced by the protagonist, but that she has a hard time expressing. Thus, Capó Crucet, for example, thinks of the hollow ceramic doll that Juan buys for Ana at the airport in Santo Domingo right before departure as "an apt metaphor for her role in her family" (Capó Crucet 2019, par. 1): "She wears a blue dress and a yellow sash around her waist. My sweet, hollow Dominicana will keep all my secrets: she has no eyes, no lips, no mouth" (Cruz 2019, 58). Ana uses her doll to hide the money that she hopes to be able to send to her family at some point. It is interesting to note that many of the metaphors and symbols that come up in the story and that help readers to translate the protagonist's confused feelings are related to Ana's childhood years in the DR and, quite often, to her mother's warnings: "Puffer fish can kill you if you eat them, yet some people take the risk and die. Keep your eyes open and don't be a pendeja like all the other girls in Los Guayacanes who fall for men with too much sugar in their mouths. Puffer fish inflate into a ball when they feel threatened as a warning to predators" (Cruz 2019, 260). As these lines also partly suggest, although the book is of course written in English, there is a ring to many sentences that make them sound as if they were being directly translated from Spanish. This stylistic peculiarity makes perfect sense when one considers the heroine's limited abilities in the language of her new homeland: "When Mamá gets angry there is always a tempest. Everyone thinks it's typical unpredictable Dominican weather, but without fail, every time Mamá realizes she can't cover the sun with one finger she screams so loud in frustration the sky collapses" (Cruz 2019, 224).

4. Closing Remarks

Lorgia García-Peña has examined the experience of the Domincanyork or what she also calls "the Nié" in depth, since these immigrants represent a "flagless nation" as they occupy a space "neither here nor there" (García-Peña 2016, 4–6). As is the case with Ana Canción, they often experience a multiple type of marginality and discrimination, for they suffer the pressures of their original culture and a great deal of ostracism from the receiving one. It is no surprise, therefore, that Cruz should decide to dedicate the book "To Dania, my mother. *Para todas las dominicanas*. For all our unsung heroes." (Cruz, n.p.; italics in original). Although, as has been shown above, much of the novel is devoted to the colossal obstacles that the protagonist faces in the U.S.—with no knowledge of the language, few real friends, little support from her husband, etc.—, the second half of the book (Parts IV–VI) demonstrates that she has the potential to resist and, even, defy some of the forces subjugating her. Ana's short-lived affair with her husband's brother, César, gives us a sense of her aptitude to take the reins of her life both from a practical and emotional viewpoint (cf. Pujols 2021, par. 8). Readers discover aspects of her character flourishing that they could have barely suspected existed before: "My breath is finally in sync with the city's. I can hear sounds of music. A fire alarm, a police siren, a bus halting at its stop, a garbage truck backing up, and so on. At first they were so loud almost unbearable, always alarming, but now they sound as pleasant as the radio or the TV or a house full of people" (Cruz 2019, 226). Even if the novel never evolves into an idealized or romantic version of the immigrant narrative, it does offer some glimmers of hope as the protagonist, a mother herself now, helps her mother and younger brother adapt to the city.

In brief, Angie Cruz's *Dominicana* can be seen to incorporate a number of features that can be easily associated with the immigrant narrative genre of fiction that has grown increasingly popular these last decades (cf. Walkowitz 2006, 2–3). The protagonist and main narrator, Ana Canción, a child bride burdened with all sorts of unfair responsibilities, is hardly able to survive the heavy demands placed on her by her family, her husband, her new neighbors, and so on. In Anderson's opinion, the novel is "a grim portrait of what it means to be doubly disenfranchised as a female illegal migrant in an oppressively patriarchal community" (2020, par. 4). However, Cruz succeeds in turning Ana's story into an insightful and original immigrant narrative by letting us look into most of her experiences through the prism of her often immature and disoriented self. Besides being a deeply perceptive observer of the realities taking place around her, the protagonist also proves to have a very sharp eye to report on some critical events that are shaping history in that place and period, and she also comes up with metaphors and images that conveniently translate her messed up feelings at decisive moments of her narration (cf. Adubato 2021, par. 15).

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Towards the Archetype of a Working-class Woman in the 1960s: Nell Dunn's *The Muse* (2020) and her Early Writings

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Abstract

In 2020 the British author Nell Dunn published *The Muse* (2020), a biographical book devoted to a woman named Josie, whose life happens to have several parallelisms with those of the characters depicted in the author's first writings. In Dunn's words, Josie's behavior, "her use of language" and "the freedom and daring of her life" are very present in the content of her literary output through these years (2020, i). Taking this into consideration, the aim of this paper is to explore the fictional and biographical connections among two of Nell Dunn's first publications—*Up the Junction* (1963) and *Poor Cow* (1967)—and her most recent volume, *The Muse* (2020). The idea that there might be a number of fabrications in what was initially presented as a realistic portrayal of the society of its day will be subject to scrutiny.

Keywords: Modern and Contemporary Literature; Gender studies; Nell Dunn; British literature; 1960s.

1. Introduction: Nell Dunn and the 1960s.

Nell Dunn (1936-) is a British author well-known for her commitment to the working class. In 1959, she decided to move from her natal Chelsea, London, to Battersea, an industrial and working-class area of the city. Jeremy Sandford, Dunn's former husband, remarks how, with actions like this, they "were going in the opposite direction" of most young people at that time (quoted in Savage 2015, 469). Jennifer Hodgson puts it claiming that:

> Dunn understood that to take possession of a voice is to claim a place in the world. She was born into upper-class privilege but, in 1959, finding herself newly married, isolated and kicking her heels in a smart house in Chelsea, she moved to working-class Battersea – the wrong side of the river. Cutting herself adrift gave her the possibility of self-reinvention. She bought a pair of tight white jeans, bleached her hair and wore it in a beehive, took a job in a factory wrapping chocolate liqueurs and became a writer. (Hodgson 2021)

Indeed, the experiences Dunn witnessed in this working-class suburb were instrumental in the creation of many of her early stories, especially those in which the lives of young women in Battersea are depicted. In these narrations, in which both their works in the factories as well

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as their nightclubbing are described, Dunn recurrently delivers a very particular archetype of the working-class woman of the sixties, highly influenced by her friendship with a woman called Josie, as she discloses in her most recent volume, *The Muse* (2020).

To fully understand Dunn's stories, it is important to consider the unprecedented political changes which were taking place in the decade in which she began to publish her own writings, the 1960s. These years were marked by the Labour government of Harold Wilson (1964-1970), and the implementation of a high number of measures concerning human rights such as the decriminalisation of homosexuality, the Race Relations Act and the abolition of the death penalty. Moreover, regarding women's rights, this government promoted equal pay for women, the legalisation of abortion, and new divorce laws. Nell Dunn, like many coetaneous authors, anticipated the importance of addressing these problems in women's lives by depicting them in her works.

Among Dunn's publications during this decade, it is worth highlighting *Up the Junction* (1963), a collection of short stories previously published in *The New Stateman*, and *Poor Cow* (1967). As it will be later developed, both volumes present the personal records and problems of young working-class women. Indeed, during the 1960s the criticism was divided between those who condemned the sexual and marginal tone of Dunn's stories and those who praised the relevance of dealing with these themes. On 22 November 1963, D. A. N. Jones wrote in *The New Stateman* that Dunn's writings notably drew attention to important problems affecting working-class citizens. He stated that volumes like *Up the Junction* were "not meant to be read by the kind of people it describes" but by upper classes in order to become aware of other realities apart from the privileged ones (Jones 1963).

Dunn had noted several times the fact that these stories were based on actual experiences, as she argues that the main aim when writing was to narrate the real experiences she witnessed in Battersea (Fisher 2021). Nevertheless, it was not until 2020, when she provided genuine testimonies and further data on the woman who inspired most of her writings, Josie, her best friend in Battersea and the person who is going to have a pivotal role in Dunn's most recent book: *The Muse* (2020).

2. *The Muse* (2020), Dunn revisits her early works.

The first edition of *The Muse* was published by the publishing house Coronet in 2020. The structure of this volume combines genuine personal records, such as letters written by Dunn and Josie, with photographs and chapters in which the author describes their lives in Battersea. From the very beginning of this volume, Dunn anticipates the role Josie has had in her life as she opens the book by quoting Shakespeare's "Sonnet 78": "So oft have I invok'd thee for my Muse, / And found such fair assistance in my verse / As every alien pen hath got my use, / And under thee their poesy disperse" (quoted in Dunn 2020, 2). Indeed, among the pages of *The Muse*, readers can, not just know details of Josie's life but also observe her way of speaking and writing, since Dunn also includes her genuine correspondence.

With regard to certain similarities found in the life of Dunn's friend and her early texts, the author claims that "my relationship with Josie was deeply connected with my work as a writer" (Dunn 2020, 1). As mentioned, these parallelisms would be more explicit in *Up the Junction* and *Poor Cow.* For this reason, the following sections will be devoted to the comparison of certain thematic clusters in Dunn's fiction and the actual experiences narrated in *The Muse*.

2.1 Friends and nightclubbing in Battersea

Up the Junction is a collection of short stories described as "a tale of class division and youth culture in the 'swinging London' of the 1960s as a young Chelsea socialite crosses the river to see how the other half live and love in run-down Battersea" (McLean 2021). In this particular book, elements based on what Dunn witnessed in her stay there would abound, especially those relating to having met Josie and attending parties with her and their other friends.

Stephen Brooke praises this book for shedding light on the experiences of working-class women and their way of approaching the socio-cultural changes that occurred in this decade. In fact, with regard to sexuality, a topic that is very present in Dunn's stories, Brooke notes that what makes this book different is that in *Up the Junction* "King's Road is not the venue for sexual exploration but, rather, a traditional (and unfashionable) working-class area [Battersea]" (Brooke 2015, 443). With actions like this, Dunn's writings are detached from most of the artistic productions released in these years which were more London-centred and merely presented the experiences of middle-class women.

Although the unnamed narrator of most of these stories seems to be based on Dunn's own life—she is a woman who has just arrived at Battersea, she works in a factory with her friends, and she is also married—most of the female characters resemble Josie in several ways. Among them, it is important to note two women named Sylvie and Rube, the best friends of this narrator and with whom she used to go nightclubbing.

In the case of the former, the most significant similarity would be the failed relationship with her husband, something which leads to some confrontations in the course of the stories of *Up the Junction*. It is mentioned that when both married, they were very young and they were unable to divorce later as, before the *Divorce Reform Act of 1969*, the only reasons to apply for it were "cruelty, desertion and incurable insanity" (*UK Parliament* 2021). This complex relationship reaches its climax in the short story entitled "Wedding Day", when Sylvie and her current husband have a violent fight while she was attending a party with the narrator.

This scene is also described in *The Muse* and, although the fight is not mentioned, throughout the volume Josie's husband is also depicted as "a bully and a tough man" (Dunn 2020, 4). Further similarities in these situations lie in the fact that, while in *Up the Junction* Nell Dunn narrates that both friends go nightclubbing due to the fact that "the pubs are open till midnight because Princess Margaret got married today" (Dunn [1963] 2013, 55), in *The Muse* she seems to recall the same night. In fact, in the first chapter of this book, "Meeting Josie", Dunn writes that the first party she attended with Josie took place the "night after Princess Margaret's wedding with the pubs open till late" (Dunn 2020, 4).

Moreover, the friends of the main characters in both *Up the Junction* and *Poor Cow* may share similar traits with Dunn's and Josie's actual friends described in the letters from the 1960s included in *The Muse.* Among them, it is important to highlight the role of a woman named Joan, who was one of Josie's best friends and who worked with her as a barmaid. Similarly, in *Poor Cow,* one of Joy's few friends is a woman called Beryl, and both work together in a pub. In fact, concerning Beryl, she also seems to be inspired by another of Josie's friends called Olive. Like Beryl, she is described as a well-known prostitute in Battersea (Dunn 2020, 16).

2.3 Motherhood, sex, and family in the 1960s

Topics concerning motherhood and family would be more present in *Poor Cow* (1967), the first novel published by Nell Dunn. This novel deals with the life of a 22-year-old mother named Joy whose husband is in prison for robbery. Therefore, she must earn money to raise their son alone.

Going back to *The Muse*, in its introduction "Meeting Josie", Nell describes a considerably similar domestic situation. It is mentioned that Josie's husband, Ray—who also shares his name with one of Sylvie's lovers in *Up the Junction*—was also sent to prison. Moreover, Dunn narrates as well that he has been in a Borstal before, coinciding with Josie's pregnancy (Dunn 2020, 7). Both being in prison and attending borstals are features also shared by the lover of the unnamed narrator in the stories of *Up the Junction*. In fact, before being judged for robbery this character tries to soothe her girlfriend claiming that "they say Borstal's all right - sort of university for them what can't afford Oxford.'" (Dunn [1963] 2013, 104).

The fact that both Joy in *Poor Cow* and Josie in real life are supposed to raise their sons alone forces them to find several unstable jobs and live their motherhood in squalor. For this reason, the description found in Josie's letters of these years and Dunn's narrations especially recalls the experiences of Joy in *Poor Cow*, who after finding herself alone and without any money, ends up having different jobs and several lovers who provide her financial help. Nevertheless, throughout the novel, Joy seems concerned about the problems this may imply to her son, and she claims to be worried about living and raising him in a "broken home" (Dunn [1967] 1988, 46).

This feeling can also be observed in *The Muse.* In fact, in Dunn's depictions, the author highlights the precarious state of the house in which Josie and her son lived. She writes:

> How the room in Finborough Road had bed bugs in the mattress and cockroaches under the wallpaper. She and the baby were covered in bites. How she went down to the Cleansing Station and was painted all over with black tar to shoo off the bugs. How she had to make the dinner in a Fray Bentos tin (Dunn 2020, 7-8).

Indeed, as mentioned, this kind of precarious situation, along with failed marriages, is one of the reasons why, in most of Dunn's stories, women tend to have several lovers. In *The Muse,* it is mentioned how Josie leaves her husband and son in Battersea to travel with lovers who were in better economic situations. It is worth mentioning that thanks to these lovers, Dunn explores in her fiction the topic of sexuality in working-class women during the 1960s. In the process, she frequently highlights two resulting problems: unwanted pregnancies and back-street abortion.

Scholars have praised *Poor Cow* for being a book that "does not condemn what in another account might have been seen as Joy's promiscuity, but rather celebrates it as an act of fulfilment" (Brooke 2015, 437). Indeed, despite the struggles faced by the characters described by Dunn—and inspired by Josie—, they tend to be optimistic about their situations. Nevertheless, when it comes to dealing with abortion, the author emphasises the problems derived from its ilegalisation and the consequent back-street abortion.

In the case of *Poor Cow,* Joy shares some doubts about her insecurity concerning being a mother, e. G. she states that "what did I go and get landed with him for, I used to be a smart girl?" (Dunn [1967] 1988, 10). Nevertheless, despite being briefly mentioned by Joy's friend, Beryl (93), the topic of abortion is not as present as it is in *Up the Junction.*

In this other volume, backstreet abortion is the main theme of two of its stories: "Sunday Morning" and "Bang on the Common". In the former, it is suggested that a woman is arrested

after wanting to have an abortion since, after eventually giving birth to a dead child, the police arrive, and it is mentioned that "nobody ever saw black Moira again" (Dunn [1963] 2013, 48). Moreover, in "Bang on the Common", Rube, one of the best friends of the narrator, is on the verge of dying after having been recommended to have a backstreet abortion. In fact, this topic was so present in this volume that its film version directed by Ken Loach in 1965 is said to have a vital role in changing public opinion on the legalisation of abortion as it enhances the dangers of backstreet abortion presented in Dunn's writings. Moreover, one of the writers who adapted the script with Dunn, Tony Garnett, mentions that they wanted to explicitly show the problems derived from this kind of intervention as he claims that "if abortions had been legal I wouldn't have lost my parents" (Deans and Brown 2013). Nevertheless, despite the importance of this topic in Dunn's fiction, in the case of *The Muse*, it is not mentioned.

3. Final remarks

Nell Dunn's writings produced during the 1960s shed light on certain issues which marked the life of working-class women through this decade. Among them, there are alternative ways of living motherhood, the precarious condition in which many of them had to face this and the high rates of crime, as most of their husbands have been in prisons or borstals. Nevertheless, these issues are also merged with others that are more in tune with the mainstream image of the Swinging Sixties: sexuality and nightclubbing. This comparative analysis has been useful to explore the extent to which Dunn's work produced in the 1960s is based on actual experiences. By this, the authenticity of these characters—the archetype of working-class woman provided by Dunn—can be assessed due to the fact that this comparison has proved that most of the biographical testimonies on Josie coincide with the experiences of the women depicted in Dunn's fiction.

Despite the fact that similarities abound, one of the challenges faced during the completion of this research is the absence of any allusion to abortion in *The Muse*, a central topic in many of Dunn's short stories. This may be due to several reasons, among them, the fact that Dunn's fiction is more descriptive, while *The Muse* is mostly composed of short notes, letters, and chapters on specific moments which do not tend to surpass the extent of four pages. Other possible reasons, apart from the implications of delivering such personal information about actual people, may be the fact that Dunn has already devoted her life to writing about this topic and the problems faced by women in the 1960s. In fact, she has dealt with these issues, not just in fiction but also in other formats, such as in her book of interviews called *Talking to Women* (1964). This collection has been reissued in 2018 by the publishing house Silver Press, something which may indicate the rising importance and interest in reassessing the archetypes of women in the 1960s by considering actual testimonies, such as those delivered in *The Muse.*

Therefore, the study of *The Muse* as a biographical volume has been instrumental to re-examine Dunn's early texts as authentic testimonies of working-class women in a decade marked by changes in women's rights, including improvements in divorce legislation, equal pay, and abortion.

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New Sustainable Bodies in Transit: Transnational Affects in Some (South-East Asian) Canadian Women Writers

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Abstract

This paper studies the articulation of aesthetics of affects by some South-East Asian Canadian refugee collectivities beyond state designations. Souvankham Thammavongsa's aesthetics of heterogeneity in her last collection of stories *How to Pronounce Knife* shows its belongingness to a plurality of immigrant voices with various perspectives, interests and drives. I look at the centrality of affective relations in the transformation of subjectivity under processes of a growing (un)happiness in the diasporic *homeSpace.* I will try to conceptualize this refugee labour of challenging, transforming, asserting, and carving out ways of living as acts of "refugee worldmaking" after the suffering of people on a scale that Michel Foucault described in 1979 as "unprecedented in modern history."

Keywords: Souvankham Thammavongsa, Canadian literature, refugee worldmaking, sustainable affects, hospitality, *homeSpace*

It is not surprising that South-East Asian Canadian refugee writers such as Souvankham Thammavongsa (*How to Pronounce Knife*) or Kim Thúy (*Ru*, 2012) are publishing some of their heterogeneous fictional pieces while positioning intersectional approaches to race, class and ethnicity at the centre of their creative inquiry. As Bharati Mukherjee asked a decade ago, how any immigrant can "renounce her earlier self, her fidelity to family history and language 'without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion'" (2011, 681). A refugee attempt at revisioning some political structures of worldmaking was underway, with a personal purpose of rejecting assimilation, and embracing hybridity, to "center on the nuanced process of *rehousement* after the trauma of forced or voluntary *unhousement*" (2011, 683 italics in the original). As Aritha van Herk argues, not all Canadian writing that details migrancy evolves from a postulation of animatedness towards wretched living conditions though. Some of these prose works gesture towards resistance, a fact that unsettles far more than those that reinscribe a recital of otherness and suffering (van Herk 2020, 1). We will try to find new responses to what Spivak terms "the cultivation of an imagination that can flex into another's space" (Spivak 2018, 169). An embodied and embedded commitment towards "sustainable affects" (Braidotti 2021; García Zarranz 2020), where the narrative voice makes out of its vulnerability with promise and commitment (van Herk 2020, 3). That desire and capacity expresses Butler's "embodied enactment" (2016, 22) as proof of bodies who recognize their precarious positions (Butler 2004), to embrace dissent and defiance, which accompanies the necessary transformation that migration entails (van Herk 2020, 8).

Souvankham Thammavongsa was born in 1978 in a Lao refugee camp in Nong Khai, Thailand, before coming to Canada when she was one year old. She was one of the sixty thousand who arrived in Canada from Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos, being part of a Canadian

history of refugee passage which has seriously impacted Asian Canadian writing (Kim and Lee 2020, 268). Together with other women writers such as Sharon Bala and Kim Thúy, Thammavongsa deals with matters of memory, generation, forced migration, and statelessness. This bodily transit entails a *transpacific precarity* (Beauregard 2021, 135), which Timothy K. August approaches through the concept of "aesthetic heterogeneity,"

> to articulate how refugee collectivities exists beyond state designations. While Thammavongsa [and Kim Thúy] write from and about different South-East Asian communities, as well as belonging to differing immigrant "waves," both texts are similar in how they present a plurality of voices, with various interests, perspectives, and drives. This approach contrasts with the singularity that has positioned South-East Asian Canadian refugees as the stable exemplary subject needed for Canadian national mythologies to be formed. I propose that a contemporary aesthetic of heterogeneity intervenes in the imagining of the Canadian social milieu, where refugee authors illustrate the different structures of knowledge created by refugee lives without having to represent and give up to the reader exactly what the refugee life is (August 2022, 40).

This aesthetic heterogeneity reveals the importance of the process of refugee worldmaking in a new *homeSpace* called "Here," without a special emphasis either on the country of origin or on the host country, and constitutes a hemispheric swarming of voices that eludes any definition of refugeeness while offering the reader the uncomfortable need to reimagine it.

The question of "how Laos is represented" is crucial when we read this 2020 Giller Prize winner collection of short stories, which cut sharply across lives marked by precarious labour conditions despite the protagonists' attempt at linguistic and physical assimilation. Across many of these work spaces, the position of one's father, the shape of one's nose, and the colour of one's skin seem to determine who is eligible for advancement into managerial circles, and who is not. In the lead story the young protagonist,

> [l]istened as her father worried about his pay and his friends and how they were all making their living here in this new country. He said his friends, who were educated and had great jobs in Laos, now found themselves picking worms or being managed by pimple-faced teenagers. They'd had to begin all over again, as if the life they led before didn't count ("How to Pronounce Knife" 4).

Here, "in this new country" Lao language is a warning for survival: "'[d]on't speak Lao and don't tell anyone you are Lao. It's no good to tell people where you're from'. The child looked at the centre of her father's chest, where, on his T-shirt, four letters stood side by side: LAOS" ("How to Pronounce Knife" 4–5). This sets in motion a powerful theoretical device, an irony made visible through the daughter's line of vision, which keeps LAOS in sight, in her sustainable struggle to move forward: "When my parents read the newspaper or watched the evening news, they never heard anything about what was happening [in Laos]. It was almost as if it didn't exist" ("Edge of the World" 96). This *unhousement,* or unhomely displacement, is deployed through "the other's language" in the host country (Derrida and Dufourmantelle 2000, 89) while the child narrator watches her father's inability to pronounce knife, "she thinks of what else he doesn't know. What else she would have to find out for herself. She wants to tell her father that some letters, even though they are there, we do not say them, but she decides

now is not the time to say such a thing" ("How to Pronounce Knife" 9). As Thammavongsa reflects, "when a parent does not know how to pronounce knife or the meaning of 'thief' you cannot tell them the truth since he feels he belongs and is accepted in a country which is speechless to him" (online interview). This shame, this painful feeling of humiliation or distress caused by the terrible consciousness of wrong or foolish behavior in the absence of parental speech plays negatively on the possibilities for a political subjectivity or any domestic authority. The child's lies will then subvert the linguistic absence of her parents' speech: "Did you get your parents to read the note we sent home with you?" asks her teacher. "No, she lied, looking at the floor where her blue shoes fitted themselves inside the space of a small square tile. She didn't want to lie, but there was no point in embarrassing her parents" ("How to Pronounce Knife" 5).

Thammavongsa complains about how being born in a refugee camp in Laos makes you stateless and displaced and writing gives you the freedom of speech when something is unbearable: "There were two kinds of people in the world," the child discovers, "those who were seen, and those who were not. I considered myself one of the latter" ("Gas Station" 137). Parenting the parent makes her subjectivity build her political dissent, creating processes of transnational solidarity (Mohanty 2003), to validate her identity and thus a new refugee worldmaking (Jemisin 2018; Y-Dang Troeung 2021). Irony and humour will pave the way to subvert and displace tension and tragedy in her short story collection, "[t]he sadder the story, the louder the laughter" ("Picking Worms" 167). Here is where "radical openness toward unexpected outcomes" can be rehearsed (van Herk 2020, 13). These outcomes are the revelations the reader will disclose at the end of each story, where the refugee's naivety transforms into an affective consciousness towards dissent in adult life.

Thammavongsa undoes this projection of (un)happiness, or resignation to accommodate to what society demands to reach your objectives of satisfaction, while carefully unpacking the ugly feelings (Ngai 2005) from the child's view towards adult's life in a tight, commanding prose. Surprisingly, these subtle yet shattering stories glow with empathy, humour and wisdom, even in the most revealing situations when a child needs to complain:

> When she was about four, she wanted to be the beast. She roared and pounded her chest and no one ever said that was not how a little girl should be. She could be ugly and uglier and even more ugly [….] To be a monster, a beast of some kind. Watching everything shudder, down to the most useless blade of grass. She wanted that for herself" ("The Gas Station" 143–44).

The child's need of power will necessarily unveil her monstrosity when depending on a promise, in projecting her desire (Ahmed 2010; Berlant 2011). The terrible promise of happiness will only be handled with irony and an affirmative consciousness of empowerment.

In the story "Mani Pedi," Raymond, an ex-boxer taken in by his sister to work in her nail salon, knows things about the women his sister employs that he thinks she doesn't know: "People form this kind of friendship in this country," she tells him, "[h]ow they tried to get pregnant, but no babies ever caught on because of the chemicals from the salon. How their coughs started and didn't ever stop" ("Mani Pedi" 70). Health and labour conditions constitute the backbone of this collection. Not only toxic chemicals threaten the health and livelihoods of Thammavongsa's characters: Raymond has to take weeks off work because he develops warts on his hands from touching people's feet without gloves, but the warts bother him less than an invisible contamination:

> It was the smell of feet. It got into the pores of his nostrils and took root there, like a follicle of hair. It was becoming a part of him, the smell—like spoiled milk. He could never forget what he did for a living because it was always there. He was beginning to taste the smell of feet at the back of his throat. ("Mani Pedi" 66).

The sense of smell of the clients' neglected feet is a stench slowly dulling his senses and revealing his precarious condition. But he can still smell, and when a female client on whom he has a crush is dropped off at the salon by a wealthy-looking man, "the smell of this man's cologne came in with her" ("Mani Pedi" 69). Raymond's heart is broken and his impossible dreams dashed; his sister sees his face fall, "the way it would fall in the ring when he knew he was losing" ("Mani Pedi" 69). The end of the story will reveal, as do others in this collection, that Raymond could never win this round, and the reader stays with a heartbreaking image of him and his sister sitting in her car, windows open, listening to the sounds of a family barbeque and children giggling, the soundtrack of middle-class innocence "like a far distant thing, a thing that happened only to other people" ("Mani Pedi" 71).

Things that happen to other people is also a theme in the story "Paris," where the labouring refugee body is contained by the gendered, racialized, sexualized, and classed networks of power that structure workplaces. The Laotian women working in a chicken processing plant think that nose jobs, hairdos, and glamorous clothing might get them promoted to the front office by their sexual predator of a boss. But altering their bodies and trying to appear like the white wives of the company men can never unmark them as racialized others, and it can never insert them into nepotistic reproductions of managerial power. The narrator, Red, who distances herself from the other Laotian women's feminine performances, is a bystander when her boss is discovered by his beautiful wife, Nicole, having sex with a Laotian female worker in his car. In distress, Nicole runs over to the narrator, seeking comfort in a hug: "She grabbed Red and held her like they were the closest of friends, and buried her pointy nose in Red's neck. She could feel the poke" ("Paris" 23). The white woman's pointy nose that other Laotian women mimic through plastic surgery breaks the invisible boundary Red maintains around her body, and the story ends with both women crying, "but for different reasons" ("Paris" 23). The male boss' sexual exploitation of his female Laotian factory workers tethers these two women to each other, uncomfortably and without collapsing their differences (Rifkind 2020).

Labour situates the refugee body on the ground, figuratively and literally, in this short story collection. In "Picking Worms," the narrator's Laotian mother's skill at picking live earthworms from farmers' fields for bait gives her pleasure—"Man, I love shit of the earth" ("Picking Worms," 172) she says after every shift—but it will never get her the promotion she deserves. Instead, the narrator's fourteen-year-old white boyfriend, who joins them on a lark, is promoted to manager and changes the way they pick. Her mother's organic, intuitive method of going barefoot and ungloved is prohibited; her health and productivity suffer because the boy manager's rules separate her physically from the earthworms she finds through touch and feel ("Picking Worms," 177). And so, she lives the contradictions of her refugee, racialized, gendered labouring body that is at once too physical for her physical job and too expert to be promoted to management. The characters' complex relationships are what elevate these stories beyond sociological or political exposé to rich explorations of the labouring body as also a loving, longing, knowing, and defiant body, which creates new routes towards sustainable affects in literary refugee worldmaking. The somatic focus of these stories offers a specificity of South-East Asian refugee and migrant experience grounded in the labouring body that is always, both visibly and invisibly, seeking to transcend basic survival (Rifkind 2020). The state

or fact of continuing to live and exist, despite these difficult circumstances is not enough, the affective disability is here exposed to be transformed into the embodiment of dissent in order to reimagine a new refugee worldmaking.

The transmission of affect is then problematized, and sideways feelings unravel various ways in which shame, anger and conditional happiness can become sustainable with important ethical repercussions (Ahmed 2014; García Zarranz 2020). Here is where the aporia of transnational solidarity (Mohanty 2003) in the *homeSpace* and the validity of alterity (Kamboureli 2021) can re-enact the subversion of this linguistic invisibility and perverse affect. Does transnational solidarity mean a "tolerant" support to realize a common political project by a public authority as Canada has always represented? Is the recognition of alterity enough? What I call the *homeSpace* not only implies an ethical dimension of neither here nor there, but the validation of a new affective worldmaking that is planetary. The aporia of transnational solidarity and linguistic assimilation will only reveal invisibility—or lack of dissent—in the process of adapting to that conditional happiness:

> He thought for a few seconds that she was talking about someone else, or to someone else. But then he realized, that's what his name was now. Jay. Like blue jay, a small blue bird, a little dot in the sky. He wanted to remind his wife that his name was Jai. It means heart in Lao! He wanted to yell. But then she would just remind him how men in this country do not raise their voices at women. Or tell him to practice his English. "No one here knows jai means heart," she would say. So what if that's what it means? It does not mean anything in English. And English is the only language that matters here… And if he was going to live here, he had to learn to adapt and fit in. ("The School Bus Driver" 114).

This resistance to exploiting the experiences they have somehow survived defies what van Herk has called "traumatage" (2020, 11), in texts that luxuriate in affliction and that make misery the core of diasporic narrative exposure. As Mbembe and Spivak argue (Mbembe 2018; Spivak 2005a), we should deal with this affective leaking, abolishing official boundaries, and building new forms of knowledge, reimagining a new life that would be planetary. This reimagined *homeSpace*, away from fear and anxiety, is now in continuous complaint with the old archives of previous decades "to change the field of what is possible" (Beauregard 2019, 577). This field of possibility is what Souvankham Thammavongsa explores in this collection when what matters is the centrality of affective relations in the transformation of subjectivity, that is, the critical approach to García Zarranz's (2020) notion of sustainable affects, under processes of the growing (un)happiness in the diasporic *homeSpace*. The child's gaze will reveal this affective sustainability through the process of "parenting the parent," a new rehousement that may be feasible despite inherited "traumatage."

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Sexual Violence in the Dark Room: Reading Whisper Networks as Collective Narratives

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Abstract

This paper aims to analyze the phenomenon of whisper networks, looking at their contested development in public culture after the MeToo movement. Often intended to elude the "due process" that may involve for survivors to endure the stigma of doubt and blaming, whisper networks have also been questioned on account of their restricted access and their practical limitations. Yet beyond their paralegal status, they can constitute testimonial spaces that mobilize a number of feelings within a feminist agenda, thus fostering solidarity against the violence inflicted by people and institutions. Taking the cases of the Shitty Media Men list in the United States and LoSHA in India, I argue that the logic and the private circulation of whisper networks can potentially open an ethical space for survivors to reckon with the intimate experience of sexual violence, renegotiating the value of political action from an emphasis on emotion and bodily vulnerability.

Keywords: whisper networks, MeToo, testimony, archive, vulnerability.

1. Introduction

On October 11, 2017, only a few days after Harvey Weinstein's news cycle accelerated the outbreak of the MeToo movement, American journalist Moira Donegan created an open-sourced list on Google Drive containing several names of men working in media industries allegedly involved in different cases of sexual abuse. Known as the "Shitty Media Men" (henceforth SMM), the document was expected to circulate privately among fellow women writers and media workers who, as both readers and editors, were instructed to remain anonymous, not mention other accusers, and never share the list with a man. Around the same week, an Indian-born California-based law graduate named Raya Sarkar posted on her Facebook page a list of the names of scholars from Indian universities accused of sexual harassment by students. The post, later referred to as LoSHA ("List of Sexual Harassers in Academia"), was crowdsourced by students who had privately addressed Sarkar with their own stories or their friends'. Both Donegan and Sarkar had expected to create a private space for their fellow women, however, both their lists, trackable online and in the middle of the Weinstein scandal, followed a similarly public trajectory in the first few hours: a large number of contributions from anonymous women in their community, unexpected virilization in the press and the social media, and polarized opinions that amplified the debates over the limits of informal reporting after MeToo.

As a global cultural and media phenomenon, the MeToo movement has advocated for justice for survivors and demanded accountability for perpetrators. On a smaller scale, the

movement's "massive autobiographical project" (Herbe and Novak 8) has responded to the generalized discredit that survivors have often encountered when reporting abuse in formal venues. In so doing, MeToo has mobilized a politics of solidarity among a global community of survivors that resonates with the project originally founded in 2006 by African American activist Tarana Burke, especially addressed to racially and socioeconomically marginalized groups. In its public interrogation of the institutional normalization of abuse, MeToo has also moved whisper networks from private conversations to public fora of report and opinion. "Whisper networks," like those built around the list, are online grassroots platforms through which people lacking institutional power warn their peers about the abuses perpetrated by those who sustain or are protected by that power. For many feminist critics and activists, whisper networks represent a strike against the pre-Weinstein era and the promise of an investment in safe spaces for women and marginalized subjects (see e.g. Grady). At the same time, the attacks on public forms of informal reporting, on account of the avoidance of due process and the "lumping" of different degrees of sexual misconduct, have intensified the backlash against MeToo's informal and community-oriented politics. Yet looking at whisper networks as simply possible alternatives to formal reporting systems prevents us from considering other ways in which they can help survivors to find safe, collective spaces.

2. The private life of whisper networks: Public secrecy and survivor agency

As Leigh Gilmore has claimed, traditionally when women, especially women of color, have denounced any form of abuse in legal or extralegal courts, they have been "tainted" as unreliable witnesses: their testimonies have been systematically submitted to doubt, and their evidence judged under unreachable standards of credibility such as, significantly in the case of sexual violence, "He Said/She Said." This prospect has prevented multiple survivors from speaking out, even in private. And yet, as Gilmore suggests, "truth-telling is dynamic" (2017a, 3-4), this is, a story often moves across a "testimonial network," through different sites, discourses and audiences, in search of an "adequate witness" (2017b, 3-4). In this sense, whisper networks are often constituted around survivors' desires to move their testimony beyond official spaces to negotiate the truth on their terms and find a sympathetic audience that can provide for alternative forms of justice.

The relationship between informal and formal reporting is not always one of mutual opposition. On many occasions, a conversation started in whisper networks may be expected to reach legal or institutional fora after contributors have gathered enough evidence or resources. Feminist law scholar Deborah Tuerkheimer defends the prevalence of whisper networks, as long as they contribute to denouncing and, eventually, correcting the bases that regulate the systems of formal reporting. This was indeed part of Sarkar's project. In contrast to Donegan's "cataloging" of aggressions, LoSHA was built upon a common definition of "sexual harassment," according to the Indian criminal law. Additionally, as a mediator for survivors who contacted her with their stories, Sarkar also offered resources and encouraged some of them to file complaints in their universities (Sarkar in Shankar 2017).

And yet, many survivors still claim not to have access to proper legal platforms (see Carter 2021, 207). For this reason, whisper networks have traditionally emerged spontaneously within a community with full awareness of what should and should not be spoken out loud or taken at face value. The perpetuation and normalization of violence and abuse in an institution illustrate a discursive regime based on what Michael Taussig calls "public secrets," where institutional power is measured against people's urge to remain silent about what they already

know too well (1999, 5-6). In such a regime, as Sara Ahmed has put it, "[the fact] that evidence of something is deemed insufficient is a mechanism for reproducing [that] something" (2016). Looking at the bureaucratic mechanisms which academic institutions employ to prevent, undermine or erase evidence of power abuse within the community, Ahmed argues that these operations perpetuate and institutionalize violence as a way of maintaining power at the expense of certain bodies. Similarly, as Donegan has later pointed out, very often, even when enough evidence of abuse exists, the information passed within whispers networks is not legitimized, and allegations can be easily discredited as simply gossip or rumor (in Dionne et al. 2019).

Whisper networks emerge naturally from a common awareness among a specific community that their own stories are relegated to marginal discursive spaces. Yet despite their subordinate position, whisperers show resistance to the mechanisms of "public secrecy" by making the secret explicit, even to small audiences, thus pointing to the violence created by institutional silencing. The very existence of whisper networks defies the official regime of discourse by enacting unofficial communication tools as alternative sources of legitimation. When they allow anonymity for the contributors, whisper networks offer further possibilities of resistance. As Giti Chandra has suggested, anonymity, as "one of the few safe ways of breaking the silence" (2021, 104) allows survivors to contest the stigma of passivity and claim agency by responding to violence (2021, 103). Additionally, anonymity contributes to the untraceable, elusive character of the whisper network. Even in a regime of public secrecy, the lack of access to whisper networks for those people involved in perpetuating abuse destabilizes the narrative control that they attempt to exercise since they do not know what exactly is being told about them, or in which terms and by how many people their actions are being discussed.

All this does not imply that whisper networks are effective or empowering for all survivors concerning institutional silencing, let alone flawless mechanisms of alternative justice. Firstly, skeptical attitudes towards certain "whispers" are not uncommon among those within a network, and sometimes, in large, online publics, the community may be required, as Donegan did by asking to "take [allegations] with a grain of salt." Secondly, internal hierarchies among whisperers are not rare. Intersectional feminist critics have commented on how whisper networks may exclude those survivors who lack enough social capital or influence to have access to them (see e.g. Wortham; Oleary; Haire et al. 211). This was an obstacle that both Donegan and Sarkar allegedly tried to minimize via online circulation. And still, as Constance Grady has pointed out, "digital whisper networks replicate the problems of their analog counterpart," (2018) since they also are susceptible to leaving out a large number of people with few or no connection to the privileged target community who are equally exposed to the abuses within the institutions, for instance, women of color or those with lower professional profiles.

3. The intimate public life of whisper networks: Renegotiating trauma and agency within the community

However, I offer that the value of whisper networks does not lie in their capacity for resistance — always compromised and precarious in practice — to formal reporting systems, as much as on the space that they potentially enable and the way they can help move the political to the intimate. As communities of survivors are constituted around the impact of trauma and vulnerability, whisper networks activate an affective connection. These connections operate both within specific groups (e.g. women or men in media or academia), and at the level of what Lauren Berlant has called the "intimate public sphere," this is, an imaginary community organically constituted by a series of media texts, public or semipublic, that catch the attention of politically marginalized subjects (1997, 4). Discussing individual cases of whisper networks,

Donegan has argued that one of the effects of being introduced to an unofficial reporting community is feeling less alone and also "less crazy," after the social reactions of discredit and gaslighting to which they are often exposed (in Dionne et al. 2019). Thus, a whisper network can constitute a site of encounter, compassion, and solidarity, often encouraging further conversations among its members in which the institutional or medical notions of violence or trauma are renegotiated in terms of their own experiences. Significantly, through the testimonies that have emerged after MeToo, the concept of sexual violence has been expanded beyond legal parameters such as consent, to include survivors' personal experiences of inequality concerning their sexual autonomy and access (Fischel 2019, 27).

These conversations, happening both in private and public spaces, have brought affects and emotions to the center of feminist politics. Sara Ahmed has argued on the mediation of emotions such as pain, anger, or hope in her discovery of feminism; she vindicates these "feminist attachments" as a reading tool that enables an understanding of the complex, ambivalent relationship that women who have been systematically wounded and stigmatized maintain with feminist politics. Far from aspiring to a universal guideline for feminist action, Ahmed's reading also involves recognizing how experiences such as trauma are intersected with certain cultural or socioeconomic conditions (2014, 174-75). Ahmed's defense of a politics of emotion is key for her project of feminist solidarities that involves "commitment" and the recognition of common affective ground beyond geopolitical specificities (2014, 189).

This move towards solidarity in response to common emotions such as pain, anger, or, in the words of Donegan, "indoor injustice," may explain why whisper networks persist, independently from official reporting systems — and arguably, even when these have at least partially attended to the survivors' complaints. The sense of trust, intimacy, and care that emerges spontaneously in many cases can provide survivor-centered mechanisms to cope with trauma, understood, as Ann Cvetkovich does, as "connected to the textures of everyday experience" (3-4). In this sense, the SMM document emphasized the importance of conversation by providing a column for editors to describe the details of the allegations; the resulting juxtaposition of specific legal terminology (rape, assault, workplace harassment, *quid pro quo* offers) and more explicit, sometimes personal descriptions of abusive situations (targets very drunk women; those weird lunch "dates" that aren't about work; had to physically fight him off) underline the tension between structural and interpersonal violence, between politics and experience; gradually, the conversation around sexual politics move to the ground of feeling and, from it, towards a broader sense of solidarity.

This project of an affective-political community has been also endorsed by at least a section of the MeToo movement, in line with Tarana Burke's project of "empowerment through empathy." Despite the prevalence of the white, middle-class, heterosexual approaches in the mainstream discourses about the movement, MeToo's emphasis on solidarity, mutual care, and collective healing emerges in a breeding ground characterized by the sense of cultural trauma and bodily vulnerability. Throughout an expanding network of survivors' testimonies, what MeToo has managed is to create a public culture of sexual trauma, taking the affective atmosphere of whisper networks to the public realm of culture. While many of these whispers may have turned into public allegations, MeToo's emphasis on vulnerability (mostly of women but also of other non-hegemonic subjects), as produced by the complicity and neglect of culture and institutions, has vindicated the intimacy of the network as a new center of sociality and politics.

Lauren Berlant's concept of intimate publics illustrates how the emergence of whisper networks in mass media and social media has constituted a global community of women and other vulnerable subjects that relate to each other through affective ties. Berlant's work

considers the ambivalence and complexities present in people's relations with politics, often responding to feelings emerging from their personal and bodily experiences. On this basis, she defines intimate publics as public and mass-mediatized communities based on an affective alliance between subjects marked by political identities and often organized around public promises of a good or better life. Importantly, Berlant describes these groups as "juxtapolitical," implying that, while they are constituted around certain political conditions or identities, rarely do they actively engage in political action or pursue a clear political aim. Instead, intimate publics "[act] as a critical chorus that sees the expression of emotional response and conceptual recalibration as achievement enough" (x). For Berlant, intimate publics are ultimately ambivalent: it is not that they are intrinsically good or bad concerning the kind of politics addressed to these people — although they always risk co-option by neotraditional or neoliberal political publics, — but they essentially underline the affective value of community and kinship that is intersected by politics. Although Berlant is not an author that often gives clear-cut solutions, she has argued that sometimes "in times of crisis, intimate publics often redirect their attention to transforming the terms of the political, converting their collective insider knowledge about injustice to political labor-power in the struggle against the dominant terms" (Berlant and Prosser 2011, 184).

4. Conclusion: Towards a survivor-made politics of vulnerability

Due to their unverified status and the risks and exclusions that they imply for survivors, whisper networks are not a perfectly sustainable alternative for legal or institutional justice. Yet, as this paper has attempted to show, their political potentiality may instead lie in their capacity to constitute testimonial archives and communities, within which bonding and intimacy can be mobilized towards a politics of mutual solidarity. In this sense, whisper networks are built upon a sort of intimate public, a group spontaneously organized around many feelings attached to a certain political situation or identity. While the kind of communities constituted around whisper networks are normally invested in a politics of gender and race, they also revolve around disappointment towards how institutions and culture systematically fail to provide a form of justice that makes survivors feel safe. In further research, I aim to look into how the MeToo movement has emerged in the context of a larger cultural moment of awareness of vulnerability and precariousness, as a response to the multiple crises throughout the planet (see e.g. Guirao). As a result, the narratives and cultural phenomena emerging from survivors in the last few years illustrate a sense of urgency for the protection of life and dignity, and a promise of solidarity that can thrive in intimate spaces.

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"It is often more fun to want something than to have it": Dystopian (Un)happiness in David Foster Wallace's *Infinite Jest*

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Abstract

Infinite Jest, written by David Foster Wallace and published in 1996, is widely known for its unconventional style and broad variety of topics. Amongst them, happiness becomes a central concept that speaks to current events. The aim of this paper is to analyze the characters' particular pursuit of happiness, drawing on some of the ideas present in the works of Sara Ahmed (2010), Lauren Berlant (2011), and Wendy Brown (2015). Special emphasis will be laid on the idea of alienation as caused by the prevailing social and political system which shapes the novel, as well as on how the expectation of happiness becomes the origin of unhappiness. These ideas will be analyzed through the teenage students and young athletes of the Enfield Tennis Academy, showing that the "very expectation of happiness as an overcoming of bad feeling is how happiness can cause unhappiness" (Ahmed, 16).

Keywords: anhedonia; David Foster Wallace; dystopia; *Infinite Jest*; (un)happiness.

Since its publication in 1996, *Infinite Jest* has become a cultural phenomenon and is considered one of the most important novels of the last decades. Its complexity, convoluted style, and impressive 1000 pages have mythicized the novel all over the world. Addiction, talent, mental illness, suicide, or depression are some of the most prominent themes in the novel. The book is full of sad characters, of people whose lives are driven by addictions or who suffer depression. The key question, though, is what makes them so miserable, and that would be the world in which they live, a neoliberal dystopia imagined by Foster Wallace twenty-five years ago that resembles our modern-day world very much. The corporate dystopia presented becomes pivotal in my reading of *Infinite Jest*.

In the introduction to his *Dystopia: A Natural History*, Gregory Claeys says that "the word 'dystopia' evokes disturbing images. We recall ancient myths of […] the Apocalypse […]. We see landscapes defined by ruin, death, destruction […]. Our symbols of species power stand starkly useless: decay is universal" (Claeys 2017, 3). The world presented by David Foster Wallace in *Infinite Jest* appears as a dystopian one. It may not be similar to the great examples of dystopian worlds we have in western literature (George Orwell's *1984* and Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*), but it is certainly described as a world in decay. Claeys states that *Infinite Jest*'s world is a "corporate dystopia," and so does Indiana Seresin: "while many science fiction novels contain portrayals of corporate dystopias, *Infinite Jest* stands out for the fact that the corporate dystopia it depicts is so close to the reality readers actually inhabit" (Seresin 2019). Readers of the novel may quickly recall one of the most curious elements of its design, which is the fact that years are no longer numbered, but each year is named after the sponsorship of

different corporations. Hence, the year 2002 is "The Year of the Whopper", and so on, being 2010, "The Year of Glad" the last year of the "Subsidized Time".

But there are more dystopian traits in this fictional world. Seresin points out one of the most interesting: "acronyms, which are very common in business and finance, are everywhere in *Infinite Jest*" (Seresin 2019). She mentions the O.N.A.N (Organization of North American Nations and wordplay with the word *onanism*), but there is also the E.T.A (Enfield Tennis Academy), among others. She continues by adding:

> Even stranger uses of acronyms include Orin's nickname for his ex-girlfriend, Joelle Van Dyne, […] whom Orin calls P.G.O.A.T., standing for 'Prettiest Girl of All Time.' In this instance, the acronym P.G.O.A.T. makes Joelle seem more like a trademarked brand or product than a real, human person […], thus further objectifying her. (Seresin 2019)

This perception of people being treated as objects rather than as human beings is not exclusive to Orin and Joelle. Another clear example is the way Hal Incandenza, one of the main characters of the novel, is referred to. For many, Hal is not Hal, he is just a promising tennis player, a machine. Besides, his name reminds us of Hal, the robot from *2001: A Space Odyssey*. Incandenza's rejection of him being treated as a machine is clear since the first chapter when, in the university acceptance interview in which he is treated as a commodity, Hal tells the deans: "I am not just a boy who plays tennis. I have an intricate history. Experiences and feelings. I'm complex. [...] I'm not a machine. I feel and believe. [...] I'm not just a creatus, manufactured, conditioned, bred for a function" (Wallace [1996] 2016, 12). This is a sign of the world in which these characters live, and one of the reasons for their profound sadness, to the point where Hal "withdraws from family and friends, taking solace in a secretive daily marijuana-smoking ritual under center court at the tennis academy" (Baskin 2019, 42).

In *Undoing the Demos*, Wendy Brown provides a definition of neoliberalism that is clearly present in Wallace's fictional world. For her, "citizenship itself loses its political valence and venue. Valence: *homo oeconomicus* approaches everything as a market and knows only market conduct; it cannot think public purposes or common problems in a distinctly political way" (Brown 2015, 39). These characters live in such a world, one that does not consider them as human beings, concerned as it is with corporations and their interests: a world that has left them behind. Human beings become just commodities with which the corporations must make as much benefit as possible.

One of the best examples of this neoliberal conception is the E.T.A, the Enfield Tennis Academy, home to the most important characters, among them, the aforementioned Hal Incandenza. The institution was founded by James Orin Incandenza, Hal's father and former tennis player, and it is a very demanding academy. Charles Tavis, director of the E.T.A., explains at the beginning of the novel that the "E.T.A., [...] I should stress an Academy, not simply a camp or factory [...], it's focused on the total needs of the player and student" (Wallace [1996] 2016, 8). But this is far from the truth: the E.T.A. does indeed create players/products for the *Show*. They care little about the students. All this is the product of James Orin Incandenza's own experience: we are told that his father, "somewhere around the nadir of his professional fortunes apparently decided to go down to his Raid-sprayed basement workshop and build a promising junior athlete the way other fathers might restore vintage autos" (Wallace [1996] 2016, 63). He was not instructing young James, nor was he educating his son: what Incandenza Sr. was doing was *creating a product*, a player.

In order to become the perfect player, one must become a machine, a body devoid of feelings and emotions. Upon this experience, the E.T.A was founded. Students are encouraged

to forget about themselves and become machines. This philosophy only alienates the teenagers and becomes one of the many causes of the unhappiness that seems to have become an epidemic inside the academy. But there are more reasons to account for their unhappiness. What they are promised is that, if they work hard and do everything that they are told, one day they will become great and play in the Show. Becoming a professional player is erected here as the main promise and the main pursuit of the students. In some cases, this becomes an obsession. That is the case of LaMont Chu, one of the students of the E.T.A.

LaMont illustrates very clearly one of the ideas that Sara Ahmed presents in her book *The Promise of Happiness*: "the very expectation of happiness as an overcoming of bad feeling is how happiness can cause unhappiness" (Ahmed 2010, 175). The students in the E.T.A. are unhappy: they feel constantly exhausted, stressed, in the words of Hal, they *suffer*. But they all believe that the suffering is worth it because they will become professional players one day. They keep pushing in their pursuit of happiness, following what will make them happy, thinking that the effort will pay off.

The case of LaMont Chu stands out in this light. He is just eleven years old, but he has "an increasingly crippling obsession with tennis fame". This obsession is so powerful that "he finds he can't eat or sleep or sometimes even pee, so horribly does he envy the adults in the Show". LaMont "feels himself in a dark world, inside, ashamed, lost, locked in" (Wallace [1996] 2016, 401). He makes this confession to Lyle, the guru of the Academy. They have a very elucidating conversation:

> "LaMont, the truth is that the world is incredibly, incredibly, unbelievably old. You suffer with the stunted desire caused by one of its oldest lies. [...] Fame is not the exit from any cage."
> "So I'm stuck in the cage from either side. Fame or tortured envy of fame. There's no way out." (Wallace [1996] 2016, 402)

LaMont is terribly unhappy, in his own words, stuck. The real tragedy is that LaMont's obsession is destroying him. He suffers from what American cultural theorist Laurent Berlant called Cruel Optimism. In her own words:

> A relation of cruel optimism exists when something you desire is actually an obstacle to your flourishing. […] [Something] that promises to induce in you an improved way of being. These kinds of optimistic relation are not inherently cruel. They become cruel only when the object that draws your attachment actively impedes the aim that brought you to it initially. (Berlant 2011, 1)

This is LaMont's situation: something that was supposed to make him happy, to give meaning to his life, has become something that is destroying him. But, as Berlant asks in her book, "why do people stay attached to conventional good-life fantasies when the evidence of their instability, fragility, and dear cost abounds?" (Berlant 2011, 2). In a world in which people are living as insignificant commodities, the urge to give meaning to one's life arises. In the case of LaMont, he cannot abandon his dream, his *obsession*, of becoming a professional tennis player in the Show. If he did, he would become an empty shell, a failure. When confronted with this dilemma, he grips to his goal even harder, with desperation, which worsens his relationship with his desire.

Still, LaMont has to learn one more thing, which adds up to the tragedy of his character and to that of many others, something that Ahmed points out in her book: "then we learn so much about the emptiness of the promise of happiness, as an emptiness that haunts the subject

in the very restlessness of its desire" (Ahmed 2010, 16). Sara Ahmed is very clarifying in this regard: she defines desire as "both what promises us something, what gives us energy, and also what is lacking, even in the very moment of its apparent realization". Therefore, "there can be nothing more terrifying than getting what you want, because it is at this moment that you face what you want" (Ahmed 2010, 31). She goes on by saying that getting what one wants "can be terrifying because what you want is not simply 'ready' as an object […] Not getting what you want allows you to preserve the happiness of 'the what' as fantasy, as if once we are ready, we can have it" (Ahmed 2010, 31). In other words, quoting David Foster Wallace, "it is often more fun to want something than to have it" (Wallace [1996] 2016, 205).

This is precisely the real tragedy of James Orin Incandenza, a tragedy which is perpetuated by his sons. After founding the E.T.A., J.O. Incandenza focused on another passion of his: he dove "into […] experimental- and conceptual-film work" (Wallace [1996] 2016, 64). After years of work, he made the most perfect and most entertaining film of all time: *Infinite Jest*. And, once he managed to fulfill all his desires, he put his head inside a microwave and killed himself.

Omitting the bizarre death of Incandenza, in the novel it is said that "the standard take on Dr. J. O. Incandenza's suicide attributes his putting his head in the microwave to this kind of anhedonia, [...] often associated with the crises that afflict extremely goal-oriented people who reach a certain age having achieved all or more than all than they'd hoped for" (Wallace [1996] 2016, 693), but we are told that "this is in fact not what killed Incandenza at all" (Wallace [1996] 2016, 693). Probably, what led Dr. Incandenza to suicide was "the Great White Shark of pain. Authorities term this condition clinical depression […] instead of just an incapacity for feeling, a deadening of soul" (Wallace [1996] 2016, 695). Michael Pemulis, Hal's best friend, also has his own theory: "And but what do you think would happen after a while, though? Without something you need? [...] If you're the real thing and need it and just cut yourself off of it altogether, you die inside. You lose your mind" (Wallace [1996] 2016, 1065). Whatever was the real reason, my reading of the novel leans toward the first explanation: when J. O. Incandenza reached his goals he felt empty. It is, in this reading, where I find a parallel between J.O. Incandenza and one of the most bizarre characters of the novel: Eric Clipperton.

Despite appearing in just two fragments, Clipperton's disproportionate and exaggerated tale is prominent among all the other stories inside the novel. The reason why Clipperton stands out among the other players is that he played tennis with the racket in one hand and a Glock 17 aiming at his left temple, making "clear his intention to blow his own brains out publicly, right there on court, if he should lose, ever, even once" (Wallace [1996] 2016, 408). In each tournament, there were players "who understandably declined to be the player to cause Clipperton to eliminate his own map" (Wallace [1996] 2016, 408), making Clipperton win every tournament in which he participated.

Eventually, Clipperton appears "as the number one in "Boys' Continental 18-and-Unders" (Wallace [1996] 2016, 431). People start to wonder if Clipperton will stop playing tennis now that he has gotten his number 1. But what happens is that Clipperton appears in the E.T.A. and asks for a meeting with James Orin Incandenza, who accepts it. Few details are given about this reunion. What we are told is that:

> ...at some point, [...] Clipperton pulls out [...] an elaborately altered copy of *NAJT's* biweekly ranking report, and the hideous blunt-barreled Glock 17 9 mm. semiautomatic, which […] places to his right —not left— temple [...], closes his eyes and scrunches up his face and blows his legitimated brains out for real and all time, eradicates his map (Wallace [1996] 2016, 432-33).

Once he reaches his goal, Clipperton feels empty. There is nothing more for him. Anhedonia has taken over Clipperton. He realizes, following Ahmed's thesis, the same thing that LaMont has yet to know, that "the very expectation of happiness as an overcoming of bad feeling is how happiness can cause unhappiness" (Ahmed 2010, 16). The promises that he believed in, his object of desire, becoming number one; all this was associated with a feeling of happiness, of satisfaction. Clipperton, like students at the ETA, expected that once he reached the top, he would feel complete. But as Christopher Janaway writes, "part of the wickedness of optimism is that it causes unhappiness by inculcating these false beliefs about happiness, beliefs whose consequences are pain and disillusionment" (Janaway 1999, 324). Clipperton discovers that all the promises he truly believed, to which he had obsessively committed to the point of choosing death over failure, were void and meaningless. And facing this realization, facing the crumbling of his whole system of beliefs, he realizes that he cannot bear it and chooses suicide.

Another solution to this dilemma, one widely chosen, is to live, as Lauren Berlant says, in a fantasy. "Fantasy is the means by which people hoard idealizing theories and tableaux about how they and the world 'add up to something'" (Berlant 2011, 2). These promises of happiness, addressed both by Sara Ahmed and Lauren Berlant, give us hope. "Hope is about desiring the 'might,' which is only 'might' if it keeps open the possibility of the 'might not'" (Ahmed 2010, 183) as Ahmed reminds us. But these promises, as we have seen, are usually empty. As an alternative to these, Ahmed talks about "the freedom to be unhappy", which "would [...] include the freedom to be happy in inappropriate ways" (Ahmed 2010, 222).

In a world like ours, so similar to the world in *Infinite Jest*, entertainment is used to control the population. We have become addicted to entertainment and we cannot live without Netflix, Instagram, or infinite scrolling. And we must find freedom. Maybe that freedom to be unhappy and to be happy in inappropriate ways implies challenging the enslaving system of entertainment and social control, and disconnecting. The greatest act of rebellion may be to get away from social media and the anxiety of the internet, living in the real world, and remembering that happiness, whatever it is, seems to be not a destination, but a journey.

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‘Beauty is as we see it’: female perception of aesthetic experience in Mary W. Shelley’s “The Mourner” (1829)

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Abstract

The aim of this article is to show how Mary W. Shelley’s tale “The Mourner” (1929) challenges the traditional idea of female beauty and moral values that the gift-book *The Keepsake* promoted. Aesthetically, the tragic plot already evidences a noteworthy inadequacy to the undertone of such gift-book and the drawings that decorate it (Turner’s drawings of a peaceful Virginia Water). Furthermore, instead of perpetuating the eighteenth-century gender systematization of the aesthetic categories of the beautiful and sublime, I will explain how this tale follows the Romantic approach of aesthetic ambiguity as it includes male and female characters who do not only experience both the beautiful and sublime, but also embody attributes related to both categories. Finally, I will interpret how this tale enriches the corpus of Romantic literature as it introduces female concerns in the plot, such as female dependence and vulnerability, as well as a communal attitude towards Nature.

Keywords: sublime, beautiful, Mary W. Shelley, Romanticism, aesthetic ambiguity.

Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley writes “The Mourner” in 1829, in a period of her life and literary career which has been traditionally considered as more conservative than the preceding years. After a scandalous life with her husband, the poet Percy Bysshe Shelley, Mary returned to London in 1823, one year after her husband’s death. At that moment she had to adjust herself to critics’ and readers’ taste to keep on publishing. As Charlotte Sussman remarks, this literary decision has been usually represented as “discontinuous with her earlier career, part of the fall into commercialism and conservatism occasioned by Percy Shelley’s death” (163). However, as we will see, a close reading of her tales shows no such conservatism but a treatment of aesthetics and issues on femininity that still challenges the traditional standards.

In “The Mourner,” Horace Neville tells her fiancée Juliet the story of Ellen Burnett, a girl who lived isolated in a humble cottage and who took care of him when he felt harassed as a student in Eton. She became a guide and kind friend to Horace and warned him about the volatility of happiness. Horace assumed that some tragedy in her past kept her isolated and prevented her from returning to her family and friends. Later, Horace meets Lewis Elmore, who tells Horace the tragic story of her fiancée, Clarice Eversham: the boat in which her father and she were coming back from Barbadoes burnt down, and only some passengers could be rescued. Her father drowned but she survived. Lewis Elmore has looked for Clarice since he knew what had happened, but he has not been able to find her yet. When Horace sees a miniature of Clarice Eversham in Lewis’s house, he realises that Clarice is Ellen Burnett. Then Lewis and Horace come back quickly to her cottage, but, unfortunately, they find out that she has finally committed suicide. Her last will was to be buried in the earth with no grave that reminds her name.

Paradoxically, this tale was published in *The Keepsake*, which was a literary gift-book owned by Charles Heath, annually edited by Frederick Mansel Reynolds, and that comprised tales and poems as well as engravings that promoted the traditional ideal of a middle-class womanhood destined to marriage and maternity. The aesthetic purpose of these books was to show culture as well as refinement, and became a symbol of education, taste, and luxury (Sussman 2013, 165-6). Furthermore, the texts and images of these books usually promoted a beauty related to a female model of integrity and purity. Nevertheless, some critics, such as Charlotte Sussman and Beatriz González Moreno (2021), have remarked that *The Keepsake* sometimes shows a tension between the images and the content, “between the volatile situations often explored in stories, and the stable material qualities that guaranteed the books’ value as commodities” (Sussman 166).

In this case, “The Mourner” is decorated with two engravings of William Turner’s paintings of Virginia Water, which is the place where Horace is telling her fiancée the story of Ellen Burnett:

Figure 1: “Virginia Water” drawn by J.M.W. Turner and engraved by Robert Wallis

Figure 2: “Virginia Water” drawn by J.M.W. Turner and engraved by Robert Wallis

Both paintings show two calm and static views of Virginia Water with some luxurious houses on the shore, rowing boats, ducks, and elegant swans. They do not include any boat in fire, any character in distress, or Ellen's tomb. Furthermore, as we will see, the female protagonist does not follow the female model promoted by this gift-book. Apart from evidencing the inadequacy between content and image, the aesthetic topic in which I want to focus is Mary Shelley's use of the beautiful and sublime.

These aesthetic categories were developed during the eighteenth century by many philosophers, such as Edmund Burke and Immanuel Kant. The beautiful and sublime were gender based and associated with responses of pleasure and pain. In this way, whereas the beautiful was related to traditional female features such as smallness and softness, and the idea of society and breeding, which cause pleasure, the sublime was related to traditional male features such as grandiosity and power, as well as isolation from society, which could cause pain and horror (Burke 1990, 113, Kant 2011, 2:208-9). However, during the emergence of Romanticism in the first decades of the nineteenth century, the fixed limits of the gender-based approach to the aesthetic experience became blurred. Thus, the images which were traditionally considered dangerous and horrible began to excite the writer's pleasure and imagination. For instance, Mario Praz develops in his canonical work *The Romantic Agony* (1933) the idea of the Romantic transgression of the category of beauty, by stating that "for the Romantics beauty was enhanced by exactly those qualities which seem to deny it, by those objects which produce horror; the sadder, the more painful it was, the more intensely they relished it" (27). Beatriz González Moreno has also published several articles about the ambiguity of the aesthetic categories during Romanticism. She states that after the gender systematization of aesthetic categories by Burke and Kant, it is understood that "women could neither be an object of sublimity nor could they have an inborn feeling for the sublime" (2007, 422). However, she deals with Romantic texts which present an ambiguous treatment of masculine/feminine sexual features. Also, she remarks in these texts the relevance of the sublime not only to legitimise the margins of what has been traditionally considered not worthy of artistic value, but also to develop a new treatment of the category of the beautiful.

Following these critical considerations, I will prove that Shelley's tale follows the Romantic approach of aesthetic ambiguity in the depiction of landscape as well as in the characterization of male and female protagonists. In the tale, Horace is presented as an intelligent and sensitive man, wealthy and educated at Eton. His education and sensibility enable him to evoke the wonders of English scenery and remarks that

> "in distant climes," he said, "we may find landscapes grand in barbaric wildness, or rich in the luxuriant vegetation of the south, or sublime in Alpine magnificence. We may lament, though it is ungrateful to say so on such a night as this, the want of a more genial sky; but where find scenery to be compared to the verdant, well-wooded, well-watered groves of our native land" (4th paragraph).

Here he is declaring that the beauty of the peaceful and mild English landscape can produce an aesthetic response so powerful as the one produced by the sublimity of the Alpine mountains. Later, he admits that beautiful landscapes can be "associated with unavailing regrets and recollected pain" (5th paragraph) when he begins to tell her cousins about his bad times at Eton. Horace mixes the effects of pleasure and pain in his understanding of the beauty of English landscape. Furthermore, Horace is characterised with personal attributes which were traditionally considered masculine and related to the sublime (such as the violence and vengeance), as well as with other attributes more related to the female and the beautiful (such as the extreme sensitivity to his teacher's abuse).

In the same way, the characterization of Ellen/Clarice relies on contrasts. She is presented as

> *pale even to marmoreal whiteness*; her chestnut-coloured hair was parted in plain tresses across a brow which wore traces of *extreme suffering*; her eyes were blue, full, large, *melancholy*, often even suffused with *tears*; but her mouth had an *infantine sweetness and innocence* in its expression, that softened the otherwise *sad* expression of her countenance. (14th paragraph, *emphasis added*)

She is a pale and sad girl but also sweet and innocent. This can remind us of the opening lines of Byron's poem "She walks in Beauty": "She walks in beauty, like the night / Of cloudless climes and starry skies; / And all that's best of dark and bright / Meet in her aspect and her eyes". Yet, her most compelling attribute is the power that she exercises over Horace. He remarks that she seems to be beyond this world and calls her a "nymph". He states that

> there was an enchantment in her sorrow, a *fascination in her converse*, that lifted me above commonplace existence; she created *a magic circle, which I entered as holy ground; it was not akin to heaven*, for *grief* was the presiding spirit; but there was an *exaltation of sentiment, an enthusiasm*, a view beyond the *grave*, which made it *unearthly, singular, wild, enthralling*. (18th paragraph, *emphasis added*)

Here Ellen/Clarice transgresses the gender-based limits of aesthetic categories and conveys an empowered female character for several reasons. Firstly, she enchants him with her eloquence, a capacity that was traditionally related to men and the aesthetic category of the sublime. We should remember that the Greek philosopher Longinus associated an elevated discourse with the sublime (Longino 56-57), and Milton characterised his sublime Satan as a powerful speaker (*Paradise Lost*). And, secondly, she alters the traditional attributes of both the beautiful and sublime in the magic space that she creates. On the one hand, this "magic circle" is holy for Horace and provides him with a space where he feels warmth and confidence, which could mean traditional responses of the beautiful, and, on the other hand, it is an "unearthly, singular, wild, enthralling" world, which has the grief as the presiding spirit, thus it is more associated with the idea of the sublime.

Later, when Lewis Elmore tells Horace about her fiancée Clarice Eversham, we are informed that she received a very complete education and travelled with her father to Barbadoes "to form her understanding and enlarge her mind" (27th paragraph). Therefore, her father provided her with an education and a way of life which were unusual for women at that time. In this way, Ellen/Clarice transgresses Kant's idea of "beautiful understanding" when he states that women have "a stronger innate feeling for everything that is beautiful, decorative, and adorned" (2:229), whereas men possess "a *deeper understanding*, which is an expression that means the same thing as the sublime" (2:229, *emphasis in original*). Ellen/Clarice does not only embody a mixture of attributes related to both aesthetic categories, but she is also able to understand the sublime. For example, Ellen/Clarice's "deeper understanding" and experience of the sublime are also evident in the following fragment, in which Horace says that she

> recited no past adventures, alluded to no past intercourse with friend or relative; she spoke of the various woes that wait on humanity, on the intricate mazes of life, on the miseries of passion, of love, remorse, and death, and that which we may hope or fear beyond the tomb; she spoke of the sensation of wretchedness alive in her own broken heart" (19th paragraph).

She wanted to protect Horace from the evil contagion of the world, as well as seeming tormented by the idea of self-destruction. Horace attempts to show her the beauty of nature, "a glorious sunset; beauty and the spirit of love breathed in the wind, and hovered over the softened hues of landscape […] if only such loveliness of nature existed, it were worth living for!" (20th paragraph). Whereas Horace praises the static beauty of nature that seems to exist for human contemplation, Ellen/Clarice presents a wilder and more vengeful nature, which is similar to the version of nature described by Mary W. Shelley in her novel *The Last Man* (1826). Ellen/Clarice wants to warn Horace that nature can also be devastating and can quickly destroy all human happiness. Therefore, Ellen answers Horace: "True, if a latent feeling did not blot this glorious scene with murky shadows. Beauty is as we see it—my eyes view all things deformed and evil" (21st paragraph). Significantly, this sentence transcends the limits of gender-based eighteenth-century aesthetics, because Ellen/Clarice, a woman, sees the sublimity of nature, whereas Horace, a man, sees the beautiful.

Precisely, the shadows that make Ellen/Clarice see "all things deformed and evil" and bring her closer to the sublime lead me to the second aspect of the tale that I want to discuss: the introduction of female concerns in the plot, such as dependence on male figures and the consequence that the loss of these figures has on female identity. When Clarice Eversham loses her father, she also loses her name and becomes Ellen Burnett. Furthermore, she is accused of her father's death by some survivors and is considered a curse and a horror. Thus, after that tragedy, she is unable to face society and explain that she has saved herself while her father has drowned. She was so grateful to and dependent on her father that she feels guilty of his death and irreversibly lost. Recently, some critics have accurately remarked the biographical aspects in "The Mourner." Mary W. Shelley had intense and dependent relationships with his father, the philosopher William Godwin, and her husband, Percy Bysshe Shelley, who had already drowned in the sea at the time that she wrote this tale. For instance, Diane Long Hoeveler suggests that the tale shows Mary W. Shelley's deeply troubling attraction to and dependence on a variety of male figures who consistently failed her but at the same time were idealised in some of her writings (368). Moreover, Kerry Ellen McKeever highlights that Mary W. Shelley uses a complex narrative and psychoanalytical structures to explain the topic of the orphaned daughter (2). Besides the autobiographical tone, I think that Mary W. Shelley is criticising a social system that made women completely dependent on their male protectors as well as making men incapable to wholly understand the complexity of female vulnerability in such circumstances. Furthermore, "The Mourner" attacks the male arrogance of believing themselves in control of a happiness that can be easily destroyed by forces of nature that cannot be controlled, similar to the way he criticised male arrogance over nature in *Frankenstein; or, the Modern Prometheus* (1816) and *The Last Man* (1826). However, a very different response to nature is shown by Ellen/Clarice at the end of this tale. She requests to rest in a "lowly grass-grown tomb" and gives herself to nature with a communal attitude, in a way that reminds Anne Mellor's idea of the female sublime, where nature is considered "a *female friend*, a sister with whom they share their most intimate experiences" (97, *emphasis in original*).

As a conclusion, Mary Shelley's tale "The Mourner" (1829) follows the Romantic approach of aesthetic ambiguity in the depiction of landscape and characterization and clearly transgresses the fixed limits of the beautiful and sublime according to eighteenth-century aesthetics. In addition, Mary Shelley expresses in this tale that the female sublime is unfortunately experienced when female identity and happiness depended entirely on her male protector.

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Exemplary elite: the Revolution of 1688 and the rhetoric of dramatic dedications

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Abstract

This chapter provides a discussion of the dedications of plays that female members of the aristocracy were addressed in the period 1660-1714. It is my contention that the practice of dedicatory writing functioned as other forms of propaganda, such as court masques and portraits, and that this strategy not only benefitted playwrights but also their patronesses, who welcomed the social recognition acknowledged by their clients. Moreover, I explain how the growing importance attached to morality in the mid-1690s became apparent in dedications: the idealisation of the patronesses' physical beauty in the reign of Charles II was replaced by a greater emphasis on female virtue in the texts published after the Revolution of 1689. In this paper, a number of dedications addressed to women of the Churchill family are considered to demonstrate that these ladies were praised for their modesty, presenting them as devoted wives, while celebrating the military victories of the duke.

Keywords: dedications, gift-exchange, drama, Restoration theatre, aristocratic women

The study of dedications of plays addressed to women and the rhetorical motifs used in these texts reveals a significant change concerning the panegyric of their patronesses: after the Revolution of 1688 aristocratic women no longer expected to be praised for their alluring beauty (as it had been the case with the dedications of plays written during Charles II's reign). Instead, and because of the change in morals and the general anxiety over improper behaviour that sprang in the 1690s, in the epistles written in this decade the emphasis of the praise of the dedicatee was placed on their virtuousness. To illustrate my point, I am going to examine the dedications of drama that Sarah Churchill, duchess of Marlborough, and her daughters, Henrietta Godolphin, countess of Godolphin, and Mary Montagu, duchess of Montagu, received.

Before discussing the epistles, I would like to introduce the study of dedications and explain the effectiveness of the patronage system in late-seventeenth-century theatre. Because of the interest Charles II and his court had in drama, theatrical activity was vigorously resumed and playgoing soon became one of the preferred past times of the royals and the nobility. At the same time that play publication increased, dedicatory writing came to be considered a customary practice fully expected by readers. This is manifestly confirmed by the data: between 1660 and 1714, 352 plays (out of a total of 565) contained a dedicatory epistle, that is 62%.[1]

[1] These references are based on an examination of all plays published between 1660 and 1714. I have revised all the works listed in the Harbage-Schoenhaum- Wagonheim's *Annals of English Drama, 975-1700* (1989) and Burling's *A Checklist of New Plays and Entertainments on the London Stage, 1700-1737* (1993), including manuscript plays.

Publication date	Author, title of play	Patroness
1700	Boyer, *Achilles*	Sarah Churchill, duchess of Marlborough
1704	Trapp, *Abra-Mule*	Henrietta Godolphin, countess of Godolphin
1706	Trotter, *The Revolution of Sweden*	Henrietta Godolphin, countess of Godolphin
1712	Philips, *The Distrest Mother*	Mary Montagu, duchess of Montagu
1714	Heidegger, *Arminius*	Henrietta Godolphin, countess of Godolphin

Table 1: Dedications of plays addressed to the duchess of Marlborough and her daughters, the countesses of Burlington and Godolphin

Dedications afforded playwrights an occasion to cement patronage relations by making them public and derive new profits. That meant that dramatists could add about 5-10 pounds to their earnings, these being limited to the third-night benefit (45 pounds or more), provided that the play was successful enough to be acted for three nights; and the payment for publication rights (which amounted to 10 pounds or a little more). This approximate estimation of playwright's takings (and it can be nothing but rough because of the scarce data that has been preserved) is given by Judith Milhous and Robert Hume in "Playwrights' Remuneration" and *The Publication of Plays in London* (2015).

Nonetheless, patronage and dedicatory writing in the seventeenth century cannot be reduced to purely economic phenomena. The name of patrons (particularly, names of noble families) written on title-pages page brought honour to the author. The panegyric, which some nineteenth-century scholars misinterpreted as artificial flattery, was one of the staple strategies for the enhancement of literary works at the time. Praising the dedicatee was a rhetorical convention and was completely justified within the context of dedications. To be most effective, both in the eyes of patrons and readers, the rhetoric of dedications (mainly, the dedicatee's panegyric) needed to be carefully devised so as to express the asymmetrical relation between patron and client in the most deferential and flattering terms. When offering their plays to a noblewoman, competent dedicators resorted to the divinisation of the dedicatee, that is, they characterised their patroness as being of divine nature and they articulated this hyperbolic praise through a variety of themes, many of which were drawn from Renaissance Neoplatonism. In the years of Charles II's reign, the idealisation of the patroness was based on the traditional social function of beauty as an instrument that confers prestige on a noble household or the court. This instrumentalisation of beauty unsurprisingly intensified in the Caroline period, because of the necessity of restoring the glory of the monarchy and the nobility after the Civil War and the Protectorate period. This glorifying use of beauty is also evidenced in the series of portraits known as the 'Windsor Beauties', which were painted by Sir Peter Lely and commissioned by Anne Hyde, first duchess of York.

As a means to contrast the rhetoric of the panegyric of patroness in plays published during the reign of Charles II with those printed after the Revolution of 1688, an extract from the epistle of Settle's *Ibrahim* (1677), to Elizabeth Monck, is used as an example. The duchess of Albemarle is idealised on the basis of her beauty and other virtues, which make her "so Divine a subject" for poetry (A2v). Lady Albemarle surpasses the female protagonist and has

allowed her to win the love of the duke: "Your Grace has all her Vertue, without the allay of her Vanity; and this advantage above her, that Your Grace possesses those Charms which Story never attributed to Roxolana; Her Beauty could subdue, but not secure her Solyman. But your Graces Victories are more compleat" (A2v). Settle then portrays the Albemarles as the epitome of spousal felicity, complimenting his dedicatee for being a loyal wife:

> For if our English Chronicle (spight of the fashionable liberty of a Licentious Age) would Character the perfect happiness of a Princely Pair, it must describe the Influence of the Dutchess of Albemarle over the unalterable Affections of her Lord: And as in Duty to such eminent Virtues; & such infinite Perfections, even the most ill-natur'd Age unanimously speaks of your Grace with Veneration. (A2v-A3)

Settle continues to divinise his patroness, underscoring her righteousness and unspotted reputation: "to secure that Fame your Virtues have so justly acquired, your Grace is as Cautious in the Preservation of it: But so impregnable are your Sacred Principles of Honour, that your Graces Care in that, is but like His, who raises Bulwarks to defend that Town, which of it self before was inaccessible" (A3). Setlle's dedication of *Ibrahim* to Elizabeth Monck illustrates that the extolment of the patroness's beauty was a staple strategy to derive prestige for one's work. It is also significant that the duchess is presented as a virtuous, married woman, a role which is similarly emphasized in the epistles written in the reign of William and Mary.

After the death of Charles II, whose reign had come to be seen as morally decadent, and the short-lived rule of his overtly Catholic brother James II, the accession of William and Mary brought a new moral tone in agreement with the values of their Whig supporters (some of them being the newly wealthy and middle-rank people). Different sectors of society imposed a demand on the elite to fulfil its theoretical role as national examples of virtue, manners and religion, while denouncing the depiction of the lewd and profane aristocracy on the stage (Hudson 6). The societies for the reformation of manners are indicative of this renewal of some of the old puritanic attitudes. In response to the widespread attacks on the irreverence and indecency of Restoration drama, which culminated with the publication of Jeremy Collier's scathing pamphlet *A Short View of the Immorality and Profaneness of the English Stage* in 1698, playwrights not only had to defend drama's place in society, but also portray exemplary models of behaviour. Similarly, in their dedications offered to noblewomen, authors shifted the emphasis to their patronesses' virtuousness. This strategy was maintained during the reign of Queen Anne, who continued William and Mary's attempt to reform morals.

The Churchills held considerable influence in the 1680s onwards. All members of the family were appointed to prominent offices at court: Sarah, duchess of Marlborough, was appointed lady of the bedchamber after Anne's marriage to Prince George of Denmark in 1683, and then groom of the stole in 1685. Moreover, once Queen Anne succeeded to the throne, Lord Churchill was made a Knight of the Garter, master-general of the ordnance and captain-general of her Majesty's land forces (Dalton 15). Sarah herself became mistress of the robes, groom of the stole, keeper of the privy purse, and ranger of Windsor Park, perceiving a total salary over £6,000 per annum (Falkner). Their daughters Henrietta, Anne and Mary were appointed ladies of the bedchamber. As a reward for Churchill's successful summer campaign in the Netherlands, Queen Anne created him marquess of Blandford, Dorset, and duke of Marlborough on 14 December 1702 (Cokayne 8, 493). Additionally, Anne granted the duke £5,000 a year for her lifetime, although, soon afterwards opposition in parliament forced the queen to withdraw her request for payment of the grant.

It is not surprising then, given their preeminence at court, that the Churchills were addressed dedications of plays. In fact, it became vital for them to secure positions at court and

to acquire honours and wealth, in order to shot that they enjoy the queen's favour and that they were able to influence her. In fact, as Rachel Weil has argued, the duke and his son-in-law Sidney Godolphin only benefitted from the support of the Whigs because they believed that they had full support of Anne (*Political Passions* 192). They did take advantage of having the queen's favour: Lady Sarah exerted her power filling "the court with her own relations, dependents, and personal servants" (Bucholz, *Augustan Court* 75). Having an interest in literature and drama, the duchess also demonstrated her immense political influence by supporting authors, and the duke, even though he was not offered dramatic dedications, he was a keen promoter of the theatre: for instance, the opera *Camilla* was staged "expressly for Lord Marlborough" in March 1709 (qtd. in Avery 188). In addition, several pieces were composed on the occasion of Marlborough's victorious battles, such as a new prologue to Behn's *The Emperor of the Moon* in August 1704 and a new song by Jeremiah Clark in December 1706 (Avery 72, 135).

In the dedication of *Achilles* (1700), Abel Boyer highlights the duchess's role as dutiful wife, which easily leads to a panegyric of her husband: "I mean that truly conjugal Friendship and Affection with which you accompany this Great Man in His Absence from His native Country, and share with him in all the Cares and Inquietudes his Extraordinary Merit has brought upon him" (n.p.). The author insists on the duke's "many Glorious Campaigns and uninterrupted Successes" and celebrates the political stability which, among other advantages, allows England to "cultivate the Politer Arts" (n.p.): "Not all the Security we enjoy by our safe and honourable Peace, can make us unmindful of the Gratitude we owe to your Name" (n.p.). By praising Lord Churchill, Boyer is implicitly currying his favour, for he had previously dedicated the duke a translation of *Ductor Historicus* (1698), a historical work by Pierre Le Lorrain de Vallemont, in which he acknowledged the family's constant encouragement. The epistle dedicatory to Sarah Churchill is a sign of gratitude, for the duchess had shown great interest in the work, as the publisher comments in the Advertisement: "That the Dutchess of Marlborough, who at that Time bore an irresistible Sway, bespoke the Comedy then in Vogue, during the Run of *Iphigenia in Aulis*" (A2v).

In the dedication of *The Revolution of Sweden* (1706) to Henrietta Godolphin, Trotter's praise of her patroness goes hand in hand with that of her noble family.[2] The author similarly extols her father, foregrounding his military achievements and presenting him as the bulwark of anti-absolutism in Europe: "All Europe look on the English Forces, whilst under the Conduct of the Duke of Marlborough, as the Guardians of their Liberty" (A2v). The author extends her praise to the lady's family by marriage, pointing out that she is "Happily Ally'd" and wishing that the young countess would give birth to "a Glorious Race, who possessing all that's Excellent in both their great Predecessors, may prove to Posterity all that we now admire in them, Our Ornaments in Peace, our Strength in War" (A3). By alluding to this popular maxim which describes the loyal warrior in Tacitus *Germania*—"*in pace decus, in bello praesidium*" (XIII, p.150)—Trotter presents herself as a protégé of the Marlboroughs and manifests her

[2] It appears that the duchess of Marlborough attended the premiere and praised the tragedy, for which the author offered it to the duchess's eldest daughter, Henrietta. Trotter's acquaintance with the Marlboroughs may have come about through her brother-in-law, Mr Inglis, who was a physician-general in the army. Moreover, the playwright was closely involved with the Marlborough circle and became a close associate of Bishop Burnet and his third wife, Elizabeth, a friend of the duchess. In fact, Trotter's letters demonstrate that she had contact with the duke (Kelley, *Catharine Trotter* 21). For instance, on 23 June 1707 she wrote that "he [Trotter's brother-in-law, Mr. Inglis] . . . sends me word that the Duke of M. desired I should go to Mr. St. John in his name" (*The Works*, 223).

Whig allegiance, for the Germania was a staple text in Whig propaganda, which was used to support the moral superiority of the Anglo-Saxon stock and their defence of freedom.[3]

In other epistles, Henrietta Godolphin is for the most part commended on account of her modesty, her ancestry and her intelligence. In the dedication to *Abra-mule* (1704), Trapp briefly alludes to the topos of the lustre of her name ("For what could reflect more Lustre on this Poem, than so celebrated a Name prefix'd to it?" A2v) and extols her modesty: "But I perceive I am in Danger of disobliging Your Ladiship, while I am doing You that Justice which will be highly pleasing to every Body but Your self" (A3). He also highlights her beauty and pays his respects to her family, which he depicts as being "remarkable, above any other, for giving so much Beauty to the court, and so much Courage to the Field; the one to Adorn, the other to Defend Your Country; the one to Triumph at home, and the other abroad" (A3v). Trapp explicitly argues that noblewomen were expected to show the greatness of their lineage through their beauty and noblemen through their military achievements.

In the dedication to *Arminius* (1714) Heidegger similarly praises Lady Henrietta for her modesty, while underscoring her good taste, which he interprets as a sign of her inner virtue. Moreover, he employs the topos of the impossibility of portraying her qualities adequately and the topos of the lustre:

> Madam, that this Elegance of your Taste is not the least part of your Character, since it shows you have that Harmony in your Soul which is attended by all other good Qualities. And here, Madam, I am tempted to mention those Virtues which render you so agreeable; but they are So great in their Native Lustre, that the Attempt to describe them, wou'd shew the utmost Vanity. (A2v)

The youngest daughter of the Churchills, Mary Montagu, also received an epistle. In the dedication of *The Distrest Mother* (1712), Ambrose Philips foregrounds her beauty, justifying his offering to the duchess on account of her "refined Taste" and "the peculiar Life and Ornament" her presence adds to all company (A3v). He resorts to the topos of the heroine to stress the physical appearance of his dedicatee and subtly implies a Neoplatonic conception of beauty, referring to its light and power: "The Charms that shine out in the Person of Your Grace, may convince every one that there is nothing unnatural in the Power which is ascribed to the Beauty of Andromache" (A3v-A4). Like other authors who addressed female members of the Churchill clan, Philips praises the duke of Marlborough and his military prowess, arguing that, since "great and shining Characters of Antiquity" are represented in his play, he must dedicate it to "a Person, whose Illustrious Father has, by a long Series of glorious Actions, (for the Service of his Country and in Defence of the Liberties of Europe) not only surpassed the Generals of his own Time, but equalled the greatest Heroes of former Ages" (A3v).[4]

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[3] As Reginald Horsman has shown, after the Revolution of 1688 a Whig view of history emerged, according to which a golden age of good government had existed in England prior to the Norman Conquest (14). Horsman points out that "the Conquest had eroded English liberties, but had been followed by a long struggle for the restoration of good government, of which the foundation had been the Magna Carta and the capstone the seventeenth-century victories over the usurpations of the Stuarts" (14).

[4] Weil has also pointed out that in Whig propaganda Marlborough was portrayed as acting for the public good. The duke's personal letters are filled with references to his lack of ambition, his desire to abandon the magnificence of court, and "a weary resolution to continue serving out of love for queen and country" (*Political Passions* 190). Dedications also contributed to form the duke's public persona. In fact, some of the authors that addressed dedications to the Marlboroughs were Whigs themselves, such as Joseph Addison.

Female agency in the realm of theatrical patronage needs to be reassessed in the light of the number of epistles that they were offered and the use of their rhetoric to defend drama's place in society. The growing importance attached to morality in the mid-1690s became apparent in dedications, due to playwrights' concern for defending drama's place in society and securing their livelihood. Authors tried to obtain the support of powerful protectors in their epistles, even after having received high earnings for their works. Dedications were a customary practice fully expected by readers and the kernel of these texts was the patron's panegyric, which benefited both authors and dedicatees. The members of the Churchill clan were extolled in dedications of plays, which functioned as a public display of their magnanimity in supporting the arts. Moreover, authors offered their respects to the duke of Marlborough, celebrating his military victories and presenting him as a national hero.

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Allegorising Surveillance Capitalism: *Westworld*'s Science-Fictional and Metafictional Pastiche

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Abstract

Lisa Joy and Jonathan Nolan's *Westworld* (2016-2020) is a deeply ambivalent product: it is another action-packed, CGI-abusing show, but also a narratively complex allegory of present-day power structures. The series, which is now in its third season but still in production for more, combines the appeals of two traditionally opposed 'spirits' of science fiction: the visual and kinetic attractions of the SF film and the deeply critical and estranging potential of SF literature. Bearing this ambivalence in mind, this paper examines how, by combining metafictional and science-fictional elements, *Westworld* functions as a critical allegory of surveillance capitalism. However, upon a closer reading, a question shall constantly emerge: is the series an anti-capitalist allegory, or is it a spectacular pastiche of the science-fictional and the metafictional? There is not an either-or answer to the question, but it is precisely this ambivalence which makes the show worth examining in depth, as an example of how the ambivalences of popular audio-visual narratives need not be seen as flaws, but as a provocative ground for critical reflection.

Keywords: Westworld, Science Fiction, Metafiction, Allegory, Surveillance Capitalism.

1. Introduction: *Westworld*, Visual Spectacle and Critical Allegory

Lisa Joy and Jonathan Nolan's *Westworld* (2016-present), one of HBO's most successful and popular series, now in its third season and still in production for more, is *a deeply ambivalent cultural commodity*, in line with much of what Jason Mittel calls "complex TV." While *Westworld* may be described as yet another action-packed, CGI-abusing audio-visual spectacle, this series is also describable as a complex narrative allegory of surveillance capitalism, using Shoshanna Zuboff's term. In this way, this series seems to combine the best of the two traditionally opposed 'spirits' of science-fictional narratives (the visual and the literary, the commercial and the artistic), but contrary to such value-hierarchies, *Westworld* is one case in which these two spirits are not contradictorily combined in any "bad" way, but combined in a mutually beneficial, dialectical contradiction. Indeed, my assumption is that *Westworld* combines the visual and kinetic attractions of the SF film with the estranging and critical potential of SF literature, for the benefit of both dimensions. *Westworld* is, on the one hand, full of carefully designed visuals (like, say, those of Stanley Kubrick's *2001*), as well as numberless fight scenes in the overblown style of the 80s SF blockbuster (like Arnold Schwarzenegger's *Terminator* franchise), all of which makes it perfectly marketable entertainment for the contemporary culture industry. However, on the other hand, as a narrative of androids and gynoids who rebel against their roles within a fully-immersive theme park (Westworld itself), the series allows for a multi-layered allegorical interpretation with potentially subversive and

reflexive (or "meta") connotations. In a way in which allegorical critique is combined with (*and not weakened, but reinforced by*) spectacular cinematography, the series so far has advanced by superimposing overtly politicised allegories upon allegories.

2. *Westworld* as Theme Park: Capitalist Spectacle through the Metafictional Frankenstein

In its first and second seasons, Joy and Nolan's narrative is mostly based upon a rewriting of the Frankenstein myth —one of the foundational architexts of science fiction that has served as the base of most robot, android and cyborg narratives. As I have argued elsewhere, the myth is rewritten in an allegorically metafictional way, as seen in the presence of narratives, writers, characters, spectators… who are embedded within the fiction. And just like Shelley's novel, *Westworld* confronts viewers with humanity's artificial progeny —the theme park's population of androids and gynoids in this case—, who suffer under their creators. Unlike the original Frankenstein, however, *Westworld* does not point at the creator's hubris as the ultimate cause of the creatures' suffering. Instead, the series lays the emphasis on the absolute commodification of these creatures by Delos, the private conglomerate who owns the theme park. In this manner, the series makes most explicit the anti-capitalist undertones of the Frankenstein myth, by re-imagining the creator as an embodiment of capital itself. As characters in a theme park that recreates an imagined American West, these androids and gynoids are shown to be sentient beings, human in all senses except the biological, but they are programmed to conform to certain character types and to never stray away from algorithmically predefined narrative possibilities that serve to entertain —without ever putting at risk— the park's paying visitors. Thus, the park operates by reducing its humanoid inhabitants to mere cogs in a complex machine —a complex *narrative machine* devised to offer a fully immersive experience, thus allegorising our own transmedia culture industry, and exposing the industry's drive towards what Guy Debord would call a "total spectacle," where everything is reduced to a consumable image-commodity.

Figure 1: Westworld's website <http://www.discoverwestworld.com/>

But not only does this bleak future scenario serve as an arresting, dystopian allegory of capitalism's totalising tendencies in the abstract; it also illustrates poignantly how capitalism is built upon (and indeed, thrives upon) the perpetuation of gender and racial oppression. As clearly seen in the clichéd ways in which the park recreates the American West, one can easily conclude that Delos is marketing the experience for a white, cisheterosexual male gaze —and indeed most of its visitors are affluent white men, with the exception of a few, who nonetheless have to adapt to the expected behaviour. With such a consumer base, it comes as no surprise that the park's "normal" functioning means that gynoids *can be and are* sexually abused in numberless ways, and that racialised androids *can be and are* vilified and offered to visitors for extermination. In other words, Westworld (the business) functions by commodifying all the usual forms of violence exerted against gendered and racialized bodies, and rather than this being a drawback for potential customers, it is instead the hallmark of the park's experience, of its supposedly "gritty realism." The series as a whole, like most HBO productions, thus emphasises with great visual detail all the suffering that this machine inflicts upon its creatures, and it narratively underscores the intersectionality of capitalist domination by focalising the series from the perspective of two gynoids: Dolores, a white rancher's daughter, and Maeve, an immigrant, racialised prostitute. In all these ways and more, the series' opening episodes construct this richly multi-layered dystopian allegory, a world in which everything seems to be overdetermined and subsumed by Delos' capitalist machinery. However, the park's established order soon comes under serious challenge, and the series focuses on its undoing, and later, on the world beyond the park.

Figure 2: Co-protagonist gynoids, Dolores (left) and Maeve (right)

In a complex chain of narrative nuances beyond my scope here, the first two seasons of the show may be summed up as a gradual build-up towards the androids' vengeful revolution, a bloody revolution led by none other than gynoid Dolores. Thus, in a way that redoubles the series' anti-capitalist undertones, the series juxtaposes a critique of the status quo with utopian speculation about ways of resistance and subversion —and in this regard, it functions as a textbook example of the "critical dystopia" in Tom Moylan's sense, as a

dystopia that offers a radical critique and also a degree of utopian hope. During season one, Dolores, Maeve and other creatures gradually gain an awareness of their predicament, and they start to act out of character —something that first looks like a series of harmless glitches, but finally infects the whole park's machinery like a virus. In a way that coheres with the series' narrative structure as what Javier Pardo calls a "metafictional allegory" —as a fictional world of writers, producers, characters, readers, users, viewers, etc.—, *Westworld* here builds towards an outcome typical of metafiction: the metafictional anagnorisis, or the character's cathartic realisation that they are trapped within a predetermined fiction. Just like in Unamuno's *Niebla* or in Peter Weir's *The Truman Show*, *Westworld* thus follows its characters in their awakening and their subsequent rebellion against their seemingly godlike masters —in this case, Delos corporation's customers, employees, executives and investors. On this level, the series may be received as a direct imperative to its viewers: a contemporary version of "exit the cave and find the sunlight!" as well as another version of "take the red pill and destroy the Matrix!" But of course, the series' reflexivity is not that straightforward in its critical connotations; it's obviously not agitprop, despite Dolores's heroic role as a Marxist-feminist revolutionary.

The second season is perhaps the best illustration of a logic that had been pushed to the background in season one as the revolution approached: the logic that there is (apparently) no escape from the machine's programming, even after an open insurrection. Dolores herself kills her creator, many human visitors, and much of Delos's investors' board, but it is shown that she did it primarily because she was programmed by her very creator to glitch, to gain self-consciousness, and to become a murderous rebel. This is a very significant plot twist because of its profoundly anti-utopian readings. This seems to imply, on the one hand, that the loop of violence and oppression cannot be broken nor escaped, or even that the oppressed shall become the oppressors. On the other hand, it also seems to imply that nothing can happen without the elite's approval —an elite that is shown to have total control over their humanoid creators, only losing such control after suicidally deciding to do so. Furthermore, season two reveals that there are many other theme parks beside Westworld, parallel worlds with different themes, but driven by the same exploitative-commodifying logic of the original park. Thus, on the whole, season two evinces the ideological flip coin of the series' critical efforts: insofar as the series succeeds in creating an allegorical representation of the complex functioning of interlocking axes of domination, Nolan and Joy's promises of a revolutionary outcome fall prey to the totalising logic of the system as represented by their own fiction —a system with no seeming outside nor beyond. Just like thinkers like Fredric Jameson and Theodor Adorno might warn us, a victory for the critical theorist (or a victory for the dystopian world builder) can be a defeat for any hopes of change. And by the end of season two, even the seemingly empowered visitors/customers of the park are shown to be nothing but the objects of data extraction, the Guinea pigs in Delos's attempts at predicting and predetermining human behaviour. As the series' language puts it, androids and gynoids are only the test subjects in the experiment, whereas humans are the real object of this mass surveillance experiment.

3. *Westworld* as Our World: Surveillance Capitalism as Dystopian Reality

Just when the park's mechanisms are finally exposed as a closed-loop system of domination with no outside —not even for seemingly empowered human customers— season three abandons the parks. Instead, the series is now set in the future dystopian Earth where Delos's Westworld came to exist in the first place. At least a priori, with this latest season, Nolan and Joy's expanded world building seems to re-energise the series's critical impetus, and it also

opens a new terrain where the characters' struggles can continue, and perhaps stand a better chance. By this point, Dolores is outside the park, trying to pass as human in order to infiltrate the elites and sabotage Delos, a corporation that is now re-contextualised as a powerful actor within a future version of present-day surveillance capitalism. Just like Silicon Valley companies today hold power today by conducting mass surveillance, commodifying human attention and speculating on human futures, in this future dystopia, companies like Delos have devised a godlike machine, called Rehoboam, a machine that does all such operations in a centralised manner, thus predetermining and narrowing the future possibilities of every single human being under its eye. In these ways, this dystopian world outside of the park is, even more clearly than the theme park, an allegory of the surveillance capitalist drive towards monopolistic techno-domination. As shown by the experiences of the newly introduced human characters who relate with Dolores, here social mobility is apparently impossible, socio-economic inequalities run along the same axes of oppression but have become more entrenched, and not even the elites are exempt from having their lives predicted and predetermined by Rehoboam's algorithms. Rehoboam thus clearly emerges as a mechanical embodiment of the same surveillance-capitalist logics which before were represented more abstractly and allegorically by the park's complex machinery. And therefore, it provides spectators with a powerful visual symbol for grasping, denouncing and (potentially) resisting the tendencies fostered by our own surveillance capitalism.

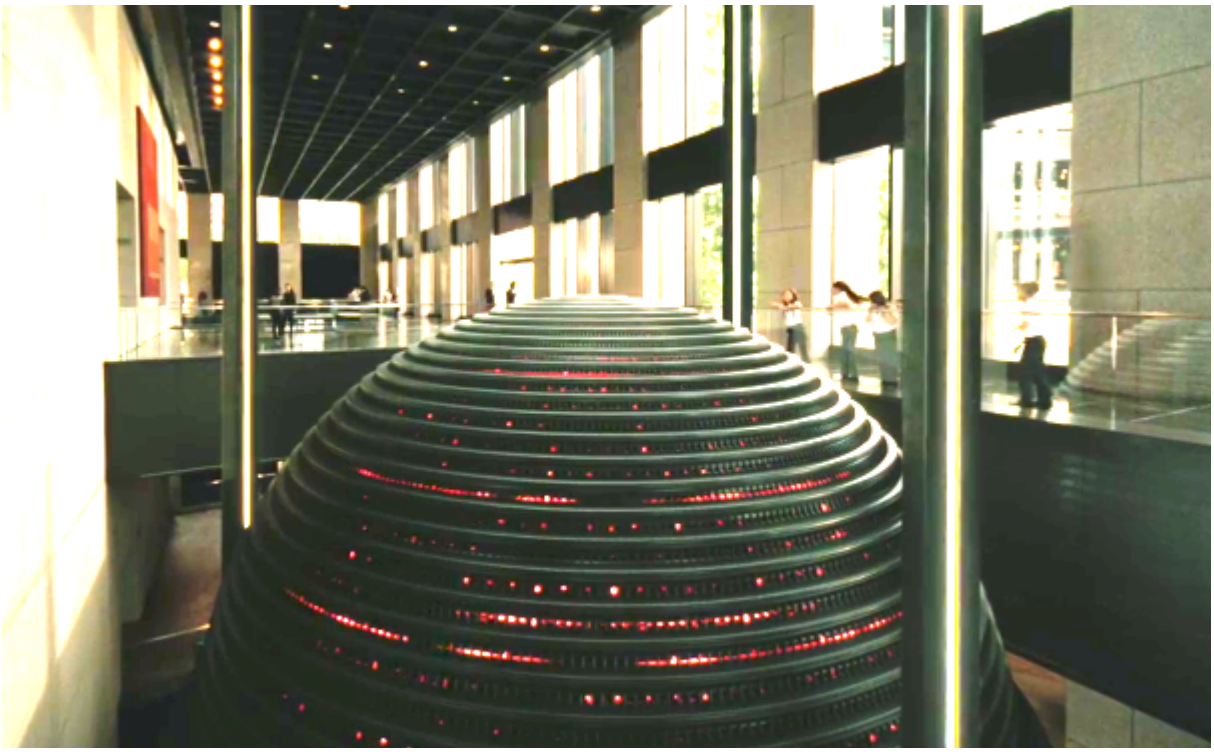

Figure 3: The Rehoboam supercomputer

Season three, however, also brings to the fore further ideological ambivalences in taking such a narrative direction. First of all, one can plausibly re-imagine Rehoboam as the subject of a technophobic conspiracy theory, especially as this imaginary machine tends to distort and overestimate the system's capacity for domination over the totality of human societies. That is, even if the series presents *the system* as the antagonist, it is also imagining that its technologies

exert a godlike power, a power from which there is no escape. In this regard, we can ask: to what extent does this contribute to what Mark Fisher calls "capitalist realism," insofar as even this apparently anti-capitalist image can serve to strengthen capitalism's perceived domination? Is the use of such symbol perhaps redirecting the series' critical, nonconformist impetus towards the cynical conclusion that any resistance and transformation is pointless? Relatedly, if we reconsider Dolores's ambivalent characterisation as a revolutionary hero, it is equally likely (though of course not assured) that we as spectators can arrive at similarly cynical and anti-utopian conclusions. Here I am thinking about how Dolores's character arc evokes a series of religiously apocalyptic notions: as a saviour chosen by her creator, Dolores is not a gynoid everywoman, she is an exceptional, superhuman individual whose divine qualities allow her to fight for humanity's freedom. This analogy with Christ becomes even more blatant in season three finale, in which Dolores willingly sacrifices herself for humanity, passing the torch of revolution to other chosen rebels. Thus, could we go as far as to say that the series' critical technophobia co-exists with a mystified technophilia, a quasi-religious hope that technology will ultimately deliver not only progress but even salvation? This question is of course rhetorical but, in any case, it is clear that —like *The Terminator* before— the series places its hopes in a literally technological "deus ex machina," whereby humans in the series are rendered mere spectators of a Miltonic epic fight between capital's machine and its rebel progeny.

4. Conclusion: Towards a Re-Valuation of Ambivalence

All in all, then, is the series fuelling critical reflection on surveillance capitalism, or is it merely a spectacular pastiche that mostly symptomatises the system's logic? It is frequently observed that reflexive narratives, whether metafiction or metacinema, end up with unresolvable loops of contradictions; and in a manner of speech, these narratives have their cake and eat it. To an extent, *Westworld* is also playing this game, and it takes little effort to realise how Nolan and Joy's allegory of surveillance capitalism is simultaneously an allegory of the series itself as a cultural commodity. The narrative is no doubt shedding a critical light on capitalism's perpetuation of class, gender and racial inequalities, but the series itself —like other HBO productions— relies on commodifying numberless forms of spectacular violence. Just like the theme park markets itself as "realistic," the series is marketed as a "complex," "realistic" and "adult" form of entertainment —a marketing discourse that has become a commonplace for so-called "complex TV." In this sense, overestimating the series' anti-capitalist connotations would be to fall into its own marketing logics, which tend to flatter audiences with the assurance of some value beyond "just entertainment." However, to ignore the blatantly anti-capitalist allegories that the series offers would do us no favour either, since it would be absurd to dismiss a commodity as hypocritical. In the end, all postmodern culture is mediated by the market and inevitably caught within its logics, but this does not mean that there is not an outside. Despite its deep ambivalence, or perhaps *thanks* to its deep ambivalence, I believe that —contrary to old value-hierarchies that, even within a popular genre like SF, still value the literary over the audio-visual, or the artistic over the commercial— *Westworld* stands as a clear example of how popular audio-visual narratives can still provide the ground for complexly nuanced critical reflections, and even for politicising, subversive interpretations. So let us fall down the rabbit hole of science-fictional spectacle, to come out again with a better understanding of the present!

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Tensions between Inclusion and Exclusion in Julissa Arce's *My Underground American Dream*

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Abstract

Since the beginning of the twenty-first century, migration has become a central topic in U.S. politics. In recent years, the undocumented youth have been sharing their stories through multiple cultural productions, attempting to break the stigma around undocumented status. Latinx literature has also contributed to this movement and one of these voices is Julissa Arce, who migrated from Mexico as a child and became a successful executive. The aim of this paper is to analyze Arce's memoir, *My Underground American Dream* (2016), by examining the factors that determine her belonging to American society. Arce and her relatives experience multiple barriers and tensions that seem to question their social acceptance. Still, Arce achieves her version of the American dream, while exposing limitations and challenges to that concept. Her story may raise awareness about the connection between migration and emotional wellbeing, contributing to the current dialogue on migration.

Keywords: DREAMers, mental health, Latinx literature, migration, YA literature

1. Introduction

The aim of this paper is to analyze the tensions and negotiation of inclusion and exclusion in Chicana writer Julissa Arce's *My Underground American Dream*, by particularly focusing on the impact of language on one's sense of belonging. In many ways, Arce's story resonates with the experiences of multiple Latinxs living in the US.

1.1 The Implications of Living Undocumented in the US

With more than sixty million people, the Latinx community is one of the largest ethnic groups in the US (US Census Bureau 2019). Recently and particularly during the Trump administration, Latinxs have been at the heart of the immigration debate. Even if the Obama administration had the highest deportation rates in history (US Department of Homeland Security 2018), the Trump administration targeted Latinxs and undocumented migrants and took numerous measures to increase border control, criminalizing and racializing migrants (Abrego et al. 2017), and stressing the increasing perception that illegality and migration are linked (Ayón 2016).

Legal status has far-reaching consequences for the over eleven million people who are undocumented in the U.S. (Passel and Cohn 2009), since living undocumented entails a risk of deportation and family separation. Moreover, undocumented migrants have a higher likelihood to live in poverty and tend to hold worse social status (Abrego and Lakhani 2015; Passel and Cohn 2009). It is estimated that 16.7 million people belong to mixed-status families (Fix and

Zimmerman 2001; Mathema 2017), where at least one family member is undocumented. In these families, all members tend to experience the impact of living undocumented. This situation is called multigenerational punishment (Enriquez 2015), and it affects their sense of belonging (Abrego and Lakhani 2015), and it has multiple legal and social implications that may last for generations. Members of these families tend to live "in the shadows," avoiding social interactions for the fear of legal consequences. Aside from affecting their sense of belonging, it has particularly negative effects on the wellbeing of children (Androff et al. 2011; Brabeck and Xu 2010).

Children in migrant families are an essential part of the immigration debate. While their lives are led by the decisions of their parents and they ought to be protected by the universal rights of the child, they are also the most vulnerable ones. The undocumented children and youth, also known as DREAMers (after the DREAM Act) have recently been in a legal limbo. Over seven hundred thousand DREAMers were under the protection of DACA, which granted them residency and a work permit but no path to citizenship (USCIS 2018). The Trump administration rescinded DACA in 2017, but this decision was revoked by the US Supreme Court in 2020. Amid this situation, DREAMers took to the streets and became very active on social media. By sharing their personal stories, they have created a sense of collective resilience (De La Torre and Germano 2014) that has influenced multiple artistic projects. Latinx authors are also part of this movement, and one of the most relevant works is Julissa Arce's *My Underground American Dream*.

2. Exclusion and Inclusion in *My Underground American Dream*

2.1 A Story of Family Separation, Undocumented Status and Financial Success

Julissa Arce is the author of *My Underground American Dream* (2016), which was adapted into a young reader's version in 2018. She recently published *You Sound Like a White Girl: The Case for Rejecting Assimilation* (2022). Aside from writing, Arce is engaged in social justice, migrant rights and education.

My Underground American Dream revolves around the lives of Arce and her family. Born in Taxco, Mexico, she grew up with her grandmother and two older sisters in Mexico, while her parents worked and lived in the US with Julio, her younger brother. At age eleven, Arce migrated to San Antonio, Texas, to live with her parents and she became undocumented. Her family then became a mixed-status family, as its members had different legal statuses. Meanwhile, her sisters remained in Mexico.

Arce's life in the US was far from ideal; while her academic performance was excellent, she became a victim of domestic abuse. In addition, despite not being aware of her undocumented status, it had far-reaching legal and social consequences. When she turned fifteen, she came to terms with her legal status, when she was unable to go to Mexico to celebrate her *quinceañera*. This realization not only created a sense of hypervigilance and constant fear of getting deported, but it also prevented her from undergoing the rites of passage of teenagers both in the US and in Mexico. However, perhaps the most defining moment of her undocumented status took place when she was completing college applications, as having a Social Security Number was a requirement to apply to most institutions. She was finally able to attend business school after the Government of Texas passed a law that permitted undocumented students to enroll in university programs.

After graduating from college and still undocumented, Arce began to work at Goldman Sachs in Wall Street. She became the vice president of the company at age twenty-seven, while

her undocumented status remained unknown. Even in that position, she feared disclosing her legal status, which also had an impact on her social interactions. Years later, in 2013, Arce became a US citizen. After being inspired by stories that resonated with her, she decided to leave the stock market in order to engage more actively in social justice and to advocate for the Latinx community. Thus, Julissa Arce's story is illustrative of the deep impact of being undocumented and part of a mixed-status family. Her work also portrays how society's views on migration affect social cohesion and one's sense of belonging. In this respect, language is one of the most relevant markers of social exclusion.

2.2 Linguistic Exclusion

Language is one of the elements that seem to determine Julissa's Arce's belonging, as the way others address her and her identity has a direct impact on her feeling and perceptions. For instance, one of her secondary school classmates makes the following comment: "'Why is *she* in the honors class?' he said. 'She's *a Mexican*! She doesn't even speak English!'" (Arce 2016, 44). At this point, Arce comes to terms with her ethnic identity and society's views on it, and she feels excluded by the group, stating: "I just wasn't like everyone else. I wasn't white. I wasn't black. I was a Mexican […] *They* were American. *They* were white. And I was not one of *them*" (Arce 2016, 44). This anecdote is therefore illustrative of the exclusion that is transmitted through language, particularly through the word *Mexican*, and of how deservingness seems to be determined by certain social parameters.

Aside from the words used by Arce's classmates, the official terminology designated to describe her legal status and situation also have a dehumanizing and excluding effect, as expressed in the following excerpt:

> I was an "illegal," or worse, an "illegal alien"—like some thing from another planet that wasn't even human […] When I thought about criminals, I didn't picture somebody like me. I pictured people who robbed, or stole, or killed. Yet people seemed to throw that word *illegal* around with the same disdain in their voice they would use to describe a thief. *Is that how people would treat me if they knew?* (Arce 2016, 60).

In this context, it is worth stressing the criminalizing assumption that the words "illegal alien" suggest, since they reveal the double standard when judging people based on their legal status. Her effort to succeed and be part of society does not seem valid if she is undocumented and thus her sense of belonging is shattered. In addition, Arce emphasizes the importance of not disclosing her status, for fear of the legal and social implications. Throughout the memoir, there are other examples of social exclusion resulting from language. A good case in point is when she attends the university of Texas, where she has resided for years, and she is labeled as an "international student" (Arce 2016, 112). When she is finally able to change her status, she is also told that she had been "out of status" (Arce 2016, 222). In short, the passages described above illustrate how language used both in official texts and by members of society has an impact on Arce's identity and sense of belonging. Thus, just as having undocumented status affects Julissa Arce and many others, the perceived social exclusion deriving from language also influences her emotional wellbeing.

2.3 Upward Social Mobility and Belonging to Society

As explained above, Arce's ethnic identity and legal status create a sense of social exclusion multiple times. However, her success at becoming the vice president of Goldman Sachs puts

her in a more favorable social position, which seems to alleviate her exclusion. Arce is aware of the privileges granted by her occupation, and she is quite consistently critical of how upward social mobility is used to value and accept migrants, while those in less favorable social positions are excluded:

> Once again, I took advantage of the stereotypes of what people think about people who are in this country illegally. I was an associate at Goldman Sachs. There was no thought in anyone's head that I could possibly be in the same category as someone who paid to get smuggled into this country on the back of a truck, or someone who crossed the Rio Grande under the cover of darkness, or who came into this country through some tunnel (Arce 2016, 232).

This passage is illustrative of the stereotypes regarding migration. Specifically, being undocumented seems to determine one's social position and their deservingness and chances of achieving the American dream. In addition, this excerpt questions the dichotomy of the "good" versus the "bad" migrant, whereby the "good" migrant enters the country lawfully and therefore deserves to achieve the American dream and occupy a higher social position. On the contrary, the "bad" undocumented migrant breaks the law and does not deserve upward social mobility. Indeed, Arce exposes a difficult path to pursue her version of the American dream in which an undocumented person achieves upward social mobility. Nonetheless, Arce also shows how, despite her achievements, financial success and respectability, her appearance and the racist and classist stereotypes attached to her ethnic identity are still decisive for her belonging. She recalls a negative experience with a shop assistant where "She not subtly reminded me that no matter what papers I had, and no matter how much money I had in the bank, I still didn't belong in her store, *off* Rodeo Drive, simply because of what I look like: Mexican" (Arce 2016, 285). Julissa Arce's story therefore questions the validity of the classist stereotypes around undocumented migration and Latinxs. Thus, *My Underground American Dream* may resonate with those undergoing a journey similar to Arce's.

3. Young Adult Adaptations

My Underground American Dream was adapted into a young-adult (YA) readers' version in 2018. This adaptation goes in line with other publications written by Latinx authors that portray what it is like to live in a mixed-status family in the US. A good case in point is Reyna Grande's *The Distance Between Us*, originally published in 2012 and adapted in 2016, which resonates with Arce's work. Colombian-American actress and author Diane Guerrero also wrote her memoir *In the Country We Love* in 2014, and its young-adult version was released in 2018. Filipino-American writer and producer José Antonio Vargas published *Dear America* in 2018, which was adapted into a YA book in the following year. The fact that these works were brought to younger audiences between 2016 and 2019 may seem pure coincidence, but their stories are related. Indeed, Julissa Arce has expressed her gratitude towards Vargas and Grande.

Aside from adaptations of works portraying children in migrant families, other YA books written by Latinxs and non-Latinxs portray migrant families from the point of view of children, such as *I Am Not Your Perfect Mexican Daughter* by Erika Sanchez (2017) or *Americanized: Rebel Without a Green Card* by Iranian-American Sara Saedi (2018). Although migration has been a pivotal theme in Latinx literature, it seems quite remarkable that multiple works target young readers nowadays, and particularly since the presidency of Donald Trump. These authors have stated that their stories are relatable and inspirational to the upcoming generations. At the same time, the impact of these works goes beyond individuals, as they

contribute to the self-representation of Latinxs, who have been "a mediated minority" (Aldama 2013, 3) in the media and culture. In this respect, it would be worth examining the pedagogical implications and mental health benefits of reading these works.

4. Conclusion

Julissa Arce's *My Underground American Dream* portrays the complexity and multi-layered implications of living undocumented. The passages described in the memoir are illustrative of data on the deep impact of having undocumented status in the US nowadays. Whether their status as individuals is documented or undocumented, the multiple barriers that all family members face affect their sense of belonging. As the passages above have shown, it seems that language plays a key role in determining who deserves to be included and excluded from society, since language derives from and influences thought, which permeates society.

Moreover, Arce's work exposes how holding a high socioeconomic status prevents social exclusion to some extent. In other words, financial success grants respectability, social acceptance and belonging to society. Nonetheless, the racist prejudices against those of Mexican and Latinx origin question their inclusion and exert violence, having a negative impact on those affected by these prejudices.

It could be concluded that Julissa Arce has achieved her own American dream. Even if her story in a way revolves around this concept, she questions its idealized version, since not everybody is under the same conditions to achieve that dream. In other words, certain social parameters such as a type of ethnicity or having undocumented status seem to condition the deservingness to achieve that dream. At the same time, she also shows how the notion of the American dream is essentially rooted in economic success, dismissing other areas that may affect one's wellbeing. Julissa Arce and her family's version of the American dream has caused fragmentation and taken an emotional toll on all family members, as the family has never been united. *My Underground American Dream* resonates with other narratives and artistic creations that encapsulate the ideals or ideas of DREAMers, which seek to humanize and dignify undocumented migrants and claim their belonging in the US.

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PART IV
Round Tables

Women's Fluid Spaces and Gendered Spatial Orientations in Victorian Literature and Culture

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Abstract

In this roundtable we focused on the spatial significance of 'orientation', implying movement, and process, for Victorian women, engaging with the mobility turn, or "the mobility paradigm" in the study of women's liminal spaces in the Victorian period. Drawing on Sara Ahmed's *Queer Phenomenology: Orientations, Objects, Others* (2006), and other critics, we explored Victorian fluid spaces where the private and the public divide is negotiated, which, coupled with the break-up of temporal boundaries in some instances, underlines how embodied subjectivities benefit from being oriented towards other bodies and spaces. Finally, this roundtable considered the interaction of temporal and spatial dimensions in the analysis of women's fluid positions in Victorian times, and in relation to the dynamic interstitial spaces inhabited by women in the nineteenth century. This led us to examine the meanings generated in re-positioning ourselves in relation to the past as regards women and mobility in the Victorian period.

Keywords: London, Entertainment, Women's clubs, Spiritualism, New Woman, Nineteenth century, Liminality, Space.

This roundtable discussed the research undertaken by the members of a current Research Project (Ref. FFI2017-86417-P-FEDER). Rosario Arias introduced the main theoretical tenets of the Project, which revolves around the notion of 'orientation' in contemporary critical theory and literature. Laura Monrós-Gaspar dealt with the topic: "women's clubland: politics, debates and entertainment". Considered sites for 'man-haters' by their detractors (Doughan and Gordon 2006, 43), and 'central havens of refuge' (Doughan and Gordon 2006, 47) by their advocates, late nineteenth-century clubs offered women a forum where they could publicly air their views on topical issues of the time. As heirs to the debating societies of the eighteenth century (Thale 1995), clubs provided women with alternative intellectual networks, which served as a counterpoint to the mainstream cultural circles, usually exclusive to men. Among the topics discussed at women's clubs there were, for example, issues related to marriage, fashion and gardening, but also to women's suffrage, politics, literary criticism and entertainment. Sources for the activities held at late nineteenth-century women's clubs are highly dispersed; there only exist few annual reports and club journals and this is not the case with every club. Notwithstanding the scarcity of sources, there is ample evidence of how the performing arts were a recurring topic in Late-Victorian women's clubs as a form of entertainment and a forum

for discussion. In addition, an influential network of theatrical New Women found in the liminality of feminine clubland an institutional hub where to test, contest and, more notably, to spread their own cultural products and ideas, which has remained unnoticed by feminist criticism and theatre historians alike (Farkas 2019). The aim of Monrós-Gaspar's contribution to this roundtable, therefore, was to scrutinize late-nineteenth-century women's clubs as fluid spaces of social, cultural and political intersections with the common link of entertainment.

In turn, Rosario Arias focused on the significant changes undergone by the Victorian drawing room as it became a locus of negotiation and transgression for women in the context of Spiritualism. The parlour/drawing room was the setting for the Spiritualist medium to hold her séances, usually in the dark. In her *The Darkened Room* (1989), Alex Owen broke new ground for the study of the dark room in connection with Victorian gender roles, and she argued that "the Victorian séance room became a battle ground across which the tensions implicit in the acquisition of gendered subjectivity and the assumption of female spiritual power were played out" (1989, 11). Granted that the medium's experience was often transmitted or recorded by male sitters and believers, it is also true that there is another point of entry into the medium's experience: the séance. Recent studies on Victorian spatial dynamics focus on the porosity of boundaries between public and private spaces in the private sphere *par excellence:* the domestic environment itself. In this sense, Anna Despotopoulou discusses the Victorian drawing room as a space of semi-public visibility for women in George Eliot's *Daniel Deronda* and Henry James's *The Wings of the Dove* where the drawing room is paralleled to a theatrical spectacle (2008, 87). Interestingly, the Victorian drawing room, where the séance takes place, is described as "an increasingly permeable space that allowed for the introduction of social gathering and play into the private and familial sphere" (Natale 2016, 61). Seen in this light, the Victorian parlour, a dynamic locus of in/visibility for women and spirits, becomes a place for entertainment that puts semi-public events on stage, with music, objects, a cast, an audience, and its own dramaturgy. Her aim was to explore the séance as a fluid space where the domestic setting is reformulated to hold social gathering and supernatural spectacles, offering a dynamic understanding of the Victorian household. In addition, Arias re-oriented the meanings of the séance, this locus of in/visibility, towards the materiality of the room, and towards the interaction of the medium/performer, as an embodied subjectivity, with her object world through the space of the Victorian drawing room.

Lin Pettersson undertook a study of Victorian travelling shows as liminal spaces of bodily natures. In *Queer Phenomenology: Orientations, Objects, Others* (2006), Sara Ahmed argues that bodies are oriented towards objects and others "through different sites, spaces, and temporalities". With this phenomenological approach the critic "offer[s] a new way of thinking about the spatiality of sexuality, gender, and race" (Ahmed 2006a, 2). She argues that, on the one hand, "bodies take shape through tending towards objects that are reachable, that are available within the bodily horizon", and, on the other hand, "consciousness is always directed 'toward' an object, and given its emphasis on the lived experience of inhibiting a body" (Ahmed 2006a, 2). This twofold view invites us to analyse the body as a material and enfleshed entity that changes as it tends towards objects and others, as well as interpreting the lived embodied experience of spatialised subjectivities across time. Ahmed's theory advocates for the body as a travelling concept; a notion that aptly fits Stacy Alaimo's term "trans-corporeality" (2010, 2). Alaimo stresses how bodies are spatialised and through connections and interactions with the environment that surrounds it arguing that "thinking across bodies may catalyze the recognition that the environment, which too often imagined as inert, empty space or as a source of human use, is, in fact, a world of fleshy beings with their own needs, claims, and actions. By emphasising the movement across bodies, trans-corporeality, reveals the interchanges and

interconnections between various bodily natures" (2010, 2). Thus, both Ahmed's "spatiality of sexuality, gender and race" (2), and Alaimo's "trans-corporeality" are produced and shaped by intersections and interconnections of space, objects and others "that travel through the entangled territories of material and discursive, natural and cultural, biological and textual" (Alaimo 2010, 2-3). Victorian travelling shows provide a space where bodies are differently presented and stylised according to different environments. One example is the quintessential performative mode of the Victorian freak show, which is underpinned by medical, scientific and ideological discourses on gender, sexuality and race, and this enactment of bodily difference and otherness interconnects the material with the immaterial. If "trans-corporeality as a theoretical site, is where corporeal theories, environmental theories, and science studies meet and mingle in productive ways" (Alaimo 2010, 3), then, the travelling show in neo-Victorian literature provides a liminal space where corporality is enacted as a travelling concept across time and space. Pettersson's research places freak narratives in a new critical spotlight, by analysing neo-Victorian representations of touring performers through the lens of "trans-corporeality" (Alaimo 2010, 2). Petersson's principal aim was twofold: on the one hand, she analysed how contemporary authors re-imagine the space of nineteenth-century travelling shows and re-embodies Victorian performers through the lens of orientation; and on the other hand, Pettersson examined the (im)material intersections and interconnections of embodiment in neo-Victorian fiction on touring performers.

Lastly, Miriam Borham-Puyal discussed women in transit, liminal spaces and the New Woman in Egerton's *Discords*. Mary Chavelita Dunne Bright (1859-1945), better known as George Egerton, was a relevant literary figure at the end of the 19th century. Innovative in form as well as in content, she claims to explore in her short stories the *terra incognita* that is woman. In this exploration, Dunne's female characters are defined by fluidity, rather than fixity (O'Toole 2014), both spatially and personally. They prove in constant transit, exploring their position in the world with regard to others, men but also women, re-defining forms of effective sorority, together with their own inner worlds. Bjørhovde qualifies them with the term "transient restlessness" (1987, 5), while O'Toole describes how they move in the social world branded by their rootlessness, a trait she sees as characteristic of Dunne's modernism (2014, 830). Borham-Puyal addressed how the New Woman in Egerton's fiction is presented as a woman on the threshold, in such a time of transition as was the turn of the century. It claimed that, in fact, these women are liminal, in the traditional sense of Victor Turner's 'transition toward' or 'in-betweenness': they have separated from societal conventions, they are transgressive and their re-incorporation in the post-liminal phase would also transform the society to which they return. Therefore, they inhabit a liminal position in time, in that "generative caesura" that the present is, as conceptualized by Sara Ahmed and Victoria Browne (2014, 40). The 'now' in these narratives provides a hopeful orientation forward because "moving toward" maintains available the "possibility of changing directions, of finding other paths" (Ahmed 2006, 570), which is especially relevant in the context of women's fight for equality in the late 19th century. Moreover, it highlighted the use of spaces of transit in Egerton's second collection of short stories *Discords* (1894), from stations, ships and city streets to actual thresholds (windowsills, doors). These physical spaces, and the place women occupy in them or in relation to them, can be interpreted as symbols of the fin-de-siècle women's need to negotiate the conquest of private and public spaces, and of these New Women's stance in-between past and future, constraint and freedom.

All in all, we discussed several instances of Victorian in-between spaces occupied by women, where the private vs public divide was negotiated, and challenged, thus stressing women's mobility, linked up with corporality, in the nineteenth century. Also, in looking back

to the Victorian past, we re-position ourselves, and generate new meanings about women's embodied subjectivities and their orientation towards other bodies and spaces, then and now.

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COVID-19 and Popular Culture: Emerging Sounds from the American West

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Abstract

This round table aimed at observing different aural cultural popular forms (music, podcasts, etc.) which addressed the human and economic effects of the COVID19 crisis in the West of the United States, with a particular emphasis on those emerging from the US-Mexico border. Starting from the premise that the crisis affected all human beings around the world, the round table aimed to observe the way "the people" integrated the effects of the pandemic both in their personal and social daily life.

Keywords: COVID-19, popular culture, music, podcasts, American West

Popular culture, in all its forms, is a valuable thermometer of the state of affairs in social, economic and political terms. In the midst of the ongoing COVID-19 worldwide crisis, which affected the social, cultural and economic policies of all countries in the world, many communal and personal rights and daily concerns were at stake. The different measures undertaken by each of the world governments called into question notions such as individual freedom, social responsibility, and human solidarity, among others. The political and sanitary measures adopted by each of the countries resulted in not only economic and political, but also human/personal situations whose consequences marked the social and economic development of these countries. The power of the media in the transmission, acceptance and/or confrontation to such measures was indubitable and, as such, artists of all disciplines felt the need to express and deploy this undoubtedly strangled situation through their work. As put forward by cultural studies scholar John Fiske, popular culture is created "to produce meanings that are relevant to everyday life" (1989, 6). Or, as Dennis D. Waskul and Phillip Vannini expressed it, "popular culture is emergent within the quotidian experiences, practices, and expressions of people. Or more simply, as we emphasize, the 'stuff' of popular culture is less important than what people do with and amongst it" (2016a, 3). This round table started from the premise that popular culture is about "las cosas del pueblo", as expressed by Los Tigres del Norte on the essence of *corridos*, and from the acknowledgment of its flexible and highly immediate nature. Its aim was to observe some of the popular cultural forms that served to integrate and process the effects of the pandemic on "the people."

COVID-19, Latinxs, the border and popular culture

The aim of this contribution to the round table was twofold: on the one hand, to observe the way COVID-19 affected Latinos in the United States, and particularly Mexicans living in the border territories. On the other, to address the way this sanitary, but also socioeconomic crisis was represented in the popular cultural production of Latinxs and Chicanxs in particular. The

presentation addressed different popular cultural forms that account for COVID-19 itself, and its political and social consequences. Among these, music was highlighted as one of the most popular and immediate forms that covered the social, economic, and moral crisis. In particular, *corridos*, as one of the most popular Chicanx/Latinx musical forms, were observed, as they describe "las cosas del pueblo." Their essence as a "sung newspaper" from their emergence in the mid-nineteenth century was regarded as a valid tool to reach conclusions on the relevance and legitimacy of popular culture to react to all social, political and economic situations, such as the one produced by the COVID-19 pandemic. On the other hand, the presentation looked at other popular artistic manifestations which represented the crisis. It observed the way street murals praised the work of public workers such as doctors and firemen. Similarly, it accounted for the way health advices were created and broadcast through the use of cartoons, in both Spanish and English, to encourage citizens to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Finally, it looked at the Covidlatino.org project, which "aims to disseminate COVID-related information to U.S. Latinos through art and social media posts that prominently feature visual staples of Latino culture, with an emphasis on the U.S. Southwest," and was launched by social scientist Gilberto López and cartoonist Lalo Alcaraz. All in all, this intervention aimed at overviewing a set of popular artistic examples which served to create community, fight COVID-19 and promote health care and the use of vaccinations during the pandemic.

American Music in the Times and Bounds of COVID-19

This presentation provided a general overview of how the social, economic and political crisis derived from the COVID-19 pandemic affected the music business in the United States. It focused on the subsequent response by American musicians and how communal and individual projects attested to the utility of music for finding relief and remedy.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the music business after the political and economic decisions taken by the American government was massive. In a statement by Sony Corporation, the range and assortment of this impact was made obvious: "delays in new music releases, interruptions in supply chains for CDs and other physical music media, and a decrease in music licensing resulting from both lower advertising activity and delays in production for motion pictures and television productions."[1] The estimated loss after the cancellation of Austin Texas's SXSW Festival was $350m for the city.[2] Other journalistic pieces in publications such as billboard.com or musicbusiessworldwide.com showed a growing preoccupation with the impact of this economic crisis on the concert industry and the corporate system. The ramifications were also visible in humbler music venues, small businesses, independent record companies, alternative bands and other more intimate instances in which corporate vision does not apply. Jobs that are not straightforwardly musical but are related to music were also affected by this.

However, one thing that brought a more positive nuance to this unhappy situation came from the artistic domain, through the creative response from different artists, both as a collective and individually. Many examples, from the mainstream and from the independent realms, could testify to how different activities were launched to enhance the potential of music as a healing force and display the strength of collective cooperation in order to overcome these circumstances. For instance, Sturgill Simpson's performance at the Ryman Auditory, with no on-site audience, raising money for different charities in exchange for two bluegrass albums

1 This was a public announcement made by Sony Corporation on March 27, 2020.

2 Austin Mayor Steve Adler himself provided this data that was then reported in the media.

that he recorded afterwards. It was also significant how a group of musicians gathered online to honor John Prine, who died of COVID-19. Of course, a large number of online festivals were organized, such as The Orchard Presents: Stay Home Festival.

Simon Frith opens *Taking Popular Music Seriously: Selected Essays* by stating that "whether as an idea, an experience or an activity, music is the result of the play of social forces" (2007a: ix). Those social forces were notoriously in motion when, in the context of the pandemic, music was exercised as a means of stress reduction, a source for recovery, growing consciousness and also a tool for criticism.

Healing and Connecting during COVID-19: Latinx Podcasts

The COVID-19 crisis had a tremendous economic and social impact at a global level, creating an atmosphere of uncertainty and anxiety. The media coverage, full of overwhelming images also affected our mental wellbeing at a time when social distancing was the main recommendation to prevent the spread of the virus. However, sociologists at UCLA suggested that the term "physical distancing" (Menjívar et al. 2020) would be more accurate due to our need to keep social ties to protect our mental health. In a world where more and more people live alone, and many feel lonely, social connections seem to be essential to reduce the impact of "the loneliness epidemic" (Lepore 2020). During the COVID-19 lockdown, numerous attempts were made to decrease the effects of both epidemics.

During this time, technology became an essential part of our lives. While bars, movie theaters and concert halls were closed, video calls, streaming platforms and social media facilitated social interactions. In the U.S., the Latinx population was one of the communities most deeply affected by the pandemic and very active on social media and podcasts.

The aim of this paper was to study how Latinx podcasters based on the West Coast reacted to the COVID-19 crisis between March and June 2020. Podcasting is a fast-growing medium that is gaining ground in the Latinx community, and it remains independent. Its features allow for creativity and greater intimacy between creators and listeners. Latinx podcasters had different reactions to the pandemic; while some shared their sense of humor and daily struggles, others collaborated with artists and educators to develop resources. In addition, these creators attempted to raise awareness of the struggles of the Black community. In a way, all of them adapted their content and tried to build empathy and a sense of collective resilience among the Latinx community. They also provided a broader picture of the pandemic and attempted to keep the social connection that we seemed to crave more than ever.

The three presentations, which addressed different responses to the personal and social effects of the COVID-19 crisis from different perspectives, were proof of the relevance of popular culture for the transmission of the effects of global, macro-events from an individual, micro-standpoint. In this line, the round table attempted to prove that popular culture may be a valid tool to create "Pan-links" among people of different backgrounds and situations and act as a parallel, "field-specific" account of information and flow of ideas. It started from the premise that it was a life-experience, practical round table, which, considering the global effects of the pandemic and similarly, its place-specific essence and popular responses to it, was followed by an invitation to the audience to share their personal experiences.

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Postcards from the Interregnum: North-American Cinemas and the Representation of the Great Recession

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Abstract

This round table looks at three contemporary audiovisual texts set in the Post-Great Recession years by relying on the notion of the Gramcian interregnum. More specifically, the selected primary sources engage with, represent, and problematize how the multiple crises and fractures wrought by the Great Recession in North America have become chronified in the body politic and social fabric of Canada and the United States. The audiovisual texts analysed are the US miniseries *Your Honor* (Moffat 2020), the Canadian film *The Body Remembers When the World Broke Open* (Tailfeathers and Hepburn 2019), and the US film *The Assistant* (Green 2019). Using the Gramscian interregnum as the core concept and bringing in some reading strategies typical of affect theory, the round table aims to discuss the post-Great Recession context as one where the conditions of the crisis have blended with social and political life.

Keywords: Great Recession, North American Cinemas, Crisis, Interregnum.

1. *Your Honor*: Notes on African Americans' Perpetual Interregnum. Isabel González Díaz

This section analyzes race relations in the miniseries *Your Honor* (Moffat 2020). Following Michelle Alexander (2012), I argue that Blacks in the USA have been living in the interregnum for a very long time, enduring never-ending chains of crises that only prove the chronification of their situation. My contention is that Gramsci's interregnum is certainly evoked in Alexander's pivotal argument: that the old (i.e. slavery and segregation) might have legally died in the USA, but precisely because the new (i.e. the real, factual eradication of racism after the promise of the Civil Rights) cannot be born—has not been born—a great variety of morbid symptoms are currently present in the lives of many African Americans, of which the mass incarceration system is amongst the most appalling.

Your Honor is set in New Orleans in the aftermath of the Great Recession, and the conflict of the story is presented when, in the attempt to protect his son for his involvement in a hit-and-run in which a white boy has died, progressive, incorruptible, and antiracist white Judge Michael Desiato propels a domino effect that causes all kinds of violence and the killing of many black people. His decision is taken at the discovery that the boy who died in the accident is the son of the head of the most powerful and cruel organized crime family in New Orleans. As the story develops, the efforts of two white privileged fathers to protect or avenge their white children become the source of violence and injustice, especially for the precarious black community. Alexander's formulation on the deceptive rhetoric of colorblindness (2012, 224-231) proves that the origin of most of the violence that viewers witness stems from the

long-lasting friendship between the white judge and the black community leader and friend to whom he resorts for help to hide the car. Besides questioning the delusion that white and black people can be friends on equal terms, the much greater effects of the belief in a race-neutral society (Alexander 2012, 40) are also displayed, as the development of the story follows almost literally the tragic script of the lives of many black youngsters.

Your Honor presents the mass incarceration system and mindfully questions the myth that black men choose to be criminals (Alexander 2012, 192), while asserting that the idea of a post-racial USA is an illusion: African Americans' perpetual interregnum of violence and injustice still remains.

2. *A Deluge of Affects*: Critical Encounters in Vancouver's "Death Zones". Eva Darias Beautell

This section examines the critical productivity of negative affects in the Vancouver film *The Body Remembers When the World Broke Open* (Tailfeathers and Hepburn 2019). I start by locating my analysis in the theoretical space defined by this roundtable, Antonio Gramsci's notion of interregnum. Gramsci's richness of thought has taken his writings far beyond the specific context of the European interwar period when he wrote his notebooks. In this case, the Gramscian interregnum is conceived as an organic crisis of legitimation of which two aspects are relevant here: that crises are not fixed events but processes that originate in the social fabric and eventually challenge its foundations by producing "morbid symptoms" (1971, 276); and that these symptoms disrupt everyday life but cannot be managed or solved within the existing social and economic framework.

Moving to my field of analysis, if scholars have identified a tendency in current global crises to normalize critical conditions and embed them in the social fabric, in the case of Vancouver this normalization drive may provide a unique case study. Canada, and very particularly the city of Vancouver, boasts to have suffered no recession in the global financial crisis of 2008, and Vancouver claims to be the fastest growing economy in Canada since 2013. Yet, at the same time, the city suffers from a chronic social and economic dysfunction due to the drastic inequality between the richest and the poorest parts of town. The case of Vancouver's Downtown Eastside is notorious in this context, recalling Étienne Balibar's notion of a "death zone" (2001, 24), an area of extreme exposure where lives are necessarily "wasted" by physical or mental illness, addictions and economic precarity. But the institutional production of symbolic areas of "human ugliness" extends to many other parts of the city. *The Body Remembers* applies a magnifying glass to the obscenity of these dysfunctional structures, using a chance encounter between two Indigenous women in East Vancouver to talk about specific forms of gendered and colonial precarities that cut across the physical, the economic and the emotional.

3. The Road to Serfdom: The Workplace after the Great Recession in *The Assistant*. Fabián Orán Llarena

Kitty Green's *The Assistant* (2019) explores the way neoliberal rationality has shaped workers' approach to work, naturalizing a culture of sacrifice that promises a nominal middle-class status in exchange for a serfdom-like attachment to work. Locating my analysis within the discussion of the Gramscian interregnum, I rely on three critical frameworks in order to approach the film—Wendy Brown's vision of neoliberal politics (2016), Sarah Bracke's notion of resilience (2016), and Sarah Ahmed's rereading of happiness as an affective mandate (2010).

The Assistant follows a young woman named Jane for one day as she navigates her exhausting job routine. She works long hours at an entry-level job position for a New York film production company run by an abusive boss who uses his power and standing to have sex with young actresses. The film is visually patterned so as to isolate the protagonist. This relates to Brown's concept of responsabilization—a key notion for neoliberal rationality by which workers themselves are tasked with deploying "the correct strategies of self-investment and entrepreneurship for thriving and surviving; […] a manifestation of human capitalization" (2016, 132-133). In the same vein, Jane's experiences can be examined through the lenses of resilience as authored by Sara Bracke, that is, as the "capacity of losing much or perhaps almost everything […] and building up everything all over again" (2016, 63). Thus, the film sticks to a modernist narrative format—a one-day plot stretch that maps out the protagonist's life in a meaningful and profound manner. One disheartening explanation for this might be that, as a resilient worker in the neoliberal age, Jane's life is fully and totally devoted to working. There is perfect overlap and conflation between her being employed and her being a social being. The fact we do not see a social life beyond work is probably because she has had to sacrifice the former in order to have the latter. Finally, I offer a reading of the film as a representation of Ahmed's vision of happiness as teleology or mandate. Jane's ordeal—riddled with supposedly encouraging messages to keep on working long hours from their peers and superiors—relates to the way Ahmed revisits happiness, that is, as a path, as a promise ahead of us or as anticipation (2010, 32).

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Cultures of Risk, Cultures of Power

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Abstract

The content of this contribution is the result of a roundtable that discussed cultures of risk and focussed on women riding motorcycles, global surf cultures and rock climbing, with a particular emphasis on questions of gender.

Keywords: risk culture, femininity, masculinity, surfing, motorcycling, rock climbing.

1. Introduction

This round table was designed to be of interest to all those scholars who are fascinated by cultures of risk including women on motorcycles, surf cultures and climbing and how they are articulated within genres like autobiography, popular fiction and travel literature. It was situated at the crossroads where a number of academic disciplines meet within the general ambit of cultural studies: namely, Sociology, Sports, Leisure and Literary Studies. Particular emphasis was put on debating questions of identity, gender, masculinity and femininity (including male dominance, the inclusion and exclusion of women), and questions of risk and danger, as well as how different practitioners express their experiences, challenges and selves in the genre forms chosen for discussion.

2. Alberto Lázaro Lafuente – A Female Lone Rider: Risks in Motorcycle Travel Books

Although traditionally motorcycle culture has been seen as essentially masculine, there is a long list of females who have shown their passion for riding motorcycles and have also written travel narratives about their experiences on two wheels. A recent travel book by a female adventure motorcyclist is *Lone Rider* (2017), by Elspeth Beard, the first British woman to ride a motorcycle around the world. In 1982, at the age of 23, Beard left London and went on a solo adventure through dangerous lands and countries at war which lasted two years. When reading this great adventure, one wonders how a young "vulnerable" woman can confront and manage, on her own, what the German sociologist Ulrich Beck calls the two faces of risk, "chance and danger" (2009, 4). Also, how is this narrative different to a similar story written by a male traveller? To explore these femininity and masculinity issues, a motorcycle travel book by Mike Carter, *The Uneasy Rider* (2008), will be brought under discussion.

A comparison of these two books shows many similarities, as seen in the table below:

Solo long motorcycle trip through different countries	
Main personal situation	Broken heart / Broken marriage
Motorcycle	BMW
Preparation	No clear plan or route
Previous experience	Very little
Contents	Social and historical details of places
	Feelings during the ride
	Relationships with people they meet
	Miseries (visa problems, money stolen, …)
	Curiosities and anecdotes
	Reflections on life (journey of self-discovery)

Table 1

The challenges and risks are also similar. Both narratives include accidents, mechanical problems, health issues, assaults, and the usual hardships of cold, heat, insects, and dangerous roads. Similarly, both texts reveal interesting insights into the writers' personality and how these risky experiences on a bike affect their interpretation of the world.

However, their attitude and tone are different. Whereas Beard's narrator sounds more intimate and resigned, accepting with calm whatever challenge she must cope with, Carter's seems more relaxed, using more humour and a self-deprecating tone, trying to make himself and his abilities seem less important, not heroic at all. This seems to contradict the views of some travel literature critics when they state that texts by male travellers tend to include dangers and risks to bolster courage and bravery, thus enhancing their masculinity (Thompson 2011, 175–77).

3. Luz Mar González-Arias – Gendered Leisure in Blue Spaces: Risk, Fear and Vulnerability in Two Recent Surf Novels

Global surf culture is constructed upon strong patterns of masculinity and femininity that often intersect with equally solid models of national identity. In popular culture the normative surfer is male, heterosexual, white, probably with blue eyes and long blond hair, and originally from Australia or California. These physical and national characteristics are often associated with emotional detachment and a well-defined lifestyle involving risk-taking, adrenalin-driven journeys in search of famous waves in exotic locations. Surfing women, on the contrary, have traditionally been absent from the systems of representation or, if present at all, the emphasis has been placed on the hypersexualisation, even pornification, of their bodies, while their ability to ride waves has usually been completely silenced (Komer 2010).

In the last decades, the body of films and literature—both high and popular—on the theme of surfing has grown exponentially. In these works, surf is usually presented as the background from where to explore issues as complex as hegemonic gender roles, social exclusion, colonial, postcolonial and neo-colonial dynamics in adventure travel, environmentalism and climate change, to mention but a few. But to what extent are

contemporary surf novels challenging canonical gender models? Tim Winton's *Breath* (2008)—a coming-of-age story about two boys in an imaginary coastal town of Australia—and Kirsty Eagar's *Raw Blue* (2009)—where the young protagonist will have to clear a space for her identity as a woman surfer in the male-dominated atmosphere of her local community—touch upon the themes of vulnerability and risk, and determine that new ways of doing gender are possible (albeit timid) in spite of the rigid constraints for gender-construction in global surf culture. To a certain extent, the protagonists of these novels—Winton's Pike and Eagar's Carly—embody critical assessments of gender within real-life surf communities (Evers 2010; Comer 2010; Zabalza 2017) and reflect on the implications of vulnerability and fear in the lived experience of blue spaces (Green and Evers 2020) against the globally sanctioned narrative of the surfer as a heroic adventurer of the 21st century.

4. Laura Martínez-García – Masculinity and trauma: surviving and healing in the climbing autobiography *The Push* (2017)

Although lifestyle or extreme sports emerged in the 1960s and 1970s as alternative ways of understanding sport and identity (Wheaton 2004, 3), their popularity has grown over the last twenty years, with a significant rise in the number of people participating in them. One of the most interesting features of most of these lifestyle sports is their relationship to risk: some of these activities put subjects in perilous situations so they can learn how to control fear and anxiety. Still these situations make participants vulnerable to trauma (Butler 2006): in their quest for high risk and personal freedom, individuals who take up extreme sports frequently face life-threatening situations and traumatic experiences that may result in serious physical injury, psychological problems (including PTSD) and even death.

Rock climbing, as one of the most dangerous of these sports (Wheaton 2014, 73), is no exception and many are the cultural products that narrate personal experiences of climbers facing a traumatic near-death experience and living to tell the tale. Still, mountains are inextricably associated not just with danger but with the Sublime and with an aesthetic pleasure that invests nature with the power to cure trauma, as was the case of the WWI veterans who participated in Mallory's expeditions to mount Everest (Davis 2012).

One such volume is the recent autobiography of one of the most prominent climbers nowadays, Tommy Caldwell. An analysis of his book, entitled *The Push: A Climber's Journey of Endurance, Risk and Going beyond Limits* (2017), reveals that the young climber deploys a particular discourse of trauma and healing (done through physical exertion, silence and endurance), which is inextricably linked to his own expressions of an eco-masculinity that, albeit non-traditional and alternative, still bears traces of hegemonic understandings of manhood, especially in his ambivalence towards vulnerability and in his difficulty to articulate feelings of weakness.

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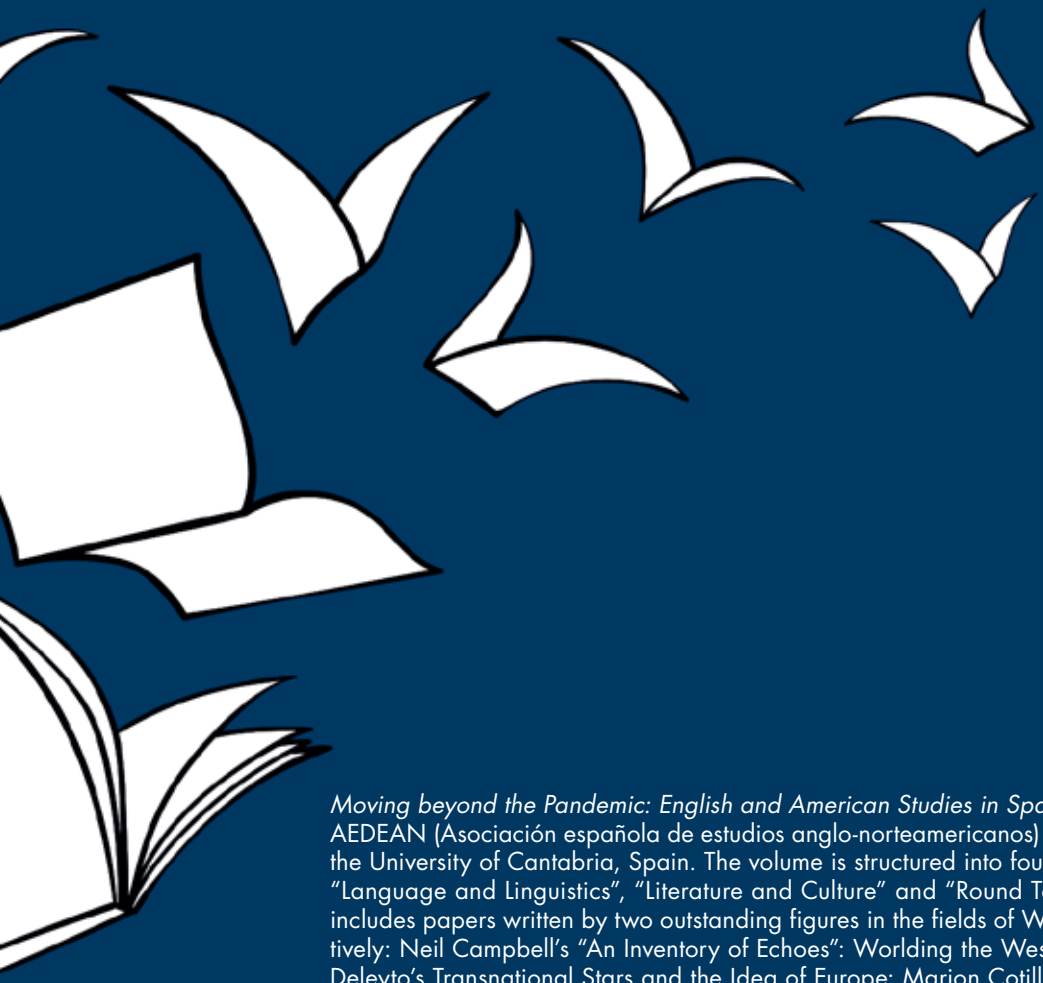

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Moving beyond the Pandemic: English and American Studies in Spain contains the Proceedings of the 44th AEDEAN (Asociación española de estudios anglo-norteamericanos) Conference held in November, 2021 at the University of Cantabria, Spain. The volume is structured into four different sections: "Plenary Speakers", "Language and Linguistics", "Literature and Culture" and "Round Tables". The "Plenary Speakers" section includes papers written by two outstanding figures in the fields of Western Studies and Film Studies, respectively: Neil Campbell's "An Inventory of Echoes": Worlding the Western in Trump Era Fiction and Celestino Deleyto's Transnational Stars and the Idea of Europe: Marion Cotillard, Diane Kruger. The "Language and Linguistics" section includes eleven papers that tackle a variety of issues concerning synchronic and diachronic phenomena in the English language of either native or non-native speakers at the phonetic, lexical, or grammatical level. These studies are indicative of the various current methodological approaches to research in subfields such as language teaching, contrastive linguistics, language contact or language variation, to name but a few. The "Literature and Culture Studies" section contains nineteen papers on topics as diverse as the field itself, ranging from Irish, Canadian, South African, Australian, American or English Literature to Film, Television and Cultural Studies. Finally, the "Round Tables" section comprises four round tables on Literature, Music, Film and Cultural Studies.

The contributions included in this volume are a representative and significant sample of the quality of the research being carried out at present in Spanish Universities in the fields of English and American Studies, and are solid evidence that our field is moving beyond the pandemic and is in excellent health.

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