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## BIOPOLITICS IN *THE BRIEF AND FRIGHTENING REIGN OF PHIL*, BY GEORGE SAUNDERS

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*ABSTRACT.* In this article, I analyze George Saunders's novella *The Brief and Frightening Reign of Phil* (2005) from the perspective of biopolitics, following the theoretical frameworks established by Michel Foucault, Giorgio Agamben, and Frédéric Lordon. I focus on two aspects of biopolitics: one linked to the extermination of the enemy, and the other to the manipulation of the passions of the governed. Regarding the first aspect, I discuss the strategies that Phil, the sovereign dictator in the story, uses to kill or displace the Other. In the second aspect, I study the use of desire and affect as biopolitical technologies that contribute to maintaining and reinforcing power. Finally, I examine the critical position of various characters in relation to Phil's biopolitical regime and the political dimension of the novella itself.

*Keywords:* George Saunders, *The Brief and Frightening Reign of Phil*, Biopolitics, Contemporary American Fiction.

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## LA BIOPOLÍTICA EN *THE BRIEF AND FRIGHTENING REIGN OF PHIL*, DE GEORGE SAUNDERS

*RESUMEN.* En este artículo analizo la novela corta de George Saunders *The Brief and Frightening Reign of Phil* (2005) desde la perspectiva de la biopolítica, siguiendo los marcos teóricos establecidos por Michel Foucault, Giorgio Agamben y Frédéric Lordon. Me centro en dos aspectos de la biopolítica: uno de ellos está ligado a la exterminación del enemigo y, el otro, a la manipulación de las pasiones de los sujetos gobernados. En relación con el primer aspecto, examinaré las estrategias que Phil, el dictador del relato, utiliza para matar o desplazar al Otro. En relación con el segundo objetivo, indagaré en el uso del deseo y del afecto como tecnologías biopolíticas que contribuyen a mantener y reforzar el poder. Por último, abordaré la posición crítica de varios personajes vinculados al régimen biopolítico de Phil y la dimensión política de la novela misma.

*Palabras clave:* George Saunders, *The Brief and Frightening Reign of Phil*, biopolítica, ficción norteamericana contemporánea.

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

George Saunders (Amarillo, Texas, 1958) explores various technologies of power in his literary works. These technologies and the resulting sense of alienation constitute one of the major topics of his *oeuvre*<sup>1</sup>. Here I propose interpreting his writing as a literary approach to the multiple ways in which biopolitical power operates in contemporary US society<sup>2</sup>. By presenting in his work “dystopic scenarios that are both deeply unsettling and alarmingly familiar” (Huebert 106), Saunders makes visible the theories of power that Foucault, Agamben, Lordon and others have explored in their writings. The purpose of this article is to analyze the presence and function of biopolitical technologies of power in *The Brief and Frightening Reign of Phil* (2005).

It may seem challenging to justify a biopolitical interpretation of this novella due to various reasons. First, the novella is considered to be “speculative, experimental fiction” (“Kirkus Reviews”) and, hence, some may think, disconnected from factual reality; second, it is a humorous “mind-bending work” (“Kirkus Reviews”) and, therefore, some may believe, should not be taken seriously. Third, Saunders himself has claimed that the main purpose of his fiction is “to provide a wild ride for the

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<sup>1</sup> David Huebert has stated that “biopolitical dystopia” constitutes “a particular mode of Saunders’s fiction” (106).

<sup>2</sup> Clare Hayes-Brady has said that “the wild, dysfunctional corporatism of Saunders’s fictional worlds is simultaneously alien and familiar, the uncanny shadow of contemporary America” (32). By extension, this “uncanny shadow” applies as well to contemporary Western societies.

reader" (Treisman, "George Saunders's Wild Ride"). This could suggest that he is not concerned about the political or moral implications of his work<sup>3</sup>. However, the author himself and critics of his work have disputed these three arguments in multiple texts and interviews.

Regarding the first point mentioned above, it is important to note that Saunders prioritizes truthfulness over realism in fiction. According to him, if a story is true to its own nature, it can actually refer to reality even more effectively than literature that is considered realist from a traditional standpoint. In his essay "The Door to the Truth Might Be Strangeness," on "The Nose" by Nikolai Gogol, Saunders claims exactly this:

"Realism" exploits this fondness of ours for consensus reality. Things happen roughly as they do in the real world; the mode limits itself to what usually happens, to what's physically possible. But a story can also be truthful if it declines consensus reality - if things happen in it that don't and could never happen in the real world. If I assign you to write a story in which the characters are a cellphone, a pair of gloves, and a fallen leaf, chatting away in a wheelbarrow in a suburban driveway, could that story be truthful? Yes. It could be truthful in the way it reacts to itself, in the way it responds to its premise, in the way it proceeds -by how things change within it, the contours of its internal logic, the relationships between its elements. With sufficient care, that wheelbarrow full of things could become an entire system of meaning, saying truthful things about our world, some of which might have been impossible to say via a more conventionally realistic approach. (277)

The argument that Saunders makes about "The Nose" is equally valid for *The Brief and Frightening Reign of Phil*. Non-realist as it is, the "fictive world's psychological physics" (277) of the novella speak openly about the world, about our world<sup>4</sup>. As Hayes-Brady has said, referring to Saunders, "the absurdity and chaos of the more irrealist stories paint the paradoxes of modern life in garish, inescapable brightness, fueled by a desperate desire for correction" (32).

As for the second concern, some critics have described *The Brief and Frightening Reign of Phil* as a work that is "absurdist in tone" and "marked by urgent anger, the satire deep, absurd and furious" (Hayes-Brady 32). However, Saunders thinks that this tone enables the writer to represent reality more accurately. As he explains in an interview, referring to his childhood in Chicago:

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<sup>3</sup> Saunders himself has frequently made apolitical comments, that Kasia Boddy connects with his "avowed Buddhist holism." Saunders has stated, for instance, that "we should try not to think of 'our companies and our government and our media' as hostile environments which oppress and exploit workers and which they must resist [...] but rather, he says, as 'manifestations' of qualities that exist 'within us' all" (10). I think that these apolitical comments are at odds with his literary work.

<sup>4</sup> Dana del George has interpreted the presence of the supernatural in Saunders's work as a result of the postmodern cultural context: "Saunders can write stories that play freely with both science and the supernatural because the consensus reality of his postmodern reader allows it. Postmodernism allows for the unhesitating representation of the supernatural [...] by implementing the law of total fiction" (123).

Some of the funniest things in South Chicago were also the most deeply true - these sort of over-the-line, rude utterances that were right on the money and undeniable. Their truth had rendered them inappropriate; they were not classically shaped, not polite, and they responded to the urgency of the moment. (Sacks)

Then, as Hayes-Brady explains, for Saunders “humor is not only compatible with difficult reality, but integrally connected to it, a medium that allows the expression of truths that are perhaps otherwise inexpressible” (32). It follows from this that it is just natural that satire and humor inform the tone of *The Brief and Frightening Reign of Phil*, as this novella deals with complex issues such as oppression, exploitation, and genocide.

As regards the third concern mentioned above, it is true that Saunders has repeatedly declared that the primary objective of his fiction is to entertain the reader<sup>5</sup>. In an interview with Deborah Treisman, he claimed that his stories are the result of an intuitive creative process, and that their political or moral implications are simply an unintended byproduct of the writing process (“This Week”). However, Saunders still believes that literature has the potential to transform readers, and that they must be altered by the stories they read. Discussing the impact of Kurt Vonnegut’s *oeuvre* on his own work, Saunders suggests that the function of short stories must be precisely to change their audience:

[Before reading Vonnegut,] I’d understood the function of art to be primarily descriptive: a book was a kind of scale model of life, intended to make the reader feel and hear and taste and think just what the writer had. *Now [after reading Vonnegut] I began to understand art as a kind of black box the reader enters. He enters in one state of mind and exits in another [...] What’s important is that something undeniable and non-trivial happens to the reader between entry and exit.* (“Mr. Vonnegut” 78. Italics my own)

The fact that a story has the power to transform its reader, suggests that it has some political potential. Therefore, Saunders acknowledges that his stories are not just for entertainment purposes, but rather they should be meaningful and relevant to the readers’ lives, in addition to any “wacky invention” they may include:

especially with a story like this one [he refers to his short story “Ghoul” (2020)] -a speculative story, built around a comedic, over-the-top premise- I think the reader is always asking, somewhere in the back of her mind, “But what does this have to

---

<sup>5</sup> When discussing his writing process and the impact he tends to have on the reader, Saunders has stated the following: “Another aspect of my approach is simply to allow that my goal is to *compel a reader to keep reading*. And/or to wildly entertain/amaze/outrage/engage the reader. I see myself, very much, as an entertainer. I am trying to entertain you by talking about something important and urgent that we have in common. By the above method, I am trying to *find out*, for that particular story, what that common thing we share is going to be. I don’t know at the outset and try not to know -well, ever. I am trying to design a thrilling roller coaster for you without knowing the exact effect riding it will have on you. My mind is on the thrill. I know that the story will have an effect, and I know where it will” (“Office Hours”).



do with me? With now? With my real life?" As I'm writing, I'm continually asking the same thing -trying to get the story to swerve in a direction that takes it away from being just a wacky invention and toward being a wacky *relevant* invention. (And that imperative might be even more pressing when the real world seems to be falling apart). (Treisman, "George Saunders on Surprising Himself")

It is obvious to me that *The Brief and Frightening Reign of Phil* is not just a "wacky invention," but a "wacky *relevant* invention." The novella offers a privileged insight into the forms of biopolitical power that permeate contemporary Western societies. By this, I mean both its racist and genocidal dimension and the way passions are captured and made productive by political power. The interpretation that follows is a close analysis of how these aspects are portrayed in the story. On the one hand, I explain the genocidal logic that is at play. On the other, I study the ways power seizes the desires and emotions of the governed.

## 2. BIOPOLITICAL POWER

In *Society Must Be Defended*, Michel Foucault explains that the emergence of "biopolitical power" took place in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century. According to him, this is a new "technology of power" focused on the "man-as-species," that is to say on the "population." (242). Therefore, from the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century, Western societies have

two technologies of power which were established at different times and which were superimposed. One technique is disciplinary; it centers on the body, produces individualizing effects, and manipulates the body as a source of forces that have to be rendered both useful and docile. And we also have a second technology which is centered not upon the body but upon life: a technology which brings together the mass effects characteristic of a population, which tries to control the series of random events that can occur in a living mass (249)

This new form of power, then, in Foucault's words, took "control of both the body and life, or [...], if you like, [took] control of life in general -with the body as one pole and the population as the other" (253). If modern power, as we see, is primarily concerned with life, Foucault asks himself how is the right to death (that was an attribute of sovereign power in the Classical period) exercised after the 18<sup>th</sup> Century. He answers that "the emergence of [...] biopower" "inscribes [racism] in the mechanisms of the State" with the result that "the modern State can scarcely function without becoming involved with racism at some point" (254). In modern societies, "killing, or the imperative to kill,"

is acceptable only if it results not in a victory over political adversaries, but in the elimination of the political threat and the improvement of the species or race. There is a direct connection between the two. In a normalizing society, race or racism is the precondition that makes killing acceptable. When you have a normalizing society, you have a power which is, at least superficially, in the first instance, or in the first line a biopower, and racism is the indispensable

precondition that allows someone to be killed, that allows others to be killed. Once the State functions in the biopower mode, racism alone can justify the murderous function of the State. (256)

Giorgio Agamben argues that the implementation of the “state of exception” enables modern biopolitical regimes to enact racism, as examined by Foucault. Agamben thinks that the “state of exception”, that is, “that moment -which is supposed to be provisional- in which the legal order is suspended, has become during the 20th century a permanent and paradigmatic form of government.” (Costa, “Introducción” 5. My translation). In this way, as Flavia Costa explains, the “state of exception”

is actually the original structure that founds -gives origin and foundation to- modern biopolitics: that is, the politics that includes natural life [zoē] within the calculations of state power. By including the living being, as bare life, within the law through its exclusion (to the extent that someone is a citizen, he is no longer a mere living being; but at the same time, to be a citizen he puts his natural life, his bare life, at the disposal of political power), politics becomes biopolitics. And the state of exception, insofar as it creates the legal conditions for power to dispose of citizens as bare lives, is a biopolitical device of the first order. (“Introducción” 7. My translation)

George Saunders has also reflected on biopolitical power and he believes that the “genocidal impulse” is a natural human tendency. He has explored this impulse in his fiction and often refers to two historical moments where the human inclination to reject, enslave or kill the Other had disastrous consequences in real life: Nazi Germany and the Southern United States before the Civil War. For him, the idea of a group of people taking over and abusing others has always been a matter of reflection and concern. As he stated in 2005:

I am interested in this strange time of tranquility in between great genocides that we are currently living in. I try to understand where the genocidal impulse hides itself when there is no actual genocide going on. I actually doubt if humans have radically changed since 1944 and, of course, Bosnia or Rwanda make clear that they have not. I am curious for the US (or British or Spanish) features, now silent, that can reach their heads and make one of these sensible and pacific countries to start a killing. That is to say, I am suspicious that the hate that is necessary to start a genocide is latent and that there could be revealing signals, in the language and in the behaviors, that alert us about their imminence and about their origin. (Saunders qtd. by Rendueles)

Saunders argues that the propensity to discriminate against those who are different is a constant tendency in the United States. This tendency may remain dormant most of the time, but it is always present and could emerge at any moment. According to Saunders, this inclination is manifested by those citizens who are “suspicious” of “the Other” and want to “dominate it, deport it, exploit it, enslave it” or “kill it as needed” (“Who Are All?”). In the following chapter, I explore how this “genocidal impulse” is depicted in the novella.

### 3. PHIL AND THE “GENOCIDAL IMPULSE”

*The Brief and Frightening Reign of Phil* is an account of the rise of a “sovereign dictatorship” led by Phil where the provisional legal order is based on a logic of “association” and “dissociation”<sup>6</sup> (“Carl Schmitt”). This means that citizenship is based on a biopolitical distinction between two groups of people, the Outer Hornerites and the Inner Hornerites. Phil, the dictator in the story, invents the enemy for personal reasons<sup>7</sup>, out of sheer hatred, and transforms the border area into a thanatopolitical space where the only possible fate for the Other -the Inner Hornerites- is to be annihilated.

To justify and legally carry out his actions, Phil calls a state of exception under the name of “Border Area Improvement Initiative.” He determines that the Inner Hornerites represent an external threat that has to be purged to ensure that the Outer Hornerites’ lives and political existence remain appropriate and healthy. The Inner Hornerites represent a social excess that has to be eliminated; at the same time, they are the enemy that allows the Outer Hornerites to form, by contrast, their own identity.

Phil has to convince the Outer Hornerites that the Inner Hornerites are their opponents to make them participate in the genocide. The first strategy that Phil uses is to explain the difference between the Inner Hornerites and the Outer Hornerites as the result of divine will, in a similar logic to that of the US Puritan tradition that conceives earthly rewards as a result of God’s generosity:

I’ve been thinking about our beautiful country! Who gave it to us? I’ve been thinking about how God the Almighty gave us this beautiful sprawling land as a reward for how wonderful we are. We’re big, we’re energetic, we’re generous, which is reflected in all our myths, which are so very populated with large high energy folks who give away all they have! If we have a National Virtue, it is that

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<sup>6</sup> “A sovereign dictator is a dictator who does not defend an already existing constitution but attempts to create a new one and who does so not by his own authority but in the name of the people” (“Carl Schmitt”). Phil, the sovereign dictator in the story, puts aside the previous legal order represented by the old President and creates a “novel positive legal or constitutional order, together with a situation of social normality that fits it” (“Carl Schmitt”). In order to create this new situation of normality, the sovereign dictator assumes that “it is possible to speak of the existence of a people in advance of the creation of any positive constitutional framework” (“Carl Schmitt”). A people can exist before a specific constitutional order because of the nature of the political. As Schmitt says, “the specific political distinction [...] is that between friend and enemy,” and this distinction refers to the “utmost degree of intensity [...] of an association or dissociation”: “the utmost degree of association is the willingness to fight and die for and together with other members of one’s group, and the ultimate degree of dissociation is the willingness to kill others for the simple reason that they are members of a hostile group” (“Carl Schmitt”).

<sup>7</sup> Phil had been in love with and rejected by Carol, one of the Inner Hornerites. Also, Phil’s father had been humiliated by a guard of Inner Horner called Smitty. Nayebpour and Varghaiyan (852) and Hayes-Brady (27) have pointed out Phil’s personal motivation to become a dictator.

we are generous, if we have a National Defect, it is that we are too generous! Is it our fault that these little jerks have such a small crappy land? I think not! God Almighty gave them that small crappy land for reasons of His own. It is not my place to start cross-examining God Almighty, asking why He gave them such a small crappy land, my place is to simply enjoy and protect the big bountiful land God Almighty gave us! (9-10)

Even if the differences between the Inner Hornerites and the Outer Hornerites in body shape and habits are the result of their spatial and social contexts, Phil essentializes them and uses them to justify their racial superiority. As he tells his followers: “Friends, take a look at these losers! If they are as good as us, why do they look so much worse than us? Look how they look! Do they look valorous and noble and huge like us, or do they look sad and weak and puny?” (10). Similarly, when the Outer Horner Militia finds the Inner Hornerites piled one on top of the other to avoid paying taxes, the Militia does not understand that the reaction is a consequence of the difficult situation the Inner Hornerites have been forced into. Instead, they essentialize their behavior and consider them “animals”:

“My God, look at those people,” said Melvin.

“So uncouth,” said Larry.

“Animals,” said Melvin. “How do they live with themselves?”

“I mean, look at us,” said Freeda. “You don’t see us piling on like that.”

“They seem sort of imprisoned by their own dark urges,” said Larry. Everyone looked at Larry, impressed.

“No wonder we treat them so unfairly,” said Melvin, trying to counter Larry.

“Not that we treat them unfairly, Melvin,” said Phil a little sternly.

“Oh, we treat them fairly,” said Melvin. “I’m just saying, you know, think how fairly we’d treat them if they didn’t behave like uncouth animals imprisoned by their dark surges.”

“Urges,” corrected Larry. (36)

Despite the ongoing genocide, Phil blames the Inner Hornerites for the mistreatment they are subject to. Moreover, he thinks they should be grateful for the immense generosity of the Outer Hornerites, who are lending them the tiny “Short-Term Residency Area:”

“You people,” Phil shouted in the stentorian voice, “via shiftlessness and inertia, have forced us, a normally gentle constituency, into the position of extracting water from the recalcitrant stone of your stubbornness, by positing us as aggressors, when in fact we are selflessly lending you precious territory, which years ago was hewed by our ancestors from a hostile forbidding wilderness!” (61)

The goal of Phil and the Outer Horner Militia is to make Inner Horner and the Inner Hornerites completely disappear. When he explains Phase III of the “Border

Area Improvement Initiative” it is clear that he wants to establish a “permanent peace” by eliminating them (107-108). According to this plan, women and kids must perish too, as the biopolitical logic makes invisible any distinctions based on gender or age: the only operative division is that between friends and enemies, between *us* and *them*. This has also been noted by Nayeypour and Varghaiyan, who say that “Phil’s discourse functions based on a fixed, uncompromising duality -a we/they (Outer/Inner) dichotomy- fueled by an ideology of racism” (853). When Phil and his Special Friends are implementing Phase III of the Initiative to destroy Inner Horner, Phil explains it this way:

“All of them, sir?” Jimmy the Special Friend was saying at that very moment. “Even the ladies?”

“Even the kid?” said Vance.

“I do not see any lady or kids!” shouted Phil. “I only see some curvier Inner Hornerites with longer hair, and one smaller Inner Hornerite with two freakish brains! With Inner Hornerites there is no lady, there is no kid, there are only evil, which must be dealt with harsh, before it spread [sic]! Hurry, boys! Seize all remaining national asset, lift said national asses out from the Peace-Encouraging Enclosure plonto [sic]!” (117)

Phil uses medical vocabulary to refer to the enemy, who is considered to be an infection. The “evil” that the Inner Hornerites represent must be “dealt with” “before it spread [sic].” In another intervention, Phil claims that he wants to keep out from Outer Horner the democratic habits of the Inner Hornerites to avoid the possibility of a contagion. Phil’s discourse frequently involves racism and eugenics because he uses them to justify his genocidal agenda. To the citizens of Outer Horner, it seems completely natural that to keep their population safe and healthy the Other must be eradicated. The use of health vocabulary in Phil’s speeches and the consideration of the Inner Hornerites as animals represent that moment in modern biopolitics, when, as in Nazi Germany, “the care of health [of the body, of the nation] and the fight against the enemy become absolutely indistinguishable” (Agamben, *Homo Sacer* 85).

From what I have explained, it is evident that Phil’s rule is based on a biopolitical distinction according to which the lives of the Outer Hornerites are worth living *because* those of the Inner Hornerites must be eliminated. This discrimination is thanatopolitical because the self-perception of the Outer Hornerites is determined by the qualities and character of the opposite group and because the annihilation of the enemy and its habits is a matter of national survival. As Foucault explained in relation to modern biopolitical regimes: “the death of the other, the death of the bad race, of the inferior race (or the degenerate, or the abnormal), is something that will make life in general healthier: healthier and purer” (255).

#### 4. THE DESTRUCTION OF THE BODIES

In his book *Discipline and Punish*, Michel Foucault highlighted the centrality of the body in contemporary punitive systems:

we can surely accept the general proposition that, in our societies, the systems of punishment are to be situated in a certain 'political economy' of the body: even if they do not make use of violent or bloody punishment, even when they use 'lenient' methods involving confinement or correction, it is always the body that is at issue -the body and its forces, their utility and their docility, their distribution and their submission. (25)

For this reason, he proposed to analyze the body, the imprisoned body, as a “microphysics of power” and to consider “penal practices less as a consequence of legal theories than as a chapter of political anatomy” (*Discipline* 28). In the context of modern biopolitics, the body is the preferred place for power to exert its force and therefore a privileged space to understand its logic.

The abuse and subjection of the human body are present in many of Saunders's short stories. As David Huebert has explained “George Saunders's fiction finds astonishing ways to manipulate and subdue the human body”: “These spectacles of physiological confinement, coupled with Saunders's recurring interest in prosthetics and physical deformity, present a consistently unsettling vision of the human and its persistently pathological relationship to the synthetic environments in which it is housed” (105). Huebert specifically refers to “Escape from Spiderhead”, “My Flamboyant Grandson” and “The Semplica Girls Diaries,” but the presence of the body in *The Brief and Frightening Reign of Phil* must also be underscored and analyzed.

In this novella, the destruction of the bodies of the Inner Hornerites and of “dissidents” like Freeda is Phil's preferred method to discipline and punish the governed. The fact that in Outer Horner people are killed by dismantling their bodies has to do with the continuity between body and bare life that is constitutive of modern biopolitical power. According to Agamben, the first register of bare life in the constitution of the modern political subject is implicit in the *Writ* of the *Habeas Corpus* (1679):

[The new subject of politics] is not the free man and his statutes and prerogatives, nor even simply *homo*, but rather *corpus* [...]. And democracy is born precisely as the assertion and presentation of this “body”: *habeas corpus ad subjiciendum*, “you will have to have a body to show.” (Agamben, *Homo Sacer* 73)

From then onwards, the body becomes the foundation of the political, and the material that the sovereign will have to shape through biopolitical technologies of power. The fact that the bodies of the populations presented in the story are artificial and constructed with different pieces points precisely at the biopolitical control of the body that is part of political modernity. In the novella, the disassembling of the bodies represents the destruction of bare life and its political potential.

This conception of the body is evident, for example, when Phil proposes to the Inner Hornerites to sell to him a member of their group, Carol, for twelve “smolokas” –an amount that would make up for three days’ taxes. As a response to this proposal, Cal (Carol’s husband) crosses the border and hits Phil. Cal asks the other Inner Hornerites to start a violent revolt, but his compatriots do not move because they are fearful of Phil’s Special Friends. Cal’s body parts are disassembled by the Outer Hornerites “for the good of the nation, in the interest of preventing further violence” (63). Phil then asks Leon, the guard, “to incarcerate the various parts of Cal at several discrete locations across the length and breadth of Outer Horner, in the interest of national security” (64) but Cal’s blue dot, the upper part of his body, is made visible to the remaining Inner Hornerites as a way to discipline them: “as per Phil, [Cal’s blue dot] was placed in a glass case a few hundred feet from Inner Horner, as a warning and a reminder to the other Inner Hornerites, who all night long, from the Short-Term Residency Zone, watched the sad blue dot that had formerly been Cal’s torso expand and contract, as if hyperventilating, or sobbing” (64). Also, Freeda, one of the members of the Outer Horner Militia, has her body disassembled to prevent further disloyalties to Phil or to his initiative at the border. She is taken to pieces precisely because she is “not sure” about Phil’s plan to make Inner Horner disappear. Phil interprets that Freeda is being “Disloyal” (108) to the “Certificate of Total Approval” (88) that she had previously signed and her body is disassembled to discourage any betrayals and to prevent the *spread* of any democratic tendencies in Outer Horner:

“What a sad thing, that Freeda should prove to be a traitor!” Phil said. “Well, let this be a lesson to all! *A lesson that the disgusting traits that make those Inner Hornerites so disgusting, such as Disloyalty, such as undermining one’s leaders via constant questioning, can even take root in us Outer Hornerites. I wouldn’t be surprised if some of us didn’t start getting smaller and doing mathematical proofs. We’ll have to watch for that. We’ll have to be vigilant.* Jimmy, Vance, please help Freeda remind us to be vigilant, by constructing an attractive yet sobering display of the components of Freeda, so people can witness Freeda’s components, and thus learn from them! What a wonderful thing for Freeda, to be so very educational! In this way, her life will not have been a total waste!” (110. Italics my own)

Before having her body disassembled, Freeda has a dream that involves the body of her daughter. This dream reveals her fears about what is going on in the Border Area. In it, Freeda is a dog and her daughter, Gertrude, is a tall vase that Phil holds looking for flaws until he shatters it:

“Put her down, put her down,” Freeda barked at him. “Why do you want to be so bad?”

“I am not bad,” said Phil. “I am totally good. What I do, benefits all.”

*Then Phil found a flaw and threw Gertrude against the wall, breaking her into a thousand pieces.*

Freeda woke and rushed to Gertrude’s room. Relieved to find that Gertrude was not a broken vase and that her pink shelving was still intact, she gave Gertrude a kiss on the middle of her three rosy cheeks. (68. Italics my own)

As we see, the destruction of Gertrude's body in Freeda's dream is a consequence of an imperfection found by Phil. It is clear then that Phil's destruction of the bodies refers to the racist logic that, according to Foucault, is characteristic of modern biopolitical power. As Phil says in the passage just quoted: "I am totally good. What I do, *benefits all*" (68. Italics my own). The bodies of Cal and Freeda were destroyed so that their political attitudes could not "take root" or "infect" the Outer Hornerites in any possible way. The eugenic logic of Phil's dictatorial state justifies the killings to remove any excesses that could menace the health and security of the nation. In the totalitarian regime led by Phil, the perfect body is the equivalent of the perfect nation, and any physical or political deviation must be removed. This is why in his inaugural speech as President of Outer Horner, Phil defines the Outer Hornerites by saying that "everything about us is as it should be" (86). Phil's destruction of his enemies' bodies represents the annihilation of bare life, which Agamben considers to be the condition of the political. This annihilation is a consequence of Phil's efforts to keep the "beautiful animal"<sup>8</sup> (Rancière, "Le malentendu" 51. My translation) of the political order in agreement with itself.

## 5. DESIRE AND AFFECT AS BIOPOLITICAL TECHNOLOGIES

In *Willing Slaves of Capital*, Frédéric Lordon analyzes the role of affect and desire as technologies of power to achieve consent in contemporary societies. Lordon studies how the dominant subjects today -notably business owners but also masters in general- manage to align the desires of the employees and subordinates with their desires. Following Spinoza, Lordon argues that

human essence, which is the power of activity –but generic and, as such, intransitive, a pure force of desire but as yet aimless– only becomes a directed activity due to the effect of a prior affection –something that happens to it and modifies it. It is the affection that points the desire in a particular direction and gives it an object for its concrete exertion. From this follows a radical reversal of the ordinary understanding of desire as the pull of a preexisting, desirable object. It is rather the push of the conatus that invests things and institutes them as objects of desire. And these investments are entirely determined by the interplay of affects. (14-15)

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<sup>8</sup> According to Rancière, both politics and aesthetics imply a certain "distribution of the sensitive [*partage du sensible*]" because they both intervene in the "distribution and redistribution of spaces and times, of places and identities, of words and of noise, of what is visible and what is invisible" ("Politique" 12. My translation). Based on this notion, Rancière explains that, in the French Classical period, the perfect political order was conceived as "a beautiful animal, constituted as a harmony between members and functions in an organic totality" ("Le malentendu" 51. My translation). As he says: "This model of the beautiful animal is also a paradigm of proportion between bodies and significations, a paradigm of correspondence and saturation: there must not exist in the community bodies in excess, bodies that circulate in excess of the real bodies; there must not be floating and supernumerary names, susceptible of constructing new fictions capable of dividing the whole or of unmaking its form and its fictionality" ("Le malentendu" 51. My translation).



This implies that individual subjects are not in control of themselves or of their own will. On the contrary, they are alienated because “the real chains are those of our affects and desires,” and these are generated externally (Lordon 17). Neoliberal corporations and other institutions hold that the gap between the desire of the master and that of his or her subjects is always too large. For this reason, they try to achieve the maximum possible alignment between the desires of the subordinate and those of the master. Following a logic that can be considered totalitarian, corporations and other institutions do this by totally mobilizing individuals to their service. This opens the possibility for the “unlimited commitment” of the subjects who are pushed “to enter a regime of *total vocation*” (Lordon 38).

Phil, the dictator of Outer Horner, manages the affects and the desires of the governed subjects to align them with his goals. In one of his speeches to the Inner Hornerites, Phil explains that he and his people will achieve political control through war and love: “But shoulder that musket we must, that musket of subduing you, and this we will, using our usual indomitable methodology and excellent creativity and spirit of love” (61). Therefore, at the same time that he exterminates the Inner Hornerites, Phil gains adeptness to his totalitarian regime by manipulating the passions of his population.

In the story, Phil uses language as a means of manipulating the Outer Hornerites and maintaining his power over them. Phil utilizes languages to enact his biopolitical agenda and to secure the support and compliance of those he governs. Saunders follows a Foucauldian concept of discourse, which suggests that the language used by subjects conforms to a pre-existing “order of things,” determined by power. Foucault thinks that “in every society the production of discourse is at once controlled, selected, organized and redistributed according to a certain number of procedures, whose role is to avert its powers and its dangers, to cope with chance events, to evade its ponderous, awesome materiality” (Foucault, *Archaeology* 216). In many of his short stories, George Saunders’s presents language as an ideological prison that reflects how power has become embedded in the identity of the characters, shaping it from within and leaving no possible exit. This is precisely what Hayes-Brady has noted in regard to Saunders’s conception of language:

The ironic quasi-metafictional devices with which Saunders peppers his voices move away from being an artistic commentary, *becoming a socio-political analysis of how language and linguistic control liberates and restricts society*. [...] By immersing the reader in the protagonists’ restricted or incomplete vocabulary, by highlighting its absurdity, the reader is necessarily attuned to the absurdity of the struggle for linguistic independence, and by extension the struggle for independence from the commercial and political forces that govern and prescribe available vocabularies. (37. Italics my own)

In the same way, Saunders thinks that there is a correlation between the use of language, quality of thought, and high political standards—a view that he shares with George Orwell. In “Politics and the English Language” (1946) the British writer explained that “modern English, especially written English, is full of bad habits. [...] If

one gets rid of these habits one can think more clearly, and to think clearly is a necessary first step towards political regeneration" (3). For Saunders too, language has the power to found reality. As he explains in "The Braindead Megaphone," "we consider speech to be the result of thought (we have a thought, then select a sentence with which to express it), but thought also results from speech (as we grope, in words, towards meaning, we discover what we think)" (4). And he thinks that political and moral problems result from an inappropriate use of language. Therefore, the solution to these problems can be linguistically induced: "The world, I started to see, was a different world, depending on what you said about it, and how you said it. By honing the sentences you used to describe the world, you changed the inflection of your mind, which changed your perceptions" ("Esther Forbes" 62).

Considering Saunders's belief in the precedence of language over thought, it is no surprise that Phil's control of Outer Horner comes with a corrupt and untruthful language that he uses to manipulate his followers. As Hayes-Brady says, Phil "alters the political landscape of the imaginary Horner by manipulating the vocabulary of the other inhabitants" (25). Phil's words do not aim to represent the truth of a given situation. Instead, the situation is presented in such a way as to serve his political interests and strengthen his totalitarian regime. This is clear, for example, when Phil describes the fall of a pile of Inner Hornerites inside Outer Horner as an "Invasion." This fall could never constitute an invasion as the Inner Hornerites were unarmed and they only happened to be inside Outer Horner because the tower to escape from taxation had collapsed (37). Even though this is clear to Phil, he calls it an "Invasion" and names the day when it happened "Dark Dark Thursday" to manipulate the emotions of his acolytes. Similarly, the next day (when the Outer Hornerites had to collect the overdue taxes from Inner Horner) is called the "Memorable Friday of Total Triumphant Retribution" by Phil (54).

In the story, Phil employs language numerous times to alter reality to his advantage. One such instance is his assault on the Inner Hornerites, which he portrays as an act of kindness, thus reversing the actuality of the situation. When Cal attacks him, Phil tells him that the Outer Hornerites should not be considered aggressors "when in fact we [the Outer Hornerites] are selflessly lending you [the Inner Hornerites] precious territory" (61). In the same way, when Phil is called to talk to the President about the fact that he disassembled Cal and scattered his severed parts throughout the country, his words -in a fragment that qualifies for the type of rhetoric despised by Orwell in the essay cited above- do not reveal, but hide the truth:

"Yes, Mr. President," said Phil. "You called me here for a report on the situation at the border. And I'm happy to report that I was recently able to gracefully quell a disturbing outbreak of violence at the border by enacting certain physical rearrangements designed to prevent further outbreaks of violence, thus rendering the instigator of the violence incapable of instigating further violence, via separating the instigator's component parts and relocating them in discrete physical locations." (74)

Phase I of the “Border Area Improvement Initiative” (88) consists of building a fence around the “Short-Term Residency Area”. However, instead of using the words “fence” or “cage,” Phil invents the term “Peace-Encouraging Enclosure” (102). The dialogue that follows is characteristic of Phil’s linguistic manipulation:

“What, we’re in jail?” said Elmer.

“You’re putting us in jail now?” said Wanda.

“How typical of the Inner Horner mindset!” said Phil. “To be unable to distinguish a jail from a Peace-Encouraging Enclosure. Safe inside the Peace-Encouraging Enclosure, you will be protected from your innate violent tendencies, and we will be protected from you. It is a real win/win.” (102)

The manipulation of language is evident whenever the author capitalizes words that should normally be written in small letters. The capitals mark that the term contains a certain ideological nuance, for example: “Border Area,” “Peace-Encouraging Enclosure,” “Special Friends,” “Outer Horner Militia,” “Expeditionary Force,” “Invasion in Progress,” “Outer Horner Border Guard,” etc. The capitalization of words -which is ultimately decided by the author himself (and not by the character)- indicates that they have been shaped by power and that they carry an ideological weight that exceeds their ordinary meaning. The author marks these terms with a capital letter as an indication that they represent the language of power and that Phil uses them to pursue his agenda. As Kasia Boddy explained, these terms constitute a sort of “euphemism” that, on the one hand, “provide an endlessly rich vein for satirical mining” (2), but, on the other, show how language is an effect of power and ideology<sup>9</sup>.

Apart from the calculated use of language, Phil specifically targets the emotions and desires of his followers to make sure that they remain aligned with his own goals. Phil praises his acolytes and makes them feel important as long as they act as he wants, as we see in this example:

Next morning, Phil and the Outer Horner Militia (Freeda, Melvin, and Larry) arrived at the border before dawn and stood watching the Inner Hornerites sleep while standing up.

“Snooze, snooze, snooze,” said Phil. “Sort of lazy, aren’t they?”

“Whereas us,” said Larry, “we’re up before dawn, diligently working.”

“That’s right Larry,” said Phil. “Good observation.”

“Doing our diligent work of collecting taxes,” said Melvin.

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<sup>9</sup> Referring to the short-story “Pastoralia,” Hayes-Brady has explained that “the capitalization of the terms situates them in a corporate discourse, reflecting the emphatic capitalization of marketing languages, and, along with the recurrence of the phrase, suggests that it is a corporate mantra of sorts, used to manage employee behaviors. The same repetition of mantra-like language is visible everywhere in Saunders’s work” (31).

“Super, Melvin,” said Phil. “We really are a diligent people.”

“Diligently collecting taxes to protect the security of our nation,” said Freeda.

“You know what?” said Phil. “After spending some time with you folks, I am tempted, in terms of our most important National Virtue, to replace ‘Generosity’ with ‘Remarkable Intelligence.’”

Larry, Melvin, and Freeda beamed. (12-13)

Phil’s “Special Friends”, Jimmy and Vance, are manipulated similarly. However, in this case, the manipulation is requested by the workers themselves in an attitude that directly points to the “neoliberal quest for full alignment” explained by Lordon (51). When the “Special Friends” start to work for Phil, he agrees to pay them one “smoloka” per day. This makes them very happy, but, before signing the contract, Vance has an additional request:

“Vance, jeez!” whispered Jimmy. “Don’t get all demanding! You’ll screw it up!”

“Jimmy, don’t worry, I know what I’m doing,” said Vance. “What I want, sir, to, uh, request, additionally? *Is that, every now and then, you say something nice about us. If that’s not too much. Like you could say something about how much potential we have, or how obedient we are, it doesn’t even need to be true. Just something nice to us every day.*”

“We didn’t get much of that at home,” said Jimmy. “Mostly it was just, you know, Jimmy you jerk, how did you get so dumb? That sort of thing.” [...]

“I’ll tell you what,” said Phil. “Every day, in addition to your smoloka, I’ll say something nice about each of you.” (50. Italics my own)

The “Special Friends” want to be praised and feel valued for their work, and the psychological reward is far more important to them than the monetary incentive. This emotional recompense has to do with the will of the subordinates to make their master happy. As Lordon explains, in today’s society employees no longer work only for a salary but, among other things, “to be identified by the master as the cause of his or her joy, so that the master will love [him or her]” (71). Later on in the story, when Phil’s “Inaugural Party” takes place, the Special Friends are sitting in a corner “wearing headphones, listening to personalized Tapes of Praise, made for them by Phil”:

“Oh jeez,” said Jimmy, too loudly. “He just said I have great biceps!”

“He just said, about me?” said Vance, also too loudly. “That he loves the focused look I get on my face when following an order.”

“He likes the way my lats flare when I pick someone up!” shouted Jimmy.

“I work well with others!” shouted Vance.

“There’s a deep intelligence in me that others rarely see!” shouted Jimmy. (85-86)

This attitude is related to the “commercialization of human feeling,” a motif that, according to Kasia Boddy, Saunders’s stories explore in a variety of ways: “most directly, in stories set in theme parks, where employees are required to dress up and perform roles, but also in businesses that offer carefully edited experiences and feelings [...]. Those who work in these places have strict ‘feeling rules’ to follow for it is ‘negative’ attitudes (rather than low productivity) that threaten their jobs” (5). In the case of the Special Friends, this “commercialization of feeling” appears in a sarcastic and inverted way, as it is the employees themselves who demand love and praise as a reward for their attitude at work.

In regards to the political manipulation of affect, I must also allude here to the exercise of biopolitical power in the nation of Greater Keller, whose “Expeditionary Force” liberates the Inner Hornerites from the genocidal project led by Phil. Greater Keller “ran like a six-inch-wide circular strip of ribbon around Outer Horner,” and, because the country “was so thin it was almost nonexistent, it was rarely visited much less invaded, and was therefore very prosperous” (95). The nine citizens that form the nation of Greater Keller have their power relations, their body shapes and their habits determined by the particular spatial configuration of their country:

The nine Greater Kellerites spent their days walking behind their President single-file, carefully placing one foot in front of the other, happy and cordial, engaged in endless energetic conversation about the appearance of the portion of Outer Horner they happened to be walking around, the nuances of the cup of coffee they were currently enjoying, and/or the enjoyable impression being made on them by the way the person in front of them looked when viewed from behind. (95)

In a physical disposition that represents a perfect alignment between government and the governed, the Greater Kellerites are numbered from one to nine, with President Rick, the First Lady, and the First Daughter taking the first three positions in the hierarchy of the country and in the walking line. President Rick and the rest of the Greater Kellerites give huge importance to the well-being of the nation and make “enjoyment” their main political goal. In this way, Greater Keller represents a “society of mass hedonism and consumerism” that is, together with totalitarianism, the main form that biopolitical power took in the 20th Century (Agamben, *Homo Sacer* 13).

The importance given to enjoyment in the nation’s life explains why Cliff, the “National Enjoyment Assessor,” is the fourth person in the country’s hierarchy. He is in charge of the “National Life Enjoyment Index Score” (114), a score from 0 to 10 that determines at any given moment the level of enjoyment of the nation and helps President Rick make his political decisions. The main habits of the Greater Kellerites -conversing and drinking coffee- have to do with the biopolitical need to keep this level as high as possible. When Dale, Citizen #9, reports to the group what is going on in the “Border Area” under Phil’s command, the “National Life Enjoyment Index Score” in Greater Keller drops to 3 out of 10 because of the anxiety produced by the situation in Outer Horner. President Rick then sends an “Expeditionary Force” (114) to save the Inner Hornerites from extinction, but also, and maybe more importantly, to increase the “National Enjoyment Level” of his population.

When the “Expeditionary Force” of Greater Keller arrives at the Border Area, Phil’s Special Friends, who “had never in their lives seen anyone bigger than themselves” (118), suddenly feel nostalgic for their previous job and abandon Phil. After Phil’s death, President Rick frees the people of Inner Horner from the cage (the “Peace-Encouraging Enclosure”) because, as he says, “that doesn’t look very Enjoyable” (120), and gives this advice to the population he had just liberated: “Our advice, to all of you people, is Enjoy!” said President Rick. “Life is full of beauty. Why fight? Why hate? Learn to Enjoy, and you will have no need to fight, and no desire to! Love life, walk in a circle, learn to enjoy coffee! Will you do that? Will you promise to try that?” (120). As a consequence of the liberation of Inner Horner, the “National Enjoyment Level” of Greater Keller reaches 9.8 out of 10, “due to their pride in their recent heroism and their anticipation of the many days of Enjoyable storytelling that lay ahead” (121).

Throughout the novella, Saunders highlights how political control is achieved by manipulating the emotions and desires of the governed. The story portrays language, especially the language of power, as a tool that shapes social reality. As a result, it becomes a significant instrument of biopolitical governance, alongside violence. Phil alters the meaning of words to enforce his agenda and to achieve the alignment of his followers. In addition, he praises his supporters to cultivate loyalty, manipulating their emotions to ensure their allegiance to his regime. In the nation of Greater Keller enjoyment is the technology of power that allows President Rick to achieve the perfect alignment of his subjects. It is through enjoyment that the desires of the citizens perfectly correspond to those of the ruling family. The “National Enjoyment Level” serves as the index to gauge the political approval of the population and minimize the chances of dissent or rebellion. As discussed above, Phil uses fear and terror to consolidate his rule. He punishes even the slightest hint of disloyalty or rebellion with the destruction and display of bodies. Phil hates his enemies and seeks to annihilate them using racist and eugenic measures. This terrorizes the Inner Hornerites and Phil’s followers, thereby reinforcing his power.

## 6. JUSTICE BEYOND BIOPOLITICS?

The totalitarian regime presented in the story is implemented through fear and love. As explained above, physical violence -the Outer Horner Militia, and the Special Friends- plays a significant role in the consolidation of Phil’s rule. The threat of assassination is ultimately what makes the Outer Hornerites and the Inner Hornerites obey the dictator. It should come as no surprise then that the liberation from Phil’s oppression is a result of violence. It is after being hit by an object thrown from Inner Horner that Phil starts to lose his linguistic ability and, therefore, his power, until he dies<sup>10</sup>. In addition to that, the arrival of the “Expeditionary Force” to

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<sup>10</sup> Clare Hayes-Brady has noted this about the relationship between language and power in Phil’s leadership: “the political heft of language [...] is a way for Phil to cope with his embittered personal circumstances and to deflect attention from his ugliness and rejection

the Border Area scares Phil's Special Friends, who abandon Phil and allow the Greater Kellerites to liberate the Inner Hornerites from oppression.

Before Phil's downfall, some Inner Hornerites unsuccessfully revolted against his abuses. They engaged in democratic discussions, but were unable to protect themselves. When the Outer Horner Militia removed the apple tree, the stream and the dirt, the Inner Hornerites held "a whispered frantic national referendum" (17), but they were incapable of agreeing on what the "primary issue" (18) was, or on where they should start the debate. Their respect for each other and their democratic conventions results to be impractical and, ultimately, negative for themselves. For this reason, at some point, Curtis proposes to act: "I say enough talking," said Curtis. "I say it's time we *did* something" (20). Their first solution is to send a letter to the President of Outer Horner asking him to discuss with them the unfair taxation system that Phil has imposed upon them. This peaceful solution does not work out well as the President ends up validating Phil's actions and appointing him as "Special Border Activities Coordinator" (32). Later on in the story, when the clothes of the Inner Hornerites are removed by Phil's unfair taxation system, Curtis again proposes to act and to resist: "Oh, this is crazy," Curtis said. "How long are we going to take this? We've got to *do* something. We've got to start resisting" (57). However, when Cal is about to be disassembled and asks his compatriots to join him in the fight against the Outer Hornerites, they do not dare to do so as they are afraid of Phil's Special Friends. After Cal is disassembled, all the Inner Hornerites feel guilty, and Curtis justifies his cowardice by claiming that he was not advocating for actual violent resistance but only for "conversational resistance" (100). Here Saunders seems to criticize democratic forms of deliberation when they lead to weakness and inaction. He seems to acknowledge that only words and good intentions are not enough to fight a totalitarian regime that is ultimately enforced through violence. It seems then that violence is the only possible way to fight back against the abuses of power. Phil's regime only falls when he is hit by an object thrown from Inner Horner. The blow in the back of Phil's head leads to the loss of his linguistic ability and later on to his death. Thereby, the story makes evident the strong relationship between language and power, as Phil's political clout is coextensive to his control of discourse. This is how the text presents this moment:

A great high-pitched wailing now sounded from Inner Horner. It may have been this that caused Phil's rack to spasm. Oh shoot, wow, Phil thought, that really hurts. He had only got this same spasming sensational [sic] once before in his life, and that had been the worse, due to, just after that, his speech would began suffering. Darn, Phil thought. It are [sic] happening now, somewhat slight [sic]. He'd better hurry, get this Phase III wropped [sic] up, so he could go homer and find that stupid brawn, and remont [sic] it (111)

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[...]. This connection of the personal and the political resonates throughout Saunders's work, and Phil's final fall from grace further strengthens the link, turning him into a pitiable figure [...]. Phil's demise, interestingly, is linguistically figured, with his indirect monologue descending into nonsense in the absence of his brain" (28).

In *Outer Horner*, all the characters are blind followers of Phil except for Freeda. She is kind and empathizes with the Inner Hornerites. For this reason, she keeps a distance from Phil's actions and is ultimately accused of disloyalty and disassembled. When Cal's body is broken up, Freeda is deeply concerned, and she writes a letter to the President of Outer Horner denouncing Phil's criminal practices. In doing so, she acknowledges the radical equality of the Outer Hornerites and the Inner Hornerites, even at the price of putting her own life at risk. This means that she firmly rejects the distinction between political existence and bare life that is imposed by the sovereign dictator. In doing so, Freeda represents "kindness" in the story, a virtue that Saunders encourages even in "the worst environments"<sup>11</sup> (Boddy 9). Freeda's in-betweenness represents a path to revolutionary politics that is explained by Flavia Costa (regarding Agamben) in these terms:

In general, in our culture, the human being has always been thought of as the articulation and conjunction of two opposed principles: soul and body, language and life, and in this case a political element and a living element. On the contrary, we must learn to think of the human being as that which results from the disconnection of these two elements and to research not the metaphysical mystery of conjunction, but the practical and political mystery of the separation. ("Entrevista" 18. My translation)

According to Agamben, modern biopolitics constructs political subjects from bare life, *bios* from *zoé*. Political emancipation should come then from the disconnection of these two sides of biopolitical power. Recognizing the equality of Outer Hornerites and Inner Hornerites implies the suppression of the biopolitical bond and is a way to achieve actual justice, which, as Alain Badiou explains, "means examining any situation from the point of view of an egalitarian norm vindicated as universal" (20).

Apart from the political dimension of these characters (Cal and Freeda), the novella proposes the intervention of the "Creator" (123) as a way to overcome the biopolitical distinction between Outer Hornerites and Inner Hornerites. The massive hands of the Creator appear above the Border Area to stop the fighting and they create a new people out of the parts of the old inhabitants. The Creator is a kind of supernatural deity (different from the "God Almighty" that Phil refers to throughout the story) with the capacity to disassemble and assemble the bodies of the subjects and to form a new society:

The Outer Hornerites and Inner Hornerites had all thought about the Creator, and talked about the Creator, and some of them had even prayed to the Creator, but none of them had ever dreamed the Creator was so big. The fighting stopped, the

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<sup>11</sup> Saunders's commencement address at Syracuse University in 2013 was on the topic of kindness. It was published as *Congratulations, by the Way: Some Thoughts on Kindness* (2014). Kasia Boddy has noted: "For Saunders, being kind is both a personal and a political imperative, but, most importantly, [...] it is something that requires work: 'go after these things,' he urged graduates" (8).



dust cloud settled, the nations of Inner and Outer Horner stared up, wide-eyed and open-mouthed. Then a second hand descended, with a vegetable garden running across the wrist, and two mechanical fingers, and a frozen lake in its palm, holding a spray can, and the Creator's left hand sprayed the Border Area, and the Outer and Inner Hornerites fell instantly asleep. The two hands, working together, gently disassembled the Outer Hornerites. Then they gently disassembled the Inner Hornerites. Using the Inner and Outer Horner parts, they rapidly constructed fifteen entirely new little people. (123-124)

As we see, the Creator seems to be a sort of social engineer (or surgeon) who puts the old society asleep with a spray and “gently” forms the bodies of the new subjects. The intervention of the Creator and the fact that the subjects’ bodies in the novella are artificial seem to imply that there is no natural existence, but only a biopolitical one, mediated or constructed by power –in this case, divine power. By constructing the new subjects, the Creator aims to found a universal subject and a perfect society. However, these efforts do not succeed, as the tendency “to turn our enemies into objects” (Saunders, qtd. by Nayebpour and Varghaiyan 848) is soon going to reappear in New Horner.

The only part that the Creator does not use to form the New Hornerites is Phil's brain, which ends up eaten by fish, and Phil's body, which is mounted on a black platform with a plaque on it that reads “PHIL MONSTER” (126). The exhibition of Phil's body refers again to the centrality of the body in modern biopolitical regimes, as explained by Foucault and Agamben. Phil's torso becomes the bare life of the new world created by the Creator, that is to say, an excess (and a threat) that founds the life of the city through its same exclusion:

As the months went by, the New Hornerites took to avoiding The Phil. Although nobody could exactly say why, The Phil gave them the creeps. Soon the path bowed out around it, weeds overtook it, and all that could be seen of The Phil was the tip of Phil's rack, which stuck out of the weeds like a bad flagpole. Animals burrowed in The Phil, birds nested there, balls accumulated there because the New Horner kids were too scared to retrieve them. And that is where Phil is today: hidden in a thicket of weeds, not loved, not hated, just forgotten, rusting/rotting, with even the sign that proclaims his name fading away. (129)

Once the New Hornerites are created, the massive hands of the Creator lift the new people and convey to them a message of love and peace:

Then the massive hands lifted the new people up to a pair of giant indescribable lips and whispered, in a fundamentally untranslatable Creator-language, something that meant, approximately: THIS TIME, BE KIND TO ONE ANOTHER. REMEMBER: EACH OF YOU WANTS TO BE HAPPY. AND I WANT YOU TO. EACH OF YOU WANTS TO LIVE FREE FROM FEAR. AND I WANT YOU TO. EACH OF YOU ARE SECRETLY AFRAID YOU ARE NOT GOOD ENOUGH. BUT YOU ARE, TRUST ME, YOU ARE. (127)

In this message, the Creator is answering these very significant questions: “what becomes of the law after its messianic fulfillment?” or “what becomes of the law in a society without classes?” (Agamben, “State” 63). With the mandate to be kind, to be happy, to be free, and to love oneself, the Creator in the story proposes, like Walter Benjamin, a kind of justice “in which the world appears as a good that absolutely cannot be appropriated or made juridical” (qtd. by Agamben, “State” 64). Therefore, the path to justice proposed in the story does not imply the cancellation of the law, but a new use of it based on “its deactivation and inactivity” (Agamben, “State” 64).

Once the Creator delivers his message, the hands remove the strings that marked the Border Area and the “Peace-Enforcement Enclosure” and plant a sign that reads: “Welcome to New Horner” (127). Along with a new understanding of the law, the unification of the bodies of the Inner Hornerites and the Outer Hornerites conducted by the Creator aims to create a utopian society beyond biopolitical power. Referring to *The Brief and Frightening Reign of Phil*, Kasia Boddy has explained how “working together with one’s neighbors is Saunders’s happy ending, [...] a counter to the human tendency to continually divide the world into dualities” (10). However, the ending of the story is not as happy as Boddy assumes, because the equality among the New Hornerites and the overcoming of biopolitical distinctions can only be temporary<sup>12</sup>.

Phil’s body constitutes now the political excess that founds the new nation, and this excess allows the New Hornerites to be united and live in peace. When the New Hornerites wake up, they find Phil’s platform and comment on its meaning:

On the way to a nearby apple tree, they passed a hulking black mess on a platform.

“What is that thing?” said Gil.

“It’s a Phil,” said Clive.

“What is a Phil?” said Sally.

“A monster,” said Leona.

“Apparently,” said Fritz.

“Or maybe Monster was his last name?” said Gil.

“You know: Phil Monster. Like: Hi, I’m Phil Monster? It’s not entirely clear from the syntax.”

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<sup>12</sup> In his essay “The New Mecca,” George Saunders reflects, ironically, on the benefits of globalization and of the mixing of races and cultures that comes with it: “in my tube at Wild Wadi [a waterpark in Dubai], I have a mini-epiphany: given enough time, I realize, statistically, despite what it may look like at any given moment, we will all be brothers. All differences will be bred out. There will be no pure Arab, no pure Jew, no pure American American [sic]. The old dividers -nation, race, religion- will be overpowered by crossbreeding and by our mass media, our world Culture o’ Enjoyment. Look what happened here: hatred and tension where defused by Sudden Fun.” (28)

“Whatever,” said Sally. “Let’s go eat.”

Leona looked at Gil. *Syntax*? What the heck kind of word was that? What was Gil, some kind of bigshot? She hated big-shots, she suddenly realized. She’d have to watch Gil. She’d talk to Sally about it. Sally didn’t seem like a big-shot. Sally seemed sensible and moral and down to earth. Sally, like Leona, was compressed and ball-shaped, unlike the freakishly elongated Gil. (128)

This minor disagreement marks a distinction between friends and enemies as it divides Leona and Sally from Gil, based on differences in body shape and language use. In the paragraph that marks the end of the story, the narrator explains that Leona has started to visit Phil’s platform and that she dreams of a new world only populated by people like her:

Except sometimes Leona comes to visit. She does not find The Phil monstrous, but strangely beautiful, and sometimes sits in the thicket for hours, dreaming, for reasons she can’t quite explain, of a better world, run by humble, compressed, ball-shaped people, like her and Sally, who speak, when they speak at all, in short sentences, of their simple heroic dreams. (129-130)

Although a new world beyond the law was created where justice seemed attainable at last, the novella suggests that new forms of biopolitical power are emerging and that the next genocide is already in the making. This seems to imply that any attempt to create a perfect society is doomed because biopolitical racism - “the tendency to continuously divide the world into dualities” (Saunders qtd. by Nayeypour and Varghaiyan 848), and the “genocidal impulse” (Saunders qtd. by Rendueles)- are intrinsic to human societies.

## 7. CONCLUSIONS

In this article, I have explained how Phil creates a totalitarian regime by inventing an enemy that needs to be annihilated. Phil justifies the genocide he is leading through racist and eugenic arguments, as he considers the destruction of the Inner Hornerites a matter of national care and security. I have discussed Phil’s destruction of the enemies’ bodies in relation to this biopolitical goal. In the totalitarian state of Outer Horner, any political or aesthetic excess must be removed to avoid any deviations and to ensure a strict coincidence of the population with itself.

In addition, I have analyzed how the biopolitical power presented in the story aims to control the desires and affects of the governed. In this regard, I have examined Phil’s manipulative use of language and how he praises his followers to ensure their alignment with his political objectives. I have studied the use of “enjoyment” by President Rick, of Greater Keller, to achieve the complete domination of his subjects. I have interpreted the political positions of the characters who revolt or speak out against Phil’s totalitarian regime. Moreover, I have explained how the novella ends with the creation of a unified nation, New Horner, that in the

beginning seems to overcome the biopolitical distinctions of the past but soon hints at a new genocide.

The biopolitical strategies presented in *The Brief and Frightening Reign of Phil* constitute a literary transfiguration of the technologies of power that conform contemporary Western societies. If these technologies have existed in the West since the 18<sup>th</sup> Century, they have been perfected over time. A significant update of these technologies occurred after the 9/11 attacks with the onset of the “War on Terror.” These events were the main preoccupation of public discourse in the United States at the time of the publication of Saunders’s novella and constitute its historical background. As Kimon Keramidas has mentioned: “released in 2005, the cultural context is clear; Saunders would never be accused of subtlety. The book was written during aftermath of the US-Iraq war, and it clearly references the politics of the day.” The creation of an external enemy, the obsession with the security and care of the population, the disciplinary destruction of the bodies, and the use of affect as a biopolitical technology may well be a *literary transfiguration* of these real-life events. As Saunders learned from one of his “literary heroes” (Huebert 116), direct representation may not be the most convenient or truthful way to represent historical facts in literature. A short story may carry the knowledge or experience of what happened in reality without the need to refer explicitly to the circumstances:

Your real story [what happened to you] may have nothing to do with your actual experience, Vonnegut seemed to be saying. In constructing your black box [your short story], feel free to shorthand those [real life] experiences, allude to them sideways, or omit them entirely. Joke about them, avoid directly exploiting them, shroud them in an over-story about aliens: *you know what you know, and that knowledge will not be shaken out of your stories* no matter how breezy or comic or minimalist your mode of expression, or how much you shun mimesis. (“Mr. Vonnegut” 78. Italics my own)

Despite being probably inspired by real-life events, *The Brief and Frightening Reign of Phil* has the potential to be interpreted beyond its historical context. This is because it showcases the technologies of power that are inherent to political modernity. By presenting this gallery of biopolitical technologies to his readers, Saunders is effectively aiding in our comprehension of contemporary power dynamics and urging us to fight for our independence “from the commercial and political forces” (Hayes-Brady 37) that govern contemporary societies.

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## “TIME TRAVEL IS REAL”: NAVIGATING THE METAMODERNIST OSCILLATIONS IN ALI SMITH’S *AUTUMN* (2016)

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*ABSTRACT.* Ali Smith’s *Autumn* (2016), the first instalment of her *Seasonal Quartet*, has been analysed as a Brexit novel or “Brexlit” (Pittel 58), when it actually represents a much wider reality. Although some academics highlight the unclassifiable nature of the novel, I believe that, despite its undeniable political undertones and thematic concerns when depicting our transmodern society, both its form and its content are aligned with the features of metamodernism that authors like Nick Bentley and Timotheus Vermeulen and Robin van den Akker define in their research (2017, 2010). While most critical studies have been concerned with the thematic aspects of the novel as the first post-Brexit novel, my aim is to offer an analysis of all the different aspects that make *Autumn* an accurate example of the metamodernist novel fluctuating between modern features like the use of free indirect discourse and stream of consciousness and postmodern features like multiple narratives and fragmentation. In its oscillation between the modern and the postmodern, *Autumn* finds a balance through its main characters, Daniel Gluck and Elisabeth Demand, who embody these two structures of feeling. Different as they might be, the reader, alongside these two characters themselves, will find that they are more alike than they expected, and thus their shared ideas and concerns turn into the main themes of the novel: the cyclical nature of time and history, the unheimlich and the nature of art.

*Keywords:* Autumn, metamodernism, Brexlit, network fiction, planetary novel, Ali Smith.

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## “VIAJAR EN EL TIEMPO ES ALGO REAL”: EXPLORACIÓN DE LAS OSCILACIONES METAMODERNISTAS DE *OTOÑO* (2016) DE ALI SMITH

**RESUMEN.** *Otoño* (2016) de Ali Smith, la primera entrega de su *Cuarteto Estacional*, ha sido analizada como una novela Brexit o "Brexlit" (Pittel 58), cuando en realidad representa una realidad mucho más amplia. Aunque algunos académicos destacan la naturaleza inclasificable de la novela, creo que, a pesar de sus indudables matices políticos y preocupaciones temáticas al representar nuestra sociedad transmoderna, tanto su forma como su contenido están alineados con las características del metamodernismo que autores como Nick Bentley y Timotheus Vermeulen y Robin van den Akker definen en sus teorías (2017, 2010). Si bien la mayoría de los estudios críticos se han centrado en los aspectos temáticos de la novela como la primera novela post-Brexit, mi objetivo es ofrecer un análisis de los diferentes aspectos que hacen de *Otoño* una novela metamodernista que fluctúa entre características modernas como el uso del discurso indirecto libre y el flujo de conciencia, y características posmodernas como las múltiples narrativas y la fragmentación. En su oscilación entre lo moderno y lo posmoderno, *Otoño* encuentra un equilibrio a través de sus personajes principales, Daniel Gluck y Elisabeth Demand, quienes encarnan estas dos estructuras de sentimiento. A pesar de sus diferencias, el lector, junto con estos dos personajes, encontrará que son más parecidos de lo que esperaban, y, por lo tanto, sus ideas y preocupaciones compartidas se convierten en los verdaderos temas principales de la novela: la naturaleza cíclica del tiempo y la historia, lo unheimlich y la naturaleza del arte.

*Palabras clave:* *Otoño*, metamodernismo, Brexlit, ficción en red, novela planetaria, Ali Smith.

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

The publication of the first instalment of Ali Smith's *Seasonal Quartet* in 2016 brought with it a plethora of academic and cultural publications interested both in this literary experiment and in the trend *Autumn* seemed to inaugurate: the "Brexit novel" or "Brexlit" (Pittel 58). The *Seasonal Quartet* shares several features with Ali Smith's previous novels: *Like* (1997), *Hotel World* (2001), *The Accidental* (2005), *Girl Meets Boy* (2007), *There But For The* (2011), and *How To Be Both* (2014). As Daniel Lea points out:

Stylistically her writing embraces fragmentation and multi-perspectivalism to reflect the crumbling of singular, authoritarian voices in contemporary discourses. Her narratives are filled with contrasting points of view, invoked in a restless marriage of difference and competitiveness, each seeking the privilege of primacy. (7)

Many of her novels make use of innovative forms and structures that place her style within the realm of postmodernism: *Hotel World*, where the human meets the supernatural and the main character's fall is mirrored by the layout of the lines on the page and keeps going from chapter to chapter; *Girl Meets Boy*, a gender-bending novel and retelling of Ovid's myth of Iphis; or *How To Be Both*, where the author



involves the reader in the construction of this subversive novel by presenting us with the choice of which of the parallel narrations we should start reading first. However, in the past few years, there have been some developments in the analysis of Smith's oeuvre in an attempt to come to terms with her stylistic and thematic evolution, acknowledging that postmodernism now seems insufficient.

The *Seasonal Quartet* does show a slight thematic and tonal shift from Smith's previous novels, but classifying it as Brexit is an oversimplified approach. Although the political undertones of the novels are undeniable, they are not completely disconnected from postmodernism. With their unique blended style, the Brexit referendum's outcome is just one of the abundant themes they explore. The microcosm the novels depict is a reflection of our present macrocosm: the socio-economic situation leading up to Brexit is not necessarily exclusive to British territory, but rather it is a reflection of a global condition: migration crises, racism and xenophobia, unemployment, and the rise of the far right are issues that resonate with citizens worldwide outside of the United Kingdom, which demonstrates the global dimension of these novels. As Smith herself claims, a novel "is bound to and helplessly interested in society and social hierarchy, in social worlds; and society is always attached to, in debt to, made by and revealed by the trappings of its time" (*Artful* 29). This global and interconnected dimension the novels depict through their interest in creating a mosaic of our present time and society is not only portrayed thematically but also formally through a style that represents metamodernism, a structure of feeling that, according to some critics is "characterised by the oscillation between a typically modern commitment and a markedly postmodern detachment" (Vermeulen and van den Akker 2). Accordingly, metamodernism employs modernist techniques like "the examination of subjective time; liberal use of interior monologue, free indirect discourse and stream of consciousness; and disruption of linear narrative" but also of postmodern features like "the use of fragmented form, multiple narratives, and complex models of identity and characterisation" (Bentley 1). Therefore, the aim of this article is to explore the resources *Autumn* uses to portray the global condition of our present time and to offer a formal analysis in an attempt to redefine the style of the novel, from "Brexit" to metamodernism.

## 2. THE RELATIONSHIP OF CHANGE TO CONTINUANCE

From the very beginning, *Autumn* has a style that is not easily classifiable. The opening passage of the novel is characterised by classic modernist resources like the use of free indirect speech, internal monologues, the flow of consciousness and rich descriptions of nature:

Daniel Gluck, your luck's run out at last. He prises open one stuck eye. But – Daniel sits up on the sand and the stones – is this it? really? this? is death? He shades his eyes. Very bright. Sunlit. Terribly cold, though. He is on a sandy stony strand, the wind distinctly harsh, the sun out, yes, but no heat off it. Naked, too. No wonder he's cold. (Smith, *Autumn* 11)

However, these modernist techniques alternate with a distinctly postmodern style, thus presenting several instances where the narrator seems to be aware of its own narratological status, using a fragmented form and highlighting the fictionality in storytelling:

Here's something else from another time, from when Elisabeth was thirteen, that she also only remembers shreds and fragments of.

And anyway, why else are you always hanging round an old gay man?

(That was her mother.)

(Smith, *Autumn* 61)

Moreover, the narration makes constant allusions to its own fictional status: "That moment of dialogue? Imagined. Daniel is now in an increased sleep period" (Smith, *Autumn* 33). However, even though, like Linda Hutcheon affirms, "the postmodern clearly also developed out of other modernist strategies: its self-reflexive experimentation, its ironic ambiguities, and its contestations of classic realist representation" (43), *Autumn* slightly deviates from the typically subversive definition of the postmodern. Despite the use of modernist and postmodernist techniques, the novel seems, like Charles Dickens was, deeply interested in creating an accurate portrait of today's society. Smith echoes the Victorian writer from the very beginning of the novel, choosing to rewrite the opening passage of *A Tale of Two Cities* and starting *Autumn* with "It was the worst of times, it was the worst of times" (Smith, *Autumn* 1), thus drawing an obvious parallel between the two novels. Nevertheless, the small but powerful change Smith makes in the original quotation, "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times" (Dickens 1), illustrates the way intertextuality is used in postmodernism: "It uses and abuses those intertextual echoes, inscribing their powerful allusions and then subverting that power through irony" (Hutcheon 118). Therefore, from the very beginning of the novel, Smith demonstrates the way *Autumn's* hybrid style oscillates between postmodernism and realism. Consequently, Smith fills the novel with descriptions of everyday life and references to contemporary culture:

It is still July. Elisabeth goes to her mother's medical practice in the middle of town. She waits in the queue of people. When she gets to the front she tells the receptionist that the GP her mother is registered with is at this practice, that she herself isn't registered with a GP here but that she's been feeling unwell so she'd like to talk to a doctor, probably not urgent, but something does feel wrong.

The receptionist looks Elisabeth's mother up on the computer. She tells Elisabeth that her mother isn't listed at this surgery.

Yes she is, Elisabeth says. She definitely is.

The receptionist clicks on another file and then goes to the back of the room and opens a drawer in a filing cabinet. She takes out a piece of paper, reads it, then puts it back in and shuts the drawer. She comes back and sits down.

She tells Elisabeth she's afraid that her mother is no longer listed on the patient list. (*Autumn* 103)

Through fragments like this one, *Autumn* creates a snapshot of our contemporary society, describing everyday life in a way that seems obvious and simple to us, but that might be used as a tool to understand 2016's British society in fifty or one-hundred years' time, in the same way as Dickens' novels currently help us understand Victorian England. Furthermore, Smith also includes several references to popular culture that resonate with the present reader but that will not have the same impact on future audiences. We can clearly understand—and even relate to—certain situations depicted in *Autumn*. We have all been greeted by unfriendly people working at reception, like Elisabeth is when she goes to the care home to visit Daniel: "This time, the woman at reception doesn't even glance up. She is watching someone get garrotted on *Game of Thrones* on her iPad" (257). As Smith's contemporaries, we understand the obsession of society with HBO's TV show *Game of Thrones* and with using a portable device like an iPad to watch it anywhere, but in a few years these references might lose their meaning. Smith uses these specific allusions to create a portrait not only of our present time, but specifically present Britain, even including the name of one of the most typical British supermarkets: "There'd be nothing brought back from Tesco's" (50). These references to our present lay the foundations of the complexity of *Autumn*, and they demonstrate the way it tries to create a realistic mosaic of today. In order to fully understand this novel, the reader needs to be familiar with contemporary Britain.

Smith herself believes that "in its apparent fixity, form is all about change. In its fixity, form is all about the relationship of change to continuance, even when the continuance is itself precarious" (Smith, *Artful* 74). The form of the *Seasonal Quartet*, mirroring the passing of the seasons it is named after, is markedly characterised by its changeable and ambivalent nature. The ambivalent style of the novel combines postmodernist, realist and modernist techniques, without fully conforming to the definition of either of these movements. As Vermeulen and van den Akker state, metamodernism should be "conceived of as 'both-neither' dynamic. [It is] at once modern and postmodern and neither of them" (6). By making use of modernist features like interior monologues and postmodern techniques like the multiplicity of narratives, Smith creates a vessel that brings together an array of diverse characters that compete, with no success, to become the dominant voice of the narrative. Instead, through its hybrid style and by showing different perspectives and mindsets *Autumn* manages to reflect the heterogeneity of humankind through the depiction of a plurality of views on conflicts of the past and the present.

### 3. THE BALANCE OF DANIEL AND ELISABETH

Metamodernism is not only reflected through the form of the novel, but it is also portrayed through the relationship between the protagonists, Daniel Gluck and Elisabeth Demand, which in itself becomes the embodiment of metamodernism. Daniel is a dreamer, a man of German-British descent who is over 100 years old and

who believes in change and tends to be more abstract: he represents postmodernism. Elisabeth, on the other hand, a young English art history student, is more suspicious, she is witty and more practical: she is more akin to realism. Their different worldviews, originating in their generational gap, are usually a subject of many debates between them:

There is no point in making up a world, Elisabeth said, when there's already a real world. There's just the world, and there's the truth about the world.

You mean, there's the truth, and there's the made-up version of it that we get told about the world, Daniel said.

No. The world exists. Stories are made up, Elisabeth said.

But no less true for that, Daniel said.

(Smith, *Autumn* 119)

Daniel's ideas seem to align with postmodernism's rejection of metanarratives (Hutcheon 6), whereas Elisabeth represents the old rational ideas postmodernism seems to contradict. Despite their different worldviews, these two characters lean on each other, in their journeys of growing up and growing old, as they share their common anxieties about the state of the world, their passion for art, and their reflections on truth, stories and history. In a similar vein, "ontologically, metamodernism [...] oscillates between a modern enthusiasm and a postmodern irony, between hope and melancholy, between naïveté and knowingness, empathy and apathy, unity and plurality, totality and fragmentation, purity and ambiguity" (Vermeulen and van den Akker 6). Between Daniel and Elisabeth, in the ideas that they share, in their conversations and in the way they mutually influence each other, they create a harmonious fluctuation: metamodernism. The balance between these two seemingly disparate characters parallels the oscillation of the metamodernist structure of feelings.

The novel is structured into three sections, each of them ending with a brief chapter that is independent of the two main narratological periods and that describes the passing of time focusing on the physical changes in nature as seasons change. These short endings of each of the sections combine the importance of nature as a functional tool to represent the passing of time with landscape descriptions as a mere aesthetic element, thus introducing modernism's concern with the subjectivity of time and its inclination to nature as one of its main themes:

A minute ago it was June. Now the weather is September. The crops are high, about to be cut, bright, golden.

November? unimaginable. Just a month away.

The days are still warm, the air in the shadows sharper. The nights are sooner, chillier, the light a little less each time.

Dark at half past seven. Dark at quarter past seven, dark at seven. (Smith, *Autumn* 85)

Moreover, they also serve as a way to alter the chronology of the narration, as postmodernism often does, while also reinforcing the structure of the novel. *Autumn* is divided into thirty-seven chapters that break the traditional linear chronological order, choosing instead to alternate between chapters set in the past, chapters set in the present and certain surreal dream-like sequences with an unclear time setting. In the same way that the novel's style is heterogeneous and ambivalent, its narrative is also far from homogeneous and straightforward. Both the form and the content of *Autumn* complement each other and blur and defy boundaries, creating:

A dialogue, an argument, between aesthetic form and reality, between form and its content, between seminality, art, fruitfulness, and life. There'll always be a seminal argument between forms—that's how forms produce themselves, out of a meeting of opposites, of different things; out of form encountering form. (Smith, *Artful* 64)

#### 4. FROM GLOBALISATION TO PLANETARITY

Smith incorporates formal features from different styles to create something new. Several critics such as Ben Masters, who highlights the adjustment-style of Smith's novels (986), or Nicole Schrag, who analyses the "aesthetic of extreme 'porosity'" in the *Seasonal Quartet* (2021), among others, have moved beyond the label of postmodernism and pointed out the metamodernist style of Smith's novels, and she appears in key theoretical texts like van den Akker, Alison Gibbons, and Vermeulen's 2017 edited collection. As Schrag observes: "the multiple analyses of Smith's metamodernism virtually all consider the relationship between political content and literary form" (2024), a relationship that becomes even more evident in her *Seasonal Quartet*.

One of the main metamodernist features that *Autumn* relies on is the interlocking of narratives, not only as a formal tool, but also as a narratological resource that contributes to the characterisation of *Autumn* (and the *Seasonal Quartet* as a whole) as a "network fiction", defined as:

a group of narratives that have been proliferating during the last two decades in literature, film, television and the Internet, which interweave multiple interlocking narratives set in different times and spaces around the globe and involve many characters, often in a state of mobility and travel, who get involved in or affected by incidents from another storyline. (Mousoutzanis 2)

Daniel offers this kaleidoscopic perspective to the narrative by being the focaliser of the stories set in Germany in the past, the stories set in England in the 1960s and certain stories set in the present, while Elisabeth also offers a perspective on modern-day England while Daniel is ill. Thus, the interlocking storylines of these two characters are used to embody and reflect the wider reality of our interconnected world. Daniel represents the past and the present, and Elisabeth represents the present and the future. Interestingly, the employment of fragmentation and complex

models of characterization developed through the interlocking narratives and the alternation of focalisers contributes to the definition of the novels as “translit”:

Translit novels cross history without being historical; they span geography without changing psychic place. Translit collapses time and space as it seeks to generate narrative traction in the reader’s mind. It inserts the contemporary reader into other locations and times, while leaving no doubt that its viewpoint is relentlessly modern and speaks entirely of our extreme present. (Coupland)

Translit novels have originated in a context of change: in the past few decades, authors like Linda Hutcheon (2001) or Alan Kirby (2006) have argued that postmodernism is over. As Alison Gibbons likewise points out, “a new dominant cultural logic is emerging; the world—or in any case, the literary cosmos—is rearranging itself”. The new cultural paradigm that emerges after the decline of postmodernism is known as transmodernity, which constitutes, according to Rodríguez Magda, one of the main theorists on this concept:

in the first place, the description of a globalised, rhizomatic, technological society, developed from the first world, confronted with its others, while at the same time it penetrates and assumes them; and secondly, it constitutes the effort to transcend this hyper-real, relativistic enclosure. (Rodríguez Magda 16, Trans. Jessica Aliaga-Lavrijsen)

This rearranging of the cosmos is in line with the concept of the planetary turn that gave way to the current planetary condition, defined by Min Hyoung Son as “a different order of connection, an interrelatedness that runs along smooth surfaces, comprises multitudes, and manifests movement” (qtd. in Elias and Morau xx). Unlike globalisation, generally understood as a “hegemonizing force” (Min Hyoung Son, qtd. in Elias and Morau xvii) or, as Gayatri Spivak defined it, “the imposition of the same system of exchange everywhere” (87), the planetary condition emphasises “its relationality model and return to ethics” (Min Hyoung Son, qtd. in Elias and Morau xvii), shifting “from globe as financial-technocratic system toward planet as world-ecology” (Min Hyoung Son, qtd. in Elias and Morau xvi). This shift has been deeply influenced by the growth of environmental movements and ecocritical analysis, which in opposition to the abstractions of global modernity imposes a grounded, phenomenal, earth-anchored ethics and aesthetics (Lawrence Buell, qtd. in Elias and Morau xxxiv). The heterogeneous tapestry that Smith constructs weaving different time periods and characters within *Autumn* and within the Quartet reflects the paradigm shift from globalisation to planetarity that the transmodern period introduces. This transformation of thought inevitably gives rise to a series of cultural and artistic changes that reflect this evolution, which led to the appearance of metamodern literature, the ambivalent stylistic reflection of these philosophical changes where *Autumn* finds the perfect springboard to develop the parallel stories that carry the narrative and to make a portrait of the subtleties of our present. As Pittel points out, *Autumn* “resists any facile categorization in terms of existing genre markers” (60), old categories fail to grasp the complexities and intricacies that the novel presents, and there is a need to make use of new terms in order to be able to

define its originality. In terms of content, Brexit is just one of the many events that define the tone and the themes of the novel. Migration and economic crisis, youth unemployment, climate change, or the rise of the far right are just some of the issues that define the setting, and although the term "Brexit" does bring these together, it may offer a reductive perspective on the novel as a whole. As Elisabeth observes when witnessing a xenophobic aggression:

The people standing in front of the Spanish people in the taxi queue were nice; they tried to defuse it by letting the Spanish people take the next taxi. All the same Elisabeth sensed that what was happening in that one passing incident was a fraction of something volcanic. (Smith, *Autumn* 130)

The aftermath of the referendum is a reflection of a wider reality. Brexit is merely the consequence of the same political and economic issues that are currently happening worldwide, and classifying *Autumn* as a "Brexit novel" or "Brexitlit" (Pittel 58) is ignoring the wider scope and the global dimension both of the novel and the world itself. From the very beginning, the conditions that are presented in the novel are not thought of exclusively as British, but rather as a representation of "the world's sadness" (Smith, *Autumn* 13). Even Elisabeth, who embodies the present and the future, explicitly points to the planetary condition of our times through her surname, Demand, as Daniel points out:

I think your surname is originally French, Mr Gluck said. I think it comes from the French words de and monde, put together, which means, when you translate it, of the world. (Smith, *Autumn* 54)

Interestingly, this planetary condition is also portrayed formally through the structure of chapters that alternate between but also link different time periods, and through the interconnected relations of the characters from *Autumn* with the characters from the three other instalments of the *Seasonal Quartet*, thus pointing to the interrelated nature of the four novels. Therefore, the dynamic nature of the metamodernist novel becomes the perfect medium to depict the oscillations and polarisations that characterise the planetary condition that defines the transmodern era.

## 5. A NOVEL ABOUT TIME

Brexit is just the backdrop for the plot, and the novel's concern with the circular pattern of history implies that the current socio-political climate is in fact not that different from previous crises. Even though to the younger generations, like Elisabeth's, this uncertainty and fear feel brand new, to older generations, like Daniel's, everything has already happened before. "Oh, that old thing" (Smith, *Autumn* 25), he would say when talking to Elisabeth. "It's new to me" (25), Elisabeth would reply. Knowing everything has happened before and everything is bound to repeat itself puts our present circumstances into perspective and thus relativises and downplays the importance we give to our individual experience. Moreover, Mousoutzanis argues that "disruption in space is also often accompanied by

disruption in time, and the non-linear or repetitive temporal structure of these fictions may be seen as reproducing the temporality of the uncanny, which is determined by what Freud termed the ‘compulsion to repeat’ (Freud, qtd. in Mousoutzanis 3). Freud claimed this repetition compulsion was a post-traumatic symptom, and as the novel puts forward at the very beginning: “It was the worst of times, it was the worst of times. Again. That’s the thing about things. They fall apart, always have, always will, it’s in their nature” (Smith, *Autumn* 1). *Autumn* is not focused on the referendum as such, but rather on the socioeconomic and cultural background and the consequences of the referendum, a turbulent and traumatic period that is not unique to our present, but that echoes our past and potentially our future. These circumstances are a reflection of Freud’s idea of “the unheimlich” or the uncanny, “the encounter between the familiar and strange” (qtd. in Mousoutzanis 3). Elisabeth has to deal with these complex feelings right after the referendum:

On the Monday after, she wandered through the city; strange to be walking streets where life was going on as normal, traffic and people going their usual backwards and forwards along streets that had had no traffic, had felt like they’d belonged to the two million people from their feet on the pavement all the way up to sky because of something to do with truth, when she’d walked the exact same route only the day before yesterday. (Smith, *Autumn* 149)

These uncanny conditions are depicted in the *Seasonal Quartet* relying heavily on non-linear temporal structures, thus establishing a connection between a traumatic past depicted through Daniel’s memories of growing up as a Jewish boy during the Holocaust, and a traumatic present embodied by Elisabeth’s struggles in a divided England. The unchronological order of the narrative serves a double purpose: firstly, it creates parallel structures between the past and the present, thus feeding the idea that time is a circular entity. On the other hand, this fragmented chronology also serves as a way to contribute to the creation of the feeling of the global unhomely, a sense of displacement. Mousoutzanis argues that Freud’s notion of the uncanny or the unhomely can be a useful lens through which to examine these fictions, since “the experience of dislocation in space in these fictions is often accompanied by a sense of disruption of time, a non-linear, cyclical, repetitive temporality” (9) that mirrors the unsettling of time and space of the uncanny. “Time travel is real. Moment to moment, minute to minute” (Smith, *Autumn* 175), but also chapter to chapter or even within the same chapter, thus becoming a tool to highlight the interconnection of different time periods and places. Smith’s *Seasonal Quartet* creates a juxtaposition of times and places through a myriad of voices that call upon the reader to find their own.<sup>1</sup> Despite reflecting discouraging realities, Mousoutzanis argues that network fictions also

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<sup>1</sup> In this sense, it is also important to point out that these new early twenty-first-century networked narratives are almost exclusively written by men, such as David Mitchell’s *Cloud Atlas* or Hari Kunzru’s *God Without Men* (Mousoutzanis). Ali Smith, thus, becomes a double trailblazer, being a pioneer and a master of the metamodern novel and also being a woman in a realm dominated by men.



"suggest new forms of communities and new ways towards a cosmopolitan future that may be seen as a response to the pervasive sense of unhomeliness, to create new 'homes' in response to the global unhomely" (3), which is shown in the way Daniel and Elisabeth find companionship in each other. Despite their age gap and the different circumstances they have to deal with, they find common ground in their core values and concerns, in their disappointment at the state of the world, in their losses, in not remembering his "little sister's name" (Smith, *Autumn* 190) or her "father's face" (209) or in their love for art.

As pointed out before, *Autumn* is fundamentally a novel about time, it is a literary experiment about the circularity and interconnections of time and history, reflected by two characters who create a balance between postmodernism and realism, between past and present, using the intersection of their parallel trajectories to portray the interlocking of our experiences in a globalised world. From the very beginning, time has been the main concern of both intra and extradiegetic agents. When Smith embarked on this project, her aim was to bring back the character of novelty to the novel, writing a series of books that "would be about not just their own times, but the place where time and the novel meet" (Smith, "Brexit divisions"). Thus, this initial idea has infiltrated into all the different dimensions of the narrative. Time becomes the centre point of *Autumn*: extradiegetically, its very origin is a concern with time and novelty; and intradiegetically, it defines both its form, with the interlocking of two narratives set in two different time periods and its altering of the traditional narratological chronology, and its content, being one of the big preoccupations the two protagonists share. Moreover, its metamodernist style is in itself a journey in time, travelling back and forth from realism to postmodernism. Smith uses a fragmented narrative and a fluctuating style to take the readers on a time travelling journey establishing a dialogue between the past, embodied by Daniel, the present, embodied by Elisabeth, and the future, embodied by the readers.

## 6. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, considering how much the concept of time influences and infiltrates every aspect of *Autumn*, one could argue that it is not a Brexit novel, but a novel about time. Brexit is merely the consequence of the novel's interest in creating a portrait of our present time, it is not the root of the novel's concerns, but merely a feature of our time. As Ali Smith herself has explained, the *Seasonal Quartet* is an experiment on time and literature that she embarked on before the referendum. Because it is a novel about time—past, present and future—it inevitably reflects the features of our present, a time tainted by migration crises, unemployment, climate change, racism and the rise of the far right.

It is also important to consider that *Autumn* is not an individual work but part of an interconnected collective of novels, the *Seasonal Quartet*, which further demonstrates its experimental and relational nature. The quartet of novels transcends Brexit as it delves into the connections and similarities between the protagonists of

each of the seasons and their respective time periods. The exploration of time is not only thematical, it infiltrates every aspect of the novel through the parallel storylines, recurrent flashbacks and fragmented style. *Autumn* is a novel about time, about the relationship between Elisabeth and Daniel, the interlocking of their time periods, their memories and their fears, and their place in the world. *Autumn* is not focused on Brexit, it goes way beyond that: it is a portrait of people and time, of the multiple intersections of time when two people meet, of their pasts, their futures and the present that they are building together; it is a piece of work about time as an organic entity that evolves and is dependent on the interactions of the characters and the world outside of the novel. Ali Smith manages to create a portrait of our present through a novel that explores time thematically and formally, demonstrating her ability to create connections and highlighting our similarities, maintaining the witty and playful style of her previous works to embark on this experiment on time. Recurrently, the metamodernist oscillations of the novel point to a wider planetary condition that simultaneously embraces unity and fragmentation, melancholy, and hope, thus pointing to relational feelings and events that we all share, beyond the borders of Brexit.

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## ERRORS AND CORRECTIVE FEEDBACK IN CHINESE EFL CLASSROOM WRITING

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*ABSTRACT.* English as a foreign language (EFL) learners are often confronted with grammatical errors in writing. This study aimed thence to identify types of errors made by Chinese EFL learners in their writing and to explore the reasons behind these committed errors as well as the corrective feedback given by EFL instructors in responding to students' errors. A mixed-methods case study research design was employed. Data were collected from the essays produced by 62 third-year senior high school students (equivalent to 12<sup>th</sup> grade) at Jining No.1 Middle School in Shandong, China and semi-structured interviews with five EFL instructors from China. Data were analyzed using thematic analysis and descriptive statistics. This study found that omission was the most common error made by Chinese EFL learners. Inappropriate learning strategies, negative transfer, overgeneralization, lack of motivation and positive attitude were the reasons of this phenomenon. It was found that both implicit and explicit corrective feedback were used by the EFL instructors in responding to their students' errors. The findings provide valuable pedagogical evidence for EFL instructors to scaffold EFL learners' writing skills.

*Keywords:* English as a foreign language (EFL), Error analysis, Corrective feedback, China, Writing skills.

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## ERRORES Y RETROALIMENTACIÓN CORRECTIVA EN LA PRODUCCIÓN ESCRITA DE ESTUDIANTES CHINOS DE INGLÉS COMO LENGUA EXTRANJERA

*RESUMEN.* Los estudiantes de inglés como lengua extranjera (ILE, por sus siglas en inglés) suelen enfrentarse a errores gramaticales al escribir. Este estudio tuvo como objetivo identificar los tipos de errores cometidos por estudiantes chinos de ILE en la destreza de producción escrita y explorar las razones detrás de estos errores cometidos, así como la retroalimentación correctiva proporcionada por los docentes de ILE en respuesta a los errores de los estudiantes. Se empleó un diseño de investigación de estudio de caso de métodos mixtos. Se recopilaron datos de las composiciones producidas por 62 estudiantes de tercer año de educación secundaria (2° Bachillerato) en el centro educativo No.1 de Jining en Shandong, China, y de entrevistas semiestructuradas con cinco docentes de ILE de China. Los datos fueron analizados utilizando análisis temático y estadística descriptiva. Este estudio encontró que la omisión fue el error más común cometido por los estudiantes chinos de ILE. Estrategias de aprendizaje inapropiadas, transferencia negativa, excesiva generalización, falta de motivación y actitud positiva fueron las razones de este fenómeno. Se encontró que tanto la retroalimentación correctiva implícita como explícita fueron utilizadas por los instructores de ILE en respuesta a los errores de sus estudiantes. Los resultados proporcionan una evidencia pedagógica útil para los instructores de ILE en su tarea de apoyar las habilidades de producción escrita de los aprendices de ILE.

*Palabras clave:* inglés como lengua extranjera (ILE), Análisis de errores, Retroalimentación correctiva, China, Habilidades de producción escrita.

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

English is a lingua franca, and it is also the most extensively learned second language around the world. In China, English is a foreign language (EFL), which, according to English Curriculum Standards for Senior High School (2018), is one of the compulsory subjects in the Chinese college entrance examination. Nowadays, more and more Chinese students are making the effort to learn English, including listening, reading, speaking, writing and other skills. Writing is not only one of the crucial ways for senior high school students to improve their language abilities, cultural awareness, quality of thought, and capacity for learning, but it is also the most difficult skill for EFL Chinese students to acquire (Sang 1). Consequently, students are challenged to produce a correct English text. According to research in the disciplines of error analysis (EA) and second language acquisition (SLA), the written work of EFL students contains a variety of errors (Sermsook, et al. 43; Zafar 698).

Consequently, a key focus of teaching ESL writing is to detect the different sorts of errors that students make in their writing and come up with strategies for doing so while also helping students improve their writing skills. Since the Process Writing

Approach (Kroll 231) was brought into language teaching in the early 1970s, feedback, a continuation of the writing process, has been viewed as a fundamental procedure of the process-oriented approach to writing. Corrective feedback (CF) is also known as error feedback and grammar correction. Written corrective feedback (WCF) is a major form of CF and refers to the written information provided by teachers to inform learners of their incorrect use of target language, help them to address errors and improve language accuracy accordingly (Bitchener and Knoch 409). With the development of the Process Writing Approach (Kroll 231) in SLA, the question of whether foreign/second language teachers should supply WCF for learners' grammatical errors in writing, and if so, how, has long been an issue of considerable debate to researchers and teachers (Khaki and Tabrizi 38).

Faulty English sentences are often written by EFL learners in Chinese high schools. In recent decades, many researchers have drawn attention to this phenomenon, which has become a major issue for SLA abroad. Chinese researchers have also noted or discussed the error-making of Chinese learners. Some studies have focused on analyzing the types of writing errors and their frequency in SLA among students. For example, Maolida and Hidayat conducted a study with 22 EFL students' writing of personal letters and found that the most frequent error type is the addition among the four types from surface structure taxonomy (336). Moreover, Maniam and Rajagopal identified omission, addition, and misordering as the three primary categories of errors in the simple past tense (547). The findings also suggest that the reasons for simple past tense errors are translation, mother tongue influence, rule application ignorance, and overgeneralization of grammatical rules. Saputra analyzed 25 students' academic writing and concluded that the most frequent error committed by students is omission, but the most frequent sources of errors are developmental or intralingua (226).

In addition, many studies have focused on the effects of CF on students' learning. Most studies concerning this issue compared effectiveness between the direct and indirect WCF on learners' accuracy improvement. Some studies found an advantage for the indirect WCF (Ferris 99; Hassan Banaruee et al. 8). On the contrary, while not denying the value of indirect WCF, some studies prefer direct WCF (Bitchener and Knoch 409; Chandler 267; Van Beuningen et al. 1). Other studies (Vyatkina 671; Robb et al. 83) found that there was no discernible difference between the effects of the direct vs indirect nature of WCF on the increased accuracy of the students' new written work. Therefore, there is still a controversy on whether certain types of WCF can be more beneficial to enhance writing accuracy than others. However, few studies have analyzed students' errors in their writing and teachers' CF in combination. In view of the existing research gaps, the current study was proposed to investigate error types and frequencies using error analysis theory. It addressed the questions of why EFL Chinese learners made errors in writing and what CF teachers provided in response to writing errors.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

CF includes everything from suggestions on word usage to fixing of grammatical and technical problems. Nunan categorized CF into positive and negative feedback and added that CF can successfully encourage verbal engagement between teachers and students in the classroom (195). According to Lee, explicit correction refers to grammatical explanation of the error or the marker's overt correction, whereas implicit correction entails reformulating the learners' statements through recasting or clarification queries (154-155).

Dulay et al. divided students' errors based on surface strategy taxonomy into four categories (150):

- a. Omission (for example, omission of copula *be*);
- b. Addition. This is sub-categorized:
  - I. Regularization (for example, *eated* for *ate*);
  - II. Double-marking (for example, He didn't *came*);
  - III. Simple Addition (not regularization or double-marking);
- c. Misinformation (i.e. the use of the wrong form from the morpheme or structure):
  - I. Regularization (for example, do they be happy?);
  - II. Archi-forms (for example, me speak to me);
  - III. Alternating form;
- d. Misordering (for example, she fights all the time with her brother).

CF can be offered in either written or oral form. The former entails written comments provided directly on the learner's written script, while the latter involves verbal feedback on the learner's written product, either during individual conferencing (Erlam, Ellis, and Batstone 257) or within class sessions (Bitchener and Knoch 193). Ellis presents a combination of two taxonomies of CF strategies (8), as depicted in Table 1.

Table 1: A taxonomy of CF strategies (Ellis 8)

	Implicit	Explicit
Input-providing	Recast	Explicit correction
Output-promoting	Repetition Clarification requests	Metalinguistic explanation Paralinguistic signal Elicitation



Explicit feedback, also known as direct feedback, refers to evaluative information by which a teacher points out an error that has been made and gives the student the appropriate form or structure next to the incorrect element. Such feedback can be conveyed in a range of formats, involving crossing out a redundant word/phrase/sentence, inserting the missing content and writing the correct usage somewhere close to the linguistic errors. Chandler reported that direct CF outperforms indirect CF in a study of 31 EFL students (267). The results of this study also showed that students' updated sketches and subsequent writing were improved in terms of accuracy. The students participating in the study preferred immediate CF because it is the easiest and fastest way for them to make changes to their papers. In a study by Ferris and Roberts, it was found that direct feedback is more beneficial than indirect feedback, especially for English language learners who are less proficient (161). Giving weak students immediate feedback may enable them to revise their work properly.

In contrast, implicit feedback or indirect feedback is a form of error correction where an error has been made in writing, but no clear corrections have been given. In this case, students are responsible for diagnosing and self-correcting their errors. Indirect feedback can take three forms that vary in how explicit it is in the manner of: a) recording in the margin the number of errors of each line; b) underlying or circling an error; c) using a code to indicate what category of the error marked (e.g., VT = verb tense; WF = word form; S = spelling errors; SA = subject-verb agreement). As a result, instead of offering corrections in this sort of feedback, students must resolve and remedy the issue that has been pointed out or detected. Indirect feedback, according to Ferris and Roberts, is beneficial and helpful because it engages students in problem-solving and guided learning tasks (161). Ferris added that learners benefit from indirect feedback since they can autonomously change their work, which allows them to process the language (16). According to Lyster, indirect feedback encourages students to autonomously fix their errors, which helps them learn (399). However, when students self-correct their mistakes, they still run into a variety of issues. First, students feel more at ease when teachers correct their mistakes. Second, and most significantly, a lack of linguistic expertise prevents learners from being able to self-correct their mistakes. To enable children to recognize or detect linguistic forms that are not a part of their interlanguage, more correction will be required.

More research has been conducted to ascertain if implicit or explicit feedback techniques are more likely to aid students in improving the precision of their writing (Long 413). According to research, neither of these two types of feedback has a statistically significant effect on writing accuracy. (Robb, Ross and Shortreed 83; Semke 195). However, according to Chandler, implicit feedback improves students' attention to forms and problems and fosters their engagement over time, thus leading to either higher or equivalent levels of correctness (290-293). Moreover, Ellis claimed that explicit feedback is more effective in eliciting the learner's immediate appropriate use of the structure and in prompting later correct usage (16), building on the theories of Lyster (399) as well as Carroll and Swain (357).

A study conducted by Mohamed Mubarak aimed to explore the feedback mechanisms and instructional strategies employed in L2 writing instruction at the University of Bahrain. Employing a 12-week quasi-experimental design, the study involved 46 Bahraini media students distributed across three groups: Experimental Group A, which received direct CF; Experimental Group B, which received error underlining; and Control Group C, which received no corrections but instead received simple, summative comments on their performance (ii). The efficacy of these interventions was assessed through pre-, post-, and delayed post-tests. Furthermore, Mubarak's investigation encompassed an exploration of instructors' and students' attitudes toward feedback through interviews and questionnaires. The findings revealed several shortcomings in both the teaching of L2 writing and the feedback methodologies employed at the University of Bahrain. Despite observable improvements among students over the course of the experiment, neither form of CF-direct nor indirect-yielded significant enhancements in accuracy, grammatical complexity, or lexical sophistication in writing. Moreover, there was no discernible difference in effectiveness between the two feedback modalities. Additionally, the results from interviews and questionnaires indicated a preference among students for direct CF, wherein errors were directly addressed in their scripts rather than merely underlined. Both instructors and students underscored the importance of feedback and its perceived benefits. However, the study also revealed a notable deficiency in follow-up procedures by instructors, particularly in failing to provide subsequent guidance after the initial draft submission.

According to Ferris, it may also be appropriate for lower achievers to self-correct their errors, especially those errors such as syntactical and lexical problems which tend to be too complex for students (6). However, according to Truscott, direct correction does not help students improve their accuracy because it demotivates them due to mistakes and leads to low linguistic accuracy in the long-term (327). It has a strong instructor focus and does not give students the opportunity to self-correct and find solutions to their learning issues. Additionally, it makes students anxious because they fear creating lots of mistakes and getting lots of red marks (Bartram and Walton 78), which prevents them from wanting to improve their writing correctness. On the other hand, implicit feedback engages students cognitively and encourages their thinking of how to use the right form to convey their meaning. In the long-term, it helps students become independent learners who are more able to recognize their errors, read their own work critically, and reflect on it. This improves writing accuracy by helping students become more self-aware of their errors and rereading their own work. Based on the literature review, it is conceivable that both explicit and implicit feedback sound useful on certain occasions depending on the situation and the learners' developmental stages. Therefore, both sorts of CF were applied in the current study.

### 3. METHOD

This study engaged both quantitative and qualitative research method designs. The quantitative method was used to determine the types and frequency of grammatical errors made by the students, and the qualitative approach was utilized to (1) study the rationale behind students' grammatical errors by conducting interviews with five teachers and (2) explore the CF used by teachers in response to the errors in students' essays. The study was conducted from September to November 2022. The first author of this study selected two 3<sup>rd</sup> grade classes from the senior high school (equivalent to 12<sup>th</sup> grade) through convenience sampling to ensure that no significant distinction occurred between the two classes. A total of 62 students were asked to write a 120-word argumentative essay titled "Suggestions for Freshman" within 30 minutes. A week later, the 62 students were given 30 minutes to complete another 120-word narrative short essay in the form of a continuation of the story. The two different genres were chosen to examine the use of English in their essay writing. A total of 124 short essays were collected. From these essays, the researcher excluded 40 essays that were not completed as the number of words of some essays did not meet the requirements and some essays that did not contain any grammatical errors. Fifty essays that met the criteria were chosen from the remaining 80 essays through random sampling. These essays were analyzed according to the error analysis procedure by Ellis: (1) gathering a sample of errors, (2) identifying errors, (3) describing errors, (4) explaining the reasons for errors, and lastly (5) explaining the methods to reduce errors (431). Grammatical errors in the data of this study were categorized based on the surface strategy taxonomy presented by Dulay et al. (150-162).

Five teachers were selected through purposive sampling for the interviews, which aimed to explore the reasons causing students' grammatical errors. Both internal and external reasons were examined in this study. This is because not only do internal reasons, which exhibit a stronger relationship to language, cause students to make errors, but external factors unrelated to language, such as the student's attitude and learning environment, also exert influence. The CF methods provided by these EFL teachers to help their students reduce those errors were also elicited through an interview instrument. Among five teachers, there are four female teachers and only one male teacher. All the teachers had master's degrees. Three teachers were English education majors, while one was majoring in a comparative and world literature, and the last teacher was of an English translation major. All the teachers had at least two years of teaching experience. The five teachers were interviewed through open-ended questions. Each interview was about half an hour long. The interview sessions were recorded, transcribed, verified, and analyzed. After transcribing the interviews, they were checked and verified by the interviewers to ensure accuracy and prevent misinterpretation by the researchers. The data were analyzed using thematic analysis and descriptive statistics.

#### 4. RESULTS

Based on the number of 50 essays analyzed in this study, the students made a total of 108 grammatical errors. The errors were first extracted, then classified and counted. The frequency of each type of error was calculated for each class and both classes were combined to analyze the most frequent types of errors.

Table 2 shows the common errors made and three error types were focused using the Surface Strategy Taxonomy, which was proposed by Dulay et al. (150-162). 108 grammatical error items were found, with the proportion of omission (55.55%), addition (27.78%) and misordering (16.67%).

Table 2. Types of grammatical errors made by students and the frequencies.

Types of grammatical errors	Frequency of errors			Percentages (%)
	Class A	Class B	Total	
Omission	27	33	60	55.55
Addition	15	15	30	27.78
Misordering	8	10	18	16.67
		Total:	108	100.00

##### 4.1. Types of omission, addition and misordering errors

In line with the Surface Strategy Taxonomy by Dulay et al., the data were detected and categorized based on the kinds of errors. The researcher divided the grammatical errors into three categories: omission, addition, and misordering, which are discussed as follows.

##### 4.1.1. Omission

A total of 27 errors were extracted from class A, and 33 errors from class B. This is the most common error. The students made this error by omitting several necessary clauses from their statements, which made their remarks disqualified from being grammatically correct. In these two English sentences, the articles *a* and *an* should be placed before the noun phrases “more and more intense learning atmosphere” and “unforgettable experience”, but the Chinese students omitted both articles. It showed that these Chinese students were not able to apply these two articles in English sentences.

##### 4.1.1.1. Omission of Articles

Wrong sentence 1: You should know how to learn efficiently in more and more intense learning atmosphere.

Correct sentence 1: You should know how to learn efficiently in a more and more intense learning atmosphere.

Wrong sentence 2: This sports meet is unforgettable experience for me.

Correct sentence 2: This sports meet is **an** unforgettable experience for me.

#### 4.1.1.2. Omission of the Plural Form of Nouns

The following sentence shows students' omission of the plural forms of nouns. For the first sentence, the usage of plural forms of nouns was not applied. If it is a plural noun, it should be followed by *-s/-es*. The phrase "one of..." must be followed by a plural noun and student is a countable noun. And for the second sentence, the noun question should be in plural form after the pronoun any.

Wrong sentence: Jane, you are one of the most talented *student* I've met.

Correct sentence: Jane, you are one of the most talented *students* I've met.

#### 4.1.1.3. Omission of the Suffix of Verb

This grammatical error is caused by the omission of a linguistic component (the suffix *-d/-ed*). It appears in English verbs while attempting to construct a sentence in the present perfect tense. The verb increase should be in the past participle form in this sentence.

Wrong sentence 1: This match has *increase* my interest in the running.

Correct sentence 1: This match has *increased* my interest in running.

In addition, as displayed in the following sentence, the students were unaware of a specific linguistic item (suffix *-ing*) as the subject rule. The verb take should be changed into the gerund form here.

Wrong sentence 2: *Take* notes is helpful for your study.

Correct sentence 2: *Taking* notes is helpful for your study.

#### 4.1.1.4. Omission of Prepositions

This problem was caused by a direct translation of Chinese into English, and the students were unfamiliar with the term "a better grasp of..." as in the sentences below. The main reason why these essays contain so many similar errors is that they don't understand the fixed collocations and instead directly translate the phrases from Chinese into English.

Wrong sentence: I believe this game will provide me with a better grasp running.

Correct sentence: I believe this game will provide me with a better grasp **of** running.

#### 4.1.1.5. Omission of Conjunction

In this sentence, the students made the same kind of grammatical errors, which is the lack of conjunction *and*. The conjunction plays a crucial role in a sentence, which is used to connect words or sentences in a sentence.

Wrong sentence: My sweat streamed down my face, my arms, my legs.

Correct sentence: My sweat streamed down my face, my arms, *and* my legs.

#### 4.1.1.6. Omission of the Relative Pronoun

The relative pronoun *which* is omitted in the attributive clauses. In this sentence, the relative pronoun which modifies the sentence “It’s wise of you to use time efficiently” and connected the two sentences.

Wrong sentence: It’s wise of you to use time efficiently, can give you good grades.

Correct sentence: It’s wise of you to use time efficiently, *which* can give you good grades.

#### 4.1.2. Addition

Addition is the second kind of grammatical error committed by the students. This kind of error occupies middle proportion as it accounted for 27.78% out of the overall number of errors. 15 errors were spotted from each class, which was the second most common error in the students’ writings. Students added items to a sentence that are not part of and this made the sentence wrong.

##### 4.1.2.1. Addition of Articles

As illustrated by the following pairs of sentences, the article *the* is redundant in both sentences. “In relief” and “in addition” are both fixed collocations, and learners are vague about them.

Wrong sentence 1: In *the* relief, I was too tired to run.

Correct sentence 1: In relief, I was too tired to run.

Wrong sentence 2: In *the* addition, exercising will give us a chance to know more about ourselves.

Correct sentence 2: In addition, exercising will give us a chance to know more about ourselves.

##### 4.1.2.2. Addition of Auxiliary verbs

This error occurred when the learners did not follow the rules of auxiliary verbs. An auxiliary verb aims to change or help another verb. However, in these two sentences, the auxiliary verbs *is* and *be* are both redundant because here the verbs benefit and have can assume the tense of the sentences.

Wrong sentence 1: Regular exercise is benefits us a lot.

Correct sentence 1: Regular exercise benefits us a lot.

Wrong sentence 2: This must be have a profound and lasting influence on your whole life.

Correct sentence 2: This must have a profound and lasting influence on your whole life.

#### 4.1.2.3. Additional of Suffixes

Additional suffixes *-ed* and *-es* in verbs in English sentences were wrongly produced. The modal verbs “should and will” should be followed by the original form of the verbs study and witness. Therefore, in the verbs study and witness, the suffixes do not need to be added to the verbs.

Wrong sentence 1: You should also studied to achieve your academic goals.

Correct sentence 1: You should also study to achieve your academic goals.

Wrong sentence 2: The upcoming 3 years will witnesses considerable challenges as well as joys.

Correct sentence 2: The upcoming 3 years will witness considerable challenges as well as joy.

#### 4.1.2.4. Additional of Plural Form of Noun

These two sentences both contain an additional error. The singular quantifier “every” and the article “a” should be followed by the singular form of nouns classmate and habit.

Wrong sentence 1: Second, don't make friends with every classmates.

Correct sentence 1: Second, don't make friends with every classmate.

Wrong sentence 2: It is critical to establish a good habit.

Correct sentence 2: It is crucial to establish good habits.

#### 4.1.2.5. Additional of Conjunction

This kind of grammatical error occurred when the students did not familiarize themselves with the rules of conjunction. Conjunctions are used in a sentence to connect words or sentences, but some conjunctions are not usually used in one sentence, such as “because” and “so”, “although” and “but”, which is totally the opposite in Chinese sentences.

Wrong sentence 1: Because our school is a boarding one, so we should follow the rules of the dorms.

Correct sentence 1: Because our school is a boarding one, we should follow the rules of the dorms.

Wrong sentence 2: Although I didn't win in the end, **but** this match made me feel surprised and moved.

Correct sentence 2: Although I didn't win in the end, this match made me feel surprised and moved.

#### 4.1.2.6. Additional of Adverbs

The adverb “more” does not need to be placed before adjectives with the suffix -er. The addition of the modifiers shows that these Chinese students have not yet mastered how to use adverbs involving the word “more” in English sentences.

Wrong sentence: Other runners passed by one by one, but my legs were getting **more** heavier and heavier.

Correct sentence: Other runners passed by one by one, but my legs were getting heavier and heavier.

#### 4.1.2.7. Additional of Preposition

The preposition “to” should be omitted when it is followed by the adverb home. The learners were unfamiliar with this grammar rule.

Wrong sentence: On the way **to** home, I was told to participate in the running competition to represent our class.

Correct sentence: On the way home, I was told to participate in the running competition to represent our class.

#### 4.1.3. Misordering

Misordering is the third kind of grammatical error engaged in by the students. 18 (16.67%) cases in total were detected; class A had eight items, and class B had 10 items. This was the third most frequent error made by learners in their writing when they utilized the erroneous morpheme or morpheme group in a sentence, resulting in an inaccurate phrase.

##### 4.1.3.1. Misordering of Verb and Noun Phrase

It was found that the Chinese students wrongly placed the auxiliary verb after the noun phrase “some suggestions”. Although the meaning of this sentence is still understood, it is not accurate in terms of proper English grammar.

Wrong sentence 1: Here some suggestions **are** for you.

Correct sentence 1: Here **are** some suggestions for you.



#### 4.1.3.2. Misordering of Adverb

These errors were related to the placement of the adverbs. In the first sentence, enough modified the adverb “well”, and it should be put after the word. Similarly, for the second sentence, the adverb “hard” describes the verb study and it should be placed after the word.

Wrong sentence 1: Everything goes enough well.

Correct sentence 1: Everything goes well enough.

Wrong sentence 2: As the students of the new generation, we should hard study.

Correct sentence 2: As the students of the new generation, we should study hard.

#### 4.1.3.3. Misordering of Pronoun and Auxiliary Verb

These kinds of grammatical errors were associated with the placement of the pronouns (we and you) and auxiliary verbs (can and will) in an interrogative sentence and a declarative sentence. In the interrogative sentence, the pronoun should be before the auxiliary verb, while in the declarative sentence, it is the opposite.

Wrong sentence 1: How we can deal with the trouble?

Correct sentence 1: How can we deal with the trouble?

Wrong sentence 2: Hopefully with your great efforts, will you enjoy a fruitful life here.

Correct sentence 2: Hopefully with your great efforts, you will enjoy a fruitful life here.

#### 4.1.3.4. Misordering of Auxiliary Verbs and Adverbs

Moreover, the students misplaced the auxiliary verbs (had and could) and adverbs (never and hardly). In this case, both two adverbs should be placed after the auxiliary verbs.

Wrong sentence 1: I never had felt such warmth before.

Correct sentence 1: I had never felt such warmth before.

Wrong sentence 2: For the last 500 meters, my leg hardly could leave the ground.

Correct sentence 2: For the last 500 meters, my leg could hardly leave the ground.

#### 4.2. *Reasons of errors making*

The researcher conducted interviews to obtain the reasons for making grammatical errors and the teacher CF for the students' errors. The interview was divided into three parts. The first part comprised the interviewee's personal information, including name and education; the second part explored the questions related to the reasons for the three types of errors made by the students, namely

omission, addition, and misordering errors; and the third part referred to the English teachers' CF. The researcher categorized the reasons for students' errors into two main themes, namely (i) internal reasons and (ii) external reasons. Internal reasons include overgeneralization as some grammatical items only exist in English, negative transfer, and lack of sufficient input. In contrast, external reasons include a lack of English native speakers in the environment, inappropriate learning strategies, lack of motivation and positive attitudes, different thinking patterns between Chinese and Westerners, as well as insufficient English instruction contact hours at schools.

#### 4.2.1. Overgeneralization

Overgeneralization was the first reason given. Based on teacher-respondent B, some students were not accustomed to use of certain grammatical rules and word choices in different contexts, and therefore, they chose the one they were most familiar with. In the sentence "Other runners passed by one by one, but my legs were getting more heavier and heavier", the comparative level of adjectives is overgeneralized. Usually, "more" is added in front of partial disyllabic and polysyllabic adjectives to form a comparative level. However, in the above sentence, learners memorized this rule mechanically and added "more" before all adjectives, such as "more heavier and heavier", while the actual comparative form should be "heavier and heavier". In addition, teacher-respondent D mentioned that some students overgeneralized part of the phrase. For example, the phrase "on the way to home" was wrongly written. Students remembered the phrase "on the way to..." is a fixed lexical item, but they ignored home as an adverb and the preposition "to" should be omitted.

#### 4.2.2. Some Grammatical Items Only Exist in English

Some grammatical items, such as the articles "a", "an", and "the", are only found in English and not in Chinese. This resulted in students' inability to use the articles accurately in the English sentences. As teacher-respondent E stated, there was no usage of the articles in Chinese, hence students often dropped them when they wrote English sentences. For example, in the English sentence "I made great effort to rush", this is an incorrect sentence written by the learner. In Chinese, the article "a" shouldn't occur in this sentence. However, in English, the noun phrase "great effort" seems to be missing a determiner before it. An article "a" should be added before it.

#### 4.2.3. Negative Transfer

According to teacher-respondents A, B, and D, Chinese and English are different languages. Consequently, Chinese students are negatively influenced by the Chinese language when learning English and this led to grammatical errors. This can be illustrated by the following two sentences. In sentence (a), the students used the Chinese knowledge to deal with it, while in Chinese, the adverb "hard" should be

put after the verb “work”, while in English, the situation is exactly the opposite. Similarly, in sentence (b), the plural countable noun should follow the phrase “one of the most + adjective”. However, in Chinese, the singular form of the noun “student” is suitable in this sentence.

(a) We will hard work for our bright future.

(b) Jane, you are one of the most talented student I've met.

#### 4.2.4. Lack of Sufficient Quality Input

Limited time was planned and allocated in the current situation and teachers had to rush in order to complete all tasks according to the lesson plans, and teachers had to converse in Chinese to explain some details in order to make students understand better. “Too much L1 in class will bring down the L2 input.” (Teacher-respondent B). Furthermore, teacher-respondent D stated that “I speak more Chinese in class because the English level of students is not very high. Too much English was not good for their understanding in class.” For this reason, English learners in China had limited exposure to English in the classroom and little input after school due to the learning environment. This was not enough to improve senior high school students’ English skills, which caused the lack of enough high-quality input.

#### 4.2.5. Lack of English Native Speakers in the Environment

According to teacher-respondent C, “...lack of native English speakers in our environment and daily life. Chinese EFL learners start learning English in the 3rd grade (of primary education), but have very little access to native English speakers, and some English learners have never even interacted with native English speakers in their daily lives.” Usually, students are able to detect language errors consciously, when they have the opportunity to speak and to practice the language with native speakers. Shortfall of English native speakers in the community has not only impacted the students’ ability to master grammar via speaking but also caused them not be able to detect their grammatical errors through conversations. Furthermore, the education model in China is test-based, although reform has taken place gradually. Still, most students learn English only in English classes, and the teachers are mainly Chinese, who use L1 to teach English most of the time. Consequently, the thinking mode is then dominated by the Chinese way of thinking, so it will produce L1-dominated English, which contributes to errors in writing.

#### 4.2.6. Inappropriate Learning Strategies

Conventional teaching and learning methods in the 21st century classroom negatively affect language acquisition. Teacher-respondent A mentioned that “the students were overly dependent on the teacher and did not have the ability to think

independently, which resulted in passive learning rather than effective language learning. They also do not integrate knowledge, and do not like to summarize, but rather they just memorize the English grammar mechanically, which leads to forgetting easily.” In addition, “most students rely on rote memorization to remember words, which is both time-consuming and inefficient, thus making students bored with English and creating a cycle of nausea. Some of them are unwilling to speak the words loudly, just wait for the teacher to tell them the pronunciation.” (Teacher-respondent C). Therefore, inappropriate learning strategies contributed to a large extent to errors in students’ writings.

#### 4.2.7. Lack of Motivation and Positive Attitude

Lack of motivation and attitude represent another reason for this phenomenon. The typical traits of someone motivated to learn English are goal-directedness, persistence, attention, expectations, desires, and a strong sense of self-efficacy (Gardner 16-19). However, there was an absence of strong motivation among the Chinese students to learn English. “Most Chinese students are not interested in learning English, and they study English just for the examination. He also mentioned that there is a lot of homework for every subject, so they have no other time to study English.” (Teacher-respondent C) From this claim, we can conclude that many students were not strongly motivated. Learners’ attitudes encourage them to work hard to learn the target language in certain circumstances. To put it another way, having a favorable attitude toward the target language, the people who speak it, and the culture associated with it may help you learn it, whereas having a negative attitude will make it harder for you to learn it. As shown in the interview, teacher-respondent E stated that “most students study English for tests because of the Chinese educational system, even though our Chinese students may be friendly to the target language and its speakers. They might believe that English is merely an auxiliary ability and that they won’t have many opportunities to use it in the future because they will pursue various careers, which the majority don’t require in Mainland China.” Therefore, negative attitudes toward English were also a cause of making grammatical errors in writing.

#### 4.2.8. Different Thinking Patterns between Chinese and Westerners

Another possible reason is thinking patterns. Teacher-respondent A mentioned that Chinese and Westerners have completely different thinking patterns, and these students live in a Chinese language environment and therefore have Chinese thinking patterns. According to Yang, Chinese people emphasize the meaningfulness of sentences, and the connection between sentences does not rely on grammar alone, which emphasizes starting from the whole and moving from the whole to the part, forming a holistic Chinese thinking pattern (378-380). Westerners emphasize form, and the sentences are connected mainly by grammatical functions, which emphasize starting from the part and moving from the part to the whole,

forming a Western analytical mode of thinking. The difference in this mode of thinking is manifested in the language order: when native English speaking people express the sequence of time or place units, it is customary to arrange them from small to large, using the part in front and the whole in the back; on the contrary, Chinese people prefer to place them from large to small, using the whole in front and the part in the back. For example, the English sentence “I was born in Jining City, Shandong Province of China.” On the contrary, it should be “I was born in China, Shandong Province, Jining City.” in the Chinese language.

#### 4.2.9. Lack of English Class Hours at Schools

According to Dulay et al., second language exposure “... consists of everything the language learners hear and see when they learn a new language. It might include a large variety of situations—exchanges in restaurants and stores, conversations with friends, watching television, reading street signs and newspapers, as well as classroom activities—or it may be of scarcity, including only language classroom activities and a few books and records” (238-241). However, for Chinese senior high school students, English class is the primary way to learn English. As teacher-respondent A stated, “Chinese high school seniors have to study almost ten subjects, and English is only one of them. With about two to three English classes per week, each class lasts 45 minutes, and high school English involves difficult grammar, so class time is often not enough. As students need to study a lot of subjects, little time for reviewing English and doing exercises after class is left, so the overall lack of study time is one of the reasons why students will make errors.” Chinese senior high school students have limited English class time, so the exposure to English was not enough, which was one of the reasons resulting in making errors in writing.

#### 4.3. *Corrective feedback provided by EFL teachers*

Undoubtedly, instruction helps learners learn a second language, which allows them to avoid or correct past errors. First, the researcher wants to contrast “learning” and “acquisition” in this context. Krashen initially put forward this distinction in his monitor theory (12-18). “Learning” is the process of paying conscious attention to a language to understand and memorize rules, while “acquisition” is a subconscious process when learners use a language for communication (Krashen 10). Thus, based on this distinction, we can conclude that there are two types of instruction: implicit instruction (inductive through the supply of i+1 intelligible information) and explicit instruction (deductive through rule explanation and application). It is impossible to provide learner-centered instruction in China due to the large number of students enrolled in classes. This is because it is typical in Chinese education and impracticable to personalize instruction to each student’s unique needs. Various training modes should be combined, such as implicit or explicit instruction, with pedagogy since they may interact with one another and help enhance learners’ English proficiency.

#### 4.3.1. Explicit Corrective Feedback

According to Ellis, explicit feedback is more effective in eliciting the learner's initial proper use of the structure and their subsequent accurate use (431). Ferris also stated that it might be appropriate for children to perform less well academically when problems like lexical and syntactical mistakes are too complex for students to fix on their own (78). However, from the interview, few teachers chose explicit feedback because it will take a lot of time compared to implicit feedback. Only Teacher-respondent D mentioned that she would give explicit CF on students' compositions to facilitate students' understanding of grammatical errors. She said that "I will give students explicit feedback because it is clearer for my students to understand their errors. If I mark the errors, students will get confused and not correct themselves." Therefore, language teachers should provide more detailed and accurate feedback on their students' grammatical faults in order to assist students to become more grammatically correct and aware. For example, one student makes an error in the sentence "It's vital importance to develop good habits." And the teacher will add "of" before the word "vital" directly in the student's composition and correct it as "It's of vital importance to develop good habits", which is clearer and understandable.

#### 4.3.2. Implicit Corrective Feedback

Contrarily, implicit feedback incorporates students in the editing process, keeps them thinking, and helps them develop ideas and think about how to present their ideas using the proper form. From the interview, most of the teachers preferred implicit CF. Both Teacher-respondents A and E chose implicit CF because of the heavy teaching task and time constraints, so just marking the errors can save a lot of time. These findings can be evidenced from the interviews conducted with the teacher-participants: "Due to the heavy teaching task and time constraint, there is no way to provide feedback to every student's mistakes. I can only pick out some typical problems and talk about them in class, and most of the time, the errors are marked on the essays and scores are given." (Teacher-respondent A). "Most of the time, I will circle the students' errors and give them marks directly." (Teacher-respondent E). As a result, it can be said that implicit feedback occasionally aids learners in correcting their errors. In the long term, it also supports their growth into becoming independent learners who are better able to read their own work critically and reflectively, are more aware of their own errors, and are more able to increase writing correctness through self-awareness of errors and repairing of the errors marked implicitly. For example, in the sentence "Second, don't make friends with every classmates.", the teacher will just circle the word "classmates", reminding students the word is wrong and asking students to correct it themselves.

#### 4.3.3. Both Explicit and Implicit Corrective Feedback

In some cases, English language teachers used explicit and implicit feedback separately in different cases. Teacher-respondent B and C chose both explicit and implicit feedback. “I will use both explicit and implicit. Sometimes, it is not necessary to give explicit feedback on students every writing because some grammatical errors are too common and most of the students will make, then I will explain these errors in class. And appropriate implicit correction promotes students’ brainstorming.” (Teacher-respondent B). “It depends. If the errors are very common in students’ writings, I will not give the correction until we have classes. If the errors are individual, I will correct them directly to prevent students misunderstanding.” (Teacher-respondent C). The teacher-respondents classified the errors into two categories, and the first is a common one that will be explained in class, which will more likely draw students’ attention to them, thus achieving the goal of correcting their errors; the second is an individual one that will be corrected directly. Therefore, both implicit and explicit feedback can be effective if used at the right time and with the proper technique given the learners’ developmental stages. For example, there is one common error in the sentence, “First, I would like to give you some advices.”, so the teacher just marks the word “advices” and will explain it in class. Another sentence, “I am really pleasing that we can be in the same school.”, and this error is not common among students, so the teacher will correct the error directly to avoid ambiguity.

### 5. DISCUSSION

From the interview, it can be concluded that most teachers prefer implicit feedback. The teachers gave several reasons for choosing implicit feedback. First, it saves time to use this kind of feedback. Second, they want students to think about the answer themselves. This particular finding is in agreement with some studies that learners benefit from indirect feedback since they can autonomously change their work, which allows them to process the language (Ferris 33). Moreover, indirect feedback encourages students to autonomously fix their errors, which helps them learn (Lyster 399).

Third, some grammatical errors are common, which they believe is unnecessary to correct every error. However, according to Nazari, explicit feedback is more successful than implicit feedback in increasing students’ grammatical awareness and correctness because it helps them feel more confident, at ease, and motivated during the learning process (156). According to Nazari, both implicit and explicit CF play an equally important role in expressing similar grammatical constructions, like the present perfect (160-161). It was thus demonstrated that students who received targeted CF were better able to apply the grammar to writing assignments. Although both explicit and implicit CF can help students write more accurately and their respective impacts are equivalent, overt corrective input somewhat outweighs implicit feedback. This finding supports what Ferris and Roberts reported (162). They reported that direct feedback is more beneficial than indirect feedback,

especially for English language learners who are less proficient. Giving weak students immediate feedback may enable them to revise their work properly.

Both explicit and implicit CF can be used to stimulate corrective awareness. The grammar, or the rules that are no longer attended by CF, tends to create grammatical errors if CF falls below a specific level or disappears totally. CF is thereupon essential for the interlanguage development of the learner and, subsequently, for reducing errors. As in this study, the teacher should point out students' errors to provide correct feedback. If necessary, techniques may be adjusted as a result of this procedure. First and foremost, grammatical errors must be carefully examined. If the error cannot be fixed by the students, it will remain in their interlanguage, at which point the teacher will have to rectify it. The teacher may choose not to correct a mistake if it can be fixed by the students and is caused by their lack of concentration or another factor. Secondly, the predicament should be assessed. Teachers should avoid interrupting the learners if they are trying to convey meaning rather than practicing grammar. In a nutshell, the teachers can offer an overall assessment. Thirdly, the learner's stage needs to be taken into account. For the beginner, the teachers can do their best to fix the faults; this will not discourage the learners but will boost their confidence in future communication. As argued by Ellis, explicit feedback at this early stage of learning is more effective in eliciting the learner's immediate appropriate use of the structure (431). Therefore, both explicit and implicit CF help in correcting errors in certain circumstances. CF is unquestionably helpful in the Chinese EFL learning setting, which has poor input and limited possibilities for language use. And when teachers provide CF, learners must pay attention to detect the discrepancies between the feedback and their production so they will genuinely absorb such feedback.

## 6. CONCLUSION

In short, the most frequent grammatical errors are omission followed by addition and misordering. Internal reasons related to language include overgeneralization, grammatical items unique to English, negative transfer, and lack of sufficient input. External reasons encompass the scarcity of native English speakers in the environment, inappropriate learning strategies, lack of motivation and positive attitudes, differing thinking patterns between Chinese and Western learners, as well as insufficient English instruction hours at schools. Lastly, explicit feedback is preferable when providing CF.

The implication of this study is encouraging the students to pay attention to the errors and to correct them. Foreign language learning is a rather complex cognitive process that involves many complex factors. There are many kinds of language errors in the target language. With the development of Error Analysis Theory, we should have a new understanding of errors and practice foreign language teaching according to the current achievements of theoretical research. In the course of learning, learners' errors should be treated differently, and different measures should be taken to deal with them. Language learners' errors should be regarded as normal



phenomena in language learning, which learners use for acquisition. Additionally, learners' psychology of writing should be emphasized to increase their interest in learning English. In daily writing training, teachers can choose articles and topics that align with learners' interests. Once learners become interested in English, they will be less reluctant to subsequent writing training. On top of that, English teachers should change the approach/ method of teaching writing. Writing training can be enhanced through group cooperation and competitive mechanisms that reward EFL learners for accurately producing English. Ultimately, although both explicit and implicit feedback can reduce learners' linguistic errors and improve their writing accuracy to some extent, the results showed that teachers would be more inclined to use implicit feedback when choosing different types of feedback. Therefore, teachers should be more flexible in using different types of CF and can combine different types of feedback to guide learners' English writing according to their real learning situations.

Furthermore, future research should address several limitations. Firstly, studies should explore the specific functions of feedback in discourse. Secondly, experimental research designs are necessary to measure the impact of feedback on EFL students, grammatical accuracy in writing. Lastly, future studies should thoroughly investigate how EFL students respond to the CF given by their instructors.

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## DISPOSABLE (TEXTUAL) BODIES: POPULAR PROSTITUTE NARRATIVES AND THE COMPOSITE NOVEL

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*ABSTRACT.* The present article compares two coeval authors, Daniel Defoe (1660-1731) and Jane Barker (1652–1732), who stand on opposite sides of the political and religious spectrum, to analyse the ways in which they engage with popular prostitute stories in *Moll Flanders* (1722) and the *Patch-Work* narratives (1723, 1726), respectively. This contribution, then, offers novel insights into these writers' work, exploring the ways in which Defoe rewrites this form of popular fiction to conform to his middle-class fantasy of personal development, and how Barker responds both to Defoe's tales of prostitute ascent and the general taste for this fiction from her own ideological perspective. It will also expose their similarities, as they construct composite literary bodies of many different prostitute narratives, and emphasize the need to understand the novel as an assemblage of voices, genres and sociomaterial aspects.

*Keywords:* novel, canon, popular fiction, intertextuality, textual assemblage, prostitute narrative.

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## CUERPOS (TEXTUALES) DESECHABLES: NARRACIONES POPULARES SOBRE PROSTITUTAS Y LA NOVELA COMPUESTA

*RESUMEN.* El presente artículo compara dos autores coetáneos, Daniel Defoe (1660-1731) y Jane Barker (1652-1732), los cuales ocupan posiciones políticas y religiosas opuestas, para analizar las maneras en las que dialogan con las populares historias de prostitutas en *Moll Flanders* (1722) y las novelas *Patch-Work* (1723, 1726), respectivamente. Esta contribución, pues, ofrece novedosas perspectivas sobre la obra de ambos, al explorar la manera en la que Defoe reescribe esta forma de ficción popular para responder a su fantasía de desarrollo personal de clase media, y cómo Barker responde tanto a los relatos de ascenso de la prostituta de Defoe, como al gusto general por este tipo de ficción, desde su propia perspectiva ideológica. También expondrá sus similitudes, ya que construyen cuerpos literarios compuestos de diferentes narrativas de prostitutas, y enfatizará la necesidad de entender la novela como un ensamblaje de voces, géneros y aspectos sociomateriales.

*Palabras clave:* novela, canon, ficción popular, intertextualidad, ensamblaje textual, narraciones sobre prostitutas.

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In 1732 William Hogarth produced a popular series of engravings titled *A Harlot's Progress*, which, together with his subsequent *A Rake's Progress* (1734-35), evince the appeal of those lives that deviated from the norm. Hogarth's harlot starts as a young girl newly arrived in London who meets a procuress, later to descend into the state of mistress, prostitute, inmate of Bridewell prison, diseased body, and, finally, a disposable one, in a coffin surrounded by insincere mourners. Her progress is clearly drawn downwards, in a pattern of descent, disease, and death. Hogarth's story is, in fact, graphically reproducing popular coeval narratives depicting the fall or rise of a prostitute or courtesan, for the entertainment or instruction of their audience.

A form of popular culture, it is necessary to reconsider these well-read texts in dialogue with more established works that have found their place in academia, to provide a more comprehensive picture of what was being read and how, and the ways in which canonical and popular culture must be understood together in context. These reflections provide a less categorical approach, which perceives eighteenth-century fiction as a network of texts that dialogued with and enriched each other, an assemblage of different popular cultures that appealed to a varied audience and construct a more inclusive and wide-ranging understanding of this period's literary production. It therefore supports the idea that the novel, in particular, comes into existence as an assemblage, being "a polyphonic (heteroglossic) assemblage of voices ... a composite of genres ... an assemblage of materials" (Brown 271), but also a locus for the blending of the historical, political, sociological, and literary.

In that line, the present article places together two coeval authors, Daniel Defoe (1660-1731) and Jane Barker (1652-1732), who nevertheless stand on opposite sides of the political and religious spectrum, and write very different fiction, to explore the ways in which they engage with these popular prostitute stories in *Moll Flanders* (1722) and the *Patch-Work* narratives (1723, 1726), respectively. Whereas Defoe has been previously associated with this genre, or its sibling, the rogue narrative (Watt; Richetti, *Popular Fiction*; Rosenthal, *Infamous Commerce*; Smith; Borham-Puyal, *Contemporary Rewritings*), Barker has not been studied under the light of her fiction's intertextual relation with this form of criminal biography, nor have these authors' works stood in comparison regarding their use of this genre. This contribution, then, offers new insights into these writers' oeuvre, exploring the ways in which Defoe rewrites this form of popular fiction to fit his middle-class fantasy of personal development, and how Barker responds both to Defoe's tales of prostitute ascent and the general taste for this fiction from her own vantage point as a Jacobite woman writer. In this comparative approach, formal similarities, such as their address to the reader, their reflection on genre, or their engagement with the prostitute story, will be seen to be placed at the service of divergent readings of society, proving the idea that these narratives could be understood as *socioliterary assemblages*, in which a composite form can serve to reflect a complex reality.

## 1. THE PROSTITUTE AND HER STORY: COMMODITIES TO BE CONSUMED

In the early eighteenth-century there existed a production and marketing of popular literature that blended "instruction, entertainment, ostensible simplicity and affordable prices" (Bertelsen 61), and that paradoxically "intertwined with an emergent middle class and an expropriating elite as to make drawing of distinct lines of aesthetic or material demarcation virtually impossible" (62), a form of "sociomaterial assemblages"<sup>1</sup> that brought together peoples from different backgrounds and contexts by means of popular performance and production. It is pertinent, then, to speak of varied "popular cultures in shifting and ambiguous relationship to each other and to a variegated elite culture", a type of "non-categorical approach" made the more compelling by considering that in the eighteenth-century "commerce was transforming the traditional relationship of 'high' and 'low' and producing a commercialised 'popular culture'" (Bertelsen 62). This blending of the high and the low moved beyond the class of the intended audience and can be perceived as well in how popular literature often became the foundation for more elite literary productions that have lived on in Western culture as canonical creations.

Among these forms of popular and highly ephemeral literature were the biographies, chapbooks, songs, poems, or broadsheets devoted to different criminal

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<sup>1</sup> I am adapting Bill Brown's term applied to the right of assemblage, which assembles people "assembled elsewhere" and combines "persons, images, things" (302). I believe that concept illustrates this shared coming together by popular spectacle or literature as described in the following paragraphs.

figures of the time, among them highwaymen or prostitutes. These forms of cheap print capitalised on the interest in the lives and adventures of these characters, often providing “a cross-fertilisation of text and performance” (Bertelsen 73) by their appearance linked to public trials or executions. An extremely popular spectacle among the working classes, the Tyburn hangings

generated preliminary publicity in the form of criminal speeches, confessions, biographies and ballads which in turn assured large turnouts for the events and a ready assembled market for further literary selling. Having read or heard a fictional last dying speech or ballad or short biography of the condemned, the London populace could then experience the real thing in what must have been an excruciatingly tense moment of public theatre. (Bertelsen 74)

Riding through the crowded streets or being granted the chance to speak their final words gave those condemned a performative platform from which journalistic and fictional accounts could feed the appetite of the voracious consumers of such public spectacles and criminal stories. Thus, given an appealing outlaw subject “an extended and various body of work encompassing almost all popular genres and extending to more sophisticated spin-offs in the form of novels (*Moll Flanders*, *Jonathan Wild*) and plays (*The Beggar’s Opera*)” could be generated (Bertelsen 74). Criminal subjects—their literal and literary lives and bodies—are then immersed in an increasingly capitalist and consumerist culture in which they become objects of popular rapid consumption, a source of entertainment and a moral warning. They respond, then, to the notion of “abjected” or “delegitimized” bodies that barely count as human bodies at all (Butler, *Bodies that Matter* 15) in their nature as outcasts and source of spectacle; they are “disposable” as victims of forces of exploitation, poverty, violence, or sexual discrimination (Butler, *Dispossession*), as disposable human and cultural capital in the excesses of a consumerist society. Emphasising this ephemerality and cultural abjectivity is the fact that the criminal textual bodies which lasted in the literary legacy of the eighteenth century were those that abandoned the realm of the popular and were inserted into the canon of sanctioned works of fiction—mostly written by men, as in the three instances quoted by Bertelsen—until recovered by the work of new schools of literary criticism.

Prostitute narratives flourished during the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries, taking the form of different genres: “whore dialogues”, “whore letters”, “whore biographies”, or the “scandal chronicle”<sup>2</sup> (Olsson viii-ix), which highlighted the “more negative and unruly forces of the public” and their “appetite for gossip”

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<sup>2</sup> Olsson includes this genre for its obvious similarities with the more explicit prostitute narrative. In the seventeenth century the ‘scandalous chronicle’ included characters disguised to live a libertine life or roman-a-clèf in which real characters were hidden under pseudonyms, while in the eighteenth century we also find ‘scandalous memoirs’ of lives of pleasure, especially among women who were trying to justify or vindicate themselves (Thompson; Breashears). Katherine Binhammer defines the “scandalous autobiography” as the “more fact-based sister genre” of the “whore’s story” (61). However, the term is open to some controversy as proven by Breashears.



(Eger et al. 9). The different genres have been categorised by Laura Rosenthal into two strands, the libertine and the sentimental, which vary in their approaches to sexuality and the agency given to their heroine, yet share their exploration of economic mobility—most notably upwards in libertine fiction, mainly downwards in the sentimental one—and their portrayal of prostitution as pointing to “emerging forms of social disruption, including global commerce, empire building, economic mobility, commodification, reliance on waged labor, the market in luxury goods, new forms of gender identity, and changing attitudes towards sexuality” (“Introduction” xx-xxi). This is in line with Ellis and Lewis’s understanding of prostitution as becoming an assemblage of sexual, economic, and social dimensions (3), and as “plac[ing] the construction of femininity at the centre of the properly philosophical debates over the nature of the commercial impetus in eighteenth-century capitalism” (11). These critics also perceived those two approaches, the libertine which “sees her as an agent of corruption, a libertine seducer of men and a fornicating sinful adulteress, inhabiting a violent world of excessive consumption, insatiable desire, criminal behaviour and bestial depravity”, and a sentimental construction that transforms her “from a criminal to a victim, from an agent of sin to an object of compassion” (11). Katherine Binhammer, in her exploration of the later Magdalen histories, further distinguishes between a “radical and a conservative telling of seduction” in these sentimental tales, between “the portrayal of the sentimental prostitute as a virtuous love object versus representing her as an abject victim” (61). While these narratives emphasise the “prostitute’s relationship to a new commercial marketplace” at the same time they “sentimentalized their fall” (42), what this scholar terms radical retellings focus more on the “moral corruption within Britain’s emerging consumer culture” or the “moral bankruptcy” of the “sexual and economic system” that limits women’s employment opportunities (58-59), whereas both the “libertine” and the “bourgeois sentimental” narratives of seduced women share the reduction of women to love and sex (31).

Despite these differences, what all prostitute narratives—whether in the libertine or sentimental form, whether based on fact or not—do have in common is that they offer the prostitute and her story to avid consumers. At this time one of the euphemisms for female genitalia was, precisely, “commodity” (Rosenthal, *Infamous Commerce* 6), emphasising that the female body is what is to be bought and consumed. The same could be said of fiction, where the plights of young women were aestheticized for the pleasure of an audience, often in the sentimental theme of “virtue in distress” in which women were “expected to suffer” (Brissenden 84). Even if these narratives avoid explicitness or present the prostitute as a social victim, they still leave her “vulnerable to erotic voyeurism” (Rosenthal, “Introduction” xxi). Just as these women instrumentalize their bodies, or are instrumentalized by their clients, pimps, or bawds, so are their textual bodies consumed and disposed of in the shape of the cheap prints that carry their stories. Examples range from Hogarth’s harlot to broadsheets and songs on Sally Salisbury, a celebrated and wealthy courtesan sent to prison for stabbing her lover, whose story then blended the textual and the performative by her role as public felon whose court case was avidly followed, and who tragically died in prison. Her crime, with an illustration of the

stabbing, was included in the Newgate Calendar, while cheap prints circulated during her trial.<sup>3</sup> Longer versions of her life and sexual exploits were published; one of them, Charles Walker's, after the author posted advertisements to gather anecdotes (Walker 1). This narrative is divided into chapters pertaining to the different stages of her life, and includes poems and letters from various addressees, creating a polyphonic composite of tales or pictures that attempt to portray the singular character of Sally. These unsentimental and picaresque patches were pieced together by Walker, who assumes the role of faithful editor (10, 68) and wishes to divide his retelling into two volumes, given the "Impatience of the Publick" and her "many Feats" (68), which would grant his editorial success at the avid consumption of her story. In these retellings of Sally's story, she is reduced to anecdotes from her lovers, with little attention to her interiority. If selling an "intimate part of the self to the marketplace" can be considered "the most tragic form of human alienation possible" (Rosenthal, *Infamous Commerce* 14), Sally and her sisters experience that alienation twice as they become textual selves exploited by the cultural marketplace.

However, besides their commercial appeal, the prostitutes' narratives of social ascent or descent serve their authors to "explore anxieties generated by the increasingly mobile world of eighteenth-century society" (Rosenthal, "Introduction" xx), in which middle-class women might fall, or low ones might rise through earned wealth or even advantageous marriages—the latter having its echo in some courtesans' real life. They moreover expose the lack of opportunities for women and the frailty of their circumstances based on sexual reputation. These stories also highlight the porous nature of social and economic boundaries because the prostitutes' access to luxury imported goods and fashions and their recurrent position as trend-setters (Rosenthal, "Introduction" xxiv) breached the divide between "the visible and illicit prostitute and the invisible respectable woman" (Attwood 6), and between public appearance and private activity.

These issues are explored in what are now termed more canonical works of fiction, proving the notion that these genres dialogue with the mainstream novel of the mid-eighteenth century. An example would be Samuel Richardson's *Clarissa* (1748), in which the heroine is raped in a house of disrepute, with the complicity of a mannish madam, yet escapes the fate of women previously associated to Lovelace, who must resort to prostitution to survive. She is expected to do the same, but is spared the "distress of her poorer sisters" (Brissenden 86), and "*heroically* resists prostitution" (Rosenthal, *Infamous Commerce* 14; my emphasis). Richardson, in fact, proves apt in this commercialization of women's suffering and sexual threats, first with Pamela's harassment, then with Clarissa's sexual assault—which shocked readers, but the author considered the triumph of virtue (Binhammer 21)—, and finally with his use of prostitution as little more than context for his plot or to create opposing anti-heroines for his female moral exemplar. Binhammer records his

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<sup>3</sup> The broadsheet published in 1723 followed the tradition of building a morality tale out of this unlikely heroine's example. On her story see Richetti (*Popular Fiction*) and Rosenthal (*Nightwalkers*).

sympathetic response to sentimental narratives of innocent victims of seduction forced by reduced circumstances into prostitution, and his support of the Magdalen project (40). Yet his prostitutes are conniving and collaborate with Lovelace; they are hypocritical in their appearance of reform and solidarity. They also dressed as ladies to deceive Clarissa better, breaching the above-mentioned boundaries, as later Moll would do dressing as a fine lady. Richardson then exposes the conventional narratives on prostitution and the value placed on virtue as part of women's commodification. On her part, in Charlotte Lennox's *The Female Quixote* (1752), Arabella mistakes a disguised prostitute for a heroine (336), and the story of Miss Groves, a ruined woman, stands in contrast to the heroine's more virtuous path towards marriage (69-78, 141-142). In these now canonical texts, and others from this period, the prostitutes serve "as negative versions of the heroine, their lives a haunting alternative to domestic virtue" (Rosenthal, "Introduction" xi). They are little more than disposable textual bodies, who easily disappear from the narrative, although still leaving a trace of the popular fiction around outcast women that inspired them. In this sense, with their unstable position between fact and fiction, history and literature, prostitute narratives could "offer a counterbalance to and complication of the picture of eighteenth-century culture one might draw from reading the more familiar canon of fiction" (Rosenthal, "Introduction" xxvi).

Still, these outcast women also become more than secondary characters, for these forms of popular culture come to serve as a basis for works of fiction studied today as epitomes of the literature of their time, among them Daniel Defoe's novels and Jane Barker's framed-narrative, both of which explore the sexual and financial politics around women's bodies and virtue by appropriating some of the clichés of these popular works. Both authors' works precede by thirty years the foundation of the Magdalen hospital and the overflow of publications on its penitents, yet will be seen to advance many of the narrative conventions and socio-economic readings of these popular stories that counted Richardson among their readers.

## 2. 'CANONIZING' HER VOICE AND STORY: VENTRILOQUISM OF THE SELF-MADE WOMAN IN DEFOE'S NOVELS

Always attuned to popular genres, in *The Fortunes and Misfortunes of the Famous Moll Flanders*, published in 1722, Daniel Defoe, the same author who assembled fact and fiction in his imitation of narratives of stranded sailors, now adopts the genre of the prostitute narrative to go beyond the simplified scandalous story of the broadsheets, poems, songs, and longer biographies that detailed the lives of famous courtesans, yet following many of the conventions of the more positive retellings, such as the story of the rise to fame and fortune of Kitty Fisher, a well-known mistress. The preface, in fact, opens with a call to attention to the type of private histories his own production has as a model:

The World is so taken up of late with Novels and Romances, that it will be hard for a private History to be taken for Genuine, where the Names and other Circumstances of the person are concealed, and on this Account we must be

content to leave the Reader to pass his own Opinion upon the ensuing Sheets, and take it just as he pleases. (3)

This paragraph—in this instance recalling titles such as “The Genuine History” or “Authentick Memoirs” of Sally and preceding the “Histories” of the Magdalen penitents—contraposes genres distinguished by their claim to fiction and fact, respectively, at the same time it complicates matters by hinting at the scandalous chronicles, in which fake names could hide actual people. Defoe’s appreciation for the genre of “genuine biography” is, for Ian Watt, evinced in how he always passes his works off as “authentic autobiography” (120), being *Moll* no exception.

Defoe was aware of the blending of the “mixture of the literal and the allegorical in fiction” (Richetti, *Popular Fiction* 32) and insists that his “moral meaning is as important as the literal truth of the story” (*Popular Fiction* 33), conscious of the need for popular fiction to justify itself “as a worth-while pastime” (33). If the prostitute narrative’s appeal was greatly based on its factual nature and its proximity to the scandalous chronicle, which encourages readers to discover the thinly veiled identities of the characters, Defoe’s text again blurs the boundaries between fact and fiction, as he had done with *Robinson Crusoe*, inspired by factual accounts, yet open to the accusation of being nothing but fiction.<sup>4</sup> It will not be the only similarity between these two works. Defoe uses in both novels the narrative conventions associated to the genre of the “history” to build fiction as a locus of personal and social truth, in which, paradoxically, the familiarity of the narrative conventions becomes evidence of their authenticity, as Binhammer states of the penitents’ stories, where deviation from convention could be met with accusations of insincerity (61-64). On the other hand, despite resorting to these conventions, factual or fictional tales enable these anonymous women to be individuated (Binhammer 65), which Defoe does by transforming his Moll into another instance of the construction of a “characteristic product of modern individualism” (Watt 105), providing his character with literary truth and presenting the social and economic forces at play with verisimilar skill. That is, his fiction enables the prostitute to become an individual rather than a type, even if her life story is modelled on innumerable others and their episodic narrative.

Connected to the idea of composite writing, Defoe’s now canonical novel offers striking formal similarities to the popular stories of prostitute progression or descent, with “vividly realized individual episodes, separated by rather flat, bridging sections of narrative, as Moll’s life progresses to its predetermined conclusion” (Bree xiv); in fact, as Bree underlines, the “typical features of the looping of a plot to link cause and effect, past and future, are almost entirely absent” (xiv). Most notably, Watt describes this work with the term “patchwork” (112), highlighting its structure as a series of passages with a connective framework and its episodic nature (117); a point

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<sup>4</sup> One of such accusations was Charles Gildon’s *The Life and Strange Surprising Adventures of Mr. D- De F-, of London, Hosier* (1719), where he accused Defoe of being a liar who had “forged a story” and imposed it “upon the world as Truth”, as the real account of a mariner from York named Robinson Crusoe.

also made by Richetti, who refers to Defoe's technique as patching together different elements (*English Novel* 63), all of which recalls Barker's epithet for and technique in her own narrative.<sup>5</sup> Defoe, then, follows in structure these popular stories, which are "commonly episodic" (Rosenthal, "Introduction" xiii), falling short of creating "the new form", the "novel", given its lack of "intrinsic coherence", among other characteristics (Watt 147), yet also proving that the "invention" of the novelistic form mainly results from the re-fashioning of literary genres already in place, in the "novelization" of pre-existing discourses (Cascardi 59).

With echoes of both the libertine and the sentimental subgenres, Defoe's *Moll* and his later *Roxana* are indeed both stories of social descent and ascent, of misery and triumph, of regret and pride (Attwood 149). Focusing on *Moll*, she undertakes the well-trodden path of "sin, repentance, and redemption" (Bree xvi), yet complicated by the relevance of materialism in this economic tale of social mobility, with clear echoes of Defoe's greatest success. From its very title, which gives a full account of her story, it is possible to perceive her early descent, only to rise in wealth and appearance of respectability at the end: from whore, bigamist, thief, and felon, to rich, honest, and penitent, a progression that Defoe highlights with his use of italics.<sup>6</sup> With its promise of fortunes and misfortunes together with his heroine's redemption, it echoes those publications printed as moral warnings, the preface declaring that this is "a Work from every part of which something may be learned, and some just and religious Inference is drawn, by which the Reader will have something of Instruction, if he pleases to make use of it" (5). This address to the audience will be seen as well in Barker, in her own encouragement to the reader to piece the story together to find the "secret" it keeps (Swenson, "Representing Modernity" 57, 59), which points to these authors' use of this form with an ideological purpose, with a message to be deciphered, even if different in their framing of the episodic patches and their reading of the prostitute narrative genre.

In fact, contrary to Barker's later moral conclusions, Defoe parodies these moralist conversion narratives with an unreliable narrator that is only too willing to justify herself, and who, as stated in the preface, "was not so extraordinary a Penitent, as she was at first" (6). In the last lines of the novel, *Moll* claims that she decided to "spend the Remainder of our Years in sincere Penitence, for the wicked Lives we had lived" (285), yet much of that same paragraph, for example, is used to excuse her past behaviour in the matter of her incest: her husband is said to be "perfectly easy on the Account", that "it was no Fault of [hers]", "a Mistake impossible to be prevented", the blame is placed on her brother's "vile part" (285), with no

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<sup>5</sup> Interestingly, Swenson records the same opinions on Defoe's *Crusoe*, while she also argues how this contributes to its standing as a modern novel that problematizes the building of narrative as well as the construction of a world through narrative ("Robinson Crusoe" 16).

<sup>6</sup> The full title famously reads as follows: "THE FORTUNES AND MISFORTUNES of the FAMOUS *Moll Flanders*, &c. Who was born in NEWGATE, and during a Life of continu'd Variety for Threescore Years, besides her Childhood, was Twelve Year a *Whore*, five times a *Wife* (whereof once to her own Brother) Twelve Years a *Thief*, Eight Year a Transported *Felon* in Virginia, at last grew *Rich*, liv'd *Honest*, and died a *Penitent*".

responsibility attributed to her for having kept it a secret. She then concludes her story advancing the later sentimental prostitute—and the sentimental distressed heroine in general—in a happy resolution in sync with Defoe’s more ‘radical’ and less conservative reading: displacing the blame to her circumstances, relating that after the “Fatigues” and “Miseries” she has gone through, she is now “in good Heart and Health”—not to mention wealth—living happily with her husband. Nevertheless, her criminal condition irrupts to the very end in this picture of domestic bliss to remind the reader of who she has been, with the reference to her incest and her claim that she “perform’d much more than the limited Terms of my Transportation” (285). The criminal and the sentimental, the economic and the moral, blend in Defoe’s ending, as they have done in his novel, which provides a more radical approach to the required narrative of penitence by its rejection of the final return to institutional control—whether a nunnery, Bridewell, or submission in marriage—or of redemptive death.

For Moll is not a passive victim of the circumstances. From the very start she wishes to escape the boundaries of birth, class, and servitude, to become a “gentlewoman” (10), understood by Moll as a self-employed woman (12). In her youthful innocence, she provides a more bourgeois significance to the term, and even uses it to describe a woman who, unbeknownst to her, is a madam of “ill Fame” (12) and whom Moll aspires to imitate in life (13). Defoe, then, exposes the permeable boundaries of class when defined by money, and responds to his context’s concerns about the increasing difficulty to distinguish the differences. And in so doing, Defoe creates a female character who, very much like Crusoe, is a self-made person, a “businesswoman” (Bree xxi), an instance of the earlier Restoration prostitute narratives of “empowerment, luxury and social rebellion”, of a “rise to wealth and status through ambition and ruthlessness” (Figueroa 38) and the later “tradesman-whore” (Binhammer 50), whose skill, resources and outcome are comparable to Defoe’s male protagonist. She is independent, skilled, and ingenious, rising above her dire settings and conditions to become wealthier, but also to own land on which she commands over others. She is concerned with money, and with her own decreasing worth in the market: she understands herself as a commodity and strategizes around that notion, moving from whore to wife, although the narrative highlights the similarities in these positions. When she sells her virginity, Moll states: “being forsaken of my Vertue, and my Modesty, I had nothing of Value left to recommend me, either to God’s Blessing, or Man’s Assistance” (25). Virtue and modesty, proclaimed as necessary tokens in a marriageable girl, determine one’s value in the marriage market, one that also commodifies women’s bodies as sources for pleasure and heirs.<sup>7</sup> In fact, Moll seems to fare better as a convicted felon than

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<sup>7</sup> Schofield provides instances of this commodification of virtue in the prostitute’s narratives and in the general narrativization of women’s lives in the eighteenth-century (“Descending Angels” 186-187), while Binhammer explores how the prostitute’s story “unmasks many of the ideological assumptions that come to be true about bourgeois marriage”, among them that “virginity is a woman’s highest commodity”, and “makes a feminist argument about how

a traditional wife and mother, in appearance choosing the form of commodification that grants more agency, although being forced to remain on the margins of respectable society. In that sense, his ending contradicts the proclaimed moral, for there is no real punishment for Moll.

Defoe, then, seems to write admiringly of this woman who is “negotiating success” (Bree xix) in a hostile society with limited options available to women. The preface highlights this message, again drawing clear parallelisms with his previous novel and hero:

Her application to a sober Life, and *industrious Management* at last in Virginia, with her Transported Spouse, is a Story fruitful of Instruction, to all the unfortunate Creatures who are oblig'd to seek their Re-establishment abroad; whether by the Misery of Transportation, *or other Disaster*; letting them know, that *Diligence and Application* have their due Encouragement, *even in the remotest Parts of the World*, and that no Case can be so low, so despicable, or *so empty of Prospect*, but that an *unwearied Industry* will go a great way to deliver us from it, will in time raise the meanest Creature to *appear again in the World*, and *give him a new Cast for his Life*. (5-6, my emphasis)

Despite this positive reading of Moll as a female version of Crusoe, there are significant differences. Although they are both illustrations of Defoe's *homo economicus* (Watt 105, 107, 125),<sup>8</sup> Moll's selfishness and fall from grace would have been perceived as greater, for she does not abandon her parents, but her offspring, and she must resort to crime rather than domestic undertakings. In fact, Defoe presents an interesting gender reversal in that Crusoe is, in Pat Rogers's words, more a “homemaker” than an adventurer, more a proprietor than a pioneer (375), and the opposite could be said of Moll. Whereas for much of the narrative (28 years) Crusoe stays in one place and builds a home and a community, taking care of living beings, Moll has a rambling life in which she leaves everyone behind, including her various children. This roguish approach complicates the possible sentimental sympathy towards her by offering the portrait of an unfeeling mother who abandons her progeny, or who even steals from a child and considers, for a moment, murdering him (162). This would have been read as unnatural inclinations in a woman, therefore in tune with a sexual marketplace dominated by men (Rosenthal, *Infamous Commerce* 10; Smith 51), in which powerful courtesans, such as Sally, are often described in gender ambiguous terms, defined by their “masculine pleasures” and rakishness (Walker 4).

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the wife and the prostitute are linked by women's financial dependence on men” (52). These considerations led to the discussion at this time of the notion of marriage as ‘legal prostitution’.

<sup>8</sup> Similarly, Richetti compares Crusoe and Roxana as exemplars of the “Mandevillian pattern whereby individual and selfish action (vice) produces social benefits – an increase in the production of goods and services, a contribution to the accumulation and circulation of wealth that constitutes an economically healthy society (as Defoe would have defined it)” (*English Novel* 65).

Given all these considerations, it is understandable that *Moll Flanders* was included in the history of the modern novel as a vehicle for middle-class capitalist values (Watt 128), and for its advancement of social and formal realism. And yet its imitation of the prostitute narrative complicates this inclusion from a formal perspective. Not only because of its episodic nature, but by sacrificing plausibility in Moll's "freedom from the probable psychological and social consequences of everything she does" (Watt 127-128), which echoes the unapologetic narrative of Sally, among others, more intent on entertaining the audience than presenting a verisimilar psychological portrait. Part of the rogue's or picaro's appeal is the quality of rising above the circumstances, of outsmarting the law, and working the system to their advantage, and Defoe withdraws from condemning his character to the kind of social death that later heroines would experience. In this, Defoe also sacrifices plausibility: Sally and other famous felons are punished for their crimes, with her bleak ending in prison strikingly different to Moll's experience in Newgate and subsequent liberation. It is then possible to disagree with Watt when he sees the source of Defoe's narrative as the "authentic biography" rather than the semi-fictional ones of rogues (120):<sup>9</sup> Defoe, as has been claimed, uses the narrative conventions of a genre in which fact and fiction are difficult to distinguish—even in the case of famous scandalous memoirists whose stories were grounded on events known by the public (Joule)—and which in the later part of the century became so popular and formulaic that it even influenced factual accounts of prostitutes who wished to gain public sympathy (Binhammer 61-64). In that sense, it would be possible to describe his novel as a composite, an assemblage of multiple stories and models of popular prostitute narratives, unified under the history of one particular woman.

Subsequent abridgments and chapbooks simplified further Moll's social and economic development story, reducing her crimes, or focusing mainly on them (Bree xxiii); a fact that would highlight the engagement of Defoe with the literary market of his time, for he created a piece of "popular" and "ephemeral" fiction (Watt 111), not even carefully edited given its cheapness. Surely because of its belonging to the prostitute autobiography genre, it "became associated with entertainment for the lower orders" (Bree xxii), rather than a work with scenes that would be welcomed by "cultivated minds" (Chalmers qtd in Bree xxv). In one of the ironies of literary history, Defoe's text sprang from a dismissed form of popular fiction, became famous through cheap popular print, and is now studied as a classic, very much the road *Crusoe* travelled, proving once more the artificial divide created between high and low culture, and that ephemeral texts retelling the lives of marginal people are significant in the understanding of the history of the (canonical) novel.

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<sup>9</sup> Watt never explicitly employs the term "prostitute biography", using only the more general "rogue biography". I believe this is why he states that it is not known how much Defoe is indebted to "any particular formal model in writing" or that "the actual prototype of the heroine, if any, has not been established" (119).



## 3. SETTING HER STORY AS EXAMPLE: BARKER'S TRAIL OF LEWD WOMEN

Moving on to a very different text, Jane Barker opens her *A Patch-Work Screen for the Ladies*, published in 1723, with the following lines: “*But I doubt my Reader will say, ... why a HISTORY reduc'd into Patches? especially since HISTORIES at Large are so Fashionable in this Age; viz. Robinson Crusoe, and Moll Flanders; Colonel Jack, and Sally Salisbury; with many other Heroes and Heroines?*” (*Patch-Work* 51, italics in original). Interestingly, Barker also starts her work with a reflection on genre. She employs the same term as Defoe: history, with its associations to unity of character and verisimilitude; then enumerates three of his novels as examples, two of which revolve around outcast or criminal characters, such as Moll and Jack, and places Crusoe and Moll at the same level as the semi-fictional accounts of the life of Sally and Jack. Among Defoe's novels, it is also interesting that the latter is based on an actual criminal, whereas Moll is probably a composite of prostitutes with not one live counterpart. This points to the conflation of the true biography and the fictional one, as they shared plot and character development, as well as alleged moral intentions. Hers, on the other hand, is a history explicitly reduced to patches, fragmented, which would suggest her interruption of a lineal ascending story of material and social success, challenging Defoe's narrative of personal and entrepreneurial development. Moreover, Barker reverses the individuation of the prostitute as heroine, assembling the different passages to create a social collage rather than a story on a particular individual, focusing more obviously on didactic narrative conventions than life-like details, with very deterministic conclusions for her female characters that read almost like moral fables. This textual collage is composed of well-known stories revolving around fallen heirs and heiresses and duped working-class women who become not self-employed but unemployable, which bursts Defoe's middle-class fantasy of a trading gentlewoman. The tension between realism and romance, inherited wealth, and self-made fortunes, exposes Defoe and Barker as two paradigmatic examples of the tensions identified by Michael McKeon in his history of the English novel, yet complicates them by evincing how both writers projected their political and social readings onto the same literary popular genre, the prostitute biography, in line with the use made of it in the previous century by partisan authors for their Royalist or Tory propaganda (Figueroa 38). This reinforces the idea of intertextual richness, that the history of the novel is built on “partisan versions of realism” which were “competing for cultural dominance” (Carnell 8), and that the exaltation of the form of “prescriptive realism” associated with male, Whig writers runs the risk of cutting out “fantasy and experiments” and severely limiting “certain forms of psychic and social questioning” (Doody 294). Employing what has been described as an “innovative, protean work that anticipates the novel but is structured in the framed-nouvelle format” (Donovan 972), Barker's experiment displaces the prostitute biography to the short stories, while her narrative's “central focus is on the ‘history’ and development of the central, female protagonist” (975), an independent, educated and literary woman, not a woman of pleasure or crime. However, the common source also vindicates the need to study these ephemeral, disposable textual bodies to understand this generic dialogism.

Barker, quite obviously, includes this popular form in her textual assemblage, with Defoe as just another instance of it. Reversing Defoe's emphasis on verisimilitude by his use of the term 'history' and on linear progression in the description of his heroine's life story, she explicitly defines her work as a "Collection of Instructive Novels" in her title, some of which are inspired by the same genre as his but with very different moral outcomes. In fact, in her preface Barker refers to "Male Patch-workers" and, given the arguments on Defoe's narrative structure—or lack thereof—it is tempting to read this epithet as pointing to the similarities of source and structure, at the time it feminises or "domesticates" (Wilson xl) the achievements of these male writers and provides hers as superior in some senses. Her criticism of Defoe's works, and others of these characteristics, can be found in her mentions of contemporary fiction. Given Barker's moral tone and the outcome of her loose male and female characters, one can assume the use of "heroes" and "heroines" is ironic, especially as in the second of the patch-work narratives, *The Lining of the Patch-Work Screen*, Galesia will contrast the fiction of her age, full of vice, to the romances of old, filled with virtue: "Those honourable Romances of old *Arcadia*, *Cleopatra*, *Cassandra*, & c. discover a Genius of Vertue and Honour, which reign'd in the time of those Heroes, and Heroines, as well as in the Authors that report them; but the Stories of our Times are so black, that the Authors, can hardly escape being smutted, or defil'd in touching such Pitch" (129). In contrast to these "Stories of our Times", her patches include well-known moral tales and proverbs, her own poetry, and even recipes, more nourishing fiction in a literal and metaphorical sense. In others, she uses names of romantic heroes and heroines to recall the times of old, but subverts readers' expectations and displays how these stories of virtue and honour have been contaminated by the zeitgeist of her time, with stories of consumerism, greed, and lechery.<sup>10</sup>

This would contradict the idea that she is "claiming her 'novel' equal to his fiction and other important writings of their day" (Wilson xxxiv), in content if not in popularity. In the preface, the use of the term "history" is significant in its connotation of real-life account, as it had in Defoe's text, together with her use of the epithet "fashionable" to present them as popular fictions of her time. While still hoping to sell copies of her work—as she makes evident by talking about the "favourable Reception" (*Patch-Work* 51) of her previous works in the first line or in the prologue to *The Lining*—, Barker seems to wish to detach herself from these narratives from the onset, by, first, claiming she is "*not much of an Historian*" (52); secondly, by stating that her patch-work narrative is uncommon in the literary arena of her time (52); and, thirdly, by publicising her *Patch-Work* as particularly recommended for her "Female Readers" (51), creating a female literary community

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<sup>10</sup> This supports Schofield's claim that Barker's work could be understood as a dissertation on different forms of romance-inspired narratives, incorporating in her work romance itself along with a critical commentary on it (*Masking* 76).

of narrators, narratees, authors and readers, far from Defoe's male implied reader<sup>11</sup> and ventriloquist act of impersonating a woman's voice, which could also be said of Walker's and other stories of Sally. Her notion that this is an "honourable" work for women would be emphasised in the highly moral conclusions of each piece and, relevantly for this discussion, in the instructive depiction of lewd women, some of which resort to prostitution, as didactic illustration of the consequences of choosing the "Stories of our Times". This contemporizing is key. As Swenson has convincingly argued, Barker actively engages the readers she has addressed so they will "patch" meaning in a fragmented narrative that mirrors a disjointed or fractured national and individual identity ("Representing Modernity" 56-57)—echoing Defoe's own appeal to his reader to interpret his work and find whatever instruction or sense he seems to be providing to his story of the ascendent prostitute.

If, in the narrative pattern of the middle-class model of the novel, Moll and Roxana triumphed economically and socially, even if at great personal cost, Barker adopts in both her works a more moralistic view that falls into place with the narrative model *she* has chosen. This form rejects the linear progression of the aforementioned traditional romance to amalgamate old romances with a "new kind of historical fiction" (Clarke 251), or "with the new ideological wrappings of the female moral sensibility" (Richetti, *Popular Fiction* 237), employing the traditional female audience or "symposium" as well (Richetti, *Popular Fiction* 239; Clarke 251), as stated above. This again recalls the definition of the novel born as an assemblage of past forms that project onto the future, and that brings together the literary, the historical and the ideological. In this broken state, a Jacobite woman narrator—the polar opposite of Defoe, the embodiment of those in power—threads the pieces together; she makes sense of and draws her own story of development from scorned lover to figure of wisdom and authority. Taking as possible references *The Canterbury Tales*, *The Arabian Nights* or the *Decameron*, each story is presented to illustrate vices and virtues, and to entertain and instruct its audience. Just like the *Arabian Nights*, Galesia—in Scheherazade-like fashion—weaves stories that include violence, crime, and women who are far from being an exemplary model. In the frame-novella she creates, Galesia becomes a teacher for her readers, as she threads the different narrative patches together, concluding each one with a proverb or moral. Women being the implied readers it makes sense that these interspersed stories are filled with women whose honour is compromised, and who must pay the consequences of their actions in the train of the before mentioned prostitute biographies. Barker again makes use of these well-known popular narratives of descent, disease, and possible death, and thus contributes to the consumption of these women's stories to achieve pecuniary gain, impart moral instruction, and even launch a political attack on the current Hanoverian and Protestant government (Cahill).

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<sup>11</sup> In the above cited passages Defoe's preface addresses a male reader: "the Reader to pass *his* own Opinion upon the ensuing Sheets, and take it just as *he* pleases" (3), "give *him* a new Cast for *his* Life" (6).

Some examples in *Patch-Work* include a pre-Hogarthian country maid recently arrived in London, who is convinced by an older man at prayers that he will marry her, only to be fooled by a ring into becoming a “Left-hand Wife” (114). She is subsequently “abandon’d by her Gallant, and disabled by her Illness” (114), a venereal disease that almost kills her, and reduced to extreme poverty. The narrator, with very little sympathy, not only blames the disease on her potential lewd intercourse with other men, but also claims that her near-death experience would have culminated, in her words, “a loathsome Example of Folly and Lewdness” (115). The story’s conclusion recalls Moll’s, for readers are told that, after her cure, she “went away to the Plantations, those great Receptacles of such scandalous and miserable Miscreants” (115). While providing the habitual context for the fall found in later sentimental narratives—she was tricked—the tone is unsympathetic. On this occasion, Galesia tells her hostess, and her audience, that “it is not out of an Inclination to rake in such *Mud*, which produces nothing but Offence to the Senses of all virtuous Persons” that she narrates this story, but out of the need to point the lack of “Vertue and Piety” of “Devotees” (115, my emphasis). This mud is the one that smutted and defiled authors of stories of contemporary times, therefore Galesia excuses herself not to become one of them. Being familiar with the popularity of Defoe’s novels, Barker seems to include nods to *Moll*, yet counteracts his more positive reading of the economic and social rise of the prostitute with the retelling of her pitiful downfall and final ostracism, which would predominate in the later age of sensibility in which repentance might still lead to being secluded from society and its wealth by becoming a nun or a Magdalen.

*Patch-Work*, and especially *Lining*, glosses stories of unwanted pregnancies, abandonment, fall into disgrace, social ostracism, advancing the well-known ‘fallen woman’ trope, which came to signify not just a prostitute but a ruined woman more generally (Binhammer 6). An example would be the Chloris of “The Story of Captain Manly”, who, despite her traditionally heroic name, willingly becomes the kept woman of the married Manly. After he is punished for his immorality by being imprisoned, disobliged, then enslaved by pirates in the Ottoman empire, they reunite in Venice, where she has repented and become a nun. Barker again uses this well-known trope of the repentant or redeemed fallen woman, who pays for her sins with retirement from society in some form of banishment.

Barker also portrays willing “Strumpets”, who seduce and manipulate to achieve wealth and power over their lover’s household, and even his wife and children. One such example is “The History of Lysander”, a common name in heroic romances, whose story takes a rather unromantic turn. Seduced by a lewd woman, he dilapidates his estate and even signs over everything he has to her. When he tells her he is going to marry Galesia, and that she should live honestly and contently with the pension he will provide, she uses her power to threaten him, to which he responds by shooting himself. Galesia concludes it is a “very fatal Warning to all unwary Gentlemen” embodied in one of them “bullied out of his Estate, Life, and Honour; his Life lost, his Debts unpaid, his Estate devour’d by a lewd Harlot!” (*Lining* 138). Thus, property is disrupted when propriety is not observed, another early

instance of one of the main themes in future novels, with sexual immorality standing for instability, disorder, social and even political disruption.<sup>12</sup> However, here the originality lies in the fact that there is a gender reversal, this is a story of a fallen man, a victim of women's appetites and ambitions, in the tradition of seventeenth-century misogynistic prostitute narratives (Figuroa 39). This could also be interpreted as a veiled reference to Sally's coeval stories of voracious greed and consumption, of her power over men, as compiled by Walker. Barker's conservatism and assimilated misogyny on this topic is clearly stated in the following exchange in the *Lining*: "The Men of all Qualities, Countries, and Stations, said Galecia, are alike; there is no such thing as Vertue and Honor left amongst 'em at least, in regard to their Wives; ... All which, said Miranda, proceeds from the Multitude of lewd Strumpets; who *reign* amongst us with Impunity" (253, my emphasis).

Leaving aside the political reading of this passage in its analysis of the state of the present society—and court—, Barker can be seen to follow the tragic model of the prostitute narrative, in the train of the more conservative sentimental tale, but not always with its heightened sympathy. This is perfectly exemplified in the last story of the *Lining*, "The Story of Mrs. *Castoff*" (282-9). Its title, as Wilson has rightly stated, makes explicit the "[d]iscarded women" (xli) at the core of Barker's work, being a complete and more developed prostitute story which echoes Moll and advances Hogarth's harlot. The young country girl is deceived by an older woman with the promise of a better-paid job into a house of disrepute and becomes a fashionable—and voraciously consumerist—mistress, to be subsequently abandoned after the unfounded accusation that she had made her lover ill. Diseased and poor, she "resolv'd to be vertuous and modest" (*Lining* 287), and finds employment. Yet she falls again with promises of marriage, only to be deserted once more by her new foreign lover. Incapable of finding a job because of her poor character reference, she falls into night-walking at Fleet-Street and finally joins "the hundreds of Drury",<sup>13</sup> after having to give up her own daughter. Besides its tragic conclusion, this tale provides the more harrowing description of prostitution, very different from Defoe's tone: "Should I tell you all the Affronts, and Indignities I suffer'd here [Fleet-Street], 'twould make your Ears glow, being often beat, and made to expose myself stark-naked, for the brutal Diversion of those who pick'd up such distressed Creatures" (288-89). In this, Barker advances some of the more shocking histories of the penitents. Fleet-Street being a well-known location for writers, Barker seems to be uniting again the literal and literary when it comes to prostitution and its depiction in fiction. However, even if far from the triumphalism and comedy of Fisher's, Sally's or Moll's stories, Barker seeks to create revolt and horror in her

<sup>12</sup> This is a constant in the later anti-Jacobin novels, for instance, which emphasise the political reading of women's fall. See Borham-Puyal, *Quijotes con Enaguas* 73-102.

<sup>13</sup> Area known, among other things, for the large number of "pleasure houses"; mentioned as well in Walker's text: "the *Hospitable Hundreds* of OLD DRURY" (11). See, for instance, <https://www.british-history.ac.uk/old-new-london/vol3/pp36-44> for a detailed description of this area, or <https://francisplaceballads.nd.edu/the-songs/24-to-the-hundreds-of-drury-i-write/>, for its description in popular ballads.

readers as a didactic trigger, at the price of commodifying the real prostitute's situation for moral, literary, or economic value, a charge recurrently levelled against subsequent writers who exploited the prostitute's plight to advance their own agenda (Binhammer).

In summary, from the perspective of her treatment of the prostitute narrative, Barker stands as a bridge between the seventeenth and the eighteenth century: her voracious strumpets trigger the associations with earlier prostitute fiction, while she also includes seduced or ruined women who do not resort to prostitution but are similar in their progression of descent, as will be seen in late-eighteenth and nineteenth novels. With Mrs. Cast-Off's story, she also advances the sentimental novel in form—crafting interrupted or broken syntax to convey overwhelming emotion as the protagonist relates her harrowing tale—,<sup>14</sup> and in content, with a more explicit description of the horrors of prostitution, preceding authors such as Wollstonecraft or George Egerton and their interspersed or short tales of fallen women in a world that leaves them few choices.<sup>15</sup>

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS

It is possible to conclude that what today constitutes high works of fiction are influenced by these popular forms of print that convey the prostitute's story to the masses. Despite their differences, Defoe's and Barker's works are similar in their use of a tragic and salacious story to engage readers, while intertwining the sexual, social, economic, and even political dimensions that coexist in the prostitute biography. They would also open the way for subsequent works in which the prostitute's story would feature predominantly, which still proved popular for the rest of the century.<sup>16</sup> In addition, both Defoe and Barker choose a narrative form that also resembles these popular stories, relating different encounters or adventures, tracing a narrative path to the happy ascent or tragic descent. Barker uses each story to focus on a different character, varying the way these women become strumpets or prostitutes, and the personal, social, moral, and economic consequences of their fall. The conventional nature of the tales is highlighted by the old narrative form and the romantic names, while there is little progression, and only Galesia's narrative frame and the didactic intent of the work holds these episodes together. Yet her anti-history, her complex form, not only speaks from the position of the defeated and their fractured world, but grants the readers insights into a "complicated

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<sup>14</sup> "But—with that she wept, which stopt her proceeding for a while, but she soon recover'd her self" (Barker, *Lining* 284).

<sup>15</sup> On Wollstonecraft's inset story of Jemima, who follows a similar pattern of descent from rape, to kept woman, to street-walker, see Borham-Puyal, "Jemima's wrongs". George Egerton (1859-1945), pseudonym of Mary Chavelita Dunne, in her short story "Gone Under" shows how a mistress finally falls into prostitution having no resources after abandoning her controlling lover.

<sup>16</sup> Rosenthal has compiled an extensive bibliography of prostitute narratives in the long eighteenth century (*Nightwalkers* 225-229).

subjectivity” (Swenson, “Representing Modernity” 56), Barker-as-galesia. On his part, Defoe uses a similar structure, moving from adventure to adventure, from lover to husband, although with greater sense of unity and individualism, and using the conventions of the genre to again blend fact and fiction. Therefore, these two literary works, which have not been compared under this light, display similar narrative characteristics that can be traced to popular forms, which serves to reassess the porous boundaries between popular and elite fiction, and between male canonised literature and the production of obliterated women writers, at the same time it exposes the richness of responses to this popular genre.

Equally relevant, in this cultural commerce, the literal and literary bodies of the prostitutes became commodities to be consumed by a growing market, both as part of ephemeral, cheap, popular culture, and of more lasting pieces of literature. They did so as anti-heroines, disposable textual bodies that serve to drive the plot or entertain the masses at a public spectacle, or as protagonists of a story of social and economic mobility. As illustrated by Defoe’s and Barker’s productions, fallen women become the embodiment of intersectional anxieties on female virtue, propriety and property, consumerism, moral corruption, and social change. Their narratives are then relevant to the understanding of eighteenth-century society and culture, and, especially, to the recovery of marginal women’s voices and stories.

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## MORRISON'S BLUE-EYED GOLEM: A REENACTMENT OF THE THIRD MAN ARGUMENT

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*ABSTRACT.* This article deals with Toni Morrison's first novel, *The Bluest Eye*, as a possible interweaving of Aristotle's Third Man Argument into both societal and psychological aspects of the contemporary world. Rooted in this philosophical background, it follows the decline of Pecola Breedlove's mental stability throughout three segments that mimic the argument's structure. The degradation of archetypes and the character's conception of beauty articulate our thesis as it attempts to present the novel as a reenactment of the philosophical theory resorting to Borges' poem "El golem" to strengthen the connection between Morrison's take on Afro-American realities and Aristotle's position regarding the degradation of the ideal.

*Keywords:* Toni Morrison, Philosophy, The Bluest Eye, Third Man Argument, Golem, Borges.

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## REPRESENTACIÓN DEL ARGUMENTO DEL TERCER HOMBRE EN *OJOS AZULES* DE TONI MORRISON

*RESUMEN.* Este artículo trata la primera novela de Toni Morrison, *Ojos azules*, como un posible entramado del argumento del tercer hombre de Aristóteles dentro de aspectos sociales y psicológicos del mundo contemporáneo. Enraizado en este plano filosófico, sigue el declive de la estabilidad mental de Pecola Breedlove a lo largo de tres segmentos con el propósito de imitar la estructura del argumento. La degradación de los arquetipos y la concepción de la belleza de los personajes articulan nuestra tesis para intentar, desde allí, presentar la novela como una representación de la teoría filosófica de Aristóteles recurriendo al poema de Borges "El golem" para reforzar la conexión entre el retrato esbozado por Morrison de las realidades afroamericanas y la teoría aristotélica de la degradación de los arquetipos.

*Palabras clave:* Toni Morrison, Filosofía, Ojos azules, Argumento del tercer hombre, Golem, Borges.

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### INTRODUCTION

In 1970, Toni Morrison published her opera prima: *The Bluest Eye*. Nowadays a crucial novel for feminism and the fight against racism, it explores Claudia MacTeer's girlhood while she narrates the story of another young black girl living in Ohio: Pecola Breedlove. Her experiences, enlightened by the author's critical approach, allow *The Bluest Eye* to confirm that Morrison "is here to speak of 'all those peripheral little girls' who otherwise remain invisible" (Roye 212).

The plot begins with the announcement that Pecola was raped by her own father and the baby they conceived was stillborn. Yet, the novel works within an altered timeline which starts when Pecola is forced to move to the MacTeer household because her father tried to burn to ashes the house they were living in. She is seen as a disruptive force by the two daughters of the family, yet, when she suddenly gets her period, she becomes an asset to them. She has something they do not, something that would give them an opportunity to be noticed. A need that Pecola wants to fulfill through the transformation of her brown eyes into blue ones, a miracle that would solve the extreme invisibility she has grown into while granting her heavenly beauty.

Claudia's point of view introduces the reader to the society the author is trying to portray. According to Jane Kuenz, this choice allows Morrison to "represent black female subjectivity as a layered, shifting, and complex reality" (421). The novel is a mosaic of images captured by a child who tries to piece together the inner struggles and pain Pecola is going through, while figuring out the truths she wants to believe in as a maturing individual.

Love and sexual harassment are primary subjects to Morrison's prism, Pecola's experiences and breaking points are shaped around times where violence is misunderstood and mistaken for a confession of love. Both children and mature characters are constructed around their understanding of what it means to demonstrate affection: the reader will often witness different types of sexual aggression, some subtle and cruelly hidden between lines, others placed right in front of the eyes of the spectator as if they were looking for someone to take action. Pecola will often think that being aggressive towards someone is loving them because that is how her parents behave towards each other while supposedly being in love.

Anissa Janine Wardi, in her 2005 article "A Laying on of Hands: Toni Morrison and the Materiality of 'Love'," reflects on several of Morrison's works but there is something special that she notices in *The Bluest Eye* which, she says, "concludes with a treatise on love" (201):

Love is never any better than the lover. Wicked people love wickedly, violent people love violently, weak people love weakly, stupid people love stupidly, but the love of a free man is never safe. There is no gift for the beloved. The lover alone possesses his gift of love. The loved one is shorn, neutralized, frozen in the glare of the lover's inward eye. (Morrison 204)

Analyzing this fragment, Wardi clarifies: "The power, then rests with the lover, who is active, choosing the expression of love. The beloved are static, incapacitated if not immobilized, by the love itself" (202). And while this can be true in certain situations within the novel, throughout this investigation we will argue against the idea of the active lover as they too are sometimes motionless. The only fluid thing is the stream of ingrained violence that is reproduced until there is no room for anything or anyone else to grow. Morrison constructs a story to guide the reader into thinking critically about the oppression enforced towards sexuality, gender and race; she shows, instead of telling, that truth can be in the eye of the beholder. In discussing racism within the novel it can be useful to rely on W. E. B. Du Bois' *The Souls of Black Folk*, where he defines race as: "a vast family of human beings, generally of common blood and language, always of common history, traditions and impulses, who are both voluntarily and involuntarily striving together for the accomplishment of certain more or less vividly conceived ideals of life" (181). He answers questions surrounding the status that comes with being of one race or another; can he be both an American and a Negro? Du Bois explains the prejudice against the black community in a straightforward and politically committed way, addressing his own. Following in his steps, Morrison tries to bring to life the reality Du Bois describes, groundwork that would later lead to a direct reference of his work in her novel *Paradise*. She writes about prejudices that come from within because they have soaked through from racism and predominant white ideals: in *Paradise*, she illustrates the nuances of colorism, she re-focuses the lens, as in each of her novels, to understand in depth what has shaped her life as a black woman. She enables her characters to create a promised land where black people are free

but only to show that such thing is not possible; she succeeds in making her characters fail. The same happens in *The Bluest Eye*, yet, instead of an apparently healthy and paradisiacal environment, the reader finds that black girls are driven mad by the standards they are meant to follow. What is common within race brings unity in Du Bois' argument, whereas in *The Bluest Eye* it is a weapon used to tear each other apart. The criticism of a disjoint and barren society has also been commented on in "Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye* As a Prose Version of T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*" where a strong connection between Morrison's work and T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* is suggested (Al Kayed and Al Kayid 109).

As Claudia MacTeer walks us through Pecola's childhood, the reader understands that she represents the broken pieces of a hurting community. The beauty in the novel lies, mostly, in the journey the girls go through to find their "vision of truth," the place where they are meant to fit in or, in Pecola's case, the place where she will have to end up hiding. Their perception of the world is defined by their understanding of individual beauty. Morrison reaches for something bell hooks addresses in *Yearning Race, Gender and Cultural Politics*: "When this diversity is ignored, it is easy to see black folks as falling into two categories: nationalist or assimilationist, black-identified or white-identified" (29). This behavior, hooks explains, tackles why and how Pecola is slowly crushed by beauty standards and by what society expects of her. Morrison elaborates in the novel's afterword: "Holding the despising glance while sabotaging it was difficult. The novel tried to hit the raw nerve of racial self-contempt, expose it, then soothe it not with narcotics but with language that replicated the agency I discovered in my first experience of beauty" (Morrison 207). Double standards and self-awareness will be the detonators of Pecola's madness. Even though she has been raped and has suffered sustained abuse, she is expected to behave like a scarless child: within this community, everyone must fulfill his or her assigned role. Yet, when Pecola does, she is still not met with love or acceptance, which results in her desire to become someone else, maybe Shirley Temple, maybe Mary Jane. She wishes for impossible transformations and is doomed to become a misfit.

Authors like Alex Zamalin and Richard L. Schur write about the fact that Morrison never advocated for the policies that black people were trying to install when she wrote her novels. What she was actually doing, as she reveals in *Playing in the Dark* (1992), essays which Schur comments on in his article, was trying not to romanticize blackness but to, sometimes, demonize it to go further than what laws and amendments could express (288-289). She had to find her own approach to the policies embodied in literature because:

When Morrison began to write in the early to mid sixties, relatively little scholarship addressed African American culture or other historically marginalized peoples and cultures. Hence the opening words to her first novel are 'Quiet as it's kept' (*Bluest Eye* 9; *Paradise* 196). In her early novels Morrison gives voice to those people whose thoughts, feelings, and emotional lives had been elided in the writing of American history. (285)

*The Bluest Eye* also engages with the political discourse of feminism as Ágnes Surányi, Nancy K. Cardona and Sam Vásquez have argued. Morrison represents girlhood as a period especially challenged by one's lack of protection against external criticism, beauty culture carves its way into each of her characters and takes on different costumes. In her article, Cardona quotes Naomi Wolf and highlights that the beauty myth "is an imposed system that is designed to maintain male dominance" (13), yet she finds it necessary to clarify:

The beauty myth does affect all women. What Wolf fails to take into account is whether or not the beauty myth affects all women equally. The question that is raised is this: If a society upholds a standard that is, by its nature, exclusive what effects are rendered on those who are excluded? (13)

This is one of the core motifs of the novel. Morrison will answer Cardona's question, especially, through Pauline Breedlove's experiences.

Maintaining the sensation that the reader is living through the children's eyes, Morrison chooses fragments of the popular children's book series *Dick and Jane* to explore the philosophical concept of degradation through texts that would have influenced the girls' upbringing. Thomas H. Fick comments on this choice while focusing on the traces he finds of Plato's Allegory of the Cave in the novel, arguing that this Platonic argument is clearly represented in the fragments where cinema appears inside the texts. He says that Pecola, in her desire for blue eyes, wants to "reform the world by reforming the way she sees it, a transcendental rather than existential imperative" (11). In the different realities of the novel, characters like Pauline deal with reality through fiction but, for the reader to understand the nuances of these techniques of escapism, we think it fundamental to understand the possible purpose of referencing *Dick and Jane*:

The 'Dick and Jane' primer is important not only because it provides a particular set of expectations of modes of behavior [...] but because it locates these expectations and behaviors in a realm of immutable Archetypes – equivalent to the Platonic idea of the 'real' – in contrast with which this transient world is only an imitation. Compared to the world of green and white houses, strong, smiling fathers and happy mothers, Claudia's and Pecola's world is but an 'Imitation of Life', to cite the title of a movie that one character admires extravagantly.

The novel centers on one successful and several unsuccessful efforts to move beyond Platonic 'realism' towards an understanding and acceptance of the physical world's primacy. (Fick 13)

Fick's statements point in the right direction yet, when reading the novel, the Allegory of the Cave seems to fall short when trying to demonstrate some of the ideas that Morrison has sewn into her story. We believe that Morrison not only explores the possible interpretations of Platonic idealism but adjusts them to the posterior theory of the Third Man Argument. Aristotle's objection to Plato's theory takes us down more interesting paths that might help us understand the novel at a deeper level; Morrison's aim does not seem to be that of accepting the physical

world's primacy or even entering the game of realities but exposing the fact that all of them are mutable. There is no physical world to hold on to because there is no perfect archetype to look up to, instead, *The Bluest Eye* becomes a staging in three different levels of the Third Man Argument. Morrison plays with the narration, with the typography<sup>1</sup> she uses, and the meaning adhered to its changing, Fick's approach is appropriate, but he soon becomes more interested in the portrayal of cinema and vision. Instead, what we want to demonstrate is how, in Morrison's novel, the improbable Platonic reality comes to life aided by Aristotle's objection; it is a *mise en scene* of this philosophical theory at all levels.

According to the initial theory of Platonic archetypes, the world is an imperfect copy of the ideal. Yet, victim to the structure of the "copy of the copy of the copy," one can discern that his argument would demonstrate that further copies of the ideal would be more imperfect than the previous one leading to a constant degradation allowing two possible conclusions, either the archetype does not exist or the object is so degraded that it would become unrecognizable rendering the ideal irrelevant.

This argument, although originally posed in one of Plato's later works, owes its proliferation and development to Aristotle. In his *History of Western Philosophy*, Bertrand Russell explains this theory as follows: "The strongest argument is that of the 'third man': if a man is a man because he resembles the ideal man, there must be a still more ideal man to whom both ordinary men and the ideal man are similar" (249); a clear objection to the immutability of the soul, of ideas and of the realities they might produce. Hence the possibility of an *ad infinitum* chain of imperfections where copies evince the degradation. When placing it in an infinite regression, Aristotle demonstrates the lack of necessity for archetypes as they would either be inexistent or exist in such a way that the object would be so distant that its reference could no longer be recognized, preventing the relation of resemblance that would be needed for the archetype to affect man or his knowledge of the world.

The purpose of this article is to discuss a different interpretation of Morrison's work. The structure of the novel appears to support the presence of the Third Man Argument throughout Pecola's story. *The Bluest Eye* is a reenactment of this philosophical theory, an attempt at explaining how it would work in the contemporary world not only in terms of society in general but also in the individual's psyche. Fick investigates the writer's take on what is real and what is an imitation, yet we believe Morrison went further than that and reflected on the world's status beyond reality or fiction, concentrating on Aristotle's degradation of archetypes.

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<sup>1</sup> "This recalls the famous artistic distinction between figure and ground. When a figure or 'positive space' (e.g., a human form, or a letter, or a still life is drawn inside a frame) an unavoidable consequence is that its complementary shape - also called the 'ground', or 'background', or 'negative space'- has also been drawn. In most drawings, however, this figure-ground relationship plays little role. The artist is much less interested in ground than in the figure. But sometimes, an artist will take interest in ground as well" (Hofstadter 75).



## PLAY, JANE, PLAY: A PHILOSOPHICAL STAGING

Morrison's novel begins by building a sense of something being wrong. Silence and marigolds combined with melancholy and harassment. Implicit questions about the fertility of the soil around their house foreshadow the destiny of the children; from the beginning, an uncomfortable scene is staged so the story can be understood from its intended angle. *The Bluest Eye* begins by announcing the author's intentions in its own title. Morrison does not use technical terms to hinder the reader's comprehension; she recurs to strong images instead. She wants to make us comprehend which elements are being used for the recreation of this fictional reality so we can follow the process. Instead of describing something she has invented, something she has not felt, she breaks down something so obvious that it is often ignored or taken for granted. It is not about degradation in itself but about the conviction that such degradation exists, presenting it not as an objection to the Platonic theory but as a confirmation of such perception. In order to achieve this, she begins to build her stage with a shining title and the structure of the children's books series *Dick and Jane*.

At first glance, the name of the novel seems to have an obvious meaning: a physical meaning, a superlative one. With the *est* following the word *blue*, one might think of something good, something essentially absolute. Yet, "The Bluest Eye" could also be interpreted phonetically and, in that case, it could be read as "The Bluest I", (blue, related to sadness and melancholy): "The saddest version of me." "The bluest I" would be the one that has been driven to the furthest of ends, a superlative that was meant to be good but ended in ruins: the degradation of an archetype, perhaps.

Before *Autumn* begins, the life of Dick and Jane is described to us in a set of degenerating paragraphs about a white family living in the suburbs. Mother, Father, Dick, Jane, cat and dog, all part of this pedagogical tale. They live in a wonderful house with a beautiful front yard where they can play without a worry. This passage, as noted by Phyllis R. Klotman in her article "Dick-and-Jane and the Shirley Temple Sensibility in *The Bluest Eye*," serves several purposes, working "as a synopsis of the tale that is to follow, and as a subtly ironic comment on a society which educates – and unconscionably socializes – its young with callous disregard for the cultural richness and diversity of its people" (123). Everything Dick and Jane have Pecola either lacks or has received in a corrupted way. Morrison inserts this children's tale in a clear first paragraph and makes it more unintelligible progressively. Slowly, the reader is separated from the original story and confronted with a mass of letters. Without the original fragment this disarray of symbols could easily be overlooked, and the text would have no meaning. It is through form (ground and figure), through typography—which demonstrates the degradation of an ideal and educational story—that Morrison will be able to take the reader on a journey of awareness. As Linda Dittmar points out in her article: "Morrison's 'Dick and Jane' typography belies the text's claim to transparency, as do her leaps in chronology, in location, and in narrating viewpoints and modalities. All these devices insist on the reader's self-conscious participation in the reconstitution of the text" (143).

This three-paragraph degradation is the perfect example to introduce the presence of the Third Man Argument, from the archetype to what appears to be its most degraded descendant: an illusion that hides that there will always be one prior version and one latter. Unfortunately, Pecola is not aware of the pattern of the archetype, she only recognizes its degradations. She has been convinced that Dick and Jane are the ideal *people*, however, white people are themselves a degradation of *people*, one of the many variations of the archetype. Because white people are considered superior socially, the characters in the novel will believe themselves a degradation of the degradation and so on, an *ad infinitum* regression revealing the inner structure of the exclusion, of the “dirtiness” (Morrison 72).

Under the Platonic lens, the immediate assumption is that Pecola is the lowest in the scale of degradation. Nevertheless, if analyzed in more depth one can see, because Morrison gives it away just before the first chapter begins, that the most degraded figure is the child Pecola will not be able to bear healthy. As the title appears to suggest, superlatives are key to this novel, they will not only affect adjectives addressed to the characters but the characters themselves. Morrison blurs the strict limits of the definition of *superlative*, it does not always have good implications anymore; instead, it is used to enhance the effect of degradation.

#### A DANDELION IS NOT A ROSE

The Third Man Argument, in Morrison’s story, is reenacted in ascending motion. The main characters are captured looking up to whom they believe worthier than themselves. The moral value of things is blurred by the trauma they are sustaining: “We mistook violence for passion, indolence for leisure, and thought recklessness was freedom” (Morrison 175). What is supposed to be good is mistaken for something bad, but, more often, what is traumatic is accepted as normal or tolerable; violence becomes so common and so attached to moments where passion emerges that the two things become interchangeable.

Nevertheless, there is one concept that is stretched throughout the novel: beauty. The use of the superlative within the title seems to point out that the burden of not being able to become beautiful will not change, it will just become more absolute in the mind of the three girls as their innocence is shattered. The first challenge they must face is that they will never be able to be pretty if this only comprehends white people’s appearance. The first step towards degradation is being convinced there is something so unattainable for you that it’s not even comprehensible:

Each pale yellow wrapper has a picture on it. A picture of little Mary Jane, for whom the candy is named. Smiling white face. Blond hair in gentle disarray, blue eyes looking at her out of a world of clean comfort. The eyes are petulant, mischievous. To Pecola they are simply pretty. She eats the candy, and its sweetness is good. To eat the candy is somehow to eat the eyes, eat Mary Jane. Love Mary Jane. Be Mary Jane. (Morrison 48)

Pecola sees that blue eyes are praised and loved so she wants them, she envies the value that comes with them. Claudia, on the other hand, resents Shirley Temple and Mary Jane; she displays anger in contrast to Pecola's envy. Preceded by Dick and Jane and their perfect family, Shirley Temple and Mary Jane construct a space for deep self-hatred in their young minds.

The second level of the degradation of beauty within the novel begins with those that, belonging to the black community, try to stay away from it to comply with society's standards; those who abide by hooks' understanding of black society.<sup>2</sup> These people, mostly women, attempt to avoid acknowledging that, even though they are not considered as irremediably ugly as their peers because they have whiter skin, they will never possess the grace of being beautiful either, so they sacrifice themselves for a little bit of superiority. The clearest examples of this are the characters of Geraldine and Maureen Peal. The former is a woman who does not allow her child to play with black children because she believes they are dirty (Morrison 85). She is also black but because of her lighter skin and ironed hair she looks different from the rest of the black characters depicted in the novel. She is purposely trying to make her differences stand out. The latter, Maureen Peal, is the girls' classmate and all three of them envy her because of her dresses, softer hair and lighter eyes. She is often told she looks beautiful, which only means she looks whiter.

These sugar-brown Mobile girls move through the streets without a stir. They are as sweet and plain as butter-cake. Slim ankles; long, narrow feet. They wash themselves with orange-colored Lifebuoy soap, dust themselves with Cashmere Bouquet talc, clean their teeth with salt on a piece of rag, soften their skin with Jergens Lotion. (Morrison 80)

The task of avoiding one's "funkiness" (81), as instructed by the novel, is quite laborious. Pecola believes she can become what she is obsessed with, she creates her own blue eyes but, within she knows they are imperfect. She is still not acknowledged like white girls are. She will try to make her delusion expand to the rest of herself and this will drive her crazy because her reality will not be able to co-exist with social structures.

This clash between fiction and truth will appear constantly throughout the novel. Pecola, as evinced by the Mary Jane scenes, will become tormented by the first level of beauty's degradation. She will be tortured by the conviction that women are less than men and black women are less than anyone but their children; the rest of the black community will cast the Breedloves away and Maureen Peal will haunt the three girls to provoke further questioning on what it is that makes *her* beautiful and not *them*:

If she was cute – and if anything could be believed, she *was* – then we were not. And what did that mean? We were lesser. Nicer, brighter, but still lesser. Dolls we could destroy, but we could not destroy the honey voices of parents and aunts,

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<sup>2</sup> Cf. page 2.

the obedience in the eyes of our peers, the slippery light in the eyes of our teachers when they encountered the Maureen Peals of the world. What was the secret? What did we lack? Why was it important? And so what? Guileless and without vanity, we were still in love with ourselves then. (Morrison 72)

The novel emanates from the inner core of the community, from the seed of their disenchantment. Claudia's interest in Pecola derives from her being everyone's scapegoat, in fact, Claudia adds: "All of us – all who knew her – felt so wholesome after we cleaned ourselves on her. We were so beautiful when we stood astride her ugliness" (Morrison 203). Pecola is pitied because she represents the superlative example of the consequences of living in one's degraded condition. The further away from beauty she believes she is, the bluer she will want her eyes to become. She is the incarnation of the suffering happening within the black community, and if we think of Plato, we are led to understand the fact that it happens even outside its limits. Marigolds aren't growing in anyone else's garden; nobody can access the supposed ideal.

The Third Man Argument is both the veil and the thread that holds all these degradations together. It is in charge of explaining all variations to the form of men and how, when socially contextualized, they are submitted to the yoke of this continuous degradation. For the characters, especially the women, pushing against these circumstances means spending a lot of money on products and clothing. That is another setback for the Breedloves and the MacTeers, none of them have enough money to pretend. When Pauline and Cholly move to Lorain they realize that the people they expected to be comfortable around, reject them: "Northern colored folk was different too. Dicty-like. No better than whites for meanness. They could make you feel just as no-count, 'cept I didn't expect it from them. That was the loneliest time of my life" (Morrison 115).

Pauline starts spending money and is forced to work due to the lack of it. She needs clothes and makeup, not because she likes them but to be well-regarded by the women she meets. At the same time, her husband starts spending their money on drinking and never quits. Cholly Breedlove is a complex character, both aggressive and insecure due to the mistreatments he suffered during his childhood: he always appears damaged. As the detonator of the plot, he is the first to be seen as someone bad. He is looking up in the scale of degradation and questioning his idea of God, therefore, of all things perfect. Yet, this is subverted—from perfect to imperfect—when the story of him losing his virginity is told. Two white men stare at him while he is having sex in the woods, looking down on him, making him feel like a puppet. Their intentions trigger the Third Man Argument and widen the space between the supposed archetype and its object (Morrison 146-147).

He wondered if God looked like that. No. God was a nice old white man, with long white hair, flowing white beard, and little blue eyes that looked sad when people died and mean when they were bad. It must be the devil who looks like that – holding the world in his hands, ready to dash it to the ground and spill the red guts so niggers could eat the sweet, warm insides. (Morrison 132)

The character Cholly is trying to fit into the stereotype of the Supreme Good is Blue, a man he loved and who took care of him. But, if Blue is black, if his hair is not white and his eyes are not blue, he cannot be God, because He only has one image, or so has Cholly been taught. Therefore, he concludes, it must be the Devil that looks like Blue and, consequently, "Cholly preferred him" (Morrison 132).

If the black community does not look like God, they might not be meant to follow him; white people must be superior if He who created the world made them look like Him, made them beautiful. If Cholly does not look like God, he does not have to act like God. He has felt dirty due to white people's looks, so he will, on his own terms, continue to be dirty. He is unconsciously applying the objection of the Third Man Argument, his character rebels against a world of archetypes: if the archetype is so far away from him then why must he live according to it. The narrator talks about Cholly's freedom (Morrison 158), he feels free because he was abandoned, he has to answer to no one and nothing to lose. Therefore, being alone he is in a godlike state or, at least, not under another god's rules. This, as he understands it, means he is allowed to do anything he wants because he has already hit rock-bottom. He is "[d]angerously free" (Morrison 157). The perception of the archetype is in the eye of the beholder; thus, everything is questioned through it: Pecola compares herself to Shirley Temple; Cholly concludes the Devil must be black if God is white; and Pauline will never see herself in the films she likes to drown herself in.

*The Bluest Eye* brings to the reader's attention that whether Plato or Aristotle were right does not matter as long as the characters remain under the illusion of the Argument's validity, as it corrupts their perception of reality. Cholly and Soaphead will question God about the truth He is supposed to hold, and they will find themselves alone. They will always have to face the questions themselves or find someone else to substitute the Supreme Being. In the end, the degradation and misleading ideals provoke their disconnection from the creator. What the characters are not aware of is that this philosophical theory has no specifically assigned roles. Instead, because of its *ad infinitum* condition, they are above and below an indeterminate number of elements, rendering the search pointless.

An attempt at eliminating the Third Man Argument can also be found in the novel. To prevent its setting in motion, the two units (archetype and degradation) must be reduced to one,<sup>3</sup> thus eliminating the separation between the archetype and the object it represents. But this never happens. Repeatedly and subtly throughout the novel, there are efforts to eliminate the gap enforced by the Third Man Argument, this could only be attained by turning the duality (archetype/object) into a single element which is proven to be an impossible endeavor (Morrison 48; 137; 143; 156).

The clearest example can be found on page 143: "His second fear materialized. She smiled and jumped down the three leaning steps to join him. Her eyes full of

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<sup>3</sup> If objects do not have an archetype because they are themselves the archetype, then the space required for the Third Man to introduce itself would be eliminated.

compassion, and Cholly remembered that he was the bereaved". In this fragment the reader will see the word *second*, and later the *three leaning steps*. This is a very clear representation of the Third Man Argument as Pauline has to descend three steps (must be degraded) to join Cholly, whom will be the love of her life as well as her ruin.

There is also a further connection to beauty in the novel, Dante is referenced a few times (Morrison 167; 171), these allusions import another question to Platonism: does Ugliness exist or is it only a degradation of beauty? Often the characters worry about neatness, about not being clean enough due to their dark skins.

A triumph of cosmic neatness. But this neatness, the neatness of Dante, was in the orderly sectioning and segregating of all levels of evil and decay. In the world it was not so. The most exquisite-looking ladies sat on toilets, and the most dreadful-looking had pure and holy yearnings. God had done a poor job, and Soaphead suspected that he himself could have done better. It was in fact a pity that the Maker had not sought his counsel. (Morrison 171)

Dante's *Divine Comedy* separates those in Hell in various circles depending on the severity of their crimes. In our world, criminals are let loose according to this character. Those who are neat can mingle with those who are not and Soaphead is against it. He is, like Cholly, looking up to his creator and wondering if he is so perfect in the end. Is being perfectly ugly a possibility or is Soaphead, along with the rest of the black community, meant to be at the last of the circles for the evil in their decay? While convinced that he could have done a better job endorsing Dante's system than God did, he notices something relevant: degradation extends over society like a wasting land. The Third Man Argument reveals itself once again: Soaphead is blending the degraded with the supposedly ideal, therefore everything has been mixed due to the *ad infinitum* condition of the theory, hence, archetypes are diluted.

This is also demonstrated in Morrison's shaping of the nuances of the novel through the use of positive adverbs or adjectives when describing atrocities. While narrating Pecola's rape, she writes, "He wanted to fuck her – tenderly" (Morrison 160-161). This statement shows how reality is veiled for the characters and love and beauty acquire meanings that lean towards the grotesque. Language is one of the most prominent means for degradation in the novel; violence is transfigured into tenderness thanks to Morrison's subtle choice of words allowing contradicting qualities to co-exist in the characters.

#### A FAILURE OF COSMIC NEATNESS

In *The Bluest Eye*, the Third Man Argument is carried out. Therefore, the progress into degradation is laid out for the reader. Morrison, as we have seen in the third part of this article, shows a reality where those who are subject to the idea of archetypes live a much more distressing life, essentially because they are chasing something completely unattainable.

This procedure aligns with the reference to Du Bois (181), Morrison mirrors society and proves the Third Man Argument is a reality, reminding us of the waste land. If Du Bois' theory is true, then reality would be as degraded and barren as it is in the myth. Believing in the worth of archetypes has led the population to both an illusion of safety and a freeing danger. As happens with Cholly, even when one decides not to abide by the norm, he is held under a veil. Therefore, by behaving against it you can only further it more.

This claim could be legitimated through another author that has also tampered with the Third Man Argument. We would like to suggest the possibility of Morrison having given the Argentinian author Borges a literary nod through the infiltration of some elements of his poem "El golem" ("The Golem") in the philosophical reenactment of *The Bluest Eye*. In his text, Borges uses a Jewish myth as his source as he narrates the vicissitudes of the devoted rabbi Judah Loew who, convinced that he had learnt the language of God, used it to create a new being that would never be able to talk. Borges triggers Aristotle's argument and shows the reader its possible consequences (Botero Camacho 46-62). The golem, created by the words of man and not God's is another example of the copy of the copy of the copy, his degradation is shown in the inability to speak or even to understand the world around him. Three of Morrison's characters have experiences that resonate with Borges' writing: Soaphead Church, Cholly and Pecola. The archetypes reenacted in her text are forced upon the characters, consciously or not, by the people right above them in the hierarchy of their community. The three little girls still look up to their parents as if they were gods while their mothers are too busy being haunted by the men surrounding them; therefore, the only ones that will be able to question their creator directly will be the men.

The first person that could be linked to Borges' poem is Soaphead Church, a man that, after quitting his studies at the ministry, decides to proclaim himself a minister regardless (Morrison 171). He will engage directly with God and ask Him questions about his integrity and choices. He has a similar relationship with religion to that of the rabbi, who believes he can learn the word of God and create life himself. Soaphead is troubled because he knows he lives in sin, as he desires little girls over women because they do not smell, they do not "mind" (Morrison 179). Instead, their flat chests make them look more like boys, like men, and he would rather be a pedophile than homosexual. If he were to be the latter, he would be (according to the society portrayed in the novel) a degraded version of the ideal Man. Again, a copy of the copy of the copy.

While acknowledging his offenses, he blames God for them. Soaphead's deviancy is his reason to want to learn the word of God. If He was perfect, he would have not created such ugliness in him. He even goes as far as to say that, because God did not do his work properly, now he must make it right: "I weep for You that I had to do your work for You" (Morrison 178), and "You forgot, Lord. You forgot how and when to be God" (Morrison 179). Now, he has to become God and help the little girls.

When Pecola appears at his doorstep, he is horrified by His lack of compassion towards the child: “She must have asked you for them for a very long time, and you hadn’t replied. (A habit, I could have told her, a long-ago habit broken for Job - but no more)” (Morrison 178). Soaphead shows his resentment towards God but, also wonders about the significance of naming things which, in the end, is a question of what makes one’s identity or what is identity in general:

By the way, I added the Micah - Elihue Micah Whitcomb. But I am called Soaphead Church. I cannot remember how or why I got the name. What makes one name more a person than another? Is the name a real thing, then? And the person only what his name says? Is that why to the simplest and friendliest of questions: “What is your name?” put to you by Moses, You would not say and said instead “I am who I am”. (Morrison 178)

This, seems to resonate with another fragment of Borges’ poem which echoes the long-discussed subject of the name of the rose:

*Si (como afirma el griego en el Cratilo)*  
*el nombre es arquetipo de la cosa*  
*en las letras de ‘rosa’ está la rosa*  
*y todo el Nilo en la palabra ‘Nilo’ (263)*

If every name is (as the Greek maintains  
 In the *Cratylus*) the archetype of its thing,  
 Among the letters of ring, resides the ring,  
 And in the word *Nile* all the Nile remains.  
 (Hollander 111)

Through this conundrum we can begin to trace a resemblance between the rabbi and Soaphead’s character. Yet, it is the fact that Soaphead will be the one to convince Pecola that she has been given her blue eyes, which will transform him in the rabbi within the novel, making Pecola his golem.

The other man in the novel that will challenge his creator directly is Cholly, Pecola’s father. Cholly sees such resemblance in his daughter of the Pauline he once knew that, in a burst of the violence that is confused with love all throughout the novel, he rapes her. He is the big and strong father that will come and play with Jane in the most twisted of ways and the metaphorical dog (Morrison 16) that will come and play with Jane and run away after, leaving her damned and alone:

He wanted to fuck her – tenderly. But the tenderness would not hold [...] His soul seemed to slip down to his guts and fly out into her, and the gigantic thrust he made into her then provoked the only sound she made – a hollow suck of air in the back of her throat. Like the rapid loss of air from a circus balloon. (Morrison 160-161)



In “El golem” (“The Golem”), Borges writes the following interaction between the rabbi—the unnatural golem’s father—and the creature. He is troubled wondering what he should be feeling toward something he has created yet knows to be an abomination; the adjectives Borges uses seem to deliberately challenge each other:

*El rabí lo miraba con ternura  
Y con algún horror. ‘¿Cómo’ (se dijo)  
‘pude engendrar este penoso hijo  
Y la inacción dejé, que es la cordura?’ (265)*

The rabbi gazed on it with tender eyes  
And terror. *How* (he asked) *could it be done*  
*That I engender this distressing son?*  
*Inaction is wisdom. I left off being wise.*  
(Hollander 115)

Morrison’s scene works well as a reply to this stanza. She gives the reader the point of view of the father while he is raping his own daughter, looking at her like the rabbi looks at his creation. In the poem, the man questions his own actions, he questions his use of the word of God; the use of the vital breath to create another notch in the belt of the *ad infinitum* degradation. And the poetic voice asks: “¿Quién nos dirá las cosas que sentía/Dios, al mirar a su rabino en Praga?” (Borges 265) ‘Who can tell us the feeling in His breast/ As God gazed on His rabbi there in Prague?’ (Hollander 115), thus culminating the presence of the Third Man Argument in the poem. Instead, Morrison uses degradation to reenact what the gift of the vital breath would become in the society she puts into words. Cholly describes “a hollow suck of air” (Morrison 161), the consequence of a thrust through which his soul has flown onto her. Instead of the description of how she is given air, the reader is given the removal of it, followed by “a rapid loss of air from a circus balloon” (161), a parody of the gift of life. Ironically, in this interaction, Pecola not only perpetuates her status as the golem of the novel, but her baby is conceived, a baby that is born dead so it will never be able to speak.

Lastly, gathering the connection of the two texts as possible reenactments of the Third Man Argument and the hypothetical chance of Morrison having teased towards Borges’ interpretation of the myth of the Golem; we intend to demonstrate that Morrison might have seen Aristotle’s theory in Borges and used his version of it.

The poem mentions a cat yet, none of the versions of the Jewish myth of the golem have a cat in them. Borges explains this to his reader:

*Algo anormal y tosco hubo en el Golem,  
Ya que a su paso el gato del rabino*

*Se escondía. (Ese gato no está en Scholem  
Pero, a través del tiempo, lo adivino). (256)*

Something eerie, gross, about the Golem,  
For, at his very coming, the rabbi's cat  
Would vanish. (The cat cannot be found in Scholem;  
Across the years, I divine it, for all that.)  
(Hollander 113)

There are two elements that are crucial to our linking of the texts in this fragment. The first is a cat that also appears in one of Morrison's chapter titles: "SEETHECATITGOESMEOWMEOWCOMEANDPLAYWITHJANETHEKITTENWILLN OTPLAYPLAYPLAYPLA" (79), anticipating the interaction between the cat and the golem of this story, Pecola. The second is Borges' accusation towards the Golem of having something that makes the cat hide when he walks past it. This resembles Morrison's description of Pecola's encounter with Geraldine's cat, a scene collected in the chapter mentioned above:

Geraldine opened the door.  
'What is this?' Her voice was mild, as though asking a perfectly reasonable question. 'Who is this girl?'  
'She killed our cat,' said Junior. 'Look.' He pointed to the radiator, where the cat lay, its blue eyes closed, leaving only an empty, black, and helpless face. [...]  
Up over the hump of the cat's back she looked.  
'Get out.' she said, her voice quit. 'You nasty little black bitch. Get out of my house.'  
The cat shuddered and flicked his tail. (89)

By contrasting the two, the nuances of Morrison's fragment become brighter. In Borges' text there is something wrong with the Golem. In Morrison's what is important is that the possibility of something being wrong with the child becomes the only valid one. As she reenacts the degradation of the Third Man Argument, there is a possibility that she uses Borges' cat to question the archetypes and the fragility of subjective truth. As readers, we already know Geraldine's story, her contempt makes her believe her son immediately when he accuses Pecola of killing her beloved cat. He is only perpetuating the archetypes he has been taught. He lures Pecola into his house and throws the cat at her so he will hurt her. Yet, Pecola never does anything to harm the creature, in fact, she pities him because she finds herself in him: "He was black all over, deep silky black, and his eyes, pointing down toward his nose, were bluish green. The light made them shine like blue ice. Pecola rubbed the cat's head; he whined, his tongue flicking with pleasure. The blue eyes in the black face held her" (Morrison 88). For a moment, they seem to recognize each

other and Pecola sees in him what she would look like if she were to have what she desires most. This tender moment infuriates Geraldine's boy resulting in the torture and almost killing of the pet. To further establish the resemblance, the second part of the stanza is also essential to what we believe to be the link between these two works. Aside from mentioning that this cat is not a part of the original myth, Borges writes about "foreseeing" it through time. Opening the possibility of time being a fluid entity, one that can be trusted when searching for clarity, is a shared pursuit between Morrison and Borges as the structure of *The Bluest Eye* relies on the use of different timelines in order to look for the things that were kept in secret or never said (Morrison 3). Without the glimpses the reader is given into the past it would not be as easy to understand the nuances and struggles that define each character's life. The glimpse into Pauline and Cholly's childhood, where they suffered the traumas that lead them to treat their children like they do, is essential to comprehend how the Third Man Argument warps reality because, even though they do not notice, they are traveling within the *ad infinitum* progression of degradation. The past is crucial to understand how the most degraded version defines itself through time. Although they believe their lives change, they always come back to the same roles and dynamics that are ingrained in their belief of the archetype's truth. The insight that future Claudia gives to the story, describing her past with the knowledge of an adult, telling the reader Pecola's story while knowing how it ends, is also what helps the reader find their own place in the narrative. It eases the access to a critical approach towards the plot. The philosophical interpretation that is being pursued in this article is just another way of shedding light to the social critique Morrison aims for in the novel. Ugliness, or the lack of beauty according to social standards, are both nuanced and enhanced the more the reader learns about the characters. Financial and racial exclusion are linked as "economic, racial, and ethnic difference is erased and replaced by a purportedly equal ability to consume, even though what is consumed are more or less competing versions of the same white image" (Kuenz 422). Ugliness becomes the embodiment of their general troubles as the characters become a part of commodity culture through their frustration and consequential consumption of affordable versions of beauty, Mary Janes in Pecola's case and cinema in Pauline's. They consume reproductions of their ideals and in their absorption the reader is allowed to unveil the process of the reenactment of the Third Man Argument.

#### RIGHT BEFORE YOUR EYES

Pretty eyes. Pretty blue eyes. Big blue pretty eyes. Run, Jip, run. Jip runs, Alice runs. Alice has blue eyes. Jerry has blue eyes. Jerry runs. Alice runs. They run with their blue eyes. Four blue eyes. Four pretty blue eyes. Blue-sky eyes. Blue-like Mrs. Forrest's blue blouse eyes. Morning-glory-blue-eyes. Alice-and-Jerry-blue-storybook-eyes. (Morrison 45)

If the *Dick and Jane* fragment serves as a pattern under which the reader can understand the novel from its beginning, the fragment quoted above is the omen

that predicts Pecola's final state. The degradation of society can only lead to the degradation of the mind.

Morrison makes the consequences of the Third Man Argument worse for the characters so they become clearer to the reader. Once the novel reaches its end, one can only sit in Claudia's position and understand why she watches from afar:

We tried to see her without looking at her, and never, never went near. Not because she was absurd, or repulsive, or because we were frightened, but because we had failed her. Our flowers never grew. I was convinced that Frieda was right, that I had planted them too deeply. How could I have been so sloven? So we avoided Pecola Breedlove – forever. (Morrison 202-203)

Having and holding on to archetypes which, as we have seen in the three previous sections, are superlative or degraded, can only come with a great number of consequences. The last chapter of the book is titled: "LOOKLOOKHERECOMESAFRIENDTHEFRIENDWILLPLAYWITHJANETHEYWILLPLAYAGOODGAMEPLAYJANEPLAY" (Morrison 191). Pecola has finally found company, but only in herself. She is the degraded Jane and in her behavior we see the consequences of the philosophical argument. The degraded Jane can no longer play because she has no playground and no friends. She is left in a twisted town with a crooked mind. Therefore, she starts talking to herself; while being a golem she transforms herself into an archetype because, in infinite imperfection, she can play the role she wants.

As we have previously stated, it is the point of view of the speaker which matters when telling a story. Claudia, as a child, is the ideal subject to bring all the pieces of the puzzle together. She still has to form her own idea of what the world is, and throughout the novel, she listens and learns. Through other people's stories and opinions, she starts categorizing all the characters in their corresponding social places: "Little by little we began to piece a story together, a secret, terrible, awful story. And it was only after two or three such vaguely overheard conversations that we realized that the story was about Pecola" (Morrison 187).

Pecola's identity splits in two, allowing the Third Man to be enacted, there is a part of her who believes her blue eyes will last forever and another who knows they do not even exist. She calls her other self "dearie" (Morrison 193) and wonders:

No. Really. You are my very best friend. Why didn't I know you before?

*You didn't need me before.*

Didn't need you?

*I mean...you were so unhappy before. I guess you didn't notice me before.*

I guess you're right. And I was so lonely for friends. And you were right here. Right before my eyes.

*No, honey. Right after your eyes.* (Morrison 194, original emphasis)

This chapter is the ultimate representation in the novel of how archetypes affect one's psyche. Morrison uses the reference to *Dick and Jane* until the end to show us the process of degradation brought to an extreme. By becoming her own friend, Pecola synthesizes the degradation all characters have to go through. She does not admit to herself she was raped by her father; she does not want to acknowledge her previous life now that she has blue eyes and her future looks brighter. She blames everything bad happening to her on other people's jealousy and does not want to listen to her other half who is aware of what her circumstances have meant for her so far. Until the end, Pecola fights her own trauma alone.

The Third Man Argument, as represented in *The Bluest Eye*, tackles much more than the question of what a Man is. The description of the realities Pecola and the other two girls live in, along with the adults' testimonies, brings a very complex experience to life. In the oppression she feels, Pecola encapsulates the gender and race-related trauma that has trickled down from generation to generation. Thanks to Morrison, a philosophical question that is often abstracted into laws and theses is transformed into an incredibly human and subtle reflection, as Zamalin and Schur argued happened in *Playing in the Dark*. Right before the afterword, she reminds the reader of the superlatives, of Cholly's tenderness and the effect of love's degradation: "He, at any rate, was the one who loved her enough to touch her, envelop her, give something of himself to her" (Morrison 204). This shows how extreme the lives of the characters are and how eloquently Morrison delivers such a complex context. The eyes Pecola believes she now possesses are those the archetypal deity would have given her yet, the "bluest I" is Morrison's metaphorical way of showing us a degraded society through a philosophical theory adjusted to the truth.

## CONCLUSION: RECLAIMING RACIAL BEAUTY

*The Bluest Eye* paints the breathtaking portrait of Pecola Breedlove, through intense and traumatic stories the reader is made aware of the subtleties Morrison intertwines between the lines. Pecola's childhood, along with Claudia's and Frieda's, revolves around fighting or succumbing to what they have learned they must become, whether they are willing to be unhappy with reality or happy living in delusion. The author simply gives shape to things that happen outside fiction, Borges wrote a poem that resorted to fantasy while dealing with the Third Man Argument, the result of Morrison's experiment is a painfully faithful representation of reality.

Throughout the article, beauty is discussed as a useful concept in order to understand how profoundly linked Aristotle's philosophical theory and the character's psyche are. It demonstrates that the Third Man Argument can be reenacted in an ascending motion thus, portraying characters that are always looking for something that will make them worthier, more perfect, more similar to the superlative archetypes, while they are descending. Beauty remains ideal, unattainable in a society where everyone believes they are lacking something at their core. While the reader becomes aware of the process of degradation, the characters become more obviously involved in it by rejecting their own identities as

black people or by trying to consume those of the people considered archetypical. In their search for something to hold on to, someone to become, characters like Soaphead Church or Cholly give the reader the possibility of embarking on the philosophical journey of discovering whether one can be perfectly ugly, perfectly deviant or if there are only ideals of things generally considered good and the rest are just their degradations.

Claudia also tries to discern the limits and definitions of “good” and “bad” as she matures by picking up the stories and testimonies left by those around her. She is an unreliable narrator that offers a text representing the copy of the memory of the statements she overhears. Consequently, the reader can only perceive Pecola through a veil of scrapped cloths stitched together,<sup>4</sup> not only can we discover Claudia’s opinions but the ongoing criticism she hears about her friend, and due to those statements and the clash between her mind and reality, Pecola becomes delirious. She thinks she has become all she lacks in her last shot at being seen. Consequently, the bluest “I” reveals itself, and the reader is left to answer the question of what a Man is who is not isolated, through the lens of Morrison’s reenactment of the Third Man Argument. The author brings many masterpieces into one. We have addressed the possible presence of the waste land myth and how Lorain is more than metaphorically barren, Dante’s spiraling Hell and the stakes of self-doom and Borges’ possible connection to the text, as he apparently uses the Third Man Argument in the same way Morrison does. These intertextual connections could all work to construct the air of disenchantment that flows through the novel in order to communicate the trauma of its story. Our philosophical interpretation is only one more resource to put this novel in the limelight and understand the input of other researchers. Du Bois’ theories are broadened through Morrison’s voice, feminist black women such as bell hooks are brought to mind. No other interpretation of *The Bluest Eye* is denied through the Third Man Argument but heightened as it brings forth the structure of the layered reality that Morrison chooses to depict in her opera prima.

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<sup>4</sup> “The point of view of a child alters the priority an adult would assign the information” (Morrison 209).

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## PAYING HOMAGE TO THE HOLOCAUST FEMALE VICTIMS IN *THE ZONE OF INTEREST*

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*ABSTRACT.* Martin Amis returns to the subject of the Holocaust after *Time's Arrow* (1991) with *The Zone of Interest*, a realistic novel set in Auschwitz in the months from August 1942 to April 1943. Amis decides to deal again with the atrocities committed by the Nazis, because he believes that the impact of the Holocaust will change with the physical disappearance of the survivors. In this article we are going to focus on two of the female victims created by Amis: a Jewish prisoner who confronts her oppressors and a Jewish doctor morally destroyed by her collaboration with the Nazis, both of whom are presented through the perpetrator's gaze. In order to demonstrate how Amis succeeds in giving the reader a truthful picture of the humiliations the Nazis inflicted on their victims, we will use the witnesses' testimonies and the studies on the Holocaust relevant to our analysis, with special attention to those who offer a gender perspective.

*Keywords:* The Zone of Interest, Holocaust, female victims, gender, Jewish, subversive.

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## RINDIENDO HOMENAJE A LAS VÍCTIMAS FEMENINAS DEL HOLOCAUSTO EN *LA ZONA DE INTERÉS*

*RESUMEN.* Amis retoma el tema del Holocausto después de *La flecha del tiempo* (1991) con *La zona de interés* (2014), una novela realista ambientada en Auschwitz entre agosto de 1942 y abril de 1943. Amis decide escribir nuevamente sobre las atrocidades cometidas por los nazis porque cree que el impacto del Holocausto cambiará con la desaparición física de los supervivientes. En este artículo nos vamos a centrar en dos de las víctimas femeninas creadas por Amis: una prisionera judía que se enfrenta a sus opresores y una doctora judía moralmente destruida por su colaboración con los nazis, ambas presentadas a través de la mirada del perpetrador. Para poder demostrar cómo Amis logra ofrecer al lector un retrato certero de las humillaciones que los Nazis infligían a sus víctimas, usaremos los testimonios de los testigos, así como los trabajos sobre el Holocausto más relevantes para nuestro análisis, con especial atención a aquellos que ofrecen una perspectiva de género.

*Palabras clave:* La zona de interés, el Holocausto, víctimas femeninas, género, judío, subversivo.

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### 1. LITERATURE AND THE HOLOCAUST: MAKING THE UNIMAGINABLE IMAGINATIVELY ACCESSIBLE

Most critics agree that, as Berel Lang states, “if *any* literary or scholarly subject could challenge the role conventionally assumed by authors, it is the radical evil exemplified by, and then to be represented in, the events of the Holocaust” (3, italics in the original). The enormity of the Final Solution transformed it into an “event at the limits”, which raises aesthetics and intellectual problems as well as ethical and moral issues (Friedlander, “Introduction” 3).<sup>1</sup> In the debate on the representability of the Holocaust two main trends can be discerned. On the one hand, there are those who, following Adorno’s famous, and often misunderstood, dictum that “[t]o write poetry after Auschwitz is barbaric” (34), believe that the literary imagination is incapable of rendering intelligible the extermination of six million Jews. Therefore, they call for what Mandel describes as “the rhetoric of the unspeakable”. For instance, Steiner claims that “[t]he world of Auschwitz lies outside speech as it lies outside reason” (146), while Howe believes that the novelist cannot make sense of the Holocaust and turn it into a significant narrative. He explains that Adorno was concerned about the danger of minimizing the horrors of the terrifying ordeal Jews

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<sup>1</sup> Friedlander argues that the “Final Solution” is an “event at the limits” because it is “the most radical form of genocide encountered in history: the willful, systematic, industrially organized, largely successful attempt totally to exterminate an entire human group within twentieth-century Western society” (“Introduction” 3). Friedlander is echoing Eberhard Jäckel’s famous statement about the uniqueness of the Holocaust.

went through by imposing aesthetic principles on it: “writers in the post-Holocaust era might be wise to be silent. Silent, at least about the Holocaust” (180). Wiesel also points to the way in which literature might distort the victims’ suffering: “We do try to put the experience into words. But can we? That is my question. Language is poor and inadequate. The moment it is told, the experience turns into betrayal” (284). Borchert expresses it beautifully:

Go home, poets, get into the forests, catch fish, chop wood and do your most heroic deed: Be silent! Let the cuckoo cry of your lonely hearts be silent, for there’s no rhyme and no metre for it, and no drama, no ode and no psychological novel can encompass the cry of the cuckoo, and no dictionary and not press has syllables or signs for your wordless world-rage, for your exquisite pain, for the agony of your love. (194)<sup>2</sup>

This idea that the Holocaust cannot and should not be represented has been challenged by many scholars and writers. In fact, Spargo argues that the anxiety about the appropriateness of representing the Holocaust began to disappear by the early 1990s and that the literatures on the Holocaust that started to proliferate clearly revealed that even the truth of history is culturally mediated (7). In this sense, Mandel is very critical of those who refer to the Holocaust as unspeakable, unthinkable, incomprehensible. She argues that the presumed “unspeakable” quality of the Holocaust is merely a cultural construct that reveals our own motivations and desires (205). Mandel understands those who think that writing about the Shoah involves a further wronging of the victims: “To speak their experience would run the risk of understanding that experience, with its concurrent possibilities of trivializing or betraying it” (222). But in spite of it, Mandel firmly believes that we have the responsibility to speak the unspeakable in order to understand the Holocaust and its aftermath.

Aarons agrees that silence is not an option. She acknowledges that the nature of the Holocaust challenges language and that its enormity complicates its telling, but we cannot turn away from the subject:

Capitulation to language’s inadequacy is symptomatic of the failure of moral reckoning, an indefensible flight of conscience. To say that we cannot articulate the atrocity of the Holocaust is to imply that we cannot judge the motivating conditions and execution of its atrocities. (38)

This way, literary representation by bearing witness to the atrocities committed during the Holocaust becomes an affirmation of life.

Langer also recognizes how difficult it is for an artist to write about the Holocaust, but if he gives up and decides that his only option is silence, he is just admitting his

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<sup>2</sup> Langer argues that Borchert falls into an obvious contradiction since “while demanding silence, Borchert labors to discover a speech, a voice to express his ‘wordless world-rage’ and ‘exquisite pain,’ to recapture the lost eloquence of the poet’s tongue” (*The Holocaust* 35).

own failure to discover the resources of language necessary to portray his vision (*The Holocaust* 17). What Langer calls the literature of atrocity is concerned with a reality that the human mind had never confronted before and its aim is “to find a way of making this fundamental truth accessible to the mind and emotions of the reader” (*The Holocaust* xii). Langer admits that it would be presumptuous to believe that art can surpass history in giving us a deeper understanding of the how and why of the Holocaust, but this has never been the province of art. Whereas history provides the details, literature looks for ways of explaining the implications and making the unimaginable imaginatively accessible.

Eaglestone agrees with Langer that “[t]he past is too important to be left solely to historians” (3). Fiction can help us understand the meaning of the Holocaust by discovering new categories or concepts.<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless, Eaglestone warns that the growth of Holocaust consciousness has resulted in the emergence of post-Holocaust kitsch which transforms the past into something “meant to titillate or offer a saccharine ease” (143). The world described in these texts is simple, apolitical and ahistorical and does not contribute to full engagement with the Holocaust. One example is the popular *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas*, by John Boyne (140).<sup>4</sup>

Epstein goes even further when he asserts that if we do not want those who exterminated the European Jews to remain victorious, but give meaning to the victims’ terrible suffering, fiction “*must flourish*” (260, italics in the original). Epstein defends the superiority of fiction over history when it comes to representing the reality of the Holocaust. Epstein criticizes novelists, even the serious ones, for not being able “to endure even minimal amounts of the reality of the Holocaust” and thus “all unknowingly, in sheer innocence” reflect the culture of the oppressor (265, 266). The writer has the responsibility to recreate life in the ghettos and camps as it really was, so that “the reader feels a sense of connectedness” with the events being described (Epstein 265).

## 2. *THE ZONE OF INTEREST*: ENGAGING WITH WOMEN’S PREDICAMENT AT AUSCHWITZ

Amis seems to share Epstein’s tenets, since, as Rosenbaum points out, he believes that he has a responsibility as a writer and thinker to deal with the extermination of

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<sup>3</sup> Eaglestone’s statement is very revealing because well-known historians such as Deutscher and Friedlander (“The ‘Final Solution’”) believe that our understanding of the Holocaust will not increase with the passing of time.

<sup>4</sup> Cesarani makes a similar claim about *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas* and its film adaptation (xvii), whereas Kaes warns of the “unabashed commercial exploitation and trivialization of human suffering” in television specials and films “in which the Holocaust serves more often than not as a mere backdrop to melodramatic private affairs” (208). Kertész, who believes that “the concentration camp is imaginable only and exclusively as literature, never as reality” (“Who Owns Auschwitz” 268), has also denounced how the Holocaust has been very often transformed into very cheap consumer goods.

six million Jews. Amis has admitted that the problem of understanding Hitler and the crimes committed by the Germans puzzled him until he read Primo Levi's statement in which he affirms that there is no rationality in the Nazi hatred:

...it is a hate that is not in us; it is outside man, it is a poison fruit sprung from the deadly trunk of Fascism, but it is outside and beyond Fascism itself. We cannot understand it, but we can and must understand from where it springs, and we must be on our guard. (Afterword 396)

Levi's words were like an epiphany for Amis since the pressure to make sense of what Hitler did left him and he felt free to write again about it (Rosenbaum).<sup>5</sup> Amis returns to the subject of the Holocaust after *Time's Arrow* with *The Zone of Interest*, a realistic novel set in Auschwitz in the months from August 1942 to April 1943.<sup>6</sup> The story is told from the point of view of the three central characters: Paul Doll, the "Old Boozer", the camp commandant and the source of most of the comedy in the novel; Angelus Thomsen, a womanizer, who falls in love with Doll's wife and is a nephew of Martin Bormann, Hitler's private secretary; and Szmul, the leader of the Sonderkommando, Jewish prisoners forced to do the Nazis' "dirty work", that is to say, help the Nazis deceive the prisoners on arriving at the camp and dispose of the corpses. Amis has explained that he decided to deal again with this terrible event because he felt that "in the very palpable, foreseeable future the Holocaust is going to absent itself from living memory" (Rosenbaum). He admits that the survivors' testimonies will endure in print and video, "but their physical disappearance from life will mark a symbolic divide" (Rosenbaum). This idea is shared by Anton Gill, whose book *The Journey back from Hell* Amis praises in the "Acknowledgments and Epilogue" as an important bibliographical source for the novel: "It is an extraordinary inspiring treasury of voices, and one grounded and marshalled by the author with both flair and decorum" (Amis, *The Zone of Interest* 305).<sup>7</sup>

In "After the Holocaust" Appelfeld warns of the danger of reducing the Shoah to facts and statistics: "I do wish to point out that the numbers and the facts were the murderers' own well-proven means. Man as a number is one of the horrors of dehumanization. They never asked anyone who he was or what he was. They tattooed a number on his arm" (83-84). In fact, the corpses at the camps were referred to as *Stücke*, pieces, a term used by Doll, the camp commandant, in *The Zone of Interest*. Alice and Roy Eckardt also assert: "The German Nazis taught that the Jew is the *Untermensch*, the contaminator from below. Accordingly, his 'name' is taken away; he does not deserve one; he is only the number tattooed into his

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<sup>5</sup> Ozick has criticized Amis for what she considers to be a manipulation of Levi's words.

<sup>6</sup> Whereas *Time's Arrow* is an experimental novel, with *The Zone of Interest* Amis chose realism as the genre for the novel (Seaman). In fact, some critics have described the book as a traditional historical novel (Ozick; Preston; Wood).

<sup>7</sup> Subsequent references are in-text and belong to this edition.

flesh” (223). Reiter has summarized perfectly well how the arrival procedure deprived the victims of any identity:

The loss of all personal possessions, civilian clothes and body hair, together with the violation of physical integrity (including tattooing in the case of Jews at Auschwitz), made new arrivals brutally aware that they had ceased to exist as individuals with a name and an identity. (21)

The victims who were reduced to mere numbers in the concentration camps have also denounced the fact that the historical accounts of the camps do not do justice to the pain and suffering individuals endured (Reiter 16). In this sense, Hartman considers that while collective memory can contribute to sharing and healing, “fiction is often more effective in finding ways for the outsider to identify with what happened in a deeply personal if precarious way” (34). And this is precisely what Amis does with the female victims in the novel: they are not anonymous figures, but characters with a defined personality who in different ways make the reader aware of their predicament in Auschwitz and allow him/her to establish a connection with them.

Amis’ concern with the female victims is very relevant, since in the last decades feminist scholars have argued for the need to engage with the notion of gender if we want to have a better understanding of the Holocaust.<sup>8</sup> They reject the accusations put forward by scholars and writers that by focusing on gender and not only on race, they are trivializing the importance of the Holocaust or ignoring the Nazis’ hatred of the Jews. They admit that for the Nazis race was more important than gender—“All Jews, regardless of who they were, were intended to die” (Waxman 14)—but this does not mean that gender should be disregarded, since women’s experiences differed from those of men. Waxman has argued that it is precisely because of its uniqueness that the Holocaust is “an especially revealing example of gender in action” (8). Furthermore, and this is relevant to this article, Waxman states that since more people were murdered at Auschwitz than at any other camp, Auschwitz “forms a useful – if horrific – testcase for exploring gender in the Holocaust” (84).

Amis contributes to a better knowledge of women’s lives at Auschwitz by creating four female victims. The first one is “a compliant Jehovah’s Witness suitably called Humilia” (Ozick), who works as a housemaid for the Dolls. As Rees has explained, the SS officers needed domestic slaves, but they had to be sure that they would not try to escape or hurt their families. They solved the problem by employing Jehovah’s Witnesses who because of their religious teachings were defined by their dependability and equanimity (Gill 49).

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<sup>8</sup> In *Women in the Holocaust* Waxman offers a very interesting account of the vindication of a more woman-centred approach to Holocaust studies as well as the opposition it has received.

The second victim is Alisz Seisser, a Gypsy, the widow of a German Nazi sergeant. Although it is true that the Jews were treated in a more brutal way than the other prisoners, the Nazis' treatment of the Gypsies was not much better. In fact, their living conditions in the camp were similar to those of the Jews: "But conditions in the gypsy camp soon became amongst the worst in Auschwitz. Overcrowding combined with lack of food and water meant that disease was rife, particularly typhus and the skin disease called noma, and many thousands died" (Rees 313).<sup>9</sup> Both the Jews and the Gypsies were the *Untermenschen*, the sub-humans. As Thomsen says in the novel: "Poles were of animal status, but they weren't insects or bacteria, like the Russian POWs, the Jews, and now also the Roma and Sinti – the Alisz Seissers of this world" (258). Very few young children survived in the camps, because the vast majority were either Jews or Gypsies.

The next two victims are Jewish. Whereas one of them, Dr Luxemburg, is a doctor who is forced to collaborate with the Nazis, Esther is the most subversive character in the novel, since she refuses to be dominated by the oppressors. In this article we are going to focus on these two characters and use the witnesses' testimonies and the studies on the Holocaust, with special attention to those who offer a gender perspective, to show how Amis succeeds in giving the readers a faithful picture of the experience of women at Auschwitz. Unlike Szmul, whose feelings and thoughts we have access to and who is the moral consciousness of the novel (Kakutani), the female victims are seen through the lens of the male perpetrators. Dr Luxemburg and Esther offer us a devastating picture of the Nazis' brutality and their lack of empathy, but in the case of Esther Amis goes even further: by creating a character who ridicules her oppressors and defeats them, Amis gives some poetic justice to the victims.

### 3. DR LUXEMBURG: THE DEATH OF THE SOUL

Amis has argued that one of the things that interests him most about Auschwitz is that, as survivors have constantly asserted, you do not know yourself until you find yourself in extreme circumstances. In normal life you only see about five per cent of another person and of yourself: "It's only in dire extremis that you actually find out the extent of your courage, whether you're prepared to make others suffer for your advantage. Even among victims. It's a very frightening thing the idea of finding out who you really are" (Stadlen). An Auschwitz survivor describes this reality: "[T]he soul was stripped naked and showed itself for what it was, better or worse" (Gill 516). In fact, in the novel the male victim, Szmul, the perpetrator, Doll, and the collaborator, Thomsen, reinforce the idea that in Auschwitz you discover who you really are. Szmul uses the legend of the king who commissioned a wizard to create a magic mirror that shows your soul, who you really are. Of course, no one can look at it without turning away: "I find that the KZ is that mirror. The KZ is

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<sup>9</sup> On the fate of the female Sinti and Roma in concentration camps see Milton, "Hidden Lives: Sinti and Roma Women".

that mirror, but with one difference. You can't turn away" (33). Doll shares the same thoughts: "And it's true what they say, here in the KL: No one knows themselves. Who are you? You don't know. Then you come to the Zone of Interest, and it tells you who you are" (68). And Thomsen also realizes at the end of the novel that the zone of interest is not just a Nazi euphemism for the area surrounding Auschwitz: "We all discovered, or helplessly revealed, who we were. Who somebody really was. *That* was the zone of interest" (285, italics in the original).

Survivors not only insist on the fact that you do not know your real personality until you find yourself in a place like Auschwitz, but claim that you cannot judge those who collaborated with the Nazis, because you do not know what you would have done if you had been in the same situation. As this Holocaust survivor states:

I was very lucky that I was able to survive without its being at the expense of others. I cannot make any judgment of collaborators, because I do not know how I would have reacted if they'd said to me, give as such-and-such names and we'll see you better fed. I was lucky to be spared that temptation. Collaborators were wrong, but if it had truly been a question of survival, would I have been strong enough to resist? (Gill 227)

Like this witness, those prisoners who did not find themselves in a situation that made them cross the moral boundaries are grateful that they were spared the sense of guilt and shame. They ask themselves what they would have done if they had been tempted to collaborate in order to survive. Levi, himself an Auschwitz survivor and to whom, amongst others, the novel is dedicated, describes the survivor's feelings very well:

No, you find no obvious transgressions, you did not usurp anyone's place, you did not beat anyone (but would you have had the strength to do so?), you did not accept positions (but none were offered to you...), you did not steal anyone's bread; nevertheless, you cannot exclude it. ("Shame" 81)

Levi argues that we should not judge those who belong to what he calls the "grey zone", those who collaborated in different ways with their oppressors ("The Grey Zone" 40-41). Levi emphasises that, although there were "grey" people who were ready to compromise, we should not and cannot confuse them with their oppressors. The horrors, humiliations they were subjected to did not leave them much room for choice and it would be illogical to expect them to behave like saints or stoic philosophers. In fact, Levi points out that the "privileged" prisoners were degraded by the system and that "the best way to bind them is to burden them with guilt, cover them with blood, compromise them as much as possible" ("The Grey Zone" 39). Alice and Roy Eckardt give us an illuminating explanation of the way in which the Nazis destroyed the soul of the prisoners who were forced to collaborate with them:

At the heart of the Endlösung is the utilization of Jews as officially-determined agents to revile and torture their fellow-Jews. The Jew is turned into the accomplice



of his executioners. The Endlösung is ultimate degradation. It is the attempted dehumanization of the Jew and the torture-process that makes it possible. The Endlösung is total mental, physical, and spiritual breakdown. (223)

Gill has explained that, although it might be thought that the prisoner-doctors were among the most fortunate because at least their work had some meaning, the fact is that they could find themselves tragically compromised by their Nazi oppressors (138). One of the doctors he interviewed, Elie Cohen, collaborated with the Germans. While he was in Westerbork he decided who was fit or unfit for the transport to Auschwitz and then in Auschwitz he helped SS doctors choose the Jewish patients who were considered no longer worthy of medical treatment and thus were condemned to the gas chamber. Cohen confesses again and again during the interview that he cannot escape the guilt he feels, because he was a collaborator and did what he was told. He admits that he cooperated because, above all, he wanted to live (441).<sup>10</sup>

Amis confronts the fate of the prisoner-doctors in *The Zone of Interest* through the character of Miriam Luxemburg,<sup>11</sup> who is of Polish-German origin: “She was a rare bird, a Judin Prominent in the SS-Hygienic Institute (the SS-HI), 1 of several prisoner doctors who, under close supervision of course, did lab work on bacteriology and experimental sera” (231). Dr Luxemburg has been in Auschwitz for two years:

Now women do not on the whole age gracefully in the KL – but it’s chiefly complete lack of food that does that (and even hunger, chronic hunger, can wipe away all the feminine essences in 6 or 7 months). Dr Luxemburg looked about 50, and was probably about 30; but it wasn’t malnutrition that had reduced her hair to a kind of mould and turned her lips outside in. She had some flesh on her and, moreover, seemed tolerably clean. (231)

In this passage Amis wants to make the reader aware of the fact that, as we saw above, many collaborators were destroyed and degraded by having to work together with their oppressors. Dr Luxemburg belongs to the grey zone, to this group of people who had no choice but to help the Nazis if they wanted to survive in an ignominious world. Van Alphen has explained this phenomenon as follows: “The situation was defined by the *lack* of choice. One just followed humiliating impulses that killed one’s subjectivity but safeguarded one’s life” (31, italics in the original). The so-called Waffen-SS and Police Hygiene Institute at Auschwitz (*Hygiene Institut der Waffen-SS und Polizei Auschwitz*) performed hygienic and bacteriological work and camp prisoners who were specialists in bacteriology, pathological anatomy, biology and chemistry did most of the laboratory work. They experimented with

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<sup>10</sup> Levi himself has explained that the first rule he learnt in Auschwitz was that you take care of yourself first of all (“Shame” 78-79).

<sup>11</sup> Of course, her name is not casual. Doll tells us that she is said to be the niece of Rosa Luxemburg, “the famous Marxist ‘intellectual’” (231).

serums and chemicals to prove their effectiveness and both Jews and Gypsies were used for these trials. Brustad writes about the latter:

Many of these medical assaults were performed by SS doctors in barrack no. 32, where everything from the taking of blood and urine samples in connection with experiments on typhus and other endemic diseases to the murder of prisoners to obtain organs for experiments and quasi-scientific research were conducted.

Dr Luxemburg is aware of the fact that with her research she is contributing to the suffering and torture of her own. The sense of guilt has broken her soul and her body reflects her inner death. This woman who is morally and ethically broken is again asked to collaborate with the oppressors when Doll tells her that she has to do an abortion. Doll is presented in the novel as a buffoon (Oates; Reich), a clown, who is considered an incompetent by his colleagues and is despised by his wife, Hannah, who is aware of the atrocities that are being committed in the camp. The fact that she is the strong one in the relationship is a clear subversion of the role usually played by a camp commandment's wife. This is how Hannah describes her husband: "And he was so coarse, and so...prissy, and so ugly, and so cowardly, and so stupid" (298). Doll himself admits that he is afraid of her and that he cannot discipline her. She even gives him black eyes which, as Doll himself admits, "seriously detract from my aura of infallible authority" (58) and makes him feel "like a pirate or a clown in a pantomime" (59).<sup>12</sup> And because he cannot control his own wife, who even refuses to have sex with him, Doll decides to start a relationship with the beautiful Alisz Seisser, a Gypsy. She is powerless and terrified, because she is aware of her vulnerability: "Alisz was mortally terrified" (49), "For some reason she was white with dread" (71), "the pale, limp, terrified figure of Alisz Seisser" (86). Doll, who is aware of her defenceless, decides to use his power as a Nazi officer to take advantage of her. Doll's treatment of her is so denigrating and abominable, that he even jokes about the tattoo on her arm: "And is that your phone number? Just joking. Nicht?" (127). Unfortunately, Alisz gets pregnant<sup>13</sup> and Doll knows that if someone finds out, it would be the end of his career: "This is a matter of the gravest moment. I hope you understand that. Fraternizing with a Haftling's serious enough. But *Rassenschande*...Insult to the blood" (223). Doll's cruelty emerges once again

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<sup>12</sup> Some critics have emphasised Amis' comic and satirical approach to masculinity in his novels (Setz; Gwózdź). It is very interesting that in "Masculinity and Pornography" Gwózdź uses the term grotesque to refer to the shortcomings of the two opposite masculinities that are being satirized in *London Fields*, because in *The Zone of Interest* Doll becomes more delusional and grotesque as the novel advances. Amis has admitted that he based the character of Doll on Rudolf Höss. Amis read the biography Höss wrote in his death cell in Poland and he found it fascinating, like a Nabokov novel in the sense that the narrator is unreliable, mendacious and utterly unaware of himself (Dodd).

<sup>13</sup> One of the consequences of lack of food was that women ceased to menstruate. Doll refers to this reality when he explains why one is seldom tempted to have a relationship with a female prisoner: "[...] so few of the women menstruate or have any hair. If you get desperate – well" (125). Alisz gets pregnant because Doll takes great care that she receives enough food so she retains her beauty and weight.

when he tells her that if she reveals to anyone what has happened, it would be her word against his: “And you’re a subhuman” (223). And while Dr Luxemburg is performing the abortion, Doll cannot help showing his lack of empathy and scruples: “Oh brighten up, Alisz. A clean termination. It’s something you should celebrate [...] Now can you pull yourself together, young lady, on your own steam? Or d’you need another slap in the face?” (262).

This sense of vulnerability, of humiliation, that Alizs experiences and which allows Amis to transmit to the reader the brutality of the Nazi officers towards their victims, is also shared by Dr Luxemburg. The main difference is that whereas in the case of Alizs there is a violation of the body and the soul, there is nothing sexual in Doll’s relationship with Dr Luxemburg. In fact, his treatment of her and Szmul is the same. He demeans both and has no scruples to mock their unbearable pain. But the reason he has chosen Dr Luxemburg is because she is a woman: female doctors were the ones who performed secret abortions in Auschwitz. Doll knows that there can be complications with the procedure and this is why he asks the doctor to have “Sodium evipan. Or phenol. A simple cardiac injection...” (232), just in case things go wrong.<sup>14</sup> Dr Luxemburg is dismayed by Doll’s words and the commandment takes advantage of her moral vulnerability to exercise all his cruelty on her:

‘...Oh, stare no so, “Doktor”. You’ve selected, haven’t you. You’ve done selections. You’ve separated out’

‘That has sometimes been asked of me, yes, sir.’ (232)

The selection of prisoners as they arrived at Auschwitz was “one of the most infamous procedures associated with Auschwitz” (Rees 141) or, as Boris, a Nazi officer, puts it in the novel: “The most eerie bit’s the selection” (4). The weak ones—women with children, elderly people—were sent directly to the gas chamber, whereas those fit for work were kept alive.<sup>15</sup> As Reiter has explained, the selection process was so devoid of any meaning that it became “the touchstone of the viability of metaphor in the concentration camp texts” (118). The whole procedure was so terrifying and nonsensical that survivors could not find any images to refer to it.

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<sup>14</sup> Because Dr Luxemburg is helping Doll, he makes sure that she has all the medicaments she needs. The situation of female doctors in camps was usually different, since they lacked instruments and medicaments. In fact, when Doll tells Alisz that a prisoner-doctor is going to do the procedure, she panics, because she believes that she only has toolkits (227).

<sup>15</sup> Most female scholars have argued that the fact that women with children were sent directly to the gas chambers on arriving at the camps shows that gender played a role during the selection (Weitzman and Ofer; Milton “Women and the Holocaust”; Waxman). I doubt that this was the case. Firstly, as Karwowska has explained, the state of the body was the first criteria for the selection. Those who looked young and healthy had a chance to survive (67). In fact, in the novel Doll gets disappointed when he realizes that a girl “in the pink of health” (23) is with child. Secondly, the Nazis soon realized that it would go against their own interest to separate mothers away from their children because of the emotional disturbance it would cause (Rees 168). In fact, Doll refers to this reality in the novel (73).

The SS doctors played a very important role in the process of extermination, since they were the ones who decided who lived or died on arriving at the camp. According to Rees, there were two reasons for their active participation in the selection process. The first one was merely practical: doctors could at a glance decide who was fit for work. The second one was philosophical: “a sense was created that the killing was not an arbitrary act of prejudice, but a scientific necessity. Auschwitz was not a place of indiscriminate slaughter, but a measured and calm contribution to the health of the state” (Rees 230). Of course, by reminding Dr Luxemburg that she has collaborated with the SS in deciding who lives or dies, Doll is inflicting another wound on her dying soul.

Nevertheless, Amis shows that those who are in the grey zone are still capable of showing compassion. When Doll asks Dr Luxemburg to perform the abortion, she does not ask for food in return for obeying Doll’s orders, since privileged prisoners in the camp had a better diet. She only wants 800 cigarettes to aid her brother “who was struggling, somewhat, in a penal Kommando in the uranium mines beyond Furstengrube” (232). She even risks her life to do some good. In fact, when Doll tells her that he knows about her secretly helping women give birth to their babies: “She didn’t reply. For she risked death every day, every hour, just by being what she was. Yes, I thought: that’ll put a few bags under your eyes and a few notches on your mouth” (232). What Amis does not tell in the novel, maybe because, as Pine has pointed out, there is a tendency in literature to overlook some of the desperate and degrading actions taken by female victims in order to survive, is that the inmate female doctors who helped the prisoners give birth, very often also killed the new-born in order to save the mother’s life: “In the chaotic scheme of values created for the victims by the Germans, a birth moment is a dead moment” (Langer, “Gendered Suffering?” 357). Sometimes the babies were poisoned, others they were smothered or drowned in a bucket of water (Waxman 98). Of course, these experiences were devastating for both the mothers and doctors. Nevertheless, what is relevant here is that Amis is showing the reader how the people in the grey zone tried to help those in distress whenever they could, or as Cohen has asserted: “One did what one could” (Gill 440), by which he means that sometimes he was able to aid people and thus find some justification or meaning in what he did. Szmul seems to echo Cohen’s words in the novel when he explains that one of the reasons for going on living is that “we save a life (or prolong a life) at the rate of one per transport” (34). They would tell the young men to say that they were eighteen years old and had a trade, so that they would not be selected for the gas chamber. Interestingly enough, Doll argues with great sarcasm that what Dr Luxemburg does with the pregnant women is “heroic” and the fact is that he is right, because for someone like her to risk what is most precious, her own life, transforms her for a short while into a heroine.

## 4. ESTHER: A VINDICATION OF WOMEN'S RESISTANCE

In the "Acknowledgments and Epilogue" Amis makes reference to the bibliography he used to write the novel and tells the reader: "I adhere to that which happened, in all its horror, its desolation, and its bloody-minded opacity" (310). Although this is true about most of the characters and situations in the novel, in the case of Esther Kubis, a fifteen-year old Jewess, Amis takes more liberties. She is the most subversive character in the novel, constantly challenging the rules without paying a high prize for it, unlike the other inmates who dared to resist one way or another. As Waxman reminds us, women were punished even for minor misdemeanours, such as working slowly (103), let alone for trying to escape, subverting the rules or refusing to comply. In this sense, Milton has pointed out that survival in the camp depended on a prisoner's ability to remain inconspicuous ("Women and the Holocaust" 314). Esther is a very attractive young woman who would not have stood a chance in the world of the concentration camp in which no transgression went unpunished.

Because of Esther's good looks, Waffen SS officer Boris Eltz becomes sexually obsessed with her and this is why he protects her by rescuing her from the *Scheissekommando* and having her transferred to "Kalifornia", a euphemism for "Canada". On their arrival at Auschwitz the prisoners were told to leave their suitcases and belongings and assured that they would pick them up afterwards. Of course, this never happened. The prisoners' possessions were taken away from them and sorted out in an area of the camp known as "Canada", because this country was thought to be a fantasy destination, a country of great riches. As Rees has explained, even the most intimate possessions were stolen.

Mostly female inmates worked in Canada and one of the survivors has explained that they were told not only to fold the clothing, but to search every piece looking for valuables: diamonds, gold, coins, dollars, foreign currency from all over Europe (Rees 224).<sup>16</sup> In fact, in one of the scenes of the novel Boris explains to Thomsen that Esther is looking for precious stones in a bucket of toothpaste (41). Women working in "Canada" enjoyed a privileged position in Auschwitz since they could grow their hair out and had better living conditions. Rees has pointed out that proportionally more women survived Auschwitz as a result of being transferred to "Canada" than almost anywhere else (244). As a survivor has asserted: "Actually, working in 'Canada' saved my life because we had food, we got water and we could take a shower there" (Rees 224). Food was really of paramount importance in the concentration camp, because it was a key element in the fight for survival in the camp, a reality corroborated by the witnesses. Levi has explained that death by hunger or by diseases caused by hunger was the prisoners' normal destiny, which could only be avoided "with additional food, and to obtain it a large or small privilege was necessary" ("The Grey Zone" 37). It was just a matter of life and death,

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<sup>16</sup> A survivor emphasises the absurdity of the whole situation when she points out that if the Nazis hated the Jews so much, "why didn't they feel an aversion to our belongings?" (Rees 141).

as Appelfeld states: “The selfish grasping at every crumb of bread and scrap of clothing, that grasping, which was sometimes ugly, was a kind of denial of death” (85-86). Prisoners stole food, usually mangels or potatoes, and they were brutally punished for it. There were also what Gill defines as “animalistic fights” during the distribution of food (139). Levi describes this reality very well: “We had not only forgotten our country and our culture, but also our family, our past, the future we had imagined for ourselves, because, like animals, we were confined to the present moment” (“Shame” 75).<sup>17</sup>

Because of the lack of food most prisoners were walking skeletons. All prisoners looked alike, since, as Gill has pointed out, all individual characteristics were removed from the face (397). A camp prisoner confirms this hard truth: “We all looked the same, bald and thin – it’s outstanding how quickly individual characteristics disappear when you starve” (Gill 421). The reference to the lack of hair is highly relevant, because on entering the camp both men’s and women’s hair was shaven, which contributed to erasing the sexual differences between them: “One would not distinguish between female and male body, especially from a distance” (Karwowska 66). As Waxman has explained, the removal of hair was especially traumatic for women, because it was a consciously humiliating process of dehumanization (89).<sup>18</sup> They felt like they were “animals” or “subhuman” (Waxman 89), that they had ceased to exist as human beings.<sup>19</sup> But although they were dehumanized, they were not desexualised: “Gender, in that sense, was the last thing to survive the camps” (Waxman 91). Women were sexually humiliated and even became victims of rape in concentration camps, which, as a survivor has argued, is really surprising taking into consideration that they were “starving, dirty, ragged women” (Pine 47).

Esther is everything but grateful towards Boris for having her transferred to “Kalifornia” and thus having better living conditions:

‘And for this she hates you.’

‘She hates me.’ Bitterly he shook his head. ‘Well I’ll give her something to hate me for.’ (39)

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<sup>17</sup> Interestingly enough, as Reiter has explained, the experience the prisoners were going through was so different from anything that had happened to them before, that they lacked the adequate linguistic means to describe the hunger they suffered and the meaning food had for them (18).

<sup>18</sup> Jacobs argues that the hair exhibit at Auschwitz contributes to both dehumanizing and eroticising the victims: “Because women’s hair is a potent symbol of female sexuality, this fragment of the human body, removed and disconnected from the individual, contributes even further to the sexualization of women’s memory” (221-2).

<sup>19</sup> Waxman points out that the Nazis also cut women’s hair for practical reasons: the hair collected was exported to Germany and it was a way to control the spread of lice in the camps (89).

Esther despises Boris firstly because she knows he has done it for selfish reasons. Whereas the majority of women prisoners were malnourished, had no hair and therefore became anonymous figures, those working in “Canada” retained some of their beauty because of their privileged situation. This explains why they became targets for members of the SS, who sometimes sexually abused them (Rees 263-267).<sup>20</sup> Secondly, Esther is aware of the fact that in a sense she is betraying her own people by going through their belongings. In a quite moving paragraph, Amis gives us a list of the items that were confiscated:

Beetling heaps of rucksacks, kitbags, holdalls, cases and trunks (these last adorned with enticing labels of travel – redolent of frontier posts, misty cities), like a vast bonfire awaiting the torch. A stack of blankets as high as a three-storey building: no princess, be she never so delicate, would feel a pea beneath twenty, thirty thousand thicknesses. And all around fat hillocks of pots and pans, of hairbrushes, shirts, coats, dresses, handkerchiefs – also watches, spectacles, and all kinds of prostheses, wigs, dentures, deaf-aids, surgical boots, spinal supports. The eye came last to the mound of children’s shoes, and the sprawling mountains of prams, some of them just wooden troughs on wheels, some of them all curve and contour, carriages for little dukes, little duchesses. (41)

Esther could not have been indifferent to what all these items meant for their owners and the stories they told. She knew that most of the extra food those working in “Canada” had access to came from the prisoners’ possessions and she must certainly have found it wholly repugnant. Some women prisoners used their good looks to have a better life in the camps. This was, for instance, the case of Henia, a friend of one of the survivors interviewed by Gill. She enjoyed a privileged position in Auschwitz because her beauty caught the attention of the commandment of the Sosnowiec ghetto (Gill 191). In this sense, Waxman, who believes that a female approach to women’s lives during the Holocaust involves re-examining experiences such as consensual sex and coerced sex, has argued that these women who consented to sex in order to survive are an example of females’ ability to make strategic choices in extreme circumstances. Even if their decision goes against our own moral values, we have to understand that often it was the only way to stay alive. Milton explains it very well: “Traditional anxieties and guilt about sex were not applicable in the world of total subservience reinforced by terror in the camps” (“Women and the Holocaust” 316).<sup>21</sup> Esther, however, refuses to exploit her attractiveness to make Boris find her even more desirable, because this would imply collaborating with her oppressor. Thus, when she is summoned by Boris, she challenges him and laughs at him by walking in a quite “unattractive” way: “Fifteen years old, and Sephardic, I thought (the Levantine colouring), and finely and tautly

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<sup>20</sup> Sometimes love relationships between German guards and women prisoners developed in “Canada” (Rees 243).

<sup>21</sup> Unlike these scholars, Chatwood prefers to include “sex for survival” in the category of sexual violence, because she believes that if a woman is put in a situation where she has to choose between starving to death or engage in “consensual” sex, it is obvious that the choice is made in a situation where coercion is present (172).

made, and athletic, she somehow managed to trudge, to clump into the room; it was almost satirical, her leadenness of gait” (39). The Nazis knew that people were hearing rumours about Auschwitz and the atrocities committed there and they decided to force prisoners to write postcards explaining their good conditions in the camp (Jeffreys 265). This is what Boris does when she dictates Esther a postcard in which the predicament in Auschwitz is described in very idyllic terms:

*Dear Mama [...] My friend Esther's writing this for me [...] How to describe life in the agricultural station [...] The work is pretty strenuous [...] But I love the countryside and the open air [...] The conditions are really very decent [...] Our bedrooms are plain but comfy [...] And in October they'll be given out these gorgeous eiderdowns. For the colder nights [...] The food is simple [...] but wholesome and plentiful [...] And everything is immaculately clean [...] huge farmstead bathrooms...with great big free-standing tubs.* (39-40, italics in the original)

Of course, Esther does not follow Boris' instructions:

‘All that stuff about the nice food and the cleanliness and the bathtubs. She didn't write down any of that.’ With indignation (at the size and directness of Esther's transgression) Boris went on, ‘She said we were a load of lying murderers! She elaborated on it too. A load of thieving rats and witches and he-goats. Of vampires and graverobbers’. (56-57)<sup>22</sup>

Boris is really infuriated, not only because she has disobeyed his orders, but because she could have put him in a position of danger if his superiors had found out what she had written. Boris is perplexed, he cannot make sense of Esther's subversive behaviour, because when she arrived at the KZ she told him that “*I don't like it here, and I'm not going to die here*” (57, italics in the original), and, obviously, with her attitude she is just endangering her life. She has committed a crime, a sabotage and is confined in the punishment bunker in Block 11. Boris thinks first of getting her some food and water, but then decides that it is better for her to be there for a couple of days so that she learns a lesson. Thomsen asks Boris what they do to people in Block 11: “Nothing. That's the point. Mobius puts it this way: we just let nature take its course. And you wouldn't want to get in the way of nature, would you. Two weeks is the average if they're young” (57). Some of the prisoners transferred to Block 11 were just confined to death by starvation, which, of course, would have been Esther's fate in the real world of Auschwitz.

Esther is released from Block 11 and she is chosen to participate as a dancer in a performance organized by Ilse Grese, the infamous female torturer. Esther is well trained because her mother was *corps de ballet* in Prague. Esther is “their big star” (158) and is therefore on a triple ration of food. As some survivors have confirmed, life for artists–musicians, dancers–was much better in the camp, since they had extra food and they were warm and indoors. One of them, a cellist, even confessed that

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<sup>22</sup> A survivor told Gill that they tried to warn people with their postcards, but they always did it in a way that did not arouse the Nazis' suspicions (512).



he never questioned the morality of playing for the Germans. He was just glad that he enjoyed a privileged situation and had an identity (Gill 471).

But Esther is not so compliant as this cellist: “She’s got very intransigent eyes. And she does have her grievance” (166). Her mother was killed in the Heydrich reprisals and Boris knows that she will not resist the temptation to misbehave in front of the members of the SS. Although Boris warns her of the consequences of her failing on purpose, she is not intimidated: “*I’m going to punish you tonight*” (166, italics in the original). Boris knows that if Ilse Grese realizes that she is trying deliberately to ruin the performance, “she’ll be flogged to death” by her (166). Irma Ilse Ida Grese was Senior SS Superior at Auschwitz and killed an average of thirty people a day. Like other female SS torturers, she was not less brutal than men. She used the most sadistic methods, like throwing dogs at the inmates. Boris teases her when he pretends to be astonished by what people say about her: “An investigator here from Berlin told me you set your dogs on a Greek girl in the woods, just because she wandered off and fell asleep in a hollow. And you know what I did? I laughed in his face. *Not Ilse*, I said. *Not my Ilse*” (167-8, italics in the original).

The great night arrives and Esther fulfils her promise:

Now the wizard began casting his spell, with flinging gestures of the hands, as if freeing them of moisture...Nothing happened. He tried again, and again, and again. Suddenly she twitched; very suddenly she jumped up, and threw the book aside. Blinking, compulsively shrugging, and noisily flat-footed (and often falling over backwards like a plank into Hedwig’s waiting arms), Esther clumped about the stage: a miracle of the uncoordinated, now flopsy, now robotic, with every limb hating every other limb. And comically, painfully ugly. The violins kept on urging and coaxing, but she swooned and swaggered on. (169)

Ilse is getting dangerously impatient with so much “staggering” and “strutting”, when Esther decides to dance and captivates the audience: “Now the charm took hold, the glamour took hold, the magic turned from black to white, the scowl of inanity became a willed but still blissful smile, and she was off and away, she was born and living and free” (170). Boris is absolutely in shock and leaves the room. He is the only one who realizes what Esther has done: she has mocked her oppressors. Initially she was “apeing the slaves. And the guards” and afterwards she expressed her “right to freedom. Her right to love and life” (170). Boris’ reflection on the meaning of Esther’s movements is highly relevant, because, as Reiter has argued, humour in the concentration camps not only helped develop ties of solidarity among the oppressed and allowed them to cope with their harsh reality, but fulfilled the function of critical protest: “Under such conditions, humour strengthened the prisoner’s morale and even permitted them a kind of resistance, however externally ineffective” (124).<sup>23</sup> According to Reiter, this subversive humour

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<sup>23</sup> Morrell has also analysed the critical, cohesive and coping functions that humour fulfilled during the Holocaust.

revealed a desire to rise above the situation in an act of “mental rebellion” that allowed the prisoners to create a counter-reality (128).

It is highly revealing that, although in the aftermath of the novel we learn what has happened to the main characters, Esther’s fate remains a mystery. Thomsen is the last one to see her in May 1933. They are both in a sealed Block: “Esther was serving the final hours of a three-day confinement (without food or water) for not making her bed, or for not making it properly – Ilse Grese was very particular when it came to the making of beds” (275). Esther is gazing at the mountains of the Sudetenland: “Seen in profile, her face wore a frown and a half-smile” (276). Then the door opens and Hedwig Butefisch, Grese’s bumgirl, comes in and she and Esther “wrestled, tickling each other and yelping with laughter” (276). Their little game finishes when Grese tells them to stop: “At once the two girls recollected themselves and straightened up, very sober, and Hedwig marched her prisoner out into the air” (276). This last image is just a figment of the imagination, because in the unique world of the concentration camp Grese would have brutally killed a female prisoner for even a lesser transgression. In Esther’s case, although she is recurrently punished, she is always given the chance to live. She, a Jewess, part of the *Untermenschen* and thus despised by the Nazis, is allowed to play with Ilse’s bumgirl without the torturer flying into a rage and showing the cruelty she is capable of. In fact, Thomsen tells the reader that he is sure Esther kept her promise: “*I’m not going to die here*” (275, italics in the original). In this sense, Esther’s story and only her story, is a clear example of the counterfactual historical novel, which, as Adams has explained, explores alternative possibilities of the past to create a different version of reality. It is true that the character of Esther allows the reader to get information about women’s predicament in Auschwitz, but to believe that someone so subversive, so transgressive as Esther would have survived in the camp is just wishful thinking. Nevertheless, I believe that through Esther Amis is paying tribute to all those women who had the courage to resist in the terrifying world of the concentration camp, a reality which Jacobs believes has been erased in the representation of women at Auschwitz. Jacobs has analysed how women at the concentration camp are remembered as mothers and as embodied subjects of Nazi atrocities. According to Jacobs, the problem with the latter visual frame is that there is a tendency to create a visual narrative of sexual domination, captivity and violation, thus replicating the perpetrator’s gaze:

Like other memories of the Holocaust, the museum at Auschwitz places victimized women at the center of the atrocity narratives, fostering an emotional connection to the past that is filtered through images of women’s powerlessness rather than representations of their heroism. (222)

It is true that we only see Esther through the perpetrator’s gaze, but what makes her such an outstanding character is the fact that she defeats and humiliates her oppressors by challenging their power and refusing to let them crush her spirit. In fact, the reader finishes the novel believing that she achieved her goal: “I’m not going to die here.”

## 5. CONCLUSION

At the end of the novel Thomsen confronts Hannah, Doll's wife, when she claims that she is finished. He tells her that she has no right to complain, because "you were always your husband's victim, but you were never a *victim*" (299, italics in the original).<sup>24</sup> He describes the victims' predicament in order to make her aware of the difference:

But oh yes suffering is. Did you lose your hair and half your body weight? Do you laugh at funerals because there's all this fuss and only one person died? Did your life depend on the state of your shoes? Were your parents murdered? Were your girls? Do you fear uniforms and crowds and naked flames and the smell of wet garbage? Are you terrified of sleep? Does it hurt and hurt and *hurt*? Is there a tattoo on your soul? (299, italics in the original)<sup>25</sup>

The last expression in this quotation was used by an Auschwitz survivor, Valerie, a Jewish painter: "Also, I know and I accept what I fought against for so long: that I cannot be like everybody else. There is a tattoo on my soul" (Gill 511). In the "Afterword" to *Time's Arrow* Amis affirms that the offence was so unique in its cruelty, cowardice and style that "we can see Levi's suicide as an act of ironic heroism [...] My life is mine and mine alone to take" (176). Those survivors who, like Valerie, want to share their painful memories with those who are willing to listen to them, believe that they owe it to those who were murdered during the Holocaust: "and together we remember not only people who no longer exist, but people who have no relatives left to remember them. They only exist in the minds of survivors like us, as shadows [...] That is why I consider it such compelling duty to keep them in my thoughts, and to cherish their memories" (Gill 231). Levi goes so far as to say that survivors are not the witnesses and this is why those who were lucky enough to survive try to "recount not only our fate but also that of the others, indeed of the drowned [...] We speak in their stead, by proxy" ("Shame" 84). In *The Zone of Interest* Amis pays homage not only to those who were exterminated in Auschwitz, but also to those who survived an experience, the enormity of which left a tattoo on their souls.

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<sup>24</sup> Ozick seems to echo Thomsen's words when she affirms: "Throughout all the grim chaos, Amis means us to view Hannah as an internal dissident, a melancholy prisoner of circumstances: perhaps even as a highly privileged quasi-*Häftling* powerless to rebel. Though seeing through Doll's cowardice and deception, she conforms, however, grumblingly, to bourgeois life among the chimneys – the dinners, the playgoing, the children's indulgences".

<sup>25</sup> These symptoms that many survivors experienced after they were released from the concentration camp have been referred to as the survivor syndrome, the post-concentration camp syndrome or the disaster syndrome.

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## THE SEMANTICS AND SYNTAX OF OLD ENGLISH MOTION VERBS

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*ABSTRACT.* This is a study in the syntax and semantics of Old English verbs of motion, including verbs of neutral motion, verbs of manner of motion and verbs of path of motion. Its aim is to identify the morphosyntactic alternations in which these verbs participate. The theoretical basis of the research draws on Goddard's semantics of motion, Levin's model of verb classes and alternations and Talmy's typological distinction between satellite-framed languages and verb-framed languages. The grammatical patterns of the verbs under analysis are discussed, as described in *The Dictionary of Old English* (Healey), with special emphasis on the study of transitivity, case, prepositional government, and reflexivity. As far as meaning components are concerned, this work concentrates on the study of polysemy. The conclusions of this study refer to the consistency of the syntactic behaviour of the verbs under analysis and the main alternations found within the verbal classes.

*Keywords:* Old English, motion verbs, semantics, syntax, verbal classes, morphosyntactic alternations.

## SEMÁNTICA Y SINTAXIS DE LOS VERBOS DE MOVIMIENTO EN INGLÉS ANTIGUO

*RESUMEN.* Este estudio versa sobre la sintaxis y la semántica de los verbos de movimiento del inglés antiguo, incluidos los verbos de movimiento neutro, los verbos de modo de movimiento y los verbos de trayectoria de movimiento. Su objetivo es identificar las alternancias morfosintácticas en las que participan estos verbos. La base teórica de la investigación se basa en la semántica del movimiento de Goddard, el modelo de clases y alternancias verbales de Levin, y la distinción tipológica de Talmy entre lenguas de marco satélite y lenguas de marco verbal. Los patrones gramaticales de los verbos objeto de análisis se analizan tal y como se describen en el *Diccionario de Inglés Antiguo* (Healey), haciendo hincapié en el estudio de la transitividad, el caso, el gobierno preposicional y la reflexividad. En cuanto a los componentes de significado, este trabajo se centra en el estudio de la polisemia. Las conclusiones de este estudio hacen referencia a la coherencia del comportamiento sintáctico de los verbos analizados y a las principales alternancias encontradas dentro de las clases verbales.

*Palabras clave:* inglés antiguo, verbos de movimiento, semántica, sintaxis, clases verbales, alternancias morfosintácticas.

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

The aim of this paper is to ascertain the consistency of the syntactic behaviour of Old English verbs of motion and to identify the morphosyntactic alternations in which they participate. Of the different types of verbs of motion, this study concentrates on verbs of manner of motion, such as *to run*, and verbs of path of motion, such as *to enter*, although verbs of general motion like *to go* also have to be considered as to their relationship with manner and path of motion verbs. This study focuses on the verbs found in intransitive motion constructions that convey a meaning of change of location. The study, therefore, is concerned with the Old English intransitive constructions corresponding to *Janet went to the store* rather than the transitive counterparts of *I returned the book to the library*.

The theoretical framework of this study is provided by Goddard and, above all, by Talmy (“Lexicalization patterns”), who proposes a typological distinction between satellite-framed languages and verb-framed languages; and Levin, who defines verbal classes with respect to their shared meaning and their different argument realizations. In Levin’s model of verb classes and alternations, both meaning components and syntactic behaviour are necessary to justify verbal class membership. In order to come to a conclusion in this respect, it will be necessary to find the verbs in each class, examine their meaning components, check their

syntactic behaviour with texts, describe such syntactic behaviour in a way that allows comparison, and define the alternations that characterise each class.

The present paper is organised as follows. Section 2 provides the theoretical and descriptive basis of the study. Section 3 describes the methodology of the study, as it focuses on the foundations of the analysis of meaning components and syntactic behaviour. Then, it presents the data and unfolds the analysis procedure. Sections 4 and 5 deal with the analysis of meaning components and argument realization of Old English verbs of motion, respectively. Finally, Section 6 draws the conclusions of this study, which point to the argument realization alternations in which motion verbs partake and the correlation between these alternations and the verbal classes of motion.

## 2. THEORETICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE FRAMEWORK

Since this work deals with the syntax and semantics of Old English as presented by verbs of motion, it requires a theoretical basis for syntax and semantics, as well as a descriptive analysis of Old English verbs of motion. The theoretical part draws on Goddard's semantics of motion and, above all, on Talmy ("Lexicalization patterns"), who proposes a typological distinction between satellite-framed languages and verb-framed languages; and Levin, who defines verbal classes with respect to their shared meaning and the different argument realizations (explained on the basis of alternations, or systematic correspondences of form and meaning). Once the theoretical foundations of the work have been established, Section 2.2 applies them to Old English by describing the linguistic expression of motion in this language. Apart from offering an account of the structural aspects of motion expressions, this section also defines the scope of the analysis of this work.

### 2.1. *Theoretical framework*

The theoretical basis of this research includes a review of both semantic and syntactic aspects. On the one hand, the semantics of motion and the lexicalization patterns of motion verbs are reviewed; on the other hand, the framework of verb classes and alternations is considered.

According to Goddard, motion can be translational or non-translational. Translational movement verbs are those which depict movement from one place to another, such as *come* or *go*, and which are often referred to as path of motion verbs (51). However, verbs such as *wiggle* or *dance*, "describe the mode of motion of an item but do not entail traversal of a path" (Goddard 152). These verbs are frequently referred to as "manner of motion verbs" since they express the subject's motion without making any reference to its location or arrangement in relation to another object.

Turning to the aspects of meaning that verbs of motion encode, Talmy ("Lexicalization patterns") puts forward a cross-linguistic typology of lexicalization

patterns, which is especially relevant for the representation of motion events. This study discusses the relations in language between meaning and surface expression, focusing, more specifically, on two semantic elements within the domain of meaning–path and manner–, and two elements within the domain of surface expression–verbs and satellites–. Its main purpose is to determine which surface expressions are used to convey each meaning component (“Lexicalization patterns” 57). Thus, depending on the surface form (verb or satellite) in which the motion component (path or manner) is encoded, Talmy distinguishes two different typologies for all the languages in the world (“Lexicalization patterns” 62-72).

On the one hand, satellite-framed languages (S-framed languages) convey manner of motion in the verb root and express path of motion in the satellite. In this type of language, the combination of a preposition and a satellite is used in order to convey path, as in *I ran out of the house*. However, the satellite can also appear alone, as in (*After rifling through the house*), *I ran out*. S-framed languages usually present a whole series of motion verbs expressing manner of motion (*walk, run, jog, etc.*) as well as a huge number of path satellites (*in, out, on, off, etc.*). Although German, Swedish, Russian, and Chinese are also S-framed languages, modern English is the archetypal example of a S-framed language.

On the other hand, verb-framed languages (V-framed languages) depict manner of motion in the satellite and path of motion in the main verb. V-framed languages display verbs that depict motion along a path (Spanish *entrar* “move in”, *salir* “move out” *pasar* “move by”), and satellites are usually independent and optional, as in *La botella entró a la cueva (flotando)* “The bottle floated into the cave”. Spanish is the prototypical example of this typology.

Once the more semantically oriented aspects of this theoretical review have been dealt with, we concentrate on the aspects that have more direct contact with syntax. In this regard, Levin’s research programme proves the relationship between a verb’s meaning and its syntactic behaviour. Moreover, verbs that share similar syntactic behaviour and, as a result, belong to a particular verbal class, would be also expected to present common meaning components (7).

In fact, this study suggests that verb syntactic behaviour can be explained only if diathesis alternations are influential to particular meaning aspects. Alternations, therefore, do not only constitute a defining property of a verbal class in terms of behaviour but can also be used to isolate the main meaning components of the class, and thus, to create deeper judgements concerning the organization of English verb lexicon. For example, it can be seen that a verb shows the body-part possessor ascension alternation only if the action of the verb involves the notion of contact, as in the verbs *cut, bit, and touch*, but not in the verb *break*, which does not display this alternation. Thus, verbs can be classified according to the meaning components they show. For instance, as Levin remarks, the verbal class of ‘touch verbs’ is composed of pure verbs of contact, that is, verbs that describe surface contact without specifying whether the contact came about through impact or not. Since they are pure verbs of contact, they show the body-part possessor ascension alternation, but do not display

the conative alternation, which implies both motion and contact meaning components (156).

The study of diathesis alternations demonstrates that verbs in English fall into classes according to shared components of meaning. As a result, class members are characterized by showing not only similar semantic properties but also similar syntactic behaviour. Hence, it can be said that a verb's behaviour depends on the interaction of its meaning and syntax.

## 2.2. Old English linguistic expression of motion

This section turns to the question of morphosyntactic structure. It also discusses some Old English verbs of motion in context, with the aim of offering an account of the structural aspects of motion expressions and defining the scope of analysis of this study.

According to Goddard, motion can be internal or translational. Translational motion implies change of location, whereas internal motion does not. This analysis concentrates on translational motion. That said, translational motion can be further divided into non-caused and caused motion. Non-caused motion is spontaneous: someone or something moves from one location to another without any external influence. From the syntactic point of view, non-caused motion is expressed by means of intransitive motion constructions, as in example (1a), *he ham ferde* "he returned home". Caused motion requires an external agent that moves something from one place to another. Syntactically, caused motion coincides with transitive motion constructions such as (1b), in which someone moves *Weastseaxna ælmessa* "the offerings from the West-Saxons" from the place where they were previously to Rome. The text codes of *The Dictionary of Old English Web Corpus* used in Martín Arista ("Accomplishments of Motion") have been kept.

- (1) a. [Bede 2 020800 (8.124.11)]

*& he þa sume ofslog, sume on onweald onfeng; & he sigefæst swa eft ham **ferde**.*

"He killed some enemies and captured others and very often returned home victorious."

- b. [ChronE (Irvine) 061500 (887.14)]

*Æðelhelm ealdorman lædde **Weastseaxna ælmessa**n... to Rome.*

"The high official Æthelhelm took the offerings from the West-Saxons... to Rome."

(Martín Arista, "Accomplishments of Motion")

Within intransitive translational motion, two types of construction can be found: one does not specify the target of motion; the other includes the target of motion. An illustration of each can be found in example (2), which draws on Martín Arista (“Accomplishments of Motion”) for the text as well as the text references. In (2a), reference is made to *eal flæsc ðe ofer eorðan styrode* “every living creature that moved on the earth”, in such a way that no destination is provided. In (2b), on the other hand, the endpoint is specified: *to Breotone* “to Britain”.

(2) a. [Gen 017200 (7.21)]

*Wearð ða fornumen eal flæsc ðe ofer eorðan **styrode**, manna & fugela, nytena & creopendra.*

“Every living creature that moved on the earth was destroyed, men and birds and cattle and the creeping things.”

b. [Bede 4 003200 (1.256.23)]

*& sona swa he trumian ongon, swa eode he in scip & ferde **to Breotone**.*

“As soon as he began to recover from illness, he travelled to Britain by ship.”

Martín Arista (“Accomplishments of Motion”) points out that in Old English the goal of motion often receives the accusative case, as in the example (3a), whereas the location and the source of motion are, as a general rule, case-marked dative, as in examples (3b) and (3c), respectively. As in the previous examples, the texts are cited as in Martín Arista (“Accomplishments of Motion”). In (3a) the preposition *angean* “against” governs the accusative, whereas in (3b) and (3c) *on* “on” and *of* “from” select the dative case.

(3) a. [Or 4 028600 (9.102.31)]

*Æfter þæm Sempronius Craccus se consul for eft mid fierde angean **Hannibal**.*

“Afterwards Consul Sempronius Gracchus marched with an army against Hannibal.”

b. [Gen 002600 (1.26)]

*...& he sy ofer ða fixas & ofer ða fugelas & ofer ða deor & ofer ealle gesceafta & ofer ealle creopende, ðe styriað on **eorðan**.*

“...and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”

c. [ÆHom II, 3 006600 (22.121)]

*Se fæder nis of **nanum oðrum** gecumen. ac he wæs æfre god.*

“The father has not come from anyone. He was always god.”

Huber has found 188 verbs of motion in a corpus selection of narrative fiction and prose, out of a total of 557 intransitive motion constructions. The neutral motion verbs *faran* “to go” and *cuman* “to come” are the most frequent. According to Huber, most of the remaining ones are verbs of manner of motion, in such a way that there are few native path verbs (like *fleon* “to flee” and *alibtan* “to alight”) and path is expressed in adverbs and prepositions in 90% of the intransitive motion constructions.

Fanego remarks that there are both manner verbs followed by path modifiers like in (4a) and path verbs or neutral motion verbs followed by subordinated manner expressions such as (4b) and (4c), respectively. The following examples have been extracted from Fanego.

(4) a. [Æ Hom 5 005800 (214)]

*Þæt wif ... **efste to ðære byrig** and bodade ymbe crist.*

“The woman... hurried to the city and preached about Christ.”

b. [Æ LS (Maurice) 002100 (90)]

*Þa **com** þærto **ridan** sum Cristen man sona, harwencge and eald, se wæs gebaten Uictor.*

“Then a certain Christian man came riding there immediately, hoary and old, who was named Victor.”

c. [Æ Holm 002300 (83.69)]

*Ða sceawode se halga cuðberhtus on ðam snaawe gebwær. bwyder se Cuma **siðigende ferde**.*

“Then the holy Cuthbert looked everywhere in the snow, whither the stranger went wandering.”

(Fanego 43)

As Fanego explains, “only the former construction [manner verb followed by a path modifier] is considered to be characteristic of S-framed languages such as English, while the latter type of construction is the one preferred in the Romance languages. In Old English, however, both can be found” (43).

### 3. METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1. *The analysis of meaning components*

Building on the background of verb classes and alternations and, in order to address the question of the meaning components of Old English verbs of motion, this section opens with a review of the most relevant works concerning the topic of motion verbs in Old English, including Weman on motion verbs in general, Ogura (*Verbs of Motion*) on verbs of neutral motion and Fanego on verbs of manner of motion.

According to Weman, five main senses can be found in Old English verbs of motion: 1) “to set out”, “to go”; 2) “to go on foot”; 3) “to glide”; 4) “to turn”; 5) “to toss”, “to move to and from” (12-174). In a study in verbal polysemy, Ogura (*Verbs of Motion*) lists the Old English verbs of neutral motion and attributes each verb to a semantic field (a sense in Weman’s analysis): “to come”; “to go”; “to turn”. Other verbs are polysemic. For example, *gerisan* is polysemic between motion “to arise” and “to happen”. *Belimþan* conveys two senses: “to stretch” and “to belong”. *For(ð)faran* is also polysemic: “to depart, die”. Finally, Fanego finds four components in Old English verbs of manner of motion: mode, speed, course, and vehicle (41).

This said, an analysis of the meaning components of verbs of motion cannot put aside the question of polysemy because the authors cited above stress the polysemic character of these verbs; and, above all, because an analysis of the patterns of polysemy in which verbs of motion are found may provide a more accurate description of their meaning components.

The analysis of the meaning components of Old English verbs of motion consists of four parts: (i) a review of the inventories and classifications proposed in previous works; (ii) a database search for the verbs that convey the meanings described in the works reviewed; (iii) a classification of the verbs of motion found in the database on the grounds of the lexical dimensions proposed by Faber and Mairal; (iv) a study in the patterns of polysemy that arise in motion verbs aimed at defining classes and the verbs that belong to them in an accurate way. These questions are discussed in Section 4.

#### 3.2. *The analysis of syntactic behaviour*

The aim of this analysis is to ascertain the consistency of the syntactic behaviour of Old English verbs of motion. As Levin states, similarity of meaning and syntactic behaviour is indicative of verbal class membership. In the analysis that follows, syntactic behaviour is understood as the range of possibilities offered by the morpho-syntax of the language to convey a certain meaning. This points to three main aspects of morpho-syntactic structure that Levin includes under the label of the realization of arguments: morphological case marking, prepositional government and verbal complementation.



Linguistic reviews of Old English—such as Pyles and Algeo, Robinson, Mitchell and Robinson, and Smith—describe Old English as an inflective language, with full pronominal, nominal, adjectival, and verbal inflectional paradigms. The characteristics of this language discussed below must be seen from this perspective.

Case marking in Old English comprises four cases, two direct ones (nominative and accusative) and two oblique ones (genitive and dative). The nominative is the most frequent case of the subject, while the accusative usually expresses the direct object. Other assignments of case to the main arguments of verbs, involving the genitive and the dative, are less frequent. The instrumental case is restricted to personal pronouns and some adjectives (Campbell 228; Hogg 117; Hogg and Fulc 46; Ringe and Taylor 326). Examples (5a)–(5d), taken from Brook, illustrate, respectively, the nominative, accusative, dative and genitive case.

- (5) a. *Wæs he, se mon, in weorulbade geseted.*

“This man was a layman.”

- b. *Hie begeaton welan.*

“They obtained wealth.”

- c. *Ʒa kyningas Gode ond his Ʒarendwrecum byrsumedon.*

“The kings obeyed God and his messengers.”

- d. *Cynewulf benam Sigebryht his rices.*

“Cynewulf deprived Sigebryht of his kingdom.”

(Brook 85-86)

The term verbal complementation makes reference to the number and types of arguments necessary for conveying a certain meaning with a given verb. Old English verbs can take one compulsory argument (intransitives), two compulsory arguments (transitives) or three compulsory arguments (ditransitives). Among verbs with three compulsory arguments, motion verbs with directional adjuncts should also be considered (Martín Arista, “Sintaxis Medieval I” 270). The following examples, taken from Brook, illustrate, respectively, intransitive, transitive and ditransitive verbs.

- (6) a. *Hē scægde.*

“He said.”

- b. *Sē cyning unbēanlice hine werede.*

“The king defended himself dauntlessly.”

c. *Ic selle eow ðæt riht bið.*

“I will give you what is right.”

(89)

As far as prepositional government is concerned, prepositions in Old English usually govern the dative case, as in *to geferan* “as companion”. Nevertheless, the accusative is also frequent, as in *geond ealne ymbhwyrft* “throughout all the world”. Prepositions governing the genitive, like *wið Exanceastres* “against Exeter”, are scarcer.

Thus, this analysis intends to identify the systematic aspects of the syntactic behaviour of motion verbs. Recurrent contrasts of form and meaning have traditionally been called alternations. As has been explained in Section 2, the framework of verb classes (Levin) restricts alternations to the expression of verbal arguments, leaving other types of arguments aside. This line is also taken in the present study.

### 3.3. Data

In order to deal with the analysis of meaning components, this study considers all the verbs provided by the lexical database *Nerthus* (Martín Arista et al.). In order to deal with the analysis of the syntactic behaviour, this study is restricted to the verbs beginning with the letters A-H.

There are several reasons justifying the selection of two different sets of verbs. The most important reason for this choice is empirical. Polysemy cannot be studied without making reference to the whole inventory of verbs of motion. The other reason for this choice is methodological. There are tools for studying the meaning components of all the verbs in the lexicon, but no dictionary is available that provides the information (especially the information on case marking, argument realization, etc.) necessary for the purpose of this paper on all the verbs in the lexicon. In this respect, the publication of *The Dictionary of Old English* (Healey) has just reached the letter H<sup>1</sup>. As a result, the morpho-syntactic part of this study focuses on Old English verbs of motion whose infinitive begins with the letters A-H. This also excludes verbs with the prefix *ge-* followed by bases that begin with the letters I-Y, such as *gewitan*. With these premises, verbs of neutral motion have been taken from Ogura (*Verbs of Motion*), verbs of manner of motion have been extracted from Fanego, and verbs of path of motion have been retrieved from the lexical database *Nerthus* (Martín Arista et al.), on the basis of the Contemporary English corresponding verbs proposed by Talmy (*Cognitive Semantics*).

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<sup>1</sup> At the time that this research study was carried out, *The Dictionary of Old English* had only published the letters A-H. The letter I was released in September 2018.

The inventory of verbs of neutral motion beginning with the letters A-H comprises (Ogura *Verbs of Motion*): *āfaran* “to go” (listed by Ogura but considered a path verb in this analysis meaning “to leave, depart”), *āwendan* “to turn”, *cuman* “to come”, *faran* “to go”, *feran* “to go”, *gan* “to go”, *(ge)ānlæcan* “to come” (listed by Ogura but considered a path verb in this analysis meaning “to come near, to approach”), *gecuman* “to come” (listed by Ogura but considered a path verb in this analysis meaning “to arrive”), *(ge)cyrran* “to turn” and *gegan* “to go” (listed by Ogura but considered a verb of manner of motion in this analysis, with the meaning “to go on foot”).

The Old English verbs of manner of motion beginning with the letters A-H, according to Fanego, include: *abealtian* “to limp, crawl”, *astigan* “to climb” (considered a path verb in this analysis), *besceotan* “to leap, spring, rush”, *bestalcian* “to move stealthily, stalk”, *bestelan* “to steal, move stealthily (upon)”, *cleacian* “to nimbly, hurry”, *climban* “to climb”, *creopan* “to crawl”, *drifan* “to rush on”, *dufan* “to dive”, *eflstan*, *ofestan* “to hasten, hurry”, *faran* “to travel, journey” (considered a neutral motion verb in this analysis), *fleogan* “to fly”, *fleogan* “to hasten quickly away”, *fleon* “to hasten towards (some refuge, sanctuary, country)”, *fleotan* “to swim”, *flowan* “(of a multitude) to come or go in a stream, throng”, *forstalian* “to steal away”, *forþbreosan* “to rush forth”, *forþræsan* “to rush forth”, *frician?* “to dance”, *fundian* “to hasten”, *fysan* “to hasten”, *glidan* “to glide”, *bealtian* “to halt, limp”, *bigian* “to hasten”, *bleapan* “to leap, to spring to one’s seat upon a horse, to dance”, *bleapan* “to rush”, *bleappettan* “to leap up”, *hoppian* “to hop, leap, dance”, *buncettan* “to limp, crawl”, *hwearfian* “to wander”, and *hweorfan* “to wander, roam”. To the final inventory, *gegan* “to go on foot” must be added.

To get the inventory of Old English verbs of path of motion, it has been necessary to find the counterparts of the set provided by Talmy (*Cognitive Semantics*) for Contemporary English. Only verbs of literal motion have been considered, in such a way that verbs like *amount*, *issue* and *avale* have been disregarded. *Advance* and *proceed*, *leave* and *part*, *cross over* and *pass* as well as *near* and *approach* have been unified because it is hard to distinguish between such similar senses on the grounds of the information provided by the standard dictionaries of Old English cited in the reference section. On the other hand, the dictionaries have provided evidence for distinguishing the following verbs that do not correspond to Talmy’s list (*Cognitive Semantics*): *gelīðan* “to come to land” and *scipian* “to go on board of a ship”. Verbs with no intransitive version have been disregarded. This is the case with the translations of “to surround”, “to encircle”, all of which are transitive in Old English (*bebūgan*, *befōn*, etc.). The resulting list of path verbs beginning with the letters A-H consists of: *āfaran* “to leave, depart”, *ālībtan* “to alight”, *ārīsan* “to rise”, *āscēadan* “to separate”, *āstigan* “to ascend”, *æthwēorfan* “to return”, *flēon* “to flee”, *(ge)ānlæcan* “to join”, *gecuman* “to arrive”, *(ge)folgian* “to follow”.

### 3.4. Analysis procedure

The methodology of analysis consists of two main steps: the analysis of the meaning components and the analysis of the syntactic behaviour of motion verbs. The analysis of meaning components is instrumental with respect to the analysis of syntactic behaviour. It helps to delimit the three classes distinguished in this analysis and also shows points of convergence and areas of overlapping between them. The analysis of the syntactic behaviour of motion verbs, in turn, can be broken down into the following steps:

1. Gathering the inventory of verbs of neutral motion, manner of motion and path of motion from various sources (Ogura, *Verbs of Motion*; Fanego; Martín Arista et al.; Talmy, *Cognitive Semantics*)
2. Finding the Old English verb when necessary (verbs of path of motion) in the lexical database of Old English *Nerthus* (Martín Arista et al.).
3. Searching for the selected verbs (letters A-H) in *The Dictionary of Old English*.
4. Isolating the relevant senses: intransitive use of these verbs (transitive, figurative, and polysemic meanings are disregarded).
5. Describing syntactic patterns in which the verbs under analysis are found.
6. Selecting examples of each syntactic pattern from *The Dictionary of Old English*. This is done with the help of the *York Corpus of Old English* (prose and poetry; Pintzuk and Plug; Taylor et al.), which provides a syntactic parsing of approximately one half of *The Dictionary of Old English Corpus* (Healey et al.), specifically designed for the compilation of *The Dictionary of Old English*.
7. Comparing the resulting syntactic patterns in order to decide on class membership.

For instance, *The Dictionary of Old English* entry for *drīfan* “to drive” gives the following senses, syntactic patterns, and collocations (Figure 1).

Given an entry like this, the selected sense that is relevant to the topic of this study and is therefore selected for the analysis is: III. intransitive: to proceed violently, rush on. Then, the citations are chosen that illustrate the sense and patterns in point: [Bede 5 6.400.27]: *ða ic breowsende wæs, ða ic mid ðy beafde & mid bonda com on ðone stan dryfan* “While I was grieving, then I bumped with my head and my hands onto a stone” and [HlG E192]: *ic ut anyde t drife t adyde* “I go out and drive and remove”. When necessary, the syntactic patterns have been checked against the *York Corpus of Old English*, as can be seen in Figure 2<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> As can be seen in Figure 2, the fragment contains an adverbial clause introduced by *ða* with a noun phrase in the first person singular (*ic*) as subject agreeing with a finite verb (*breowsende wæs*) and the main clause (introduced by correlative *ða*) consisting of a noun

- I. absolute: to force to move, drive
- II. transitive
  - II.A. to force to move, drive
    - II.A.1. of human beings and spirits; drifan ut / drifan ... ut  
'to drive out', drifan ... onweg 'to driveaway', deofol  
drifan 'to exorcise the devil'
    - II.A.2. of animals (cu, hors, hund, neat, scep, swin; heord orf); drafte  
drifan 'to drive a herd'
    - II.A.3. figurative
  - II.B. to hunt, pursue, chase
    - II.B.1. to follow a track
  - II.C. to move something by force
    - II.C.1. to move by a steady force, especially to sail a  
boat; sulh forþ drifan 'to force the ploughonward'
  - C.1.1. a. figurative
  - C.1.2. to move by a thrust or blow
  - II.D. to perform or do something, transact business, engage in an activity
    - II.D.1. in general: to practise right / wrong in one's life (riht / gemearr /  
unriht / I drifan)
      - D.1.1. a. specifically of a judge or priest: to further, promote (in Ælfric)
      - D.1.2. to engage in various activities
        - D.1.2.a. drifan drycraeftas / wiglunge 'to practise sorcery'
        - D.1.2.b. cype drifan 'to drive a bargain'
        - D.1.2.c. manguge drifan 'to follow a trade'
      - II.D.2.e. legal: spæce / spræce drifan 'to plead a case, urge a suit'
  - II.E. to experience, endure something painful
- III. intransitive: to proceed violently, rush on

Figure 1. Senses, collocations and patterns in *The Dictionary of Old English* entry for *drifan*.

phrase in the first person singular (*ic*) as subject agreeing with a finite verb (*com*) and followed by three prepositional phrases (*mid beafde and mid bonda, on ðone stan*), in such a way that the non-finite verb *dryfan* complements the finite verb *com*.

```

( (CODE <T06910011000,6.400.26>)
  (IP-MAT-SPE (NP-NOM-x *exp*)
    (ADVP-TMP (ADV^T +Ta))
    (VBDI geIomp)
    (PP (P mid)
      (NP-ACC (D^A +ta)
        (ADJ^A godcundan)
        (N^A foreseonnesse)
        (NP-GEN (D^G +t+are) (N^G synne))))
    (PP (P to)
      (NP (N witnunge)
        (NP-GEN (PRO$^G minre) (N^G unhersumnesse))))
    (, ;))
  (CP-THT-SPE-x (C 0)
    (IP-SUB-SPE (CP-ADV-SPE (P +da)
      (C 0)
      (IP-SUB-SPE (NP-NOM (PRO^N ic))
        (VAG hreowsende)
        (BEDI w+as)))
      (, ,)
      (ADVP-TMP (ADV^T +da))
      (NP-NOM (PRO^N ic))
      (PP (PP (P mid)
        (NP-DAT (D^I +dy) (N^D heafde)))
        (CONJP (CONJ &)
          (PP (P mid)
            (NP (N honda))))))
      (AXDI com)
      (PP (P on)
        (NP-ACC (D^A +done) (N^A stan)))
      (VB dryfan)))
    (. .))
  (ID cobede,Bede_5:6.400.26.4024))

```

Figure 2. Syntactic parsing in the *York Corpus of Old English*.

With the help of the syntactic description provided by *The Dictionary of Old English*, as well as the syntactic parsing shown in Figure 2, the syntactic behaviour is described as follows:

- 1) absolute use

HlG1 E192: *ic ut anyde t **drife** t adyde.*

“I go out and drive and remove.”

- 2) with subordinated manner expression

Bede 5 6.400.27: *ða ic breowsende wæs, ða ic mid ðy heafde & mid bonda **com** on ðone stan **dryfan**.*

“Then I was regretting, then I bumped (lit. I came going) with my head and my hands onto a stone.”

For further information on reflexivisation, we consulted Ogura’s work (*Verbs with Reflexive Pronoun*) on each specific verb. The syntactic description presented above allows us to compare all the verbs in the corpus and, eventually, to draw conclusions on the class membership of the verbs based on the shared syntactic behaviour.

#### 4. THE MEANING COMPONENTS OF OLD ENGLISH VERBS OF MOTION

In order to systematically deal with the meaning components of Old English verbs of motion, we have searched for them in the lexical database *Nerthus* (Martín Arista

et al.) and classified them in terms of the lexical dimensions and sub-dimensions listed by Faber and Mairal (280-283). A total of 791 motion verbs have been found and classified, as can be seen as follows:

## 2. MOVEMENT

### 2.1. General [move, go, come]

*ābrēran, (ge)cweccan, (ge)brēran, (ge)līðan, hwearfilian, swefian, wagian*

#### 2.1.1. To move in a particular way

*besīgan, gemædan, onrīdan, rīdan, scofettan, tōslūpan*

#### 2.1.1.1. To move quickly [speed, race, hurry]

*ācweccan, āræsan, āswōgan, ātrucian, cleacian, forspēdian, forðbrēosan, forðræsan, (ge)ærnan, (ge)iernan, (ge)recan, (ge)spēdan, inræcan, inræsan, læccan, nýddēowigan, ongebrēosan, onræsan, scacan, scottettan, tōscēotan, trendan, tycgan, ðeran, ðurbræsan, ūtræsan*

#### 2.1.1.1.1. To cause somebody/something to move quickly [speed, race, hurry]

*(ge)iernan*

With this classification, the analysis seeks to determine the most recurrent patterns of polysemy that emerge within the Old English verb class of motion. This part of the analysis focuses on verbs of motion belonging to two or more lexical sub-domains. However, it can be seen that, on some occasions, different lexical sub-domains refer to a single meaning, as in example (7):

(7)

*breran* “to fall”

#### 2.1.3.5. To move downwards

#### 2.4.1.2. To move downwards to the ground

The verbs that, in spite of appearing under several lexical sub-domains, convey one meaning, are not polysemic and, as a result, cannot be considered in this study. In order to remove them, we proceed as follows. The information contained in the field “translation” of the lexical database of Old English *Nerthus* (Martín Arista et al.) has been retrieved from Martín Arista and Mateo Mendaza, a synthesis of the meaning definitions provided by the standard dictionaries of Old English, including Bosworth and Toller, Clark Hall and Sweet. This study unifies the meaning definitions found in the dictionaries by following two principles—polysemy and increasing specificity—: “within a meaning definition, commas separate related instantiations of a sense while semicolons distinguish senses” (Martín Arista and Mateo Mendaza ii),

as in *tōhweorfan* “to separate, disperse, scatter; to go away, part”. On the basis of this information, we can therefore assume that only those verbs whose meaning definitions are separated by a semicolon (and which display, at least, two lexical sub-domains) can be considered polysemic. Only 153 verbs from the initial list fulfil these requirements.

Notice that, in order to study patterns of polysemy within motion verbs, this analysis will focus on coincidences arising between three-digit sub-domains. Lexical sub-domains of this type are: 2.1.1. To move in a particular way; 2.1.2. To move off/away; 2.1.3. To move towards a place; 2.1.4. To move across; 2.1.5. To move over/through; 2.1.6. To move in a different direction; 2.1.7. To move about in no particular direction; 2.1.8. To move in relation to somebody/something; 2.1.9. To not move any more, after having moved; 2.2.1. To move as liquid in a particular way; 2.2.2. To move in/downward below the surface of a liquid; 2.2.3. To move over liquid; 2.2.4. To move upwards to the surface of a liquid; 2.3.1. To move as air; 2.3.2. To move through the air; 2.3.3. To move upwards in the air; 2.3.4. To move downwards in the air; 2.4.1. To move in a particular way; 2.4.2. To cause somebody/something to move downwards to the ground; 2.4.3. To move one’s body. Consequently, all those verbs that, despite fulfilling the above-mentioned requirements, show several lexical sub-domains that belong to a common category, as in (8), will be removed from the analysis as well.

(8)

*(ge)sprengan* “to scatter, strew, sprinkle, sow; to spring, break, burst, split, crack”

2.1.8.6. To move out in all directions

2.1.8.6.2. To move apart

2.1.8.6.2.2 To come apart

Finally, verbs whose translation includes one meaning related to the sense of motion and one or various meanings related to other different senses, as in (9), have not been considered either.

(9)

*(ge)spēdan* “to prosper, succeed; to speed”

As a result, the inventory of Old English verbs of motion in which patterns of polysemy will be studied is comprised of the following 121 verbs:

*āberstan* “to burst, burst out, break out, be broken; to break away, escape”, *ābūgan* “to bend, turn, curve, bow, do reverence, submit, turn oneself; to deviate, incline, swerve, turn (to or from); to withdraw, retire; to be humble”, *āfaran* “to go out, depart, march; to travel”, *āflēogan* “to



fly, flee away; fly from, escape”, *āflieman* “to expel, banish, disperse, scatter; to rout; to drive away, cause to flee”, *ābealtian* “to halt; to limp, crawl”, *ābnīgan* “to fall or bow down; to empty oneself”, *ābræccan* “to clear out; to spit out”, *āhweorfan* “to turn; to convert, turn away or over; to turn aside; to avert”, *āiernan* “to run over or away; to pass over; to run out; to go, pass by”, *āsīgan* “to decline, sink; to go or fall down”, *āsincan* “to sink down; to fall to pieces”, *āstīgan* “to go, come, proceed, step; to rise, ascend, mount, climb; to go down into, descend”, *āswōgan* “to rush into; to cover over, invade, overrun, choke”, *ætfyligan* “to adhere, stick to; to cling to, cleave”, *ætslīdan* “to slip, glide; to fall”, *beclingan* “to bind, enclose, inclose; to surround”, *becnyttan* “to bind, tie, knot, inclose; to knit; to surround with a bond, tie round; to attach with a string”, *befealdan* “to fold, roll up, wrap up, envelop, surround; to cover; to bend the body; to clasp; to attach; to involve, implicate; to overwhelm”, *befēran* “to surround, go round, pass by; to go about; to come upon; to overtake; to feed; to get, fall among”, *bescēadan* “to separate, discriminate; to scatter, sprinkle; to shadow”, *betyrnan* “to turn round; to bend the knee, prostrate oneself”, *bewindan* “to wrap, wind or bind around or about, envelop, entwine, clasp; to surround, encircle; to brandish (a sword)”, *beurīpan* “to bind, wind about; to surround”, *cwencan* “to extinguish, quench”, *drīpan* “to drop, drip, cause to fall in drops; to moisten”, *feorsian* “to separate, put far, remove, expel; to go beyond, depart”, *fēran* “to go, march, set out, depart, make a journey, travel, sail; to come; to behave, act”, *fergan* “to carry, bear, bring, convey; to go, depart, betake oneself to; to be versed in”, *flēotan* “to float, swim; to sail, drift, flow; to skim”, *forscūfan* “to drive away, drive to destruction; to cast down”, *forswigian* “to keep silent; to conceal by silence; to pass over, suppress”, *fortȳnan* “to enclose, shut in; to prevent passage, block up”, *forðhebban* “to further; to advance, carry sth forwards (DOE)”, *forðræsan* “to rush forth; to rise up, spring up”, *forðstæppan* “to go or step forth, proceed; to pass by”, *forðwegan* “to further; to advance, to carry sth forwards (DOE)”, *gangan* “to go; to go on foot, walk; to turn out”, *(ge)bendan* “to bind, bend; to fetter, put in bonds”, *(ge)būgan* “to bend, turn, stoop, bow, bow down, submit, sink, give way; to turn towards, turn away; to revolt; to retire, flee, depart; to join, go over to; to convert”, *gedēðan* “to kill; to mortify”, *(ge)dragan* “to drag, draw, go; to extend, protract”, *(ge)fealdan* “to fold up, wrap, wrap up, roll up, roll about; to entangle; to join, attach closely; to involve, implicate (oneself in sth), entangle”, *(ge)fērlīccan* “to keep company or fellowship, accompany; to unite, associate”, *(ge)flēogan* “to fly, fly over; to flee, take to flight”, *(ge)folgian* “to follow, accompany; to follow after, pursue, go behind, run after; to follow as a servant, attendant or disciple”, *(ge)hangian* “to hang, be suspended; to depend, be attached, hold fast, cling to; to lean over”, *(ge)hlēapan* “to go, run; to leap, jump,

spring, dance; to mount”, *(ge)brēran* “to move; to shake, agitate; to stir together, mix up”, *(ge)hwemman* “to bend, incline, slope; to turn”, *gebwielfan* “to arch, vault, bend over”, *(ge)iernan* “to move rapidly, run, haste; to flow, spread; to pursue; to cause to move rapidly, turn, grind; to pass, elapse”, *(ge)liðan*, *(ge)lūcan* “to close, lock, shut up, enclose; to fasten; to close, conclude; to interlock, intertwine; to twist, wind”, *(ge)lūtan* “to bend, bow, stoop, recline, fall down before one; to decline; to approach an end”, *gemædan* “to make mad or foolish”, *geondfaran* “to go through, traverse, pervade; to penetrate, permeate”, *geondhweorfan* “to pass over or through, traverse; to go about”, *geondlācan* “to go through or over, traverse; to flow over”, *geondspringan* “to spread about, be diffused; to penetrate”, *(ge)recan* “to move, go, proceed, hastily; to carry, bring, convey”, *(ge)rōwan* “to go by water, row, sail; to swim”, *(ge)sælan* “to bind, tie, fetter, fasten; to restrain, confine, curb”, *(ge)sencan* “to sink, plunge, immerse, submerge; to drown, flood with water”, *(ge)wadan* “to move, go, proceed, advance, wade, pass, traverse, go through, strive; to pervade”, *(ge)wærlan* “to go, wend; to turn; to pass by”, *(ge)wīcan* “to retire, yield, give way; to fall down, give way; to depart”, *(ge)windan* “to bend, wind; to twist, curl; to go, turn; to revolve, roll, weave; to roll back, unroll; to repair”, *gryndan* “to set, descend, come to the ground, sink; to found”, *gyrdan* “to encircle, surround, bind round; to gird”, *hlīdan* “to come forth, spring up; to cover with a lid”, *hnīgan* “to bow down, bend, incline; to fall, decline, descend, sink”, *hoppian* “to hop, leap; to dance; to limp”, *bræcan* “to clear the throat, hawk, spit; to reach, bring up (blood or phlegm)”, *hwearftlian* “to move about, revolve, turn or roll round; to wander, rove, be tossed”, *insteppan* “to enter, go in; to step in”, *læcan* “to move quickly, rise, spring up, leap; to flare up”, *oferfaran* “to pass, cross, go off or over, traverse, go through; to penetrate; to meet with, come across; to overcome, overtake, withstand”, *oferfēran* “to traverse, cross, pass over, or though, pass along; to meet with, come upon”, *oferflēon* “to fly over, flee from; to yield to”, *oferflōwan* “to cover with water; to overflow, run over, pass beyond bounds”, *oferscēadan* “to separate, divide; to scatter over, sprinkle over”, *oferyrnan* “to go or run over, overwhelm; to cross, pass by running; to spread over or throughout”, *ofstīgan* “to descend; to ascend; to depart”, *onbieldan* “to bend, bend down, bow, incline, lean, recline; to decline, sink; to fall away”, *onswīfan* “to swing, turn; to put or turn aside, divert, push off”, *onðenian* “to extend, stretch; to bend”, *pluccian* “to pull away, pluck; to tear”, *rīdan* “to ride; to move about, swing, rock; to float, sail; to chafe (of letters)”, *scacan* “to shake, quiver; to flee, hurry off, go forth, depart; to move quickly, be flung, be displaced by shaking; to pass, proceed; to weave, brandish”, *scottettan* “to move about quickly; to dance, leap”, *scriðan* “to go, move, glide; to wander, go hither and thither, go about”, *swīfan* “to move in a course, revolve; to sweep; to wend; to take part, intervene”, *tōdræfan* “to

separate, disperse, scatter; to expel, dispel, drive away, out or apart”, *tōfēsian* “to disperse, scatter; to drive away; to rout”, *tōflēogan* “to be disperse, fly asunder, fly apart; to crack, fly to pieces”, *tōflōwan* “to disperse, flow down, flow to, ebb; to be split; to melt; to pour in; to distract, wander; to be separated, take different directions; to spread; to be dissipated, scattered; to render useless, bring to nothing”, *tōgīnan* “to be opened; to split; to slip; to gape, yawn”, *tōhlīdan* “to split, split asunder, spring apart, break, crack, burst; to open; to gape, yawn”, *tōhweorfan* “to separate, disperse, scatter; to go away, part”, *tōiernan* “to run to, run about, run together; to wander about; to flow away, dispersed”, *tōlicgan* “to lie or run in different directions, part; to separate, divide”, *tōsceacan* “to shake to pieces, shake violently; to disperse, drive asunder; to drive away, shake off”, *tōslūpan* “to slip away; to be relaxed; to fall to pieces; to dissolve, melt; to be undone or loosed; to get powerless or paralysed”, *tumbian* “to leap, tumble; to dance”, *twifyrclian* “to branch off, deviate from; to split into two, fork off from, separate from another object”, *tyrnan* “to turn, revolve, move round; to run”, *ūpātēon* “to draw up, bring up, rear; draw out, pull out, pluck up; lift up, place in an upright position”, *ūtāflōwan* “to flow out; scatter, be dispersed”, *ūflōwan* “to flow out; scatter, be dispersed”, *wagian* “to move, wag; to shake, wave; to swing, move backwards and forwards; to totter”, *weallian* “to wander, travel, roam, go abroad; to go as a pilgrim”, *wōrigan* “to roam, wander; move round, totter, crumble to pieces”, *wræcsīðian* “to travel, wander; to be in exile”, *wreccan* “to twist; to strain”, *wylwan* “to roll, roll together; to join, compound, compose”, *ymbfaran* “to surround; to travel round”, *ymbgān* “to surround, go round; to go about or through”, *ymbgangan* “to surround, encompass, go round; to go about or through”, *ymbbringan* “to surround, encompass, fence round; to wind round”, *ymbtyrnan* “to turn round; to surround”.

When two or more meanings are expressed, the most frequent polysemy patterns found in the data are the following. An Old English verb exemplifying each pattern has been provided by way of illustration.

- a. 2.1.1. To move in a particular way  
2.1.3. To move towards a place  
e.g., *(ge)hlēapan* “to go, run; to leap, jump, spring, dance; to mount”
- b. 2.1.1. To move in a particular way  
2.1.6. To move in a different direction  
e.g., *betyrnan* “to turn round; to bend the knee, prostrate oneself”
- c. 2.1.1. To move in a particular way

- 2.1.8. To move in relation to somebody/something  
e.g., *onswīfan* “to swing, turn; to put or turn aside, divert, push off”
- d. 2.1.1. To move in a particular way  
2.4.1. To move in a particular way (land)  
e.g., *hoppian* “to hop, leap; to dance; to limp”
- e. 2.1.2. To move off/away  
2.1.8. To move in relation to somebody/something  
e.g., *āfaran* “to go out, depart, march; to travel”
- f. 2.1.3. To move towards a place  
2.1.8. To move in relation to somebody/something  
e.g., *fēran* “to go, march, set out, depart, make a journey, travel, sail; to come”
- g. 2.1.3. To move towards a place  
2.4.1. To move in a particular way (land)  
e.g., *bnīgan* “to bow down, bend, incline; to fall, decline, descend, sink”
- h. 2.1.5. To move over/through  
2.1.8. To move in relation to somebody/something  
e.g., *ymbgangan* “to surround, encompass, go round; to go about or through”

The patterns of coincidence of two sub-dimensions presented above can be explained by means of the notions of telicity and manner v. path of motion. Telicity is the property of verbs and expressions that convey a meaning such that the logical endpoint implicit in the verb is achieved (Van Valin and LaPolla). For example, “jumping on the floor” is an atelic expression, whereas “jumping through the window” is a telic one.

On the one hand, verbs belonging to the lexical subdomains 2.1.1. To move in a particular way and 2.4.1. To move in a particular way (land) depict manner of motion and can be considered as atelic. On the other hand, verbs belonging to the lexical subdomains 2.1.3. To move towards a place; 2.1.5. To move over/through and 2.1.8. To move in relation to somebody/something can be considered as atelic as well, although they tend to convey path of motion. Telic verbs are a minority and can be

found within the lexical subdomains 2.1.2. To move off/away and 2.1.6. To move in a different direction.

On the basis of the analysis given above, it turns out that Old English verbs of motion that present patterns of polysemy are usually atelic. Very few cases of telicity can be found, and they tend to depict movement from one place to another (path of motion). Thus, it can be said that polysemy patterns found in the analysis include, as a general rule, atelic verbs that indistinctly convey manner of motion or path of motion. Verbs belonging to the lexical subdomain 2.1.8. To move in relation to somebody/something show the highest degree of polysemy, followed by those belonging to 2.1.1. To move in a particular way; 2.1.3 To move towards a place and 2.4.1. To move in a particular way (land), respectively.

## 5. SYNTACTIC PATTERNS OF OLD ENGLISH VERBS OF MOTION

This section presents the analysis of syntactic behaviour by verbal class. In general, the syntactic patterns with the verbs under analysis are discussed, with special emphasis on the question of reflexivity, since it seems to be a feature of most verbs of neutral motion that might also be shared by manner of motion and path of motion verbs. By way of example, the description of the syntactic patterns of an Old English verb of neutral motion, a verb of manner of motion and a verb of path of motion is provided below, respectively:

### ***awenden* “to turn”**

1) with directional adverb

ÆLS (Agatha) 205: *þa awende se encgel aweġ mid þam cnapum.*

“Then the angel turned away with the boys.”

Used reflexively (Ogura, *Verbs with Reflexive Pronoun*)

Exod 7.23: *ac awende hine [Pharaoh] fram him*

“But the Pharaoh turned himself away from him.”

### ***āhealtian* “to limp, crawl”**

1) absolute use

PsGII 17.46: *bearn elelendisce forealdodon & ahealtedon*

“Foreign sons aged and limped.”

### ***(ge)folgian* “to follow”**

1) absolute use

ChrodR 1 80.19: *þu scealt beforan gan, and hi ealle folgian.*

“You shall go before and they all will follow.”

2) with dative object

Or 4 5.89.23: & <ægþer> ge he <self> wepende hamweard for, ge þæt folc þæt him ongean com, eall hit himwepende hamweard **folga de**.

“And he weeping homewards before, the folk that came towards him followed him home weeping.”

The general conclusion that can be drawn from this analysis is that it is well justified to distinguish three classes of verbs in Old English: verbs of neutral motion, verbs of manner of motion and verbs of path of motion. The meaning of each class corresponds to different realisations of arguments and, more specifically, to two different morpho-syntactic alternations: the reflexive alternation and the verb/satellite alternation.

Verbs of neutral motion are frequently found in the reflexive alternation (10). Verbs of manner of motion and path of motion verbs take part in this alternation very infrequently. In terms of meaning content, the non-reflexive pair of the alternation shows less involvement or affectedness of the mover than its reflexive counterpart. The dative case, which is the case of the recipient, the beneficiary, and so forth, is preferred over the accusative, which is consistent with the explanation of the alternation in terms of involvement or affectedness.

(10) a. [ÆCHom I, 26 005300 (391.102)]

*He **gewende** to Romebyrig, bodigende godspell.*

“He went to Rome announcing the godspell.”

b. [Or 3 026700 (10.75.6)]

*Þa **wendon** hie **him** hamweard.*

“They turned homewards.”

(Martín Arista, “Accomplishments of Motion”)

With respect to the verb/satellite alternation, Fanego explains that there are neutral motion verbs followed by subordinated manner expressions, although they are more characteristic of V-framed languages such as Spanish than S-framed languages such as English (43). The analysis has shown that these manner expressions are in fact verbs with a more specific meaning, manner of motion verbs. There is, therefore, an alternation between the manner verb and the manner verb as a subordinated manner expression with a neutral motion verb, as in *They rode to X-They came to X riding*. Only neutral motion verbs and manner of motion verbs take part in this alternation. The former in expressions like *They rode to X*, the latter in the corresponding *They came to X riding*. Further evidence for this alternation has been gathered from Martín Arista (“Accomplishments of Motion”), with manner of

motion verbs like *nīdan* “to ride” and *siðian* “to travel”: rode to Reading vs. came riding and came travelling v. travelled to Egypt (11).

(11) a. [ChronE (Irvine) 054500 (871.1)]

*Her **rad**se here to Readingum on Westseaxe.*

“This year the invading army rode to Reading, in Wessex.”

b. [Æ LS (Maccabees) 019300 (773)]

*And ðær **com ridende** sum egeful ridda*

“And there came riding a fearful rider.”

c. [Beo 019600 (720)]

***Com** þa to recede rinc **siðian**, dreamum bedæled.*

“Then there came travelling to that building the man deprived of dreams.”

d. [Æ Let 4 (SigewardB) 003400 (299)]

*& wearð ða mycel hungor vii gear on and, & heo **siðoden** ealle to Egypte lond, þer heo bileofencæ fundon.*

“And there was a great famine for seven years and they all travelled to Egypt, where they found means of sustenance.”

As far as the meaning content of the alternation is concerned, the verb of manner of motion specifies the meaning of the verb of neutral motion, which is by definition general, in such a way that the verb of manner of motion provides a descriptive frame (usually in a durative tense such as the present participle, although the infinitive can also be found with the same function) for the neutral motion verb.

## 6. CONCLUSIONS

This study has shown that an analysis of the patterns of polysemy in which verbs of motion are found can provide a more accurate description of their meaning components. Although more research is needed, the results of the analysis indicate that polysemic Old English verbs of motion are usually atelic. Telicity is infrequent, and it coincides with path of motion. Some verbs of manner of motion can appear in subordinated manner expressions with verbs of neutral motion (*drīfan* “to rush on”, *flēogan* “to hasten quickly away”). Verbs of path of motion do not appear in subordinated manner expressions. Although most verbs combine the absolute pattern (to go) with the directional pattern (to go to some place), a significant number of verbs of manner of motion appear in the absolute pattern only: *forþbreosan* “to rush forth”, *forþbræsan* “to rush forth; to dart forth (of a bird)”, *frician?* “to dance”,

*bealtian* “to halt, limp”, *bleappettan* “to leap up”, *buncettan* “to limp, crawl”. This is also the case with the verb of path of motion (*ge*)*ānlǣcan* “to join”. With respect to reflexivisation, all verbs of neutral motion can be used reflexively in intransitive motion constructions. Some exceptional verbs of manner of motion appear in reflexive constructions (*bestelan* “to steal, move stealthily (upon)”, *creopan* “to crawl”, *flēogan* “to fly”, *forstalian* “of a slave, to steal away”, *fysan* “to hasten”, and *bweorfan* “to wander, roam”). Path of motion verbs are not used reflexively.

As a result, there is ample justification for distinguishing three verbal classes of motion in Old English: neutral motion, manner of motion, and path of motion. Additionally, the meaning of each class corresponds to different argument realisations and, more specifically, to two different morpho-syntactic alternations: the reflexive alternation and the verb/satellite alternation. The reflexive alternation aligns with verbs of neutral motion, whereas the verb/satellite alternation is consistent with verbs of manner of motion. Path of motion verbs are not found, as a general rule, in either of the alternations found in this study.

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## A TAXONOMY OF ANTHOLOGIES ACCORDING TO THE CRITERIA OF DELIMITATION

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*ABSTRACT.* Anthologies have usually been approached in relation to the canon and have usually been criticised for their inclusions and omissions. Yet anthology criticism ought to firstly acknowledge that the selection process stems from a concrete understanding of literature, tradition and its categories—period, genre, theme. These categories applied to the field of anthology-making are referred to as the criteria of delimitation, which condition which texts are apt to be anthologised. For this reason, Menand’s definition of tradition and its categories is set forth alongside Hopkins’s classification of anthologies in order to preserve the latter’s precise divisions—comprehensive, period, and trade anthologies—, to revise its terminology—genre anthology instead of generic anthology—, to demarcate the categories of the criteria of delimitation—critical anthologies are left out because they belong to the realm of the selection process—, and to propose a new class—the denomination of group anthologies for those collections which focus on the representativity of social groups. Thus, the criteria of delimitation, derived from the categories of tradition, offer a possible taxonomy of anthologies: comprehensive, period, genre, trade and group anthologies.

*Keywords:* anthology, literary criticism, tradition, categories of tradition, taxonomy, criteria of delimitation.

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## UNA TAXONOMÍA DE LAS ANTOLOGÍAS A PARTIR DE LOS CRITERIOS DE DELIMITACIÓN

*RESUMEN.* Las antologías han sido generalmente estudiadas en relación al canon y han sido generalmente criticadas por sus inclusiones y omisiones. Aun así, la crítica centrada en la antología debería en primer lugar reconocer que el proceso de selección deriva de una concepción concreta de la literatura, la tradición y sus categorías –periodo, género, tema–. Estas categorías aplicadas al campo del estudio de la creación de antologías son denominadas criterios de delimitación, los cuales condicionan qué textos son aptos para formar parte de una antología y facilitan una posible organización de las antologías. Por esta razón, la definición de tradición y sus categorías de Menand es expuesta junto a la clasificación de las antologías de Hopkins con el fin de preservar las divisiones precisas–general, histórica, comercial–, de revisar su terminología–antologías de género textual en lugar de genéricas–, de demarcar las categorías de los criterios de delimitación–las antologías críticas son excluidas porque pertenecen al ámbito del proceso de selección–, y de proponer una nueva clase–la denominación de antologías de grupo para aquellas colecciones especializadas en la representatividad de grupos sociales. Así pues, a partir de los criterios de delimitación, derivados de las categorías de tradición, se puede establecer una taxonomía de las antologías: antología general, histórica, de género textual, comercial y de grupo.

*Palabras clave:* antología, crítica literaria, tradición, categorías de tradición, taxonomía, criterios de delimitación.

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Even though anthologies constitute one of the main tools in literature courses, the critical corpus on anthologies is astoundingly reduced. Most literature students, if not all, have had in their hands a copy of an anthology which, even if sometimes weighty to carry, has saved in the end the space and money of separate works. However, the monographs, manuals, and specific studies on this form can be easily counted on both hands, if not on one. It is true that this neglect derives from the critics' preference for other aspects, such as the use of anthologies in the institution of academia, as in Guillory's famous book *Cultural Capital*, or the effect of anthologies in the history of reading, as in Price's *The Anthology and the Rise of the Novel*. The lack of specific studies on anthologies contrasts with the raised agitation when new anthologies are published and one's own expected list of names and works does not make it into the final product. Anthologies have historically been judged for their selections and omissions. Yet these selections are part of a bigger picture which sets the foundations for the anthology. This paper argues that anthologists' selection of works actually succeeds the previous step of concretising the criteria of delimitation (a given tradition, genre, period, theme, and social group), which give unity to the anthology and offer a possible taxonomy of anthologies (comprehensive, genre, period, trade, and group anthologies).

Anthology-making, according to Kuipers, is divided into three creative steps: selection, arrangement and presentation. The problem with this division is that it implies that the material is firstly selected and then ordered into “limitless possibilities for arrangement of the selections, such as by genre, theme, or other aesthetic variations” (Kuipers 124). Nonetheless, the conscientious and well-defined selections prove that there must have been a previous step that defines the general principles that structure the anthology. Choosing anthology-pieces does not precede but succeeds another critical step; the selections are bound by this step.

The concept of *criteria of delimitation* alludes not to the process of choosing literary works for the anthology, but rather to the previous step of narrowing down the corpus from which the anthologist will make ulterior decisions. The question here is not “what specific texts make up the anthology?”, but “where should the material be taken from?”. Bearing in mind that the *bouquet* constitutes the final product of the process, the anthologist ought to firstly delimit the field. These criteria of delimitation can usually be seen condensed in the title of the anthology, which gives hints about the parameters applied to delimit an area from the whole domain of a literary tradition. For instance, the work *Kissing the Rod: An Anthology of Seventeenth-century Women's Verse* shows how the editors Greer et al. have carried out a selection applying three explicit filters and a fourth one which is described on the first page of the “Introduction”. Firstly, a temporal specificity of writers who have been born before the turn of the seventeenth century; then the requirement that the writers must be women; further the condition that the selection is limited to poetry; and the fourth filter determines that all these writers must have lived in “seventeenth-century England” (Greer et al. 1). Causally enough, these delimitations seem to fit into the three vertices of the triangle of written tradition: generic, historical, thematic or “composed of any combination of [these] features (‘the tradition of 19th-century black women’s autobiography’)” (Menand and Foley 3722).

Yet before delving into the discussion of the vertices of tradition, it should be pointed out that Menand incorporates a second meaning of tradition. This is Cunningham’s view as an all-encompassing term discussed in his book *Tradition and Poetic Structure*: “more generally, *tradition* has been defined as ‘the body of texts and interpretations current among a group of writers at a given time and place’” (qtd. in Menand and Foley 3722). This structuralist position interprets tradition as totality, that is, as the whole body of texts which determines the form of a new work, and which one potentially has access to in a certain period. For its structuralist quality, Cunningham’s theory might be put side by side with similar notions by other critics, such as Northrop Frye.

Their similarity, nevertheless, lies in their different use of terms. For example, Frye’s ironic treatment of the term tradition in *Anatomy of Criticism* does not coincide with Cunningham’s understanding of tradition. The former states that “only one organizing principle has so far been discovered in literature, the principle of chronology. This supplies the magic word ‘tradition’ which means that when we see the miscellaneous pile strung out along a chronological line, some coherence is given it by sheer sequence” (Frye 16). On the other hand, the latter’s conception of

tradition might be compared to Frye's concept of "total literary history" in their common vocation towards totality, their central position in an essentialist structuralist stance, and their view of the literary past as the constitutive material for contemporary works.

Indeed, tradition for Cunningham is not just a mere descriptive term, but an active agent in the elaboration of literary works, for what makes up tradition is principles of order, which are defined as "that which directs and determines the selection of the materials that enter into a work, and their succession and importance" (20). These principles of order in Cunningham's *Tradition and Poetic Structure* are the chosen language, the sub-languages, literary conventions and extraliterary ideas. The chosen language refers to the potential expression of any given language. Sub-languages allude to a "special selection of language appropriated to poems, or to certain kinds of poems, or to certain groups of poets" (20-21). These sub-languages determine choices of vocabulary, phrasing and syntactical patterns. Literary conventions might be concretised as repeated patterns, forms and genres. And extraliterary texts (mainly theological and philosophical), as part of tradition, can provide the structural idea or the progression of the argument in a work. These principles of order shape the final work; there is no escape. Such a deterministic stance usually leads the critic to dismiss the concept of originality, due to the fact that the individual work has become a set of qualities, properties, phrases or structures from other texts. The most illustrative instance of this point is the chapter on Chaucer "Convention as Structure: The Prologue to the *Canterbury Tales*". In it, as the title already tells us, Cunningham argues that "The Prologue" of *The Canterbury Tales* has a clear antecedent in terms of its structure, which is the medieval convention of the dream vision. The whole chapter (and book) overflows with such terms as precedent, scheme, technique, method, subject, and principle, leading to the conclusion that

The identity of the literary form of the Prologue to the *Canterbury Tales* with the conventional form of the dream-vision prologue can be regarded as established. It may be felt, however, that the distinctive feature of the *Canterbury Prologue* —the series of portraits —has not adequately been accounted for. No one, I trust, will ask one to account for the greatness of Chaucer's portraits, for his peculiar skill in writing. If such matters can be explained, certainly they lie outside the scope and method of this chapter. (72)

Here, Cunningham recognises his inability to provide an analysis which comprises the peculiar, differential, distinctive quality of a work. Frye would put it in a starker way since the poet for him "is at best a midwife" (98). In relation to tradition and originality, Frye shares as well the deterministic opinion that "the possession of originality cannot make an artist unconventional; it drives him further into convention, obeying the law of the art itself, which seeks constantly to reshape itself from its own depths, and which works through its geniuses for metamorphosis, as it works through minor talents for mutation" (132). What differentiates Frye and Cunningham is that the former, rather than compartmentalising the study of literature as a whole in language, literary aspects, and ideas, opts for exclusively delving into

the literary specifics and poses an archetypal criticism all around *mythos* (or plot) and *dianoia* (or imagery) extracted from commonalities found in works taken from the classical English canon.

Nevertheless, the understanding of tradition as totality displays an attitude less preoccupied with dealing with tradition as a classifying term than treating tradition as source detector of the work's structural form to prove that not only every formal decision or image, but even every idea has had a predecessor in a previous text. The work becomes an enumeration of structural abstractions which take part in a complex network of source detection and study of influence thus proving that the literary past is present in contemporary works. Yet the view of the literary past as a cohesive unity might be seen as a conceptual indeterminacy since it is an impossible task for an individual author to comprehend it. In the context of literary studies, tradition, used on its own, without any modifier, might be called, after Fredric Jameson, an "untotalizable totality" (xii); its referentiality is primarily temporal rather than bearing a specific classifying denotation. In this sense, tradition refers to the past, to what has been done up to a certain point in time; its specific meaning, however, is empty. What really defines tradition is what accompanies this term. Therefore, to understand tradition and its complexity, one has to delve into the peculiarities of the possible complements which define the noun 'tradition'. The critical discussion of no specific tradition, just tradition in isolation, is fruitless.

In the same way as structuralism abstracts the work of art into practices found in other works, it abstracts the whole creative activity called 'literature' with the pretence of setting the structural principles of the discipline as a whole. But this leads to what might be called 'the fallacy of totality'. When one critic aims at discussing the principles of tradition as encompassing every work of art made to date, he or she is playing the illusionist making the public look at the hands while the trick is elsewhere. The trick is obviously that which goes without saying, namely, the critic's implicit view of literature and its categories, which are those of tradition.

Besides Frye and Cunningham, one of the most influential figures in relation to tradition is T. S. Eliot. His has a very specific understanding of tradition, in the temporal and spatial dimensions. Lucy claims that "tradition is for him that part of living culture inherited from the past and functioning in the formation of the present. Eliot sees the whole of European culture as a living growth springing from the stem of the Christianised Graeco-Roman cultures" (6). Eliot's view of tradition is founded upon Christianity and the cultural heritage of classical antiquity in Europe; it is not to be understood in absolute terms. This is one of the multiple traditions that can be drawn. His wish to make this tradition *the* tradition, as is posited in "The Classics and the Man of Letters" (160), is more related to his political views than a thorough study of the concept.

In exploring the most relevant discussions of tradition in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Cianci and Harding observe that this concept has evolved over time: from Eliot's Tradition, Leavis's Great Tradition, and Cleanth Brook's The Tradition, to most recent "vigorous academic reformulations" in terms of ecocriticism, feminism, sexuality,

postcolonialism, and race. They give the example of Bate's *Wordsworth and the Environmental Tradition*, Showalter's *A Literature of Their Own*, Woods's *A History of Gay Literature: The Men's Tradition*, Lawrence's *Decolonizing Tradition*, and Bell's *The Afro-American Novel and its Tradition* (Cianci and Harding 2). These "academic reformulations" are different concretisations of tradition inasmuch as they stem from a new understanding of its categories. Moreover, these are examples of today's need to acknowledge the critic's specific approach to tradition since, provided that tradition is explored on its own, it is likely to obviate mentioning which tradition is borne in mind.

This is recognised by Fowler who, in attempting to define literature in the *Routledge Encyclopedia of Literature and Criticism*, asserts that "I am concentrating on a particular tradition of theory and criticism. It is an English tradition, frankly a parochial one; for France, or Germany, or Russia, the history and the possible theoretical positions would be different" (10). Later Fowler gives more details about the specific conception of tradition he has in his hands:

If 'Literature' is a cultural category, one has to concentrate on a particular cultural context, and describing it from within is bound to seem parochial. By 'our' culture I mean English-speaking Britain and America, where there is a common economic organization, an integrated publishing and reviewing industry, and very similar educational systems. (10)

Widdowson, in his book *Literature*, quotes this same fragment from Fowler and admits that his knowledge of literary traditions other than the English one is too limited. For this reason, his study "is primarily anglocentric in focus" (19).

Due to the fact that approaching tradition as totality is not shared anymore and that *Literature* as a universal concept, and with a capital 'l', has been discredited, coping with literature needs and demands to be contextually specific. That which is said of a determined literature affects a concrete tradition, and vice versa. In fact, the categories of literature are those of tradition. For instance, the expression 'literatures in English' actually alludes to 'literary traditions in English'. If there is not a unique definition of Literature, literature needs to be understood in the context of a specific tradition. And as the term 'literature' and what it encompasses has historically evolved over time, that which constitutes 'tradition' has been affected. In other words, different definitions of 'literature' over time imply different material belonging to 'tradition'. And consequently, the historically determined material of 'tradition' encompasses the works which can be potentially anthologised.

Dealing with literary studies, it seems obvious that in talking about tradition, one refers to literary tradition. What is less obvious is the implicit definition of literary, and therefore of literature, adopted by the critic. Other fields apparently have had an easier starting task, as can be seen in cultural and religious studies, since tradition is defined as "a set of practices" or "a pattern of action", which are to be created from or based on the past, as Hobsbawm (1) and Hammer (736) claim. However, the adjective 'literary' does not carry with it such a straightforward delimitation of tradition.



There is critical consensus nowadays in relation to the fact that there is no single valid conception of literature to be applied to any context. As a matter of fact, Widdowson claims that “[n]o one by now – not even the most dyed-in-the-wool traditional literary critic – can easily accept either a notion of a unitary ‘Literature’ or that there can be a meaningful essentialist definition of the concept” (10). Consequently, historical specificities are to be taken into account. The concept of literature has evolved over time and in today’s world it includes works which were excluded some years ago. Indeed, Widdowson argues that, from a conception of Literature as the field of masterworks and geniuses, twentieth-century critical perspectives redefined literature turning their attention to disregarded works, discriminated voices and new ways of interpreting meaning. The critic points out that “postcolonial feminisms have a clear linkage with notions of ‘Cyborg’ identity, with transgressive sexual politics, with all the creative postmodern movements whose rationale is the continual breaking down of unitary and universalising paradigms—and of which ‘Literature’ has surely been amongst” (92).

Illustrative cases of this new view of literature are the anthologies *Nineteenth-century American Women Writers: an Anthology*, edited by Kilcup in 1997, *Anthology of Australian Aboriginal Literature*, edited by Heiss and Minter in 2008, *Common People: An Anthology of Working-Class Writers*, edited by de Waal in 2019. In fact, these collections are far from being homogenous. Whereas the former takes into consideration, amongst other texts, journals, travel literature and advice columns, Heiss and Minter’s add political letters to their anthology, and the latter includes essays and memoirs. All three anthologies, rather than focusing on a specific literary form or genre, are conceived to give voice to a historically underrepresented social reality: that of women, Aboriginal Australians, and working-class people.

The expanded conception of literature from feminist, postcolonial or class perspectives are instances of minorities’ redefinition of tradition’s essentialism. In this aspect Bhabha’s work is fundamental. He argues that “the recognition that tradition bestows is a partial form of identification. In restaging the past it introduces other, incommensurable cultural temporalities into the invention of tradition. This process estranges any immediate access to an originary identity or a ‘received’ tradition” (*The Location* 3). Consequently, more and more voices stretch the boundaries of a fixed paradigm. Tradition cannot be packed into a definitive list of compulsory readings—nor in an anthology—which condenses the fulcrum of a national identity. In fact, alongside tradition, the notion of nation has been equally disrupted. Bhabha in the same book observes that “the very concepts of homogenous national cultures, the consensual or contiguous transmission of historical traditions, or ‘organic’ ethnic communities—as the grounds of cultural comparativism—are in a profound process of redefinition” (7). Nations, like narrations, undergo constant evolution with the involvement of new political entities which push their boundaries in the process of hybridity (Bhabha, “Introduction” 4). This cultural diversity within geopolitical spaces leads Bhabha to move the spotlight away from the national to the global: “where, once, the transmission of national

traditions was the major theme of a world literature, perhaps we can now suggest that transnational histories of migrants, the colonized, or political refugees—these border and frontier conditions—may be the terrains of world literature” (*The Location* 17). Similarly, but focusing on the role of the reader, Damrosch proposes an “elliptical approach” insofar as it recognises the cultural specificity of texts and acknowledges their relevance for the reader’s context (133). The reader, then, is placed in an intermediate position which negotiates the meaning of a text between the past and the present.

These perspectives of what makes literature have conditioned what is to be considered as anthologisable. As a matter of fact, the redefinition of tradition, the ambivalence of the national, the avowing of the global interweaving of narratives, and the recognition of the simultaneous otherness and assimilation of the text are aspects that make up the critical foundations of *The Heath Anthology of American Literature* and *The Longman Anthology of World Literature*. The former, whose general editor is Paul Lauter, displays more clearly Bhabha’s ideas. American literature, rather than being ascertained as a truism, is problematised from its origins, boundaries, and political assumptions. Such is the case of the sections “Nation within a Nation: Lakotas/Dakotas/Nakotas”, “Redefining the South”, or “Outside/Inside U.S.A.: Expansion and Immigration” in volume C. It displays a new understanding of its history and its constituting sociopolitical groups. The latter, being Damrosch one of the general editors with Pike, more clearly explores the reader’s elliptical approach through the section “Resonance” where texts, sometimes far in time and space, are connected. As can be seen, the selection and the arrangement of the texts in anthologies derive from the different delimitations according to the starting point of a concrete understanding of literature and its traditions. Therefore, the volume of works which make up literature and tradition is historically conditioned, and thus, the selection of the content which is to appear in an anthology is narrowed down by the contemporaneous view of these concepts.

After having set the boundaries of literature, and hence of literary tradition, one is able to discuss the subcategories of literary tradition. As has been noted above, the titles of anthologies give plenty of information about the tradition taken into consideration. Thus, the delimitation of the categories of tradition underpins the parameters—criteria of delimitation—established to develop a coherent anthology. Hence, each category of tradition leads to a type of anthology. In this sense, it is worth pointing at the correspondence between Menand’s taxonomy of generic, historical and thematic traditions with Hopkins’s categories of anthologies.

The first category is *comprehensive anthologies* “attempting ‘representative’ coverage of the whole field” (Hopkins 290-291). As can be guessed, the cognate aspect of treating tradition in isolation is the view of tradition as totality, whose impossible realisation is reflected into an ideally all-encompassing but always failed anthology. What is impossible of the definition of comprehensive anthology is not the emphasis on representativity, but the understanding of “the whole field”. If this expression implies an understanding of literature as a unitary field of knowledge, this essentialist perspective has been historically undermined, as has already been

discussed. Literature, with a capital 'L', is always partial, biased. Literature, with a lowercase 'l', is divided into compartments according to the categories of tradition. Besides the Heath and Longman anthologies of world literature mentioned above, *The Norton Anthology of World Literature's* shorter fourth edition proves this. By simply glimpsing at the table of contents of its volumes, one quickly realises how these anthologies are organised according to the different geographically based traditions: "Ancient Mediterranean and Near Eastern Literature", "Ancient India", or "Early Chinese Literature and Thought", among others. The editor, thus, has to give due credit to the contextual specificity of the geographical belonging. In fact, Lawall, one of the editors of the *Norton Anthology of World Masterpieces*, states that the first editions gathered in the 1950s gave preference to the richness of the text per se, following the critical tenets of New Criticism. However, "more recently, the format has changed to combine previously separate historical and biographical material with the analysis of the author's work. The implied critical perspective now presents literary and aesthetic structures as part of a broad referential context" (Lawall 27). Even in those anthologies where the scope is global, one cannot dodge the cultural specificity of texts.

A different issue is, from the specificity of each tradition, the attempt to offer a broad outlook of representative samples. This would be the case of dealing with literary traditions without the imposing model of a centric and dominant conception of Literature. These comprehensive anthologies would have the presentation of a culturally specific tradition in all its variety as the ideal goal. Lauter, who can never be suspicious of defending the centrality of Literature, claims that "to observe change, to account for difference and similarity, to comprehend the historical conditions of textual production – all, it seems to me, lead us toward the comprehensive anthology, rather than to separate books by individual authors" (Lauter 20). Here *comprehensive* alludes to the anthology's intended goal of presenting a tradition in all its complexity and contextual value.

In relation to the historical category of tradition, the anthological equivalent is Hopkins's *period anthologies*, "offering 'representative' coverage of a particular century, reign, or historical movement" (291). This term, far from being Hopkins's coinage, already appears throughout Ferry's book; it is used by Kuipers, as in "literary period anthology" (128); it appears in Hibbard's study of types of anthologies, one being "anthologies devoted to a period in literary history" (648); and Houston cites the specific example of "Romantic period anthologies" (256). Woodcock notices this tendency in the publication of Oxford Books, since "there are Oxford Books which cover particular centuries of English poetry" (119), and McDowell adds a subtle comment on the continuity of tradition by observing that one of the purposes of an anthology is that "it may celebrate the status quo and attract new readers to the accepted poetry of a particular period" (595). As can be seen, almost every critic has noticed the evident capacity of anthologies of encapsulating literary works into temporal compartments or movements.

It might be argued that every anthology is in a sense a period anthology since there is no text appearing in an historical vacuum, and there can be no anthologised

text after the time present. The fact that time logically limits the works which can be published is to be remarked, since it is one of the main factors which conditions the appearance of new and re-editions of anthologies. Readers need anthologies which comprise contemporary materials. As new works are continuously being published, cutting-edge anthologies rapidly become outdated. Moreover, as the critical tenets which inform the selections are also grounded in the historical specificity of its elaboration, every anthology is in part a period anthology not only in terms of the material taken into consideration but also the followed critical principles.

Regarding Menand's generic (genre-based) category, Hopkins opts for "formal and generic collections focused on a particular category of poem (pastoral, country house poem, sonnet, satire, ode, elegy, ballad, translation, poem on affairs of state), and usually ranging across more than one period" (291). However, the terms "formal" and "generic" might not be the most suitable inasmuch as they might generate confusion. "Formal" echoes formalism, which does not necessarily have to be related to the historical portrayal of genres. The problem of "generic" is that it alludes to something whose reference is not concrete. Actually, this is the opposite meaning to the concrete process of categorising works into genres. For this reason, the easiest solution is to name this kind of anthology *genre anthologies*, so that there is less ambiguity, and we avoid possible confusion.

As might be guessed, the controversy does not lie in the use of the word 'genre', but in the definitions of the genres, which directly affect those works which are considered literary, and therefore, what is bound to be considered an anthology-piece. The case of *The Oxford Book of English Verse* shows the historical evolution of this issue. The word "Verse" has a lot to tell us about this because of the changing perception of the poetic genre over time. Whereas Quiller-Couch limits the anthology to "the lyrical and epigrammatic" (ix), Gardner includes in the collection "the tradition of satiric, political, epistolary, and didactic verse in English" (v), and Ricks encompasses the "lyric..., satire, hymn, ode, epistle, elegy, ballad, nonsense verse..., the prose poem..., nursery rhymes, limericks and clerihews" (xxxiv). It is most likely that part of the inclusions in the last edition would not have been understood as poetic, and probably neither as literary, in the years of the first edition, the turn of the 20th century. Consequently, the categorisation of genres is grounded in the specific historical context of its formation, since this critical aspect has evolved over time, as has the concept of literature.

The last comparative step between Menand's categories of tradition and Hopkins's types of anthologies does not coincide. Following the logic applied so far, Menand's 'thematic traditions' would correspond to Hopkins's 'critical anthologies', but this correlation is inexact. Thematic traditions include any literary topic which can be abstracted, whilst critical anthologies refer to those collections in which the editor's personal criteria have determined the inclusion or exclusion of the works. With regards to the latter, Hopkins moves from a taxonomy based on the categorisation of the materials anthologised (related to traditions, periods and genres) to the anthologist's implication in the selection of these materials. The

difference is subtle, yet significant. Whereas the first elements delimit the whole corpus of literature into compartments so that the anthology has cohesion and coherence, the category of ‘critical anthologies’ alludes to the next step of selecting which pieces are to take part in the anthology. The process of selection, therefore, is not part of the criteria of delimitation.

Yet Menand’s thematic traditions have a relative cognate in anthologies, namely *trade anthologies*. This denomination was coined by Riding and Graves in *A Pamphlet against Anthologies*, and it refers to those collections whose *raison d’être* is market success. First published in 1928, Riding and Graves’s book constitutes a fierce attack on this type of literary collection because they are deemed a distortion of literature made by the anthologist’s taste (36). The polemicists only accept unpublished private collections and corpuses of unknown or unavailable texts (34; 182). Since an anthology, as soon as it finds a publisher and goes into the market, becomes a product to sell and is expected to at least return on investment, Riding and Graves’s rejection of trade anthologies is actually a dismissal of anthologies in general.

Hopkins recovers the expression but, rather than being a pejorative denomination for most published anthologies, he uses it to allude to thematic collections (285). Washington’s *Love Poems* is a good example of a trade anthology in this sense. Being divided into “Definitions and Persuasions”, “Love and Poetry”, “Praising the Loved One”, “Pleasures and Pains”, “Fidelity and Inconstancy”, “Absence, Estrangements and Parting”, and “Love Past”, this collection gathers poems from very different traditions which, however, find themselves at the junction of love. Such identifiable names of the English tradition as Shakespeare, Whitman, Dickinson or Rossetti appear next to Wên T’ing-Yün of ninth-century China, the father of Persian literature Rudaki, Barthrari of fifth-century India, or Izumi Shikibu of tenth and eleventh centuries in Japan. Whilst *Love Poems* is constructed with the clear intention of being pleasant for the general public, it also shows freedom of choice. The restraint of the economic demands is accompanied by the editor’s loosened pressure of academic accuracy. It is true that these anthologies lack the precise definition of traditions, the historical approach to literature and the contextual setting of each piece. Nevertheless, Washington’s collection sets poems together for the sake of the universal literary experience of love. Trade anthologies, thus, might be useful to comparatively explore works from different traditions as poetical expressions of a given theme.

Another particularly interesting example is D. J. Enright’s *The Oxford Book of Death*. This anthology’s title combines the transcendence of being an Oxford Book with the thematic centrality of death. Therefore, with the exception of courses on the literary depiction of death that might recommend this anthology, or research conducted around this topic, *The Oxford Book of Death* might be regarded as more closely fitting the category of trade anthology. The thematic centrality of the anthology is accompanied by another factor which reinforces this label. Enright observes in the “Introduction” that “the great initial uncertainty had to do with the public status of the subject” (xii). The anthology does not have an academic target reader but aspires to take part in society. Therefore, “this being a subject on which

there are no real experts – lay voices rightly insisted on being heard alongside those of ‘literary men’” (xi-xii). As Dana argues, “the interest of the editors and compilers of these anthologies is not in poetry, primarily, but in subject or stance” (49).

Besides the central presence of English-speaking writers in an Oxford Book, there is room for thirteenth-century Persian Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī, Raage Ugaas of c. nineteenth-century Somalia, or Po Chū-i of around eight and ninth centuries in China, among many others. Moreover, Enright also combines different genres to display the multifarious perceptions of death: not only poems, but also newspaper articles, fragments from narrative works, fragments from non-fiction writing as Tadeusz Borowski’s “Auschwitz, our Home: A Letter”, or royal dictums as Charles IX of France’s “the body of a dead enemy always smells good” (231). Apart from the fourteen sections of the book—“Definitions”, “Views and Attitudes”, “The Hour of Death”, “Suicide”, “Mourning”, “Graveyards and Funerals”, “Resurrections and Immortalities”, “Hereafters”, “Revenants”, “War, Plague and Persecution”, “Love and Death”, “Children”, “Animals”, and “Epitaphs, Requiems and Last Words”—the writings appear in consecution with no context of the precise experience they refer to, their cultural or geographical origin. As can be appreciated, trade anthologies display literature as a creative activity which enables the mutual sympathy and empathy across the globe.

At this point, however, there still remains an aspect to be discussed, that is, the fact that, after Menand’s classification of “generic”, “historical” and “thematic”, he adds “or any combination of features (‘the tradition of 19th-c. African American women’s writing’)” (3722). The historical part of the example is clear, but defining if “African American women’s writing” is generic or thematic is less obvious. Viewing genre anthologies as united by a common formal characteristic of the text, one has the impression that Menand sees “African American women’s writing” as a thematic category. Provided that theme is considered a textual element, a category might be missing. In the current critical world where the concept of literature has been expanded in terms of geographical, gender and minority re-presentations, new traditions emerge. As a matter of fact, traditions are subjected to history, and as such, they might appear, evolve, transform, and even disappear. As Louis Gates Jr. argues:

Literary works configure into a tradition not because of some mystical collective unconscious determined by the biology of race or gender, but because writers read other writers and ground their representations of experience in models of language provided largely by other writers to whom they feel akin. It is through this mode of literary revision, amply evident in the texts themselves—in formal echoes, recast metaphors, even in parody—that a ‘tradition’ emerges and defines itself. This is formal bonding, and it is only through formal bonding that we can know a literary tradition. The collective publication of these works by black women now, for the first time, makes it possible for scholars and critics, male and female, black and white, to demonstrate that black women writers read, and revised, other black women writers. To demonstrate this set of formal literary relations is to demonstrate that sexuality, race, and gender are both the condition and the basis of *tradition*—but tradition as found in discrete acts of language use. (xviii)

These new traditions have been consolidated, which means that literary criticism should have a proper name for this. Instead of being part of thematic anthologies, these could be integrated into *group anthologies*, in which the fulcrum is the representativity and formal closeness of the works written by a given part of the population, especially those marked by race, class and gender. These three sections of the population have been historically under-represented, marginalised, and disregarded in the study of literature. In dealing with the historical challenges to the concept of Literature, Widdowson argues that: “any notions of ‘disinterestedness’, ‘scientific’ objectivity and ‘ideological innocence’ have been scuppered by the political analysis of Cultural Studies, as they have, too, by those of the latter’s principal theoretical drives: Marxism, feminism and postcolonialism” (77). The inclusion of these voices derives from the demands of these socially involved groups which put the emphasis on the ideological burden of literature. Besides the three anthologies discussed above edited by Kilcup, Heiss and Minter, and de Waal, other instances to take into account are Keating’s *Working-class Stories of the 1890s* (1971), Rodenberger et al.’s *Writing on the Wind: An Anthology of West Texas Women Writers* (2005), and Rushdie and West’s *The Vintage Book of Indian Writing, 1947-1997* (1997).

In brief, dealing with literary anthologies implies having in mind a definition of the literary and literature, being this definition far from definitive. Many have been the approaches and interpretations of literature, which has invariably integrated new perspectives historically disregarded. As Literature has been dismantled, the study of literature needs to be contextually precise, and historically aware. For this reason, literature is to be approached from the specificity of a given tradition and its categories in order to acknowledge the works taken into consideration. Hence, this study of the categories of tradition, mainly derived from Menand, leads to the analysis of the types of anthologies, mainly derived from Hopkins. In Menand’s categorisation, historical and generic traditions correspond to period anthologies and genre anthologies, respectively. Thematic traditions, diverging from the example posed by Menand, are particularly relevant in trade anthologies—those non-academic anthologies whose creation is destined for economic profit, but at the same time, give the anthologist the freedom of approaching literature without the constraints of academe. One last category of tradition which Menand overlooks is the re-presentation of minorities. Those anthologies whose main defining aspect is the collection of writings by these traditions might be gathered together under the umbrella term of ‘group anthologies’. Obviously, it goes without saying that these categories of anthologies are complementary and that an anthology might fit into more than one slot at the same time. Yet those anthologies whose defining constant is a specific category might be considered part of that category. For instance, an anthology representing more than one genre within a given time could well be classified as a period anthology. Likewise, if the depiction of a genre over more than one period or movement is preferred, the literary collection could be named a genre anthology. If different genres over centuries are to be considered for the shortlist, the anthology will likely be a comprehensive anthology. Group anthologies turn their attention to the social group being anthologised and trade anthologies do not necessarily need to follow any category inasmuch as the product succeeds in the market.

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## MIMESIS OF CONTRAST IN SHAKESPEARE'S EPHEMERAL SUBPLOT AND ITS USE IN VICTORIAN AND MODERNIST LITERATURE

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*ABSTRACT.* The aim of this paper is to present an overview of Shakespeare's employment of a narrative technique that could be referred to as the "mimesis of contrast." By analysing the characteristics of certain sequences in *Macbeth*, *Henry IV 1* and *The Tempest*, it will be spelt out that Shakespeare's sudden subplots, generally considered mere comic reliefs, are in fact revealing instances that not only mirror the play's primary narrative but also succeed in generating a drastic poetic effect. Moreover, the use of this method will be considered in the works of Victorian and Modernist authors, notably Charles Dickens, James Joyce and T. S. Eliot. Lastly, the ideas of traditional Shakespearian critics like S. T. Coleridge and Thomas De Quincey shall work as central arguments in this article, aiding to conclude that Renaissance drama, and in particular Shakespeare's motif of contrast, made an impact in the literature of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

*Keywords:* Shakespeare, Literary Criticism, Victorian Literature, Modernism, Comparative Literature.

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## LA MIMESIS DE CONTRASTE EN LA SUBTRAMA BREVE SHAKESPERIANA Y SU USO EN LA LITERATURA VICTORIANA Y MODERNISTA

*RESUMEN.* En este artículo se pretende analizar el uso que Shakespeare hace de cierta técnica narrativa, a la que nos podemos referir como “mímesis de contraste.” Tras analizar las características de determinadas secuencias en *Macbeth*, *Enrique IV 1* y *La Tempestad*, se mostrará cómo las subtramas breves de Shakespeare, generalmente consideradas descansos cómicos, son en realidad momentos de suma importancia, puesto que no solo reflejan la narrativa principal de la obra, sino que también generan un impactante efecto poético. Posteriormente, se tendrá en cuenta el uso de esta técnica dentro de la literatura de autores victorianos y modernistas, en concreto en los textos de Charles Dickens, James Joyce y T. S. Eliot. Por último, tendremos en cuenta las valoraciones de determinados autores acerca de la obra de Shakespeare, S. T. Coleridge y Thomas De Quincey, para demostrar que el teatro renacentista, y en concreto la mímesis de contraste, tuvo un gran impacto en la literatura de los siglos diecinueve y veinte.

*Palabras clave:* Shakespeare, Crítica Literaria, Literatura Victoriana, Modernismo, Literatura Comparada.

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

“So foul a sky clears not without a storm” (4.2.110), writes William Shakespeare in *King John*, presenting in this concise verse an existential, politically tainted prophecy. In fact, the clearing of a thick atmosphere into an environment of lesser heaviness is a device that this author employed to arrange decisive sequences of some of his most influential dramatic works, a storytelling method to be considered as Shakespeare’s “mimesis of contrast.” This paper focuses on three plays of different genres, *Macbeth*, *Henry IV 1*, and *The Tempest*, which will aid to show that with these plot changes Shakespeare sought to move the audience and engage with it, bearing an intention both poetical and social. In addition, how the latter section of several pairs of scenes was arranged as a sudden subplot that not only reflected the leading narrative but also provoked a feeling of renovation will be observed. The three plays to be discussed have been selected for several major reasons. Firstly, they will aid to show how Shakespeare made use of similar narrative patterns, and in particular the one named above, throughout his wide range of production. I deem proper to raise this idea, since at a first glance the readership may assume that plays as varied as the ones chosen—that is, a Tragedy, a History, and a Romance produced in different stages of his writing career—must be notoriously dissimilar pieces. Secondly, since this study focuses on the transitions between major storylines and apparently abrupt plots, the plays have been selected to show that, no matter how

distant the secondary characters are from the protagonists, there is at all times a strong similitude between them. Through an analysis of three scenes which rely on the effects of inebriation to unfold—the “Porter Scene” in *Macbeth*, the Carriers’ conversation in *Henry IV 1* and the plotting of the murder of Prospero in *The Tempest*—the following section will provide an overview of the characteristics of the mimesis of contrast and the use of this narrative strategy in the plays, supported by ideas postulated by traditional critics of the Shakespearian canon, such as Samuel Taylor Coleridge and Thomas de Quincey.

De Quincey’s and Coleridge’s commentaries on Shakespeare have been taken into account, primarily, because they allow this study to transcend Renaissance drama. The use of De Quincey’s essay “On the Knocking at the Gate in *Macbeth*” and Coleridge’s lecture on *The Tempest* will permit us to easily reflect on the use of Shakespearean motifs and narrative devices in Victorian literature, and particularly in Dickens’ *Oliver Twist*. The critical works of both authors will shed light on the understanding of the Shakespearean canon in the nineteenth century as well as of its use as a source to develop pioneering literatures. As it will be noticed, the mimesis of contrast is employed in Dickens’ novel in a way which follows the same steps which Shakespeare set while using this formula. Moreover, in the last sections of this paper, the inclusion of two Modernist writers—James Joyce and T. S. Eliot—will allow to complete an overview of how Shakespeare’s major topics and techniques have been constantly rearranged in the English language literary tradition, as well as to show which have been the different approaches towards this borrowing through time. In their respective works, these authors applied profusely Shakespeare’s motif of contrast to enhance their texts with an atmosphere of renewal, breaking a slowly woven suspense. By focusing on a pair of radically different scenes from *Ulysses*, it will be pointed out how Joyce’s narrative patterns and voices mirror Shakespeare’s prosodic shifts, which are contained in the sudden changes between verse and prose present in the plays as well as in the various registers used by characters belonging to different social spheres. Lastly, T. S. Eliot’s employment of the Shakespearean tradition in *The Waste Land*, and particularly in “A Game of Chess,” will show how Modernism broadened the width of experimentation in regards to the use of primary and secondary sources in the literary text. The differences and similarities between the two scenes that compose “A Game of Chess” will be explored, considering Eliot’s employment of Shakespeare’s themes to create a drastic change of environment and a contrasting mimesis. Finally, relying on studies such as Harry Berger’s (2015) “A Horse Named Cut: *1 Henry IV*, Act 2, Scene 1” and Frederic Tromly’s (1975) “*Macbeth* and His Porter,” it will be stated that while Dickens made use of Shakespeare to enrich his novels with particular narrative shifts, Joyce and T. S. Eliot went further, blending Shakespeare’s texts with their correspondent criticism to present meta-literary pieces, thus adapting centuries of tradition into a literature adequate for what, as James Nohnberg writes, Eliot referred to as the “present chaos” of their era (21).

2. MIMESIS OF CONTRAST IN *MACBETH*, *HENRY IV 1* AND *THE TEMPEST*

Shakespeare's employment of extreme thematic and stylistic alternations within the same play has long been subject to criticism, with some scholars labelling it as an avoidable narrative choice. Alan Stewart describes the Carriers' scene in *Henry IV 1* as "something of an oddity" (431), perhaps due to the strangeness of the suddenly lowly prose of its characters in contrast to the delicate lines of Hotspur and the rest of the revolutionary plotters present in the previous scene. On the other hand, Michael Allen gives credit to these shifts, considering the porter scene in *Macbeth*, and classifies them as "thought-paralyzing concepts of comic relief" (327) taking into account Thomas de Quincey's essay "On the Knocking at the Gate in Macbeth." De Quincey's piece of criticism analyses this scene, with which the playwright managed to produce his comic relief by means of presenting the base complaining of a hungover medieval porter in the aftermath of King Duncan's assassination—"Here's a knocking indeed! If a man were porter of hell-gate, he should have old turning the key" (Shakespeare, *Mac.* 2.3.1-2).

In his essay, De Quincey argues that "in order that a new world may step in, this world must for a time disappear" (84), culminating with the idea that at no instant is the "sense of the complete suspension and pause in ordinary human concerns so full and affecting as at that moment when the suspension ceases, and the ongoings of human life are suddenly resumed" (84). To support this thesis, he then regards the feverish plane that Macbeth's central deed establishes, theorising on how the arrival of the porter on stage breaks, with rather base though deep human touch, the hanging tension left by the murder of the king. For De Quincey, when the breath-taking tension is broken and a new world arrives to substitute the former,

when the deed is done, when the work of darkness is perfect, then the world of darkness passes away like a pageantry in the clouds: the knocking at the gate is heard; and it makes known audibly that the reaction has commenced: the human has made its reflux upon the fiendish; the pulses of life are beginning to beat again; and the re-establishment of the goings-on of the world in which we live, first makes us profoundly sensible of the awful parenthesis that had suspended them. (De Quincey 84)

Considering De Quincey's theory, this ephemeral subplot and particularly its characteristic knocking produce an impact on the audience as the calm after the storm, although, as Frederic Tromly argues, its primary purpose might have been to adjust and clarify the audience's response to the intense plot developed immediately before (151). However, this approach is not only present in *Macbeth*. As commented before, in act 2, scene 1 of *Henry IV 1* the domestic conversation between the Carriers in Rochester proves to be a similar situation to that of the porter in the tragedy, though certainly Hotspur's revolution shall not be considered "fiendish." On a similar note, Fredson Bowers argues that the Carriers, as well as Macbeth's attendant have no ideological significance in themselves (53)—they represent "the mimic world of the underplot" (53) and constitute, along with the rest of the tavern scenes of the play "a form of parody of the main plot" (53). Furthermore, as Stewart points out, "the

consensus of twentieth-century critics was that these comic scenes have an important but subordinate relationship to the main plot" (432). This subordination works, moreover, as a parallelism to the primary narrative, their characters being domestic alterations of the circumstantial courtly protagonists as well as of their situations. For instance, as Harry Berger argues, after Hotspur's rhymed rhetoric in *Henry IV 1*—"Why, what a candy deal of courtesy / This fawning greyhound then did proffer me!" (Shakespeare, 1H4 1.3.247-248)—"the opening dialogue of act 2, scene 1 strikes an antithetical low note by introducing us to a Shakespearean version of contemporary truck-stop culture" (83). In this scene the rushed commentary on the time of the day spoken by the First Carrier—"An it be not four by the day I'll be / hanged ..." (Shakespeare, 1H4 2.1.1-2)—brings the reader back to Falstaff's introductory words in act 1, scene 2—"Now, Hal, what time of day is it, lad?" (1H4 1.2.1)—thus presenting a mock parallel of the principal plot and characters. Yet this parallelism is not the only noticeable one, for Berger points out another correspondence between the world of the court and the Carriers' momentary subplot, stating that there is a social implication in the analogy between "the superficially careless escapism of the Eastcheap holiday—"What a devil hast thou to do with the time of the day?" (Shakespeare, 1H4 1.2.6-7)—and the inconvenience to which transporters of food are exposed in a politically and economically unstable world, where the price of oats matters and sharp practices are the order of the day" (83). Consequently, this consideration would endow the seemingly comical atmosphere of the scene with a serious social critique, and reinforce A. R. Humphreys' opinion on the blending of tragic and light-hearted moments in *Henry IV 1*:

The co-existence of comic and serious plots is not confined to their efficient alternation, although their alternations are superbly efficient. The more they are scrutinized, the more connected they appear, the connection being sometime of parallelism and reinforcement, sometimes of antithesis and contrast, sometime a reversal by which serious or comic is judged by the other's values. There are, too, stylistic relationships by which, for instance, major types of imagery are common to both parts, or by which the texture and pace of prose scenes offset those of verse. (Humphreys xlvi)

Similarly, the transitory subplot of the Porter in *Macbeth* relates back to the protagonist of the play, although the parallelism might not be as clear as in *Henry IV 1*. In my view, the audience of *Macbeth* may find attractive to fall into a Manichaeian understanding of the play due to the sanguine features of the protagonist. In this case, the characters would be divided into two groups consisting of, firstly, the Macbeth marriage—perhaps associated to the Weird Sisters—and, secondly, all other dramatis personae. This taking would make difficult to acknowledge the Thane of Cawdor as a creature of human capacities relatable to, e.g., the Porter, contrary to the facility of assuming that the disastrous new owner of the Rochester stable might parallel the figures partaking in the primary plot of *Henry IV 1*, mirroring the prospect of a new king of England. Thus, as De Quincey commented on the human making its resurgence against the fiendish, many critics have made use of the principle of contrast to analyse and justify the radical

difference between the Murder and the Porter scenes. “The simpler vices of the Porter,” writes John Harcourt, “serve to establish an ethical distance between the failings of ordinary humanity and the monstrous evil now within the castle walls” (397). Nevertheless, contrary to this remark, I would argue that the Porter might aid the reader to elaborate on some traits of the personality of Macbeth, being not his antithetical character, meek inhabitant of merry England, but rather a cynical figure that will prophetically and decisively speak to the audience about the penalty of any crime, here encouraged by the knocks upon the door discussed by De Quincey:

... (*Knock.*) Knock, knock, knock! Who’s there, i’  
 th’ name of Beelzebub? Here’s a farmer that hanged  
 himself on th’ expectation of plenty. Come in time!  
 Have napkins enough about you; here you’ll sweat  
 for ‘t. (*Knock.*) Knock, knock! Who’s there, in th’  
 other devil’s name? Faith, here’s an equivocator  
 that could swear in both the scales against either  
 scale, who committed treason enough for God’s  
 sake yet could not equivocate to heaven. O, come in,  
 equivocator. (*Knock.*) Knock, knock, knock! Who’s  
 there? Faith, here’s an English tailor come hither for  
 stealing out of a French hose. Come in, tailor. Here  
 you may roast your goose. (*Knock.*) Knock, knock!  
 Never at quiet. —What are you? — But this place is  
 too cold for hell. I’ll devil-porter it no further. I had  
 thought to have let in some of all professions that go  
 the primrose way to th’ everlasting bonfire. (*Knock.*) (Shakespeare, *Mac.* 2.3.1-19)

From these lines the reader assumes that for the Porter, the suicidal, the equivocator, and the thief will virtually end up in the same path as the murderer—in “the primrose way to the everlasting bonfire” (2.3.19). Thus, this passage establishes Macbeth as a common man cynically enhanced by the impression caused by the Porter’s comic relief. In *Macbeth*, the sudden subplot not only breaks the “courtly” sublimity typical of the early Jacobean drama, but also allows the audience to identify Macbeth with the waking hungover character as well as with itself. As Tromly writes, considering the Porter’s opinion that all deeds deserve the same punishment, “the ultimate function of the scene is to humanize the murderer by forcing us to recognize him in the ‘ordinary’ Porter and perhaps in ourselves as well” (151), a cognizance that would turn the traditional Coleridgean understanding of the



scene—"the disgusting passage of the porter" (Coleridge, "Macbeth" 154)—into a revealing brief plot.

To my mind, it is certainly interesting to comment on Coleridge's opinion on these scenes, for, in one of his lectures on Shakespeare, "Thursday, 17 December 1818," he discusses in depth what I would consider another instance of Shakespeare's renewal of action after a bold moment: the preposterously comical encounter of Caliban, Trinculo and Stephano in *The Tempest*—another scene masterfully led by drunkenness. Firstly, Coleridge elaborates on act 2, scene 1 of the same play, in which the frustrated assassination of Alonzo and Gonzalo by Antonio and Sebastian takes place. He states that it is a moment of intense poetical strength, comparing it with the plotting of the murder of Duncan, classifying it as

an exact counterpart of the scene between Macbeth and his lady, only pitched in a lower key throughout, as designed to be frustrated and concealed, and exhibiting the same profound management in the manner of familiarizing a mind, not immediately recipient, to the suggestion of guilt, by associating the proposed crime with something ludicrous or out of place; something not habitually a matter of reverence. (Coleridge, "The Tempest" 139)

Then, to conclude his commentary on this Romance, he acknowledges something of great interest for our analysis. Coleridge encourages the reader to "observe how the effect of this scene is heightened by contrast with another counterpart of it in low life, that between the conspirators Stephano, Caliban, and Trinculo in the second scene of the third act, in which there are the same essential characteristics" ("The Tempest" 139). Hence, the power of the former scene increases as the following arrives, mirroring it. The Romantic critic relates the absurd plotting of these minor characters against Prospero to the hampered scheme of the preceding scene, that, if carried out, would have led to a decisive undertaking for the political regimes of Naples and Milan. Traditionally, the minor speakers Stephen and Trinculo—like the Carriers and the Porter—have been described by critics such as Berger as characters "neither individuated nor stabilized by their roles in the drama" (85). Certainly, as protagonists of an unforeseen subplot, they necessarily have to bear some of the traits belonging to the central characters in order to fit within the width of the play. Nevertheless, these figures have been designed under the influence of Shakespeare's "low-life" comedy and, as a unique and successful experiment within the wide spectrum of this author, they deserve further recognition. Coleridge, yet again, granted it, describing this scene in *The Tempest* and its secondary characters as contrasting followers to the previous ones, successful and "intensely individualized; the results of meditation, of which observation supplied the drapery and the colours necessary to combine them with each other" (140).

3. THE SHAKESPEREAN CANON IN VICTORIAN FICTION: DICKENS' *OLIVER TWIST*

It can be argued that this dramatic technique—the use of a relieving minor scene after an intense poetic moment—transcended Shakespearian plays and was used by renowned modern writers of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in order to achieve a sublimity in their narrative as proposed by De Quincey. In the following pages, by analysing a certain sequence of scenes from *Oliver Twist*, it will be appreciated how “the re-establishment of the goings-on of the world in which we live” (De Quincey 84) has been a device employed by Dickens as subtly as by Shakespeare, not only for the sake of contrast, but also to create a parallelism between the characters present in their correlative situations. Yet, there is a noticeable shared characteristic in the commented “comic” Shakespearian scenes that needs to be addressed before bringing into discussion the more modern passages selected. As A. Lynne Magnusson declares, in *The Tempest* “the comic material occasionally gives the impression of improvisation,” as if “the methods of the commedia dell’arte were in Shakespeare’s mind when he devised the drunken pranks of Stephano, Trinculo, and Caliban” (52). The fact that the renovative scenes in each Shakespearian play feel almost as if they were momentarily improvised—in contrast to the carefully woven plotting of Hotspur’s revolution, Duncan’s murder, and Antonio’s attempt of assassination—is caused, as Tromly argues while discussing the Porter, by a disorientation in which the senses are pestered, through which imagination takes reason prisoner (154).

This is precisely what can be found in chapter XLVII of *Oliver Twist*, “Fatal Consequences,” which involves the moment when Bill Sikes, the oldest and leader of Fagin’s gang, discovers that his lover Nancy has betrayed him, denouncing him to the authorities. After Sikes’s fit of rage, the reader encounters what could be regarded as one of the most explicit episodes of Victorian literature, the scene in which this outcast assassinates the girl in cold blood, a passage defined by Sue Zemka as “the climax of the plot” (29):

She staggered and fell: nearly blinded with the blood that rained down from a deep gash in her forehead; but raising herself, with difficulty, on her knees, drew from her bosom a white handkerchief—Rose Maylie’s own—and holding it up, in her folded hands, as high towards Heaven as her feeble strength would allow, breathed one prayer for mercy to her Maker.

It was a ghastly figure to look upon. The murderer staggering backward to the wall, and shutting out the sight with his hand, seized a heavy club and struck her down. (Dickens 423)

Compared to the slowly woven plotting of Shakespeare’s central scenes such as the murder of King Duncan, Sikes’s undertaking is rather unanticipated and lacks the solemnity of the previously analysed conspiracies. However, in this suddenness the reader shall also find Shakespeare, a drastically different one—one who writes relying on the immediate cruelty of loss as an emotion. As John Jordan spells out, stating an opinion which I second, “the scenes between Sikes and Nancy in the final one-quarter of the novel represent, I believe, Dickens’ attempt to retell the story of

*Othello*, with Bill Sikes in the role of the murderer, Nancy as Desdemona, and Fagin as the cunning, manipulative Iago who drives Sikes to commit the deed" (11). Moreover, Dickens not only recreates the narrative of this awful situation and its various characters, but at points even takes line for line the last interaction between Othello and Desdemona: "‘Let it be,’ said Sikes, thrusting his hand before her. ‘There’s enough light for wot I’ve got to do.’ ... ‘Bill,’ said the girl, in the low voice of alarm, ‘why do you look like that at me!’" (Dickens 423).

Nonetheless, Dickens does not seem content with turning *Othello*'s climax into a shockingly sudden subplot for this early novel of his, and proceeds to develop a subsequent scene based on a radical variance, presenting a situation of such calmness that the change surely feels eery, almost psychotic. The sequence composed of the murder scene and the following one present in chapter XLVIII, "The Flight of Sikes," "breaks the linearity of the plot" (Zemka 31) and "occupies a transitional zone in the aesthetic history of the momentary" (33). The environment which the new episode presents is pastoral and tender, creating a contrast with the startling crime and achieving a feeling of renovation that causes the mind of the reader not only to be liberated from the former dense atmosphere, but also to understand and overcome "the awful parenthesis that had suspended" (De Quincey 84) the distressing situation. In a similar way to the relieving secondary scenes of Shakespeare, the flight of Sikes to the countryside unfolds as if nothing decisive had happened, the readership finding itself face to face with the ongoings of an absolute realistic everyday life:

It was nine o'clock at night, when the man, quite tired out, and the dog, limping and lame from the unaccustomed exercise, turned down the hill by the church of the quiet village, and plodding along the little street, crept into a small public-house, whose scanty light had guided them to the spot. There was a fire in the tap-room, and some country-labourers were drinking before it. ...

The conversation of the men assembled here, turned upon the neighbouring land, and farmers; and when those topics were exhausted, upon the age of some old man who had been buried on the previous Sunday; the young men present considering him very old, and the old men present declaring him to have been quite young—not older, one white-haired grandfather said, than he was—with ten or fifteen year of life in him at least—if he had taken care; if he had taken care. (Dickens 425)

The country scene gives voice, through a rather intrusive narrator, to the clients of the tavern: "if he had taken care" (Dickens 425) allows the narrative to open momentarily, including each of the citizens of the isolated village, engorging itself, and producing the same effect as the Carriers' comments about the previous owner of the inn where they spent the night in *Henry IV 1*—"Poor fellow never joyed since the price of oats rose, it was the death of him" (Shakespeare, 1H4 2.1.11-12). The fact that Dickens gives in this passage a situation and a life, not only to the protagonists of the primary plot but also to a casual villager puts the reader in a sympathetic situation. Thus, like in Shakespeare, through this frame one is led to

the realization that in the novel each individual belonging to the working classes may have troubles, feelings, and intentions as deep and valid as that of the protagonists, proving that, as Coleridge considered it, a scene may be “heightened by contrast with another counterpart of it in low life” (“The Tempest” 139).

#### 4. SHAKESPEARE’S SHIFTING VOICES IN JAMES JOYCE’S *ULYSSES*

Moving from Victorian literature to Modernist fiction, I would like to comment on how one of the greatest experimental writers of the twentieth century implemented this narrative approach in his fragmented masterpiece. With a similar procedure to that of T. S. Eliot, as it will be commented on shortly, James Joyce reached, by means of the clash of different narrative voices in *Ulysses*, a feeling of renovation produced by a sudden plot which collides with the one that comes right before it. Furthermore, I would say that it is not too daring to assert that this modernist narrative choice may have been taken directly from Shakespeare, since both Joyce and Eliot acknowledged to have made use of what the latter referred to as the “mythical method.” This idea, spelt out by the American poet in “Ulysses, Order and Myth” is described by Nohrnberg as

an author’s practice of taking an ancient or received myth, legend, traditional, archetypal or historical story – from the point of view of literary realism a tall tale or fantastic legend – as the skeleton or organizing principle or the scaffold or template or infrastructure or pentimento for a narrative that is both ostensibly self-standing and, in some sense, “modern,” or more contemporary, and yet can be mapped onto a kind archaeological other original. (21)

In this essay, Eliot states while discussing *Ulysses* that “if it is not a novel, that is simply because the novel is a form which will no longer serve; it is because the novel, instead of being a form, was simply the expression of an age which had not sufficiently lost all form to feel the need of something stricter” (“Order and Myth” 177). The reinventing of the novel form was what Eliot most valued considering Joyce’s works, applying the mythical method himself to his poetry and particularly to *The Waste Land*. These authors were engaged in making use of the solid beams of tradition to sustain the literature of their age, which from their point of view was formless: they employed the “ancient stay”—the topics and forms of Western and Eastern literatures up to the modernist era, and particularly Shakespeare—against their contemporary “present chaos” (Nohrnberg 21). Nonetheless, as will be commented in the following section, there are paramount differences in the manner in which both authors carried out the sudden Shakespearian shift from the “royal” to the “daily,” from the poetic to the common.

Discussing the novelist, there are a pair of sections in *Ulysses* that present a drastic change of situations which serves to showcase how the discussed Shakespearian technique is applied in the fiction of the early twentieth century. As it can be noted, there is a great contrast to be noticed between Joyce’s prose and Dickens’ previously commented third-person realist writing. Principally, it has to be stated that in the

fragments of the modernist novel the narrative is definitely bound by its characters' voices. Being presented in a free discourse that does not only describe—as the traditional Victorian writing does—the situations, ambitions and fears of the characters through an external eye, Stephen Dedalus and Leopold Bloom expose themselves most nakedly to the reader, their consciousnesses working as the narrator. Their respective motivations and capacities become thus easily noticeable, as is the case of Dedalus in “Proteus,” the shifting episode, the third one in the novel and the last belonging to the “Telemachia.” “Proteus” is written as a stream of consciousness almost in its entirety, giving to the reader the final glimpse that leads to a definite understanding of Stephen's personality. The prose is dense, resembling Dedalus's melancholic mind, and the sublimity of his discourse certainly belongs to one of the climaxes of the novel, as he is, Patricia A. Rimo comments, “engaged in the characteristic activity of abstraction” (296):

Ineluctable modality of the visible: at least that if no more, thought through my eyes. Signatures of all things I am here to read, seaspawn and seawrack, the nearing tide, that rusty boot. Snotgreen, bluesilver, rust: coloured signs. Limits of the diaphane. But he adds: in bodies. Then he was aware of them bodies before of them coloured. How? By knocking his sconce against them, sure. Go easy. Bald he was and a millionaire, maestro di color che sanno. Limit of the diaphane in. Why in? Diaphane, adiaaphane. If you can put your five fingers through it it is a gate, if not a door. Shut your eyes and see. Stephen closed his eyes to hear his boots crush crackling wrack and shells. You are walking through it howsomever. I am, a stride at a time. A very short space of time through very short times of space. (Joyce 37)

The personality of the younger protagonist is hence presented as intricate and delicate. In fact, the pre-speech discourse he has with himself while walking along Sandymount Strand proves that “despite any answers the philosophers might provide, Stephen, for his part, prefers intellect to matter, or thought to things” (Rimo 37). Moreover, it could be argued that his inner talk works here as a well-crafted main plot that not only was fully developed in the first two episodes, arriving here to its zenith, but also in the ambitious work that precedes this modernist masterpiece, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. In the shorter novel, as well as in the episodes of *Ulysses* directed by Dedalus, “he is apt to choose the speculative over the actual, for the material world discomfits him” (Rimo 37). Hence, Stephen's narrative is tailored slowly, working as a main plot burdened with references to his inner guilt, which is illustrated by Shakespeare's lines and particularly by Macbeth's and Lady Macbeth's traditional symbolism of sin—“Conscience. Yet here's a spot” (Joyce 16). The seriousness of Dedalus's plot is heightened by the tradition of Shakespeare, finding its absolute contrast as the episode finishes and “Calypso” presents itself with one of the most simple and domestic scenes of the novel, the breakfast of Leopold Bloom. The next fragment arrives after the last words of Stephen's elaborated stream of consciousness—“Moving through the air high spars of a threemaster, her sails brailed up on the crosstrees, homing, upstream, silently moving, a silent ship” (Joyce 50)—and in the same manner as in Shakespeare and Dickens this homely sequence illuminates the narrative, dissipating the clouds:

Mr Leopold Bloom ate with relish the inner organs of beasts and fowls. He liked thick giblet soup, nutty gizzards, a stuffed roast heart, liverslices fried with crustcrumbs, fried hencods' roes. Most of all he liked grilled mutton kidneys which gave to his palate a fine tang of faintly scented urine. Kidneys were in his mind as he moved about the kitchen softly, righting her breakfast things on the humpy tray. Gelid light and air were in the kitchen but out of doors gentle summer morning everywhere. Made him feel a bit peckish. (Joyce 53)

The passage, in contrast to Stephen's narrative, is clearer and much humbler. Not only the scenery and the main interests of the narrator are fairly different from those of the preceding episode, but the narrative technique changes also, which provides an even greater contrast to the sequence. In "Calypso," Joyce casually shifts from stream of consciousness to free indirect discourse (FID), as this third-person narrative is that employed in the previously selected fragment presenting Bloom. FID allows the narrator to embody, or at points even mimic, the personality of the figures it regards, thus giving an indirect though detailed overview of a particular character. Daniel P. Gunn writes, while discussing Jane Austen's free indirect discourse in *Emma*, that the aesthetic pleasure of this passage comes from "subtle modulations among narrative registers, as the prose moves in and out of a complex array of voices, including that of the narrator" (35). Consequently, the FID technique should be understood "not as a representation of autonomous figural discourse but as a kind of narratorial 'mimicry', analogous to the flexible imitations of others' discourse we all practice in informal speech and expository prose" (Gunn 236). Thus, Joyce gives a straightforward understanding of Leopold Bloom's personality and preoccupations despite the fact that there is no use of stream of consciousness in the opening of the episode. The reader notices, due to the catalogue of organs that compose Bloom's breakfast and the feeling generated by the relish with which he enjoys them, that the sensorial pleasures of the body are what appeal to him most, contrary to Stephen's metaphysical obsessions.

The contrast produced by the change of narrative techniques in *Ulysses*, along with the radical shift of topics, prompts a sensation similar to the one caused by the immediate subplots of Shakespeare's plays. The figures of the two protagonists are parallel, and the personal and intellectual differences of the two Dubliners are perceived as the sudden introduction of Bloom interrupts the settled narrative to present a character devoted to base material passions, in the same manner in which Trinculo and Stephano's comic subplot in *The Tempest* shows sudden signs of gluttony and lust—"He shall taste from my bottle" (Shakespeare, *Temp.* 2.2.76). Moreover, the domesticity of the second scene bestows the character with profound humanity, and provides the reader with a sympathetic understanding of Bloom as a familiar antihero, an average man whose implications, in the words of Morton Levitt "are indeed for all mankind" (134). As the Porter's monologue in *Macbeth* and the Carriers' conversation in *Henry IV* endow the plays with a warm, though rough human touch, the breakfast of Bloom suddenly brings to the novel a homely feeling after the over-intellectualized discourse of Stephen Dedalus. As in Dickens, the momentary subplot, depicting a scene of non-heroic human life, disentangles the overwhelming scenario that preceded it.

5. A METALITERARY DEPICTION OF SHAKESPEARE'S MIMESIS IN T. S. ELIOT'S  
*THE WASTE LAND*

Something not widely discussed by critics needs to be acknowledged to pursue the analysis of the use of Shakespeare in T. S. Eliot's masterpiece: *The Waste Land* was drastically influenced by Joyce's techniques. Up to the poem's publication in 1922, T. S. Eliot had drunk from Joyce's chapters, which were published in *The Little Review* from March 1918 to December 1920 (Geert Lernout 8). The two works share verbal parallels, as well as many of their topics. This can be easily concluded if one compares, for instance, passages from episodes like Joyce's "Hades"—"Your heart perhaps but what price the fellow in the six feet by two with his toes to the daisies? ... The Botanic Gardens are just over there. It's the blood sinking in the earth gives new life (Joyce 102, 104), "An obese grey rat toddled along the side of the crypt, moving the pebbles" (Joyce 110)—to certain lines from Eliot's "The Burial of the Dead" and "The Fire Sermon"—"That corpse you planted last year in your garden, / Has it began to sprout? Will it bloom this year?" (Eliot, *TWL* lines 71-72), "A rat crept softly through the vegetation / Dragging its slimy belly on the bank" (Eliot, *TWL* lines 187-188). Nevertheless, of all the traceable similitudes that can be found in the two works, what is of most interest for this analysis is the poet's use of Joyce's mythical method. Contrary to Joyce, who was influenced by literary tradition in the sense that he implemented recurrent topics and motifs to frame his narrative and guide his characters—as he used Lady Macbeth's blood spots to define Dedalus's guilt—Eliot made use of his sources as an order that was to be readjusted. He explains this method in "Tradition and the Individual Talent" as:

the existing order is complete before the new work arrives; for order to persist after the supervention of novelty, the whole existing order must be, if ever so slightly, altered; and so the relations, proportions, values of each work of art toward the whole are readjusted; and this is conformity between the old and the new. (Eliot, "Tradition" 23)

Considering this view, the second section of *The Waste Land*, "A Game of Chess," might be the perfect instance for us to spell out T. S. Eliot's use of Shakespeare as a primary source in order to "rearrange" tradition and achieve a new poetic scenario based on mimesis, since, apart from being filled with Shakespearian motifs, the key of the passage will be proved to be Thomas de Quincey's theory on the strength of the knocking on the door. Firstly, the luxurious opening of "A Game of Chess" shall ring a bell to Shakespeare's readers:

The Chair she sat in, like a burnished throne,  
Glowed on the marble, where the glass  
Held up by standards wrought with fruited vines  
From which a golden Cupidon peeped out  
(Another hid his eyes behind his wing)  
Doubled the flames of sevenbranched candelabra

Reflecting light upon the table as  
The glitter of her jewels rose to meet it,  
From satin cases poured in rich profusion; (Eliot, *TWL* lines 77-85)

Here is to be found, as Eliot points out in the notes to the poem, a direct reference to *Antony and Cleopatra*. Enobarbus's well-trodden description of the Queen the day she and Antony met—"The barge she sat in, like a burnished throne / Burned on the water. The poop was beaten gold ..." (Shakespeare, *Ant.* 2.2.23-24)—has been taken by Eliot to fit the purposes of his poem. Nevertheless, the verse parallels are not the only sign that brings the reader back to the doomed Alexandrian couple. As the environment is developed and the opulence of the scenery engorged, adorned by a sense-disturbing synaesthesia, an aristocratic pair is introduced. Two lovers are subdued to a delicate relationship of power, a modernist Cleopatra ruling over the psyche of a mentally devastated Antony, controlling his physical and mental movements—they are not playing the same colour and she has him in check:

'My nerves are bad tonight. Yes, bad. Stay with me.  
Speak to me. Why do you never speak. Speak.  
What are you thinking of? What thinking? What?  
I never know what you are thinking. Think.'  
I think we are in rats' alley  
Where the dead men lost their bones.

'What is that noise?'

The wind under the door.

'What is that noise now? What is the wind doing?'

Nothing again nothing.

'Do

'You know nothing? Do you see nothing? Do you remember

'Nothing?'

I remember

Those are pearls that were his eyes.

'Are you alive, or not? Is there nothing in your head?' (Eliot, *TWL* lines 111-126)

This dialogue, along with the previous description of the room, present what I would regard as the central motif of "A Game of Chess:" sterility and its psychological consequences in opulence as well as in frugality. As John McCombe writes of Eliot's "Cleopatra," she is "a problem insofar as she is artificial, even



inanimate, and she represents the antithesis of the life and rebirth that are so central to Eliot's poetics" (24). Following this opinion, I would say that the excess and luxury of the scenario forgo the presence of fertility, sympathy and any fulfilling sensorial experience. The candelabra producing a disturbing game of lights and reflections as well as the coloured glasses and marbled finery erase the woman from the attention of the reader, given that "the same profusion of jewels and fragrances which should ostensibly stir the senses of those who gaze upon her instead 'drowns' those same senses" (McCombe 31). The epic catalogue describing the sumptuous but dull objects that crowd the room, Carolyn Holbert says, "shows us a world where sexual relations have lost their moral or spiritual relevance and have also lost their connection with fertility, where sex is disconnected from either love or children" (6). Then, as Holbert writes, the dialogue previously quoted makes clear that the lack of sensitiveness and fertility in this environment "is not just a result of spiritual drought but also of deliberately destructive act" (6).

One of the theories that has been argued to explain why the "successful" like this couple, as understood by their environment, fall into a state of apathy and are dragged into a neurotic position was described by the psychology of the early twentieth century some years before T. S. Eliot published *The Waste Land*. In 1916 Sigmund Freud wrote "On Those Wrecked by Success,"<sup>1</sup> an article partly focused on the dissatisfaction of the Macbeth marriage, in which he proposed that "people occasionally fall ill precisely when a deeply-rooted and long-cherished wish has come to fulfilment" (316). In the cases Freud proposes, an "illness followed close upon the fulfilment of a wish and put an end to all enjoyment of it" (317), like languor in the poem's marriage. Certainly, it can be argued that the two characters that open "A Game of Chess" are doomed by the coldness of their opulence and power, which reflects their lack of action and consequent sterile lives. Yet again, I would say that this links *The Waste Land* to Shakespeare's canon, adding that Eliot's adaptation of Enobarbus's lines, within the context of poem, allows the lovers to distance themselves from Antony and Cleopatra—the figures are "rearranged," detached from the particular, so that they can take any form the psyche of the reader may provoke. Macbeth and Lady Macbeth would perfectly fit into Eliot's personae, even Ferdinand and Miranda, whose romance-like situation trembles and is challenged as they start discussing affairs related to politics and warfare in the mildest of tones while playing a game of chess:

[Here PROSPERO discovers FERDINAND and MIRANDA playing at chess]

MIRANDA: Sweet lord, you play me false.

FERDINAND: No, my dear'st love, I would not for the world.

MIRANDA: Yes, for a score of kingdoms you should wrangle,  
And I would call it, fair play. (Shakespeare, *Temp.* 5.1.72-74)

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<sup>1</sup> This is the second section of "Einige Charaktertypen Aus Der Psychoanalytischen Arbeit." (1916) *Imago*, 4 (6), 317-336, titled "Die am Erfolge scheitern".

Towards the end of Eliot's scene, the reader has entered a state of suspense of the kind that can be found in King Duncan's assassination, Hotspur's planning, and the plotting of the murder of Prospero, encouraged by constant direct references to Renaissance drama which brings the Shakespearian canon to mind. Finally, Eliot makes the characters realise that there is a need for renewal both in their lives and the main narrative of *The Waste Land*. As active gears of the poem, conscious of the part their plane is playing in it, they feel that "in order that a new world may step in, this world must for a time disappear" (De Quincey 84)—they pledge for a change of atmosphere, hoping for the suspension, repetition, and neurosis to cease:

"What shall I do now? What shall I do?"

"I shall rush out as I am, and walk the street

"With my hair down, so. What shall we do tomorrow?"

"What shall we ever do?"

The hot water at ten.

And if it rains, a closed car at four.

And we shall play a game of chess,

Pressing lidless eyes and waiting for a knock upon the door. (Eliot, *TWL* lines 131-138)

From my point of view, the fact that this last line is presented after a long series of motifs that explicitly connect the text with Shakespeare turns it into an intentional direct reference both to *Macbeth* and Thomas de Quincey. After this passage a lowly parallel plot unfolds, the scene moving from an aristocratic environment to a daily conversation taking place in a pub at closing time. Even though there is no possibility of change for the modernist Shakespearian couple, there is for the reader as well as for the poem as a whole, as the lines are liberated from a dense atmosphere. The following picture is composed by Eliot to produce a feeling of radical contrast, the scene including many of the traits designed by Shakespeare commented above. Just like in *Henry IV*, the new characters represent "the mimic world of the underplot" (Bowers 53), constituting "a form of parody of the main plot" (53) and causing, as Coleridge put it regarding *The Tempest*, the previous scene to be "heightened by contrast with another counterpart of it in low life" (139). In addition, like in all of the above commented plays, the less heavy scene occurs under the effects of a sudden alcoholic inebriation, which works as an earthly and modest parallel to the first section's "strange synthetic perfumes" (Eliot 87) that "drowned the sense in odours" (89). Nevertheless, what I would consider the feature that conclusively breaks the lingering abeyance is the shift of narrators. In a similar way to Joyce's employment of direct and indirect discourse, Eliot turns the leading poetic voice from an omniscient narrator to an unnamed character participating in the conversation which leads the scene, its first words truly working like a knock upon the door which erases the previous suspension from the reader's mind in a flush:

When Lil's husband got demobbed, I said—

I didn't mince my words, I said to her myself,

HURRY UP PLEASE ITS TIME

Now Albert's coming back, make yourself a bit smart. (Eliot, *TWZ* lines 139-142)

In this reported narrative, Lil and the narrator discuss sideways the former's relationship with her husband. The talk is constantly interrupted by the voice of the owner asking them to leave the bar, with a sentence that has many connotations within poem's context—HURRY UP PLEASE ITS TIME (Eliot 41)—and which I would say that works as a constant “knocking” renewing action. Regarding the conversation topic between Lil and her company, it is what links this section to the first, despite all elements producing contrast. Like in the aristocratic previous part, sterility and a pitiful marriage frame the plot of these lines. Albert, Lil's husband, is returning from the First World War, and the narrator instigates his wife to become “smart” (Eliot 142) for him to “enjoy” her:

He'll want to know what you done with that money he gave you

To get yourself some teeth. He did, I was there.

You have them all out, Lil, and get a nice set,

He said, I swear, I can't bear to look at you. (Eliot, *TWZ* lines 143-146)

If in the previous section sterility was represented by a dull opulence, in this one, on the contrary, it unfolds as poverty and physical incapacity. In Christina Hauck's words, “Lil is a type, often found in the discourse about reproductive control, of what I call the abject mother, the usually working-class woman whose inability to control her own fertility was inscribed on her pain-wracked, weakened body” (242). Soon, it is revealed that Lil has taken abortive pills which have pitifully degraded her, not only regarding her looks, but also psychologically:

You ought to be ashamed, I said, to look so antique.

(And her only thirty-one.)

I can't help it, she said, pulling a long face,

It's them pills I took, to bring it off, she said.

(She's had five already, and nearly died of young George.)

The chemist said it would be all right, but I've never been the same.

You are a proper fool, I said.

Well, if Albert won't leave you alone, there it is, I said,

What you get married for if you don't want children? (Eliot, *TWZ* lines 156-164)

With “A Game of Chess” Eliot crafted an ideal piece concerning the use of the myth and tradition, following Joyce. While in the introductory part he rearranged motifs recurrent in Shakespeare, in the second he adapted that first scene to a usual situation of his era, and any era. If in the former section the characters’ apathy was the result of having everything—of fulfilment, as Freud put it around the time of the *The Waste Land*’s composition—in Lil’s situation it is produced by the impotence of penury. Like the Renaissance playwright in *Henry IV 1* and Dickens in *Oliver Twist*, Eliot created a world that shared the characteristics of the main plot, only in a working-class environment. Nonetheless, going even further than his Victorian predecessor, he employed De Quincey’s critical ideas on Shakespeare as a paramount subject to make the pulses of life beginning to beat again. By means of the knock upon the door which leads to Lil’s situation Eliot produced a successful metaliterary depiction of Shakespeare’s mimesis of contrast.

## 6. CONCLUSIONS

As it has been argued, these brief subplots presented through several centuries should not be understood as isolated fragments of a lower intention, nor as momentary instances that lean on undeveloped characters. In my view, they need to be considered analogies of the primary narrative, which prove to the reader that the protagonists’ situations can also belong to minor or modest figures in the same manner as Gloucester’s disgrace mirrors Lear’s, and Oberon and Titania parallel Theseus and Hippolyta—although presented with a much subtler and ephemeral approach than these major resemblances. While considering other works from the Shakespearian canon, it needs to be pointed out that the plays which have been discussed in this paper are not by any means the only ones in which the discrete mimesis of contrast is applied. I would suggest that if the topic was to be commented further, a sudden change taking place in *Cymbeline*, act 4, scene 5, could not be left out of consideration. The disparity between Jupiter’s appearance as a *deus ex machina* and the scene’s sway towards the world of the living as a “macabre discussion” (Phillip Collington 294) between Posthumus and his jailer is an instance that would ideally fit in a broader review of the field. While the former of the pair of scenes, Posthumus’s dream, is introduced by lines in fourteen beats in an attempt to resemble “epic poetry associated with national and dynastic heritage,” (Valerie Wayne 336), the latter unfolds in a dialogue that “shifts the tone closer to comedy due to the wry, earthly, yet quasi-philosophical jailer,” (343) a figure that truly resembles the Porter in *Macbeth*.

The speakers of Shakespeare’s sudden situations as well as the characters from the selected pieces of Victorian and Modernist literature—by no means to be considered mere choruses fit to support the main plot—could be understood, Berger writes discussing *Henry IV 1*, as “bearers of the meanings of others” (85). Considering the more recent writers, the case of Eliot as it has been presented in the final section of this study is particularly striking. The use of tradition is applied by this poet to produce an ideal instance that represents how English literature has

been rearranged, step by step, from the Renaissance to the twentieth century in a blending of criticism and poetry. Using his own theory on creative writing as presented in "Tradition and the Individual Talent" and "Ulysses, Order and Myth," he recovered motifs from Shakespeare and his critics, putting them together with topics recurrent in Modernism like sterility and abortion. A particular example of recreation in English literature's tradition has been proposed in this study, aiming to show how from a narrative choice that bears a clear poetic intention, novelists, poets, and critics intertwiningly developed a strong trail. Through the use of particular changes of action from epic to domestic, Shakespeare and his later followers did not only achieve the dramatic effect of creating a parallelism between protagonists and secondary characters in order to increase the dramatic value of the piece, as it was described by Coleridge, but also made the reader engage with the sublimity of the knocking on the door, as theorized by De Quincey, by breaking off the suspense after a decisive tragic moment when all "must pass self-withdrawn into a deep syncope and suspension of earthly passion" (85).

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## EXAMINING ADAPTATION PRACTICES IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEXTBOOKS: A CLOSER LOOK AT AUTHENTICITY

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*ABSTRACT.* Authentic texts in English Language Teaching (ELT) textbooks are highly valued for their ability to provide learners with exposure to real-world language. In Portuguese ELT textbooks, very often authentic texts are marked as "adapted", but few discussions have been raised about how they are adapted in ELT textbooks and what elements are considered during text adaptation. Given the central role textbooks play in language teaching and learning, examining textbook writers' adaptation practices can help teachers make informed choices about how to best use such materials. The goal of this paper is to examine the nature of text adaptations in Portuguese ELT textbooks and the extent to which authentic texts are modified. To accomplish this, two corpora have been manually compiled: one consisting of 37 adapted texts extracted from two Portuguese ELT textbooks, and the other comprising their unmodified, authentic counterparts. Each adapted text was compared to its corresponding original source using a predefined set of criteria. Findings reveal that adapted texts differ from the authentic source with respect to size, while changes at the level of language, such as modifications to vocabulary and syntax, are very rare.

*Keywords:* authentic texts, adaptation, ELT, materials development, textbooks.

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## EXAMEN DE LAS PRÁCTICAS DE ADAPTACIÓN EN LOS LIBROS DE TEXTO DE LENGUA INGLESA: UNA APROXIMACIÓN A LA AUTENTICIDAD

RESUMEN. Los textos auténticos en los libros de texto de inglés como lengua extranjera (ILE) son muy valorados por su capacidad de proporcionar a los alumnos una exposición al lenguaje del mundo real. En los libros de texto de ILE portugueses muy a menudo los textos auténticos se marcan como "adaptados", pero se han planteado pocos debates sobre cómo se adaptan y qué elementos se tienen en cuenta durante la adaptación del texto. Examinar las prácticas de adaptación es importante porque los libros de texto desempeñan un papel fundamental en la enseñanza y el aprendizaje de lenguas. Conocer las decisiones de los autores de libros de texto ayuda a los profesores a tomar decisiones informadas sobre la mejor manera de utilizar dichos materiales. El objetivo de este trabajo es examinar la naturaleza de las adaptaciones textuales en los libros de texto de ILE portugueses y hasta qué punto se modifican los textos auténticos. Para ello, se han compilado manualmente dos corpus: uno compuesto por 37 textos adaptados extraídos de dos libros de texto portugueses de ILE, y el otro compuesto por sus homólogos auténticos no modificados. Cada texto adaptado se comparó con su correspondiente fuente original utilizando un conjunto de criterios predefinidos. Los resultados revelan que los textos adaptados difieren de la fuente auténtica en cuanto al tamaño, presentan una simplificación lingüística mínima y, con bastante frecuencia, no se identifican con precisión la fuente y la autoría.

*Palabras clave:* textos auténticos, adaptación, ILE, desarrollo de materiales, libros de texto.

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

Textbooks continue to play a central role in English Language Teaching (ELT) classrooms worldwide, providing a structured and organised approach to language teaching and learning. Textbooks act as a guide for both teachers and students, as a teaching and learning resource, offering a structure that outlines lesson content and providing coherence to individual lessons and the overall course. In essence, the textbook serves as the ELT syllabus, which teachers and students are expected to follow (Richards).

One of the fundamental building blocks of textbooks is the teaching materials which are either selected or produced to align with the curriculum and meet the needs of both teachers and students. These materials consider the linguistic, cultural, and pedagogical aspects and include various types, such as written, audio, and visual resources. While some materials are specifically produced for textbook purposes (contrived materials), others are obtained from authentic sources, often aimed at advanced language learners.

Authentic texts hold particular significance in language learning due to their ability to expose learners to real-life language as it is authentically used in real-world

contexts (Gilmore, “Comparison”; “Authentic”). These texts include newspapers, literature, advertisements, interviews, poems, song lyrics, and other genres. Crucially, their source, authorship and date of publication assures teachers and learners of their genuineness (Mishan, *Designing*, “Reconceptualising”). While the inclusion of authentic materials in ELT textbooks provides real-world language exposure, it is equally important to ensure that these materials are suitable for learners. As noted by Masuhara: “Materials exist in the market regardless of their alignment with users’ social contexts, curriculum, needs, wants, or assessment.” (279-80). This is where the practice of text adaptation becomes essential. Adaptation involves modifying authentic texts to make them more appropriate for language learners while retaining their original meaning and purpose.

Recent interest in textbook research on materials development devotes much attention to authentic materials and their adaptation (Masuhara and Tomlinson; Norton and Buchanan). This includes investigating the advantages and challenges of incorporating authentic materials into language teaching (McDonough et al.) and the relevance of task authenticity in facilitating language acquisition (Bolster; Guariento and Morley; Mishan, “Reconceptualising”). Studies also recognise the importance of teacher adaptation in ensuring that materials meet the specific needs of their students (Garton and Graves; Masuhara and Tomlinson). Thus, understanding the adaptation practices of textbook writers is crucial for teachers to make informed choices about using these materials effectively (Darin; Gray; Bolster).

Whereas the extensive body of literature on adaptation focuses on textbook materials by teachers, the process of textbook production has received limited research attention despite its importance in the field of education. Although some studies have examined principles of materials development and the effects of textbooks on instructional methods (Atkinson, “Exploring”), there exists a noticeable gap in investigating the creative processes inherent in coursebook design and the challenges encountered by authors (Atkinson, “Problems”). Coursebooks, particularly in the context of ELT, play a critical role in organising classroom activities, with a significant portion of classroom content being shaped by them (Harwood, “Content”; “Coda”). The necessity for a more profound comprehension of the coursebook development process, the ideologies they promote, and their implications for scientific education and pedagogical strategies is apparent, underscoring the need for additional research in this domain to improve teaching efficacy and student learning outcomes.

This raises questions about how texts are adapted and about what elements are considered during text adaptation. Given the central role that textbooks have when it comes to language learning, becoming aware of textbook writers’ decisions helps teachers make informed choices about how to best use such materials.

However, despite the pressing relevance, very little research about the practices of textbook writers is known. As recently highlighted by Harwood (Coda 181-82):

materials production research, that is, research investigating ‘the processes by which textbooks are shaped, authored, and distributed, looking at textbook

writers' design processes, the affordances and constraints placed upon them by publishers, and the norms and values of the textbook industry as a whole' (Harwood, 2013a, p. 2) is surely the most neglected type of materials research.

In an earlier study, Clavel-Arroitia and Fuster-Márquez (126) highlight the substantial presence of authentic materials but the lack of transparency about the adaptation practices of ELT textbook writers:

Meanwhile, opportunities to access authentic language materials have risen exponentially thanks to the internet and the development of communication technologies. However, we are still in the dark as to how those genuine texts are actually handled by individual teachers.

This study aims to address the gap in research on adaptation practices within English language textbooks by identifying the alterations made during the adaptation process. By specifically examining textbooks designed locally for Portuguese schools, the study seeks to answer the question: To what extent do texts labelled as "adapted" differ from their authentic counterparts?

## 2. BACKGROUND

### 2.1. *Authenticity and language learning materials*

The concept of authenticity is central to our understanding of language learning and teaching. Authenticity, in the context of language, is a concept that reflects the use of genuine, unmodified materials that faithfully replicate the complexities of real-world language. Authentic materials are any materials not specifically prepared for pedagogical purposes or designed for language learners (Mishan, *Designing*). They can include a wide range of materials, such as literature, art, newspapers, magazines, websites, videos, music, television, advertisements, dialogues, radio broadcasts, and video clips (Buendgens-Kosten).

The importance of using authentic materials in ELT classrooms has been well-documented in the literature. Authentic materials not specifically prepared for pedagogical purposes add a real-life element to the learning experience and expose the learner to a more realistic language use, as it is employed in everyday life and genuine communication (Mishan and Timmis; Nuttal). Incorporating authentic materials can have a profound impact on the development of language skills as learners are exposed to an array of styles, registers, and genres, reflecting the complexity and richness of real-world communication (Bell and Gower).

The significance of authentic materials extends beyond language skills. They serve as windows into the social, historical, and cultural aspects of the language, enabling learners to explore the broader context in which the language is embedded. The use of authentic texts in the ELT classroom can also help to develop learners' intercultural competence, providing students with genuine cultural information and authentic views of the world (Kramsch and Sullivan). One of the

most compelling advantages of authentic materials is their motivational impact on learners (Mercer 2014). Authentic materials can be more motivating for learners than inauthentic ones, as they are often more relevant to their interests and needs (Mishan, *Designing*). When learners are able to successfully understand and use authentic materials, it can help to boost their confidence and motivation to continue learning (Gray). While authentic materials provide valuable language input, their suitability for language learners varies, making materials adaptation a common necessity in ELT.

Authentic materials, while rich in genuine language use, can often be complex, containing linguistic and cultural elements that challenge learners. This complexity may hinder comprehension and slow down the language learning process. Adaptation serves a fundamental role in ELT materials, with its primary purposes being to enhance readability, facilitate comprehension, make materials more learner-oriented, and improve language intake. These adaptations extend to various types of educational materials, including texts, exercises, tasks, and multimedia resources, ensuring their suitability for the intended audience (Masuhara and Tomlinson).

Adaptation can also ensure that content is culturally relevant and sensitive to the learners' backgrounds. Teachers can make cultural adaptations by replacing examples and anecdotes with those more familiar to the students, creating a more inclusive learning experience. Fundamentally, the process of adaptation acknowledges that not all materials are automatically suitable for language learning and that some degree of modification may be necessary. The centrality of adaptation is reflected in the vast literature on materials development which discusses the benefits and challenges of adaptation and provides guidance of principles and procedures for adaptation (Masuhara).

Within this context, text adaptation emerges as a key component of this larger process (Garton and Graves). Text adaptation serves as a vital component in ELT materials. It aims to align authentic texts with the needs of language learners while at the same preserving the authenticity (Tomlinson; Luís, "adaptação"). It involves the process of modifying authentic texts to render them more learner-friendly while retaining their fundamental meaning and purpose (McDonough et al.). In essence, the overarching objective is to enable learners to engage with authentic texts at their respective language proficiency levels while still exposing them to real language usage. There are two traditional types of text adaptation, namely linguistic simplification and linguistic elaboration (Tomlinson), each serving distinct purposes in enhancing learners' access to authentic texts (Masuhara; Bolster).

One prevalent model of text adaptation centres on linguistic simplification, which aims to minimise the disparity between the language of authentic texts and the linguistic competence of learners (Widdowson). Within this context, Hirvela notes that "(s)implification, then, is the result of a carefully constructed attempt to rearrange discourse so as to match the linguistic needs and abilities of learners at a specific point in their language development." (135).

In addition, simplification can be threefold (McDonough et al.). At the level of sentence-structure, adaptation involves reducing sentence length or rephrasing complex sentences into simpler ones. At the lexical content level, adaptation aims to control the introduction of new vocabulary items by referring to what students have already learned. In addition, there is also adaptation of grammatical structures, which involves simplifying challenging grammatical content, such as shifting from passives to actives or from reported speech to direct speech. All three domains of adaptation should enhance text comprehension without compromising the original content (Gilmore, “Authentic”).

An alternative method of text adaptation is known as linguistic elaboration (Long and Ross). This method involves linguistically adapting the language without eliminating unfamiliar lexical items, altering the naturalness of linguistic forms, or diminishing the original content of the text. Hence, rather than opting for linguistic simplification, they advocate for “elaboration” of the language. The process of linguistic elaboration entails augmenting the text’s redundancy by utilising diverse linguistic resources, such as repetition, paraphrasing, synonyms, segmentation, and repetition (Long). Likewise, it can involve “adding to the original text rather than removing or replacing existing content” (Nation 59), by providing additional linguistic information through paraphrasing, redundancy, synonyms, heteronyms, or definitions of low-frequency words. In the case of implicit information or cultural references, content elaboration may involve adding footnotes, glossaries, or supplementary explanations within the text (Mishan, *Designing*; “Global”; Rathert and Cabaroğlu; Yano et al.).

Having surveyed some of the ways in which teachers can make authentic texts more accessible and pedagogically suitable, the following section shifts focus to the main topic of this paper, namely specific strategies employed by textbook writers in adapting texts during the textbook production process.

## 2.2. *Text adaptation in textbooks*

As previously mentioned, authentic texts in Portuguese ELT textbooks are often identified as “adapted”, which literally means that they are different from the source. It is a widespread and accepted practice that textbook writers adjust authentic texts and materials before they reach the hands of teachers and students. The labelling of these texts as “adapted” also implies that they are pedagogically suitable. In fact, an online survey conducted during our research revealed that Portuguese ELT teachers interpret “adapted” as meaning that texts have been adjusted to better meet the language needs of students. As one teacher put it: “Textos adaptados são textos com uma linguagem mais simples” (Adapted texts are texts with a simpler language). However, as mentioned earlier, the precise nature and scope of these adaptations are typically not detailed in textbooks, nor is the rationale behind these changes made clear (Clavel-Arroitia and Fuster-Márquez).

This knowledge gap is particularly intriguing, considering the central role that materials play in the teaching and learning process (Harwood, “Content”; Tomlinson and Masuhara). Without a clear understanding of how authentic texts have been handled in textbooks, teachers who generally rely on these textbooks lack crucial information about the quality and adequacy of what they perceive as carefully curated teaching materials.

Clavel-Aroitia and Fuster-Márquez stand out as some of the few researchers who have openly examined the quality of text adaptation. Their study primarily focuses on the authenticity of authentic texts in international ELT textbooks and on the degree to which authentic texts retain their authenticity. They reveal that a significant proportion of texts identified as authentic exhibited varying degrees of changes, such as linguistic simplifications, cultural alterations, and content modifications, most of which lacked clear pedagogical purpose. These findings contribute to the small body of literature trying to understand the nature and purpose of adaptations in textbooks. Shedding light on the ambiguity surrounding “adapted” texts, encourages greater transparency about the extent and purpose of adaptations so that teachers can make informed choices about the materials they use.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1. *Materials*

In the first stage of our study, we assembled two distinct datasets: one containing the adapted texts (Corpus 1) and the other comprising their authentic counterparts (Corpus 2).

For Corpus 1, the selection process began with ensuring that each text had an identifiable and accessible original source. This was essential for our study, as it allowed us to examine how the adapted texts differed from their authentic counterparts. Textbooks often include contrived texts, so identifying authentic sources was crucial. We ensured that each adapted text could be paired with its authentic counterpart in Corpus 2. Achieving this involved a meticulous manual online search, including searching for the title or parts of the text if the source was not explicitly given or was inaccurately provided. Texts for which we could not find the source were excluded from the corpus.

With respect to thematic consistency, only texts related to the specified thematic units, “Multiculturalism” and “Consumerism,” were included to maintain consistency in subject matter.

Regarding the appropriate proficiency level, the texts were selected from textbooks designed for 11<sup>th</sup> grade Portuguese students with a B2 level of English proficiency, ensuring the materials were suitable for the target student group. This level was chosen based on the assumption that textbooks at higher proficiency levels are more likely to use authentic (rather than contrived) materials.

Concerning diversity in publication, we chose texts from two different textbooks (TB1 and TB2) published by different publishers and authored by different groups of writers to capture a broader range of adaptation practices. Finally, to ensure accuracy, all texts were manually extracted and carefully reviewed to properly identify and categorize the adapted texts.

As a result of applying these criteria, Corpus 1 included a total of 37 texts, with 19 texts from TB1 and 18 texts from TB2. While 37 texts may not constitute a large corpus, our results demonstrate that they reveal a robust pattern of adaptation practices.

For Corpus 2, the second dataset, we obtained the authentic counterparts by following the online links provided within the textbooks, typically located at the end of each text. Each text in Corpus 2 corresponded to the authentic source of the adapted text in Corpus 1.

### 3.2. Procedure

Our study combined a quantitative and qualitative analysis. It involved a detailed textual examination of each adapted text alongside its authentic source to identify deviations. This examination, which was carried out manually, was guided by four main categories and corresponding sub-categories: structural change, linguistic change, acknowledgment of the source, and acknowledgment of authorship, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Categories and sub-categories for text analysis.

Structural adaptation (McDonough et al. 2013)	Linguistic adaptation (McDonough et al. 2013)	Acknowledgment of source (Mishan, <i>Designing</i> )	Acknowledgment of authorship (Mishan, <i>Designing</i> )
Text Deletion	Linguistic Simplification	Inaccurate	Inaccurate
Text Reconstruction	Linguistic Elaboration	Absent	Not Acknowledged
Structural Authenticity	Lexical Substitution Linguistic Authenticity	Accurate	Accurate

“Structural adaptation”, also known as “restructuring” (McDonough et al.), evaluates the impact of adaptation on the size and organization of texts. This criterion assesses whether adapted texts maintain the structural authenticity of the original material, focusing on their integrity and originality.

“Linguistic adaptation” examines linguistic simplification (McDonough et al. 69-78), specifically, changes in vocabulary and syntax in authentic texts. This process



is crucial to determine whether the adaptations make the language more accessible and comprehensible for learners.

“Acknowledgement of source”, or “provenance” (Mishan *Designing* 18), informed by the research of Clavel-Arroitia and Fuster-Márquez, is essential for assessing whether the sources of textbook texts are properly acknowledged. This enables both teachers and students to effectively locate and engage with the original texts.

“Acknowledgement of authorship”, cited in Mishan (*Designing* 18) and derived from Clavel-Arroitia and Fuster-Márquez, explores how adaptations handle the attribution of original authors. While source and authorship are often linked, it is crucial to examine them independently to ensure ethical and educational standards are upheld, confirming the accurate recognition of both source and authorship.

#### 4. RESULTS

After conducting a detailed comparison between the adapted texts and their source material, we broke down each of the four categories into subcategories. In this section, we present our results by examining the common adaptation practices across both textbooks and how they apply individually to TB1 (=19) and TB2 (=18).

##### 4.1. Structural adaptation

Within the category “Structural Adaptation”, we identified three patterns, namely “Text Deletion”, “Text Reconstruction” and “Structural Authenticity”, as illustrated in Figure 1.

a. “Text Deletion” constitutes the most widespread adaptation practice, which involves the removal of sentences and paragraphs, resulting in a reduction in the length of the original text. For example, a 400-word adapted text in TB2 has been taken from different paragraphs of a 4400-word long text. Text Deletion was the most common type of structural change, being the dominant pattern in both TB1 (47%) and TB2 (78%).

b. “Text Reconstruction” results from substantial structural change through the reordering of selected parts of the original text or by amalgamating parts from more than one authentic text. This intriguing adaptation practice was observed in TB1 (16%).

c. “Structural Authenticity” was observed mainly in artistic texts, such as poems and lyrics, which undergo minimal structural changes. This practice was consistent in both TB1 (21%) and TB2 (22%), showing that the number of texts falling into this category was relatively small.

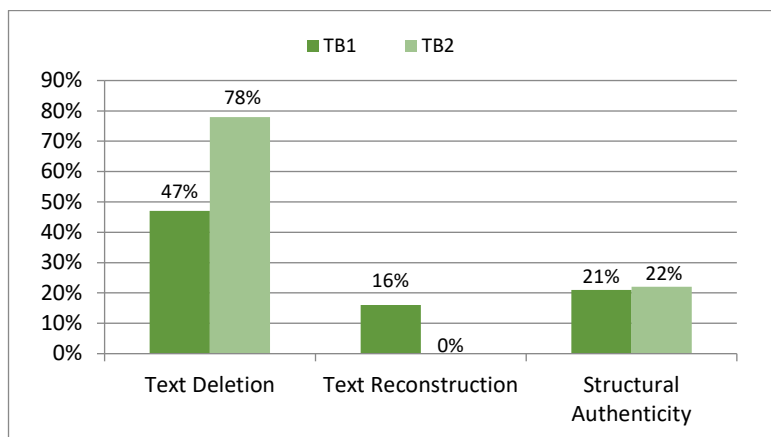


Figure 1. The structural adaptation of texts.

#### 4.2. Linguistic adaptation

“Linguistic Adaptation” was broken down into four subcategories: “Linguistic Simplification”, “Linguistic Elaboration”, “Lexical Substitution” and “Linguistic Authenticity” (Figure 2).

a. “Linguistic Simplification” involves modifications of vocabulary and sentence structure to align the text with learner language proficiency. The most striking outcome of the category “Linguistic Adaptation” was the absence of genuine linguistic simplification (0%) in both textbooks. What we found instead were instances that appeared to be simplification but were, in fact, by-products of substantial structural changes. This indicates that there was a lack of specific attention given to simplifying complex language in both textbooks, and this absence of linguistic simplification was consistently observed.

b. “Linguistic Elaboration”, on the other hand, focuses on providing additional information to enhance language learning. This pattern, however, was also quite infrequent and generally only present in highly reconstructed texts. For the purpose of our analysis, we counted linguistic elaboration only when the texts preserved their structural authenticity. Under these conditions, we observed this pattern exclusively in TB2 (22%).

c. “Lexical Substitution” refers to the replacement of names of entities, whether human or otherwise, that are absent from the original text. In TB2 (11%), we found original names being replaced by entirely different ones, resulting in a substantial alteration of the text’s overall meaning.

d. “Linguistic Authenticity” is observed when texts do not undergo any linguistic changes. The overwhelming absence of linguistic adaptation was the most striking outcome of the combined results, namely 84% of texts. This means that the majority of texts fall within this category, with TB1 showing 100% and TB exhibiting 67% of

linguistic authenticity. In TB1 the linguistic features of the text, such as vocabulary and sentence structure, remained unaltered. As such, there was no simplification or modification aimed at making the text easier to understand or more accessible. In TB2, the remaining 33% of modified texts comprise lexical substitution (11%) and linguistic elaboration (22%), as addressed in b. and c. above.

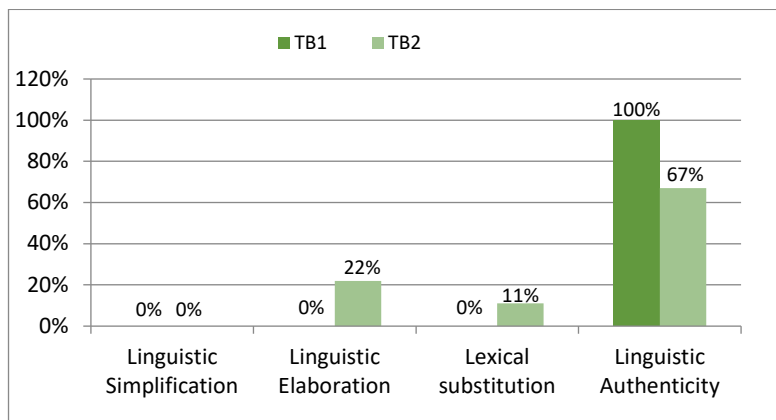


Figure 2. The linguistic adaptation of texts.

### 4.3. Acknowledgment of source

We examined “Acknowledgment of Source” by distinguishing three subcategories: “Inaccurate Acknowledgment”, “Absent Acknowledgment” and “Accurate Acknowledgment” (Figure 3).

a. The most concerning finding was the high prevalence of “Inaccurate Acknowledgment” across textbooks: 89% in TB1 and 50% in TB2. This inaccuracy is mainly caused by the use of hyperlinks which are either imprecise or not available. For example, in most cases, the hyperlinks lead to the main directory of a given website rather than to the texts’ exact location.

b. “Absence of Acknowledgment” of source means that when students and teachers access adapted texts, there is no information provided about where the text originally came from. In TB2, 50% of all texts did not provide the source despite the fact that it was available in the original text.

c. “Accurate Acknowledgment” was, of all the subcategories, the least represented. It was only found in TB1 (11%), mostly with literary texts and lyrics, whereas in TB2 we could not find one single text in which the original source had been accurately provided (0%).

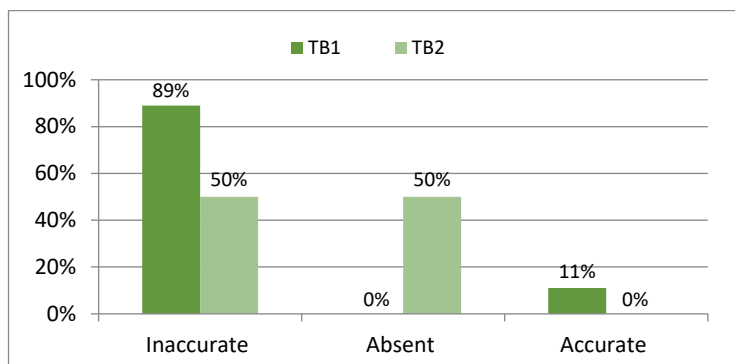


Figure 3. The acknowledgement of the source.

#### 4.4. Acknowledgment of authorship

In analogy to the previous category, “Acknowledgment of Authorship” was also subcategorised into “Inaccurate Acknowledgment”, “Absent Acknowledgment” and “Accurate Acknowledgment”, as shown in Figure 4.

a. The predominant tendency is for authorship to be acknowledged accurately, with 47% of texts in TB1 and 44% of texts in TB2.

b. Equally high is the frequency with which authorship is acknowledgment inaccurately in TB1 (42%). In such cases, the author’s name is listed in the source but is incorrectly identified in the textbook.

c. Finally, there are also cases where authors of various text types, such as newspaper articles, journal articles, and book chapters, were not acknowledged despite being available in the original text. Lack of acknowledgment accounts for a total of 42% in TB1.

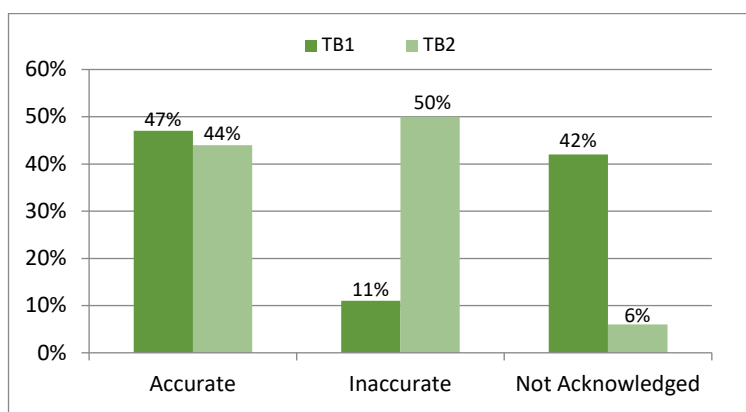


Figure 4. The acknowledgement of authorship.

## 5. DISCUSSION

In response to our research questions, our study has revealed a variety of intriguing and unexpected adaptation practices which raise serious concerns about their pedagogical purpose.

a) One of the findings of our study is the systematic practice of making structural changes to authentic texts, resulting in substantial downsizing or reconstruction. While this practice is expected (Feak and Swales), it shows that the term “adapted” is used rather vaguely and that these texts should better be labelled as “shortened” or “abridged”. Therefore, one of the conclusions that emerge from our study is that adapted texts are best characterised as “reconstructed teaching materials”. This prompts us to question the rationale behind the choice of such excessively long original texts. The longer the original texts, the more it must be reduced to fit the textbook page. In terms of its pedagogical value, such extensive text reconstruction practices are motivated by the need to fit texts within the textbook page, compromising the integrity of the materials and, subsequently, their authenticity.

Adjusting the size of texts poses a well-known challenge for expert ELT textbook writers engaged in ongoing coursebook development (Atkinson, “Reconciling”). This process requires them to make compromises between content and space limitations (Feak and Swales) and hence downsizing texts is a common practice in textbook development. However, our findings prompt us to reflect on the consequences of extensive downsizing (and text reconstruction) and on the criteria for text selection. While compromises may be necessary in textbook development, extensive reconstruction could have potentially been avoided by selecting smaller, more manageable texts from the outset. Through a more strategic approach to text selection, textbooks would achieve a more balanced and authentic representation of language learning materials in ELT textbooks.

b) Another intriguing finding that emerged from our analysis is the limited degree of linguistic simplification in these so-called adapted texts. As noted earlier, linguistic simplification aims to facilitate easier learning (Widdowson). Typically, texts are simplified to enhance comprehensibility for second language learners (Zi), primarily by removing challenging vocabulary and complex sentence structures (Crossley et al.). Unexpectedly, the texts we analysed showed no signs of genuine linguistic adjustments to accommodate the needs of language learners. Rather, any observed changes primarily served as “repair strategies” to manage extensive reconstruction applied to shortened texts. Thus, even when linguistic adaptation is present, it does not seem to be motivated by the need to enhance learnability.

c) Furthermore, our investigation uncovered that authentic texts often originate from poorly edited websites where texts are published without undergoing peer-review. In one of the textbooks we analysed, linguistic complexity was found in texts sourced from less reputable sources, featuring multiple clauses (e.g., two embedded by-clauses inside the main clause) or vocabulary of infrequent usage. Our findings contradict the prevailing belief among educators that emphasise the importance of using reliable materials to enhance learning (Ellili-Cherif and Hadba)

and calls for the urgent need for high-quality resources that align with effective language teaching methodologies (Tomlinson 2012).

d) Hyperlinks embedded within English language textbooks are intended to enrich students' learning experiences by providing access to supplementary information and diverse perspectives. However, our research uncovered significant discrepancies in the functionality and reliability of these hyperlinks, thereby impacting the overall educational value of the texts (Luís, "Exploring"). A notable finding from our study revealed that a considerable portion of hyperlinks fails to lead to the expected source, diminishing students' ability to fully comprehend the content presented. These hyperlinks may be incomplete, broken, or non-existent, posing challenges for students to access relevant information, such as the source, authorship, the title and year of publication.

e) In cases that do not involve artists such as singers and poets, a clear discrepancy arises in how authors are identified within educational materials. These discrepancies range from misaligned author names to the attribution of authorship to fictional individuals or not identifying authors entirely. Such practices directly contradict established copyright principles, which underscore the importance of accurately crediting authors and respecting their intellectual property rights, especially in educational contexts where ethical standards are paramount. Addressing these discrepancies in authorship is essential to ensure the authenticity and integrity of educational materials. Educating teachers and textbook writers on intellectual property rights protection can improve their awareness and knowledge, enabling them to uphold ethical standards and accurately credit authors in educational materials (Lunyachek and Ruban).

In summary, our findings have brought to light a spectrum of practices that challenge conventional assumptions about the pedagogical value of text adaptation. The discrepancies uncovered between adapted texts and their authentic counterparts not only hold pedagogical implications but also raise ethical considerations. This calls for heightened theoretical and methodological rigor within textbook research, as well as the necessity for scholars in ELT to draw insights from research findings (Gilmore, Authentic) to ensure that our efforts contribute meaningfully to the advancement of educational practices and methodologies.

## 6. IMPLICATIONS FOR ELT

This study highlights several key implications and corresponding recommendations for the field of ELT. One significant implication is the use of the term "adapted" in ELT textbooks. This term is often misleading, as it suggests linguistic simplification. This is not evident in the adapted texts, which are more accurately described as shortened and reconstructed. It is recommended that textbook writers differentiate between the various kinds of text adaptation to help teachers better support students in engaging with authentic (i.e., linguistically unsimplified) language. When teachers know that a text is merely shortened rather

than simplified, they can focus on helping students with authentic language by developing effective teaching strategies, such as pre-reading activities, vocabulary previews, and specific reading tasks.

The functionality of hyperlinks in textbooks is another area of concern. Inaccurate or non-functional hyperlinks can frustrate students and teachers, discouraging further engagement with the materials. This issue also impacts digital literacy, as navigating online resources and critically evaluating information is increasingly important. To improve this, it is essential to ensure that hyperlinks effectively connect students to authentic sources and provide access to related resources that can deepen their understanding of the topic.

Finally, the study addresses the critical issue of copyrights and intellectual property within the context of educational materials. Proper attribution of sources and authorship is essential to respect intellectual property rights and promote the responsible use of adapted materials. To address this, publishers should issue clearer guidelines regarding the restructuring of authentic texts and the acknowledgment of sources and authorship to ensure that authentic texts preserve their authenticity.

In conclusion, addressing these limitations requires concerted efforts from textbook publishers, textbook writers and teachers. By implementing the recommended changes, textbooks can become more transparent and accurate in their presentation of adapted materials. This will empower teachers with the necessary information to make informed instructional decisions, ultimately enhancing the learning experience for students. Improving access to the original source will not only support language learning but also foster critical digital literacy skills. Furthermore, respecting intellectual property rights and ensuring proper attribution will uphold academic integrity and promote the ethical use of educational resources.

## 7. LIMITATIONS

While this study has shed light on several important aspects of adapted texts and their implications for language learning materials, it is important to be cautious when generalising the findings of this study.

One of the primary limitations of this study is the relatively small sample size, which included two specific ELT textbooks from different publishers and examined adapted texts from only two thematic modules. Although our quantitative and qualitative analysis revealed a consistent pattern of adaptation strategies, the findings may not necessarily fully represent lower proficiency levels and other educational settings (e.g., digital textbooks). It is also important to bear in mind that this study is based on textbooks available up to 2016 and that newer textbooks may exhibit different adaptation strategies.

Finally, our decision to maintain the anonymity of textbooks, authors, and publishers limits our ability to provide concrete examples, of which there are plenty. However, the study revealed a wide range of concerning results that were initially

unforeseen. By maintaining anonymity, we wanted to ensure that the focus remains on the adaptation practices and their impact on language learning, without inadvertently stigmatising particular materials, authors, or publishers. As recently noted by Atkinson ("Reconciling"), writing ELT textbooks is a complex process, which involves catering to the demands of multiple stakeholders. So, despite the numerous shortcomings we have identified, we would also like to acknowledge the challenges of textbook writing.

## 8. CONCLUSION

Within the realm of English language textbooks produced and published in Portugal, a recurrent label used to describe reading texts is "adapted." Traditionally, this label implies a process involving lexical and syntactic simplification to make authentic texts more accessible to language learners. However, our comprehensive study unveils a significant disparity between this conventional understanding of adaptation and the actual practices employed within the textbooks we analysed.

Contrary to the expected linguistic simplifications typically associated with adaptation, our research findings reveal that the adapted texts in our corpus have undergone remarkably few linguistic changes. In essence, these textbooks preserve the linguistic authenticity of the original texts, challenging the very notion of what it means to adapt a text. Consequently, we assert that the term "adapted" as applied to these materials is fundamentally misused.

In addition to this linguistic paradox, our investigation exposes another dimension of adaptation that extends beyond language alone. Material developers enjoy a substantial degree of freedom when it comes to restructuring the original texts, often reducing them to a mere fraction of their original size. This substantial structural modification, which sacrifices the structural integrity of the original texts, raises questions about the pedagogical rationale behind such extensive reconstruction. It is notable that the literature lacks theoretical support for this level of textual alteration, and we found no apparent pedagogical justification for these practices.

This discrepancy between what these ELT textbooks imply, through their use of the term "adapted", and what they actually do, through extensive structural alterations, underscores the need for a re-evaluation of adaptation practices in educational materials. The conventional expectation of simplification is not met, and the implied preservation of structural integrity is not realised. These findings invite a critical examination of the ethics and principles guiding the development of teaching materials, as well as a reconsideration of how authentic texts are utilised in language education. We conclude our study by inviting educators, material developers, and researchers to re-evaluate the objectives and methods of adaptation, fostering a more transparent and pedagogically sound approach to textbook production, and language learning materials.



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## THE FLÂNEUSERIE OF *IN TREATMENT'S* LAILA GREEN: WAYWARDNESS, WILLFULNESS, AND THE BLACKQUEER ART OF FAILURE

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**ABSTRACT.** The Parisian flâneur is a figure whose indulgent urban loitering is shaped by straight white male privilege. In contrast, this essay introduces the concept of the *Blackqueer flâneuse*, highlighting the radical imagination's role in maneuvering through heavily surveilled and controlled spaces. By weaving together intersecting theories of waywardness (Hartman) and willfulness (Ahmed), it examines *Black flâneuserie*—both as an imaginative and tangible mode of mobility—that ingeniously subverts or sidesteps the violence of capture. Focusing on Laila Green, from the series *In Treatment* (2021), the essay unveils her outlaw imagination, her yearning for liberation, and her everyday practices of wandering as alternative expressions of flâneuserie. Employing the concept of *queer failure* (Halberstam), the analysis frames Laila's persistent attempts at escape alongside her history of facing setbacks as a practice of *flâneuserie*. With the help of critical geography (de Certeau, Tuan, Cosgrove, Cosgrove and Dora) and Jungian theory, it conceptualizes Laila's passion for high places and mountains and ultimately the realization of her passion as evidence of her individuation. Akin to the paradoxes of white male *flânerie*, *Black flâneuserie* in Laila's case unfolds as a paradoxical journey of self-discovery, complicated by her privilege and the entanglements of her wanderings within the logic of racial capitalism.

**Keywords:** flâneuserie, waywardness, willfulness, queer art of failure, Black geographies, Black ecologies.

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LA *FLÂNEUSERIE* DE LAILA GREEN DE *EN TERAPIA*: REBELDÍA, OBSTINACIÓN Y EL ARTE *BLACKQUEER* DEL FRACASO

*RESUMEN.* El autocomplaciente deambular urbano del flâneur parisino se conforma como figura masculina, blanca, privilegiada y heterosexual. Por contraste, este ensayo explora el concepto de *Blackqueer flâneuse*, enfatizando el papel radical de la imaginación para moverse por espacios fuertemente vigilados y controlados. Uniendo teorías entrecruzadas sobre rebeldía (Hartman) y obstinación (Ahmed), examino el deambular femenino y negro, *Black flâneuserie*, como una forma de movilidad a la vez imaginativa y tangible que ingeniosamente elude o trastoca la violencia de diferentes políticas de confinamiento y cautividad. Centrándonos en el personaje de Laila Green de la serie *En Terapia* (2021), este artículo muestra su imaginación proscrita, su anhelo de liberación y sus prácticas deambulantes cotidianas como expresiones alternativas de *flâneuserie*. A través del concepto de *queer failure* (Halberstam), mi análisis identifica como una práctica de *flâneuserie* los persistentes intentos de escapar por parte de Laila, así como su historial de superación de contratiempos. Con la ayuda de la geografía crítica (de Certeau, Tuan, Cosgrove, Cosgrove y Dora) y de la teoría de Carl Jung, se conceptualiza la pasión de Laila por lugares elevados y montañas, elementos que materializan una pasión que evidencia su individualización. De forma similar a las paradojas del *flânerie* masculino y blanco, en el caso de Laila Green, *Black flâneuserie* se nos presenta como un viaje paradójico de descubrimiento personal, que se complica por su situación privilegiada y por los enredos de vagabundear dentro de la lógica del capitalismo racial.

*Palabras clave:* flâneuserie, rebeldía, obstinación, queer art of failure, geografías negras, ecologías negras.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The TV series *In Treatment*, originally aired from 2008 to 2010 on HBO, centered around Gabriel Byrne's Dr. Paul Weston, a white male therapist who met with different patients each week.<sup>1</sup> In the 2021 reboot, the spotlight shifts to Dr. Brooke Taylor, Paul's protégée, played by Uzo Aduba, renowned for her role as "Crazy Eyes" in the Netflix hit show *Orange Is the New Black* (2013-19) and as a US Attorney's Office investigator Edie Flowers in the limited series *Painkiller* (2023) about America's opioid epidemic. As Uzo Aduba points out, "it's important to see a Black woman at the center of a story about mental health and therapy" (qtd. in Newman-Bremang). Furthermore, Dr. Taylor represents a shift in the portrayal of

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<sup>1</sup> The author presented an initial draft of this paper at the 81st College Language Association Convention, with the backing of the University of Debrecen's Faculty of Humanities Scholarly Fund.

Black women in the role of therapists; she revises the trope of the wise “Black Lady Therapist,” whose primary function is to guide (mostly white) protagonists through the messiness of life in shows like *Crazy Ex-Girlfriend* (Newman-Bremang).

Set in post-lockdown Los Angeles in 2021, the series depicts a world still grappling with the pandemic's effects, including fear, precarity, grief, and the lingering isolation from quarantine. As vaccines begin to curb the coronavirus, Dr. Taylor opts to work from her magnificent multimillion-dollar home, designed by her recently deceased architect father. The revival is characterized by extended scenes set in her home, creating a theater-like experience on television, in which “the only action was talk, brimming with nuanced nonverbal cues, the teasing out of deceptions, the riverine routes that conversation takes to find its path. Each session was part ministration, part duel, part dance” (Colón-Zayas qtd. in Poniewozik). As Brooke processes her father's passing and confronts the trauma of giving up her son for adoption during her teenage years, she becomes entangled in a tumultuous affair with an ex-boyfriend with whom she used to drink. Despite the support of her Alcoholics Anonymous sponsor and friend, Rita, Brooke relapses. Throughout the six-week period covered in the series, Dr. Taylor takes on the responsibility of treating three new patients, each with their own mental health issues. These patients include Anthony Ramos from *Hamilton*, who plays Eladio, a sensitive Latino home health aide. Brooke harbors doubts about his manic depressive diagnosis and unearths within his sleep issues a complex web of emotions tied to his employers, who treat him as “family,” but also as a disposable domestic worker. Then, there's Colin (John Benjamin Hickey), a wealthy white male tech entrepreneur who, after spending four years in prison, is ordered by the court to attend therapy sessions as a condition for his parole. Lastly, Laila Green (*Euphoria*'s Quintessa Swindell), a brilliant upper-class Black teenager, brought in by her grandmother for a “specific problem,” namely, for “choosing to be lesbian” (Laila – Week 1 3:25, 3:38-3:42).<sup>2</sup> Laila's longing to escape from her home environment unfolds against the backdrop of the series' themes, which touch on the far-reaching effects of racial injustice, queerphobia, police violence, climate crisis, and mass incarceration. To the best of my knowledge, there exists no prior scholarly examination of *In Treatment*. There are, however, numerous reviews and interviews available, and I reference some in this essay.

This essay revolves around Laila's yearning to run away from home, casting her in the role of the contemporary imaginary flâneuse. Flânerie, a spatial practice tied to specific urban sites such as streets and the arcades has been notably influential. The flâneur, an idly strolling figure prominent in nineteenth-century Paris, symbolizes a relatively wealthy, anonymous individual with the luxury of wandering aimlessly through the city. Originally embodied by a bourgeois white straight male, the flâneur's leisurely pace and indifference allowed him to observe city life and

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<sup>2</sup> To avoid burdening the characters' speech with ellipses and ungrammatical constructions inherent in oral speech, I have redacted brief pauses and repetitive phrases, except where used for emphasis.

revel in the traces of modernity. According to Walter Benjamin (*Arcades* 417), the flâneur's experience is marked by intoxication, where walking through the streets evokes a sense of euphoria: "An intoxication comes over the man who walks long and aimlessly through the streets." The indulgence of aimless wandering contributes to the pleasurable and poetic nature of his journey, emphasizing the freedom to follow inspiration wherever it leads (Benjamin, *Arcades* 436). The flâneur walking with a tortoise (Benjamin, *Arcades* 422) further illustrates the creative and transgressive nature of his idling, serving as a symbolic protest against "the division of labor" (Benjamin, *Arcades* 427) and highlighting the preciousness of "the fruits of idleness" versus the "fruits of labor" (Benjamin, *Arcades* 453).

Flânerie, however, encapsulates manifold ambivalences. It simultaneously adheres to privileged and oppressed ways of interacting with the modern city while at the same time challenging urban life and seeking something different (Martínez): "His eyes open, his ear ready, searching for something entirely different from what the crowd gathers to see" (Larousse qtd. in Benjamin, *Arcades* 453). This pedestrian mobility engages with the modern city in a critical, embodied, and pleasurable manner, embracing both sensuous and speculative elements. Flânerie is thus a practice with multiple layers of meaning and interpretation, making it both normative and transgressive, a paradoxical blend that intertwines knowledge as well as a lack of knowledge of the urban landscape. As noted before, the flâneur has traditionally been conceptualized as a white, heterosexual, bourgeois, able adult man. Susan Buck-Morss, a famed scholar of Walter Benjamin and the Frankfurt school, confirms that Benjamin's politics did not incorporate feminism as an analytical frame (the same can be said of critical race, queer, or crip theory). Notably, within Benjamin's work, particularly *The Arcades*, the prominent female figure is the prostitute. Buck-Morss highlights the correlation between prostitution and female flânerie, noting that "all women who loitered risked being seen as whores" (119).

Much like Keith Tester in *The Flâneur*, I grapple not only with the challenge of defining flânerie but also with the aspiration to extend its significance. While the figure of the flâneur is undoubtedly rooted in a Parisian time and place, Tester argues that it also has the capacity to serve as "a figure to illuminate issues of city life irrespective of time and place" (16). In contrast to the original figure's limits, the figure of the flâneur can be redefined to encompass diverse identities, including the disabled (Serlin) and the Afropolitan (Leff) flâneur as well as the New Negro Flâneuse (Scheper). However, there has been a notable absence of exploration regarding the blackqueer flâneur/flâneuse/flâneux in contemporary Black cultural expression.<sup>3</sup> Thus, in this paper, I advocate for extending the traditional flâneur

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<sup>3</sup> I use Ashon Crawley's term "blackqueer" to characterize Laila to highlight her critique of the normative structures and restless search for "ways of existence otherwise" (7). Laila identifies as a queer lesbian, even though this self-identification may be considered an "imperfect nominative." However, a case can be made for reading Laila as genderqueer, not only because Quintessa Swindell, the actor portraying the character, identifies as nonbinary (using they/he pronouns), but also because, as Marquis Bey argues, blackness initiates the failure of the *cístem*, the cisgender binary system. Blackness invites an alternate space beyond or through



archetype by connecting it to Laila Green, a young Black queer woman navigating the post-pandemic landscapes of the Americas. My objective in stretching the flâneur beyond its traditional form is to assert “the inherent spatiality of Black life – the spatial imaginaries, space-making practices, and sense of place rooted in Black communities” (Hawthorne 5). Laila emphasizes the spatial dimensions of Black life in two main ways. First, she imagines movement even when physical mobility is constrained or interrupted, a common reality for Black women and people. Second, through her exploration of urban, suburban, and natural landscapes, Laila resists and defies the anti-black surveillance, discipline, and violence directed at racialized individuals and communities. This exploration is particularly significant as she moves through new routes toward and perspectives from elevated heights such as hills or mountains. The article uses spatial studies and Jungian theory to connect her proclivity for heights to her ambivalent inner journey of self-discovery.

Laila’s imaginative and physical journeys echo the contradictions surrounding the original flâneur archetype, an affluent man who roamed Parisian streets in the 19th century. Like the original flâneur, Laila’s social status is embroiled in the contradictions of racial capitalism: she seeks an alternative while being simultaneously advantaged and disadvantaged by its structures.<sup>4</sup> Despite her privileged background permitting her to “cast a lingering gaze onto the fleeting beauty of the post-colonial city,” as a Black flâneuse, she “must also navigate the racialized [and gendered] dynamics of the gaze, i.e. the performative and normative regulation of space through the violent policing of who can look at whom, who can be seen and who remain invisible, who must look down and who cannot look away” (Hill qtd. in Sobande et al.). In this way, Laila’s access to and experience within certain spaces are not only influenced by the intersections of racism, sexism, and homophobia, but also by privileges such as her US citizenship, class status, ability, light skin tone, beauty, and thinness. As a result, her advantages and disadvantages are always already entangled as she wanders in a manner akin to flânerie.<sup>5</sup>

To link Laila to the figure of the Black flâneuse, I enter into an already existing dialogue with waywardness (Hartman), willfulness (Ahmed), queerness and/or

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gender “where a new—and black—world, ‘without border or boundaries,’ might be instantiated” (xii).

<sup>4</sup> In his seminal work, *Black Marxism: The Making of the Black Radical Tradition*, Cedric Robinson critiques classical Marxism for its failure to theorize racism as a constitutive element of capitalism. He argues that capitalism has always been racial, inherently relying on the systematic devaluation and exploitation of non-white populations. This can be seen in slavery, imperialism, and settler colonialism, which have been foundational to capitalist development (116).

<sup>5</sup> Ultimately, I cannot isolate these factors or determine which one dominates in any given situation; they are embedded and tangled in specific contexts and unpredictable ways. All I can say is that Laila’s ability to move in a particular way is situational and context-dependent. Even the same racialized subject can be noted, surveilled, and regulated by some, and not others.

queer failure (Halberstam). In *Wayward Lives, Beautiful Experiments* (2020), Saidiya Hartman offers an account of Black women's lines of flight and errant paths through Harlem from 1890 to 1935. She identifies the following set of words as kins of "wayward": "errant, fugitive, recalcitrant, anarchic, willful, reckless, troublesome, riotous, tumultuous, rebellious and wild" (227). As can be seen, willfulness in the general and in Ahmed's sense belongs to the same family. The first of a series of entries on waywardness reinforces this conceptual kinship: "To inhabit the world in ways inimical to those deemed proper and respectable, to be deeply aware of the gulf between where you stayed and how you might live" (227). Laila's willfulness is evident in her refusal to enroll and go straight to Berkeley University, and also by virtue of her queerness, which always already implies straying from straight paths. The word "queer" originally comes from the Indo-European root *-twerkw*, which also yields words like "transverse", "twist," and "athwart" (Sedgwick viii). As underscored by Ahmed, "queer" can be understood as a "willful word" (250), and Hartman notes that waywardness is a "queer resource of black survival" (227). Willfulness and waywardness intersect with *flânerie* in their emphasis on the persistence of seeking a different existence, "the untiring practice of trying to live when you were never meant to survive," as Hartman puts it (227). In Ahmed's words, "mere persistence can be an act of disobedience" (9). Laila's persistent attempts to break free and hike certainly cause Rhonda's unhappiness, who sees it as rebellious willfulness.

In addition, both waywardness and willfulness are linked to the possibilities of the Black radical imagination or the queer potential of the will. Both concepts strive to realize these possibilities in spite of the massive enclosure under which the dispossessed labor and suffer. Hartman defines waywardness as "a practice of possibility at a time when all roads, except the ones created by *smashing out*, are foreclosed" (228). Similarly, Ahmed frames willfulness as a structural problem misdiagnosed in individual terms, reflecting on difficult, sad experiences without seeking to resolve that difficulty (20). She adds, "When you stray from the official paths, you create desire lines, faint marks on the earth, as traces of where you or others have been" (Ahmed 20). Hartman's historical project parallels Ahmed's approach, aiming to "exhume open rebellion from the case file" and "to illuminate the radical imagination and everyday anarchy of ordinary colored girls, which has not only been overlooked, but is nearly unimaginable" (xiv). In a sense, both willfulness and waywardness express feminist longings to disrupt the world as we know it. Furthermore, both thinkers spatialize these practices of possibility. Ahmed describes "a willfulness archive" as "a wandering archive, an archive without a fixed abode," challenging the concept of trespass, "the idea that you can only travel with permission" (123). This applies to Laila, whom Rhonda sees as willful for travelling without adult permission. Ahmed notes, "To break free from duty is narrated as willfulness, wandering away from the right path" (116). As well, Hartman employs spatial imaginaries to articulate wayward methods of possibility:

Wayward: the unregulated movement of drifting and wandering; sojourns without a fixed destination, ambulatory possibility, interminable migrations, rush and flight,

black locomotion; the everyday struggle to live free. . . Waywardness articulates the paradox of cramped creation, the entanglement of escape and confinement, flight and captivity. Wayward: to wander, to be unmoored, adrift, rambling, roving, cruising, strolling, and seeking. (227)

Some wayward feminine and genderqueer rebels in Hartman's archive, such as Mattie Nelson, Mamie, and Gladys Bentley, can be read as flâneuse figures. Like these revolutionaries, Laila struggles to live freely, attempting to elude capture by wandering and seeking different experiences. My theorization of blackqueer flâneuserie thus engages with overlapping notions of waywardness, willfulness and, as discussed later, failure.

Unlike the Black women whose wanderings are confined by the oppressive boundaries of the Black ghetto, Laila is from the same affluent, historically Black community, Baldwin Hills, as Dr. Taylor, which had been devastated by fire in 1985 (fifty-three homes were destroyed and three people died).<sup>6</sup> Despite her privileged surroundings, Laila's flânerie, characterized by unregulated drifting and wandering, represents a paradoxical "entanglement of escape and confinement, flight and captivity" (Hartman 227). Her flights embody a relentless struggle against a myriad of oppressive forces, from intergenerational trauma and racial violence to corporeal punishment and emotional neglect. A sensitive high school senior, Laila longs for a life that strays from the predetermined, *straight* path of happiness. She rejects the idea of "success" defined solely by academic and professional achievements, material wealth, and a "good" life. Instead, she craves a genuine sense of freedom from the suffocating grasp of her grandmother and a society that seeks to straighten her out. Rhonda (played by Charlayne Woodard), Laila's grandmother, insists on therapy because the "gays and lesbians are at higher risk for everything. Failure, depression, addiction, failure" (Laila – Week 1 4:05-4:12). To prevent Laila from succumbing to what Rhonda essentially terms queer failure, Rhonda wants Laila to confront the real-world consequences of willfully "choosing" her lesbian identity. Laila's queerness can thus be seen both as failure in Halberstam's sense and as willfulness in Ahmed's sense, highlighting the will's queer potential (Ahmed 7).

Much like the traditional flâneur, Laila's character is multi-faceted, and she retains an elusive quality (Tester 1). In her intake session with Dr. Taylor, Laila pretends to be a sex addict. But Dr. Taylor recognizes the racialized gender performance of "promiscuity" as a test and a challenge, rising to the occasion with her culturally responsive approach. Notably, Dr. Taylor refrains from reducing Laila's everyday

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<sup>6</sup> In her essay titled "Apartheid U.S.A." Audre Lorde (46) describes "the molotov cocktails that were hurled into the brush in Los Angeles, starting the conflagration that burned out well-to-do Black Baldwin Hills—fifty-three homes gone, three lives lost—to government sanctioned segregation and violence." This illustrates the precarity of any form of privilege or normalcy for Black people or other marginalized communities. Even when socioeconomic status appears to override blackness, individuals, and communities can be abruptly exposed to various forms of racism. Therefore, I interpret the Black flâneuse from an intersectional perspective, taking for granted the co-presence of multiple identities and identifications.

feelings and struggles to mere diagnostic labels. Instead, by providing Laila a safe space, Laila can access difficult feelings such as fear, despair, anger, grief, and loss. Rather than aiming for a “cure,” Dr. Taylor guides Laila toward a spiritual healing journey that centers the body, feelings, autonomy, and authenticity. Dr. Taylor’s culturally sensitive understanding of transgenerational loss and trauma connects Laila’s struggles to historical and ongoing experiences. More specifically, Dr. Taylor refuses to pathologize Laila’s blackqueer identity as deviance or criminality, to dismiss her trauma and other psychic effects of racism, sexism, and homophobia on Laila. As the Jungian therapy progresses, Dr. Taylor locates intergenerational trauma and a tendency towards fantasy in Laila’s lineage; she strives to make connections between Laila’s daydreaming, hopelessness, rage, sadness, disassociation, and other feelings and thoughts, and the ongoing violences and deprivations Laila is subjected to in the world. Dr. Taylor’s affirms what Rhonda has deemed to be a propensity for failure and a “problem” of lesbian willfulness. This affirmation enables Laila to embark on her journey of self-discovery amidst racial capitalist forms of scrutiny and coercion.

## 2. IMAGINARY FLÂNEUSERIE AS THE QUEER ART OF FAILURE

The concept of failure is built into the figure of the flâneur from the outset. While Benjamin associates the impossibility of the flâneur with the contradictions of capitalism, signaling inevitable revolutionary crises, my vision of flânerie resonates with the negativities associated with queerness and blackness. More specifically, I argue that blackqueer flânerie identifies “potent avenues of failure” that challenge the prevailing logics of success rooted in racial capitalism (Halberstam 16). As well, Laila identifies blackness with the notion of failure. This is evident in her identification with overarching social and historical narratives about the perceived failure of her race. She contends that systemic racism in America ensures the failure of Blacks: “We’re set up to fail. Everything is set up that way, so if you’re the one-in-a-thousand person that doesn’t, then that’s fucking great” (Laila – Week 3 18:16-18:24). It is noteworthy that she harbors a sense of failure, even though she does not fail in any conventional sense: “I just keep on failing. And failing and failing and failing, even though I don’t fail at anything because I can’t! If I were to like fail a test or a quiz or like a class, everything would be worse. Everybody would freak out, and so, so I don’t fail because... Because I can’t” (Laila – Week 3 17:37-18:07). Her sense of failure is not tied to her academic achievements, but to her struggles with self-expression or self-realization, and perhaps her internalization of systematic racism. Paradoxically, in her pursuit of success, she assumes the role of a representative for her entire race, forcing herself to epitomize success. However, she is acutely aware that this racial capitalist conception of success is rooted in the dehumanization of her people. Despite her family’s “success,” she understands that white supremacy continues to deny them humanity, health, and happiness. As a result, she feels a mixture of grief and anger about their achievements: “My dad’s a success, and he’s miserable. I’m a success. I got into every single school that I applied to” (Laila – Week 3 18:08-18:41). In her subsequent rant, she highlights her

fury with the “choices” available to her: either achieve the capitalist ideal of “success” tied to “productivity,” “profit,” and “ownership,” or suffer the repercussions of being/becoming the “loser” that America already thinks she is. She feels suffocated by this success/failure dichotomy. In what follows, I illustrate how her flânerie dismantles the capitalist logics of success and failure, revealing the benefits of not getting one’s way.

Laila’s struggles as a Black girl in a world fraught with dangers and constraints have led to repeated failures in her attempts to break free from the confines that surround her. The first time Laila ran away and was forcibly returned home was at the age of five. Her mother had already left, and her grandmother, Rhonda, had stepped in to assist her father, Jamal, in raising her. Fueled by a desperate attempt to find her absent mother, Laila packed her little suitcase and ventured to the end of the block. In her recollections shared with Brooke, she vividly remembers the scorching heat, the unkempt sidewalk, and the dying lawns in the neighborhood. When the suburban lawns, gardens, and sidewalks no longer mark wealth and success, portraying a sparkly dream of leisure and familial bliss, they function as ruins for the flâneur, insofar as they represent ecological loss, the decay of the commodity, and the art of failure. Hiding behind a barren bush, Laila reflects on its ruined state as a symbol of queer failure and ecological loss: “When I got to the end of the block, there was this bush. Just branches, so I guess there was, like, a drought or something. Now I realize, like, there weren’t any leaves, so, obviously, people could see me. I must’ve looked so stupid. I just remember feeling like I had escaped this realm, you know?” (Laila – Week 3 8:51-9:18) She identifies this moment as an avenue of failure while emphasizing the way in which a sense of escaping from her reality emerged from it. She realizes how “stupid” she must have appeared, exposed in the midst of a drought-stricken landscape. For Jack Halberstam (11-12), however, “stupidity” does not refer to a deficiency in knowledge but rather counterintuitive ways of knowing such as “a refusal of mastery, a critique of the intuitive connections within capitalism between success and profit, and as a counterhegemonic discourse of losing.” Despite her young age, Laila has an experience of stupidity and queer failure as forms of resistance and critique against dominance. The resistance emerges in her imagination, which tirelessly works to realize her dreams of escaping, ultimately turning her dream journey to Peru into reality. Although she fails this time, her failure will become the ground for imagining “other goals for life, for love, for art, and for being” (Halberstam 88).

Turning to the bush for protection, Laila unknowingly draws on the ancestral knowledge of maroon communities who sought refuge and constructed “homes in trees, tree stumps, treetops, swamps, caverns, and even underground caves known as ‘dugouts’” (Diouf 98-99). Besides a site of ecological loss and catastrophe, the bush symbolizes a site of ancestral memory, invoking reservoirs of creative tactics that empower strength, resilience, and unforeseen joy. However, Laila’s gesture of seeking sanctuary within the bush can also be seen as a failed expression of maroonage, a concept which entirely rejects dominant spatial arrangements and practices. Perhaps it is no accident that she instinctively draws on a tradition, which

can be considered a failure in the sense of not becoming dominant. Even so, maroonage offers a model of contestation, rupture, and discontinuity with plantation logics. While she yearns to merge with the vegetation, the destruction of Indigenous ecosystems with suburban lawns and the harsh reality of extreme heat events in the early twenty-first century leave the landscape devoid of its natural means of protection, stripping the bush of its foliage. The dried-up shrubbery serves as a stark reminder of the legacy of colonial land extraction that shapes the environments Californians inhabit today, contributing to rising temperatures and devastating wildfires. It serves as evidence of how racial capitalism and settler colonialism underpin both environmental destruction and gendered racial oppression. This moment exposes the persistence of plantation logic, which repeatedly reemerges in new spaces, despite attempts to envision alternative futures (McKittrick, “Plantation Futures” 9). This pivotal moment in Laila’s early life thus reflects both her attempts to escape and failures to do so navigating the landscapes of the Americas. Her actions evoke the complexities of historical legacies and their impact on the present, highlighting the enduring quest for liberation, resistance, and a new world grounded in the wisdom of maroon communities.

Laila’s most recent attempt at escape illustrates her struggle to embody the figure of the flâneuse. During her last endeavor, she had set her sights on reaching Seattle, determined to climb Mount Tacoma or Tahoma (colonially known as Mountain Rainier).<sup>7</sup> However, Laila never even embarked upon her journey toward the summit because her grandma intercepted her at the train station and returned her home. Laila, with her “privileged” socioeconomic status, initially appears to embody the position of the flâneuse in that she possesses the means to purchase train tickets, entrance passes, necessary equipment, and so on. She also shares the flâneur’s appreciation for beauty, however, the forms of that beauty differ. Whereas Charles Baudelaire’s (25-6) Constantin Guys admires “the eternal beauty and the astonishing harmony of life in the capital cities,” Laila seeks refuge in natural beauty as an escape from urban racial capitalist modernity. Moreover, her choice to use the colonial name, Mountain Rainier, versus the Indigenous-derived names for the mountain — Tahoma, Tacobeh, Pooskaus, Tacomafor, and Ti’Swaq’ — aligns with the imperial attitudes often associated with the flâneur. The mountain, held sacred by the Puyallup Tribe, is most commonly referred to as *təqʷuʔmaʔ/təqʷuʔbəd*, but that name was changed to Rainier after an Admiral in the British Navy who played a role in suppressing the American Revolution (“spuyaləpabš: syəcəb ʔə tiil ʔiisədčəl”). Importantly, Shields draws connections between the flâneur’s exploration and control of urban landscapes and imperialism. “As a consumer of sights and goods,” Shields (78) argues, “the flâneur is a vicarious conqueror, self-confirmed in his mastery of the empire of the gaze while losing himself in the commodified network of popular imperialism.” Oblivious to the historical dispossession of Indigenous land

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<sup>7</sup> Mount Tacoma is a volcanic peak, celebrated for being the most glaciated mountain on Turtle Island apart from those in Alaska. It stands at an impressive elevation of 14,410 feet (4,392 meters), making it not only the highest mountain in Washington but also the tallest peak in the entire Cascade Range (“Mountain Rainier” 2023).

and the colonial dynamics involved in its conversion into a national park, Laila's desire to view the land inadvertently mirrors the imperial gaze.

Laila's potential to be a "real" flâneuse is fragile, highly constrained, and context dependent, whereas her imaginary flânerie is not bound by the limits of her surroundings. While Laila never reaches the mountain's summit due to her grandmother's intervention, her fantasy of the ascent holds significant meaning. In contrast to the Parisian flâneur, her intoxication feeds on imaginary sights. Describing Mount Tacoma, Laila emphasizes the sense of freedom it embodies: "It's not the tallest mountain, but the thing that makes it so special is that it's taller than any of the mountains surrounding it. So you get to the top of it and you can, like, see out forever. It's like the Overlook on steroids. You get that high up, and you're just, like untouchable" (Laila – Week 3 14:01-14:40). The prospect of being able to look out from such a vantage point conjures up a feeling of being untouchable, an elevated state of being beyond the reach of the cruel world below. For Laila, regardless of her ability to climb it, the mountain symbolizes an escape from her constraints, a different way of experiencing the landscape, and an affective encounter with freedom. Through her imagination, she accesses a limitless vision that grants her a momentary reprieve from the limitations of her reality. The act of envisioning the mountain allows Laila to assert her right to discover the world on her terms and experience an emotional release from the confines of her everyday life. Although Laila's grandmother thwarts her physical journey, Laila's imaginary climb signifies her desire for freedom. In the realm of her imagination, she finds a connection to God through the mountain.<sup>8</sup>

Laila's fascination with mountainous heights is evident in hankering after Mount Tacoma, the Overlook, and Machu Picchu. Eminent cultural geographer Yi-Fu Tuan points out that attitudes towards mountains have been conflicted since the medieval age, oscillating between reverence and fear (*Topophilia* 71). Humanity has responded emotionally to these "recalcitrant aspects of nature," viewing them "at one time as sublime, the abode of the gods, and at another as ugly, distasteful, the abode of demons" (*Topophilia* 70). The concept of the sublime encapsulates this blend of awe and terror, influencing perceptions of mountainous and polar regions during the era of Western exploration and colonization (Cosgrove and della Dora 2). In *Romantic Geography* Tuan notes the rising popularity of the sublime in the eighteenth century, a concept defined by Immanuel Kant through the towering Alpine peaks (46). This fascination led to the emergence of mountain climbing as a fashionable pursuit, with mountaineers seeking "to experience the mountains' eerie

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<sup>8</sup> According to a tribal member, the ancestral language Lushootseed is deeply intertwined with the land and can be heard in the sounds of nature—the animals, the water, and the rivers—revealing a profound connection between the Indigenous people and their sacred lands: "The word for river is *stolach*, so when you're listening to the river, it is *stolach, stolach, stolach, stolach, stolach*. . . It's in the land. Lushootseed is from the land" ("What's in a Name?" 0:12-0:56). Speculating about how Laila would have experienced Tacoma, she might have recognized its sacredness along with the Indigenous Title of the Puyallup over Tacoma, that is, their collective ownership and jurisdiction over the land and resources.

beauty, the thrill of danger, and the proximity of death” (47). Following Denis Cosgrove and Veronica della Dora in *High Places*, “nineteenth century exploration and colonialist discourse figured high places as spaces of muscular and masculine challenge, of competitive adventure, and unearthly, intense, sometimes even spiritual experience, as well as of intense scientific curiosity” (4). Unlike her girlfriend Cara, who is afraid of heights, Laila relishes the phrase *l’appel du vide*, the French term for the intense, irrational urge to jump from high places, and is drawn to the thrill and danger associated with such places. It should be emphasized that her preferred elevations are not the perilous, sparsely inhabited mountaintops like Mount Everest that pose extreme risks to the human body.<sup>9</sup> While mountain climbing has a history of imperial exploration and territorialization, it cannot be reduced to that history. Laila’s desire to reach the peak indicates the complexity of climbing and hiking as activities, with imperial and liberatory overtones, always already implicated in racial capitalism and its ecological consequences. Accordingly, her experience of the physical landscape at high altitudes is likely to be exploitative, monotonous, and commodified, yet also authentic, transformative, and auratic.

While I attempted to summon the possibilities inherent in Laila’s imaginary *flânerie*, it is equally important to revel in the limits and failures of it. Her inability to reach her destination prevents her from fully occupying the position of the *flâneur*. Laila’s failure to take on the *flâneur*-like role underscores the challenges faced in Black *flânerie*. As Francesca Sobande notes in “Strolling with a Question: Is It Possible to Be a Black *Flâneur*?” the Black *flâneur* contends with “such significant risks and social disciplining which leaves [her] questioning whether they can ever fully occupy this transient position of the ‘*flâneur*’.” Indeed, the strict upbringing and deep involvement of her grandmother in Laila’s life cast doubt on whether she can assume the role of the *flâneuse*.

Failure is a central theme in Laila’s experience as a *flâneuse*. As a blackqueer *flâneuse*, Laila constantly envisions ways to break free from her constraints, despite the odds stacked against her. Even when she is behind the wheel, Laila is “somewhere else,” often causing accidents due to her daydreaming (Laila – Week 2 13:18-13:20). Dr. Taylor recognizes her imagination as a healthy coping mechanism in a world filled with violence and hostility, particularly towards Black women (Laila – Week 2 18:09-18:23):

You internalized violence from your family, from the culture at large, and if I understand it, you never felt like you had any options. Any say, any control. And that’s why you’ve been so desperate to escape. Do I have that right? Okay, and you’ve tried many times. From the end of the block in Anaheim to the train in Seattle, and now

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<sup>9</sup> Even if Laila is not likely to lose limbs or faculties due to climbing, as far as we know, she has had little to no experience hiking or climbing. Even relatively “safe” destinations such as Mount Tacoma or Machu Pichu are likely to place huge demands on her body, testing the limits of her mental and physical endurance.



South America, but every time you'd get away, someone seems to bring you back. No escape you've attempted has been permanent. (Laila – Week 5 16:29-17:03)

Ultimately, Laila embraces the queer art of failure by attempting “the impossible, the improbable, the unlikely, and the unremarkable” (Halberstam 88), conceiving of other ways of being and new models of living that lean into and feed off failure. Despite numerous setbacks, disappointments, and punishments, Laila retains a willful determination to escape. Her queer failures fuel her willfulness, as described by Ahmed, and vice versa. She is “unwilling to be seated at the table of happiness,” “unwilling to get along, unwilling to preserve an idea of happiness” and success (Ahmed 2).

### 3. LAILA'S APOLLONIAN GAZE FROM THE OVERLOOK

Laila's life is tightly regimented and restricted by both societal control and the watchful eye of her grandmother, who oversees every aspect of her activities. Rhonda's strictness serves as a coping mechanism aimed at protecting her granddaughter from the harsh and vicious realities of American misogynoir.<sup>10</sup> The pressure of striving for admission to an Ivy League school further adds to her sense of discipline and constraint. In search of an escape from this suffocating environment, she finds solace in the nearby Baldwin Hills Scenic Overlook, a place she frequents both with her girlfriend Cara and on her own. The project site was slated to become a 230-home gated development until the 57 acres of parkland was acquired for public use. Through its utilization of water-efficient native plants and the incorporation of a recycled concrete climbing trail, the park gestures toward another space and another space of being (“Baldwin Hills”). Within this natural environment, where Laila feels safe and her grandmother's concerns regarding safety are alleviated, she discovers the freedom to explore her creativity and her queerness, all the while challenging the norms that confine her. At the Overlook, Laila and Cara break free from their highly surveilled and regulated lives:

Yeah. A few times, we figured out how to, like, meet up at the overlook. We'll just sit there and watch the city and come up with stories and poems and I mean, this girl is, like, so creative, Dr. Taylor. She has, like, notebooks of all of the stuff that we come up with, and sometimes it's funny, and we'll just, like, die laughing. And other times, it's just really, like, way out there. We'll just like let it flow. We'll create these whole lives and worlds and, sometimes, even make artwork to go along with it. (Laila – Week 2 9:24-10:00)

The Overlook grants her a sense of detachment from the pervasive modes of surveillance she encounters in her everyday life. This perspective allows her to

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<sup>10</sup> Misogynoir is a term coined by Moya Bailey in 2008 to “describe the anti-Black racist misogyny that Black women experience” as “a result of their simultaneous and interlocking oppression at the intersection of racial and gender marginalization” (1). Importantly, Dr. Taylor thinks that Laila's imagination is a coping strategy to deal with misogynoir.

evade the watchful gaze of those who seek to curb and regulate her actions. In Simone Browne's (21) terms, the Overlook becomes a symbol of "dark sousveillance," tactics used "to render one's self out of sight" and plot "imaginaries that are oppositional and that are hopeful for another way of being." In historical contexts, strategies of dark sousveillance were crucial for individuals seeking to escape slavery, using tools of social control such as plantation surveillance or city lantern laws in subversive ways (Browne 21). The bird's-eye view of the city from the Overlook holds particular significance for Laila.

When Laila visits the Overlook alone, she experiences a profound sense of liberation and connection to something beyond herself. The role of her imagination becomes crucial in this experience, as she physically looks down on the city but envisions herself floating, unbound by the constraints of the built environment. Up there, she perceives an "out-of-reach feeling" that she associates with God:

Sometimes, I go to the Overlook at night by myself to be there alone. And I just look at all of the lights across the city, the streetlights, house lights, lights of the cars on the 405, and, in a way, I feel like I've already hurled myself off of the Overlook. Except I'm not falling. I'm floating. And everything is so far away. Nothing can touch me. It's so intensely beautiful that I almost get too excited. Like, I can hear my heart beating in my ears, and I can feel it in my fingertips. It's both the feeling of being really high and deep underwater at the same time.<sup>11</sup> (Laila – Week 5 4:52- 5:39)

This act of floating represents her desire to escape from her regimented life and merge with the atmosphere, seeking a higher plane of existence. In the nighttime city, Laila finds an opportunity to shed "the creeping negative equity of the daytime and celebrate urban virtues, beauty in the ordinary" as well as to explore "the mysterious, the quiet, the secret and the itinerant" in all their glory (Dunn). While Nick Dunn's concept of nightwalking is usually associated with exploring the mysterious and secret aspects of the city, it is important to recognize that Laila's experience differs due to the racialized and gendered dynamics of her existence. Although she may not have the opportunity to stroll through the city streets at night due to safety concerns, at the Overlook, she can momentarily escape the restrictions of her daily life. From her vantage point at the Overlook, Laila feels unwatched and unencumbered by the surveillance and discipline placed upon her as a young Black woman. While her phone and credit card transactions may still trace her location, in that moment, she experiences a sense of detachment from the inequities of daily life under white supremacist heteropatriarchy. The beautifully illuminated cityscape fills her with joy, and she surrenders to the darkness while paradoxically basking in the

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<sup>11</sup> The sensation of being immersed deep underwater evokes the marine mammals that Black feminist Alexis Gumbs studies and connects with. Similarly, it brings to mind the protagonist of Octavia Butler's *Wild Seed*, who transforms into a dolphin during her Middle Passage journey. Laila's ecstatic soaring recalls the euphoric "high" induced by intoxicants, but also that of the ancestors who flew back to Africa, and their descendants, who understood the profound truth that, "If you surrendered to the air, you could ride it," as articulated by Morrison (337).

lights. In this profound moment of self-exploration, Laila sheds the compulsion to conform or perform. The Overlook becomes a space of temporary liberation and self-discovery, allowing her to transcend the limitations and possessiveness of her everyday life.

In Michel De Certeau's "Walking in the City," he distinguishes between the "ordinary practitioners of the city" and the urban voyeur. The former are the individuals who live "down below" and navigate the city's spaces through walking, creating an urban "text" with their movements without being able to read it (93). These individuals, normally associated with the flâneur, subvert the visual and theoretical constructions of urban space and make use of unseen spaces through their walking practices. The latter are the urban voyeurs who take pleasure in "seeing the whole" and "totalizing" the complexity of the city from a privileged vantage point, like the observation deck of the World Trade Center (De Certeau 92). Surprisingly, Laila's panorama of the city from the Overlook fits more the totalizing, voyeuristic gaze of the voyeur than that of the ordinary practitioner of the flâneur. However, it is no contradiction to think about the flâneur in terms of the dialectic of movement and stopping. From the writings of nineteenth century writers, it is not only clear that the flâneur moved at a tortoise-like speed but that he also stopped by to minutely examine the displays of goods or survey shoppers seated before the doors of cafés (Larousse qtd. in Benjamin *Arcades* 451). In his old age, Victor Hugo observed the city from the top of a public omnibus still reserved for men (Benjamin *Arcades* 432). Similarly, after climbing up the trail to the Overlook, Laila engages in a form of "panoramic pleasure of peripatetic flânerie" (Buck-Morss 102). She revels in the view of the cityscape without being subjected to its hustle and bustle, noisy crowds, or microaggressions.

As we mentioned previously, the fantasy of reaching the peak of Mount Tacoma symbolizes Laila's desire to see endlessly and feel untouchable. Now we see that the Overlook offers her a vantage point over the city, evoking a sense of invincibility and excitement from the beauty vibrating in the air. For Laila, heights such as the Overlook and mountain peaks represent a quest for romantic ideals of beauty, permanence, and love. Denis Cosgrove's concept of "Apollo's eye" captures the paradoxical nature of Laila's yearnings for heights: "Apollo embodies a desire for wholeness and a will to power, a dream of transcendence and an appeal to radiance. The Apollonian eye is synoptic and omniscient, intellectually detached" (2). While the Apollonian gaze (like that of the flâneur) is inscribed as male, western, imperial, global, and universalizing, I employ it here to characterize Laila's God's eye-view: "The Apollonian gaze, which pulls diverse life on earth into a vision of unity, is individualized, a divine and mastering view from a single perspective. That view is at once empowering and visionary, implying ascent from the terrestrial sphere into the zones of planets and stars" (Cosgrove 12). For Laila, this individualized, unified, visionary, divine view is empowering because it allows her to escape from a life and world where she is relegated to the role of the object, ordered and controlled. Laila's affinity for heights serves as a reprieve from such horizontally limited perspectives and inflicted violences. In one of her sessions, she recounts a recurring

fantasy where she must flee with her grandmother and drive her Cadillac Escalade through a barricade to save herself and her grandmother from a white militia guy, recalling the “panic of needing to get away” (Laila – Week 2 16:27-16:29). Earlier, she explains that though her schoolmates have not come up on her, “that psychotic bullshit is deeply embedded within their heart,” “they constantly do it in every one of their actions.” While no one has threatened or harassed her yet, she feels like the “world is like a fucking hate crime”; she expects racial violence all the time, suffering from the tension, the worrying, “the fucking stress” (Laila – Week 2 14:00-14:24). Contrary to the sciences of geometry or geography, visual arts or literature in service of the Apollonian vision, Laila’s aim is not to master or colonize the globe (Cosgrove 22), but to remove herself from the stresses inflicted by racial capitalism and break the chains of objectification. Laila’s “magic mountain” is the reverse of Thomas Mann’s: for her, life down below means being “trapped in some never-ending capitalist, bullshit fucking parade” (Laila – Week 3 18:49-19:07). In contrast, the “high” of seeing the city below while remaining hidden from it brings her immense pleasure, placing her atop the world detached from its claims on her. In Cosgrove’s words, “To achieve the global view is to lose the bonds of the earth, to escape the shackles of time, and to dissolve the contingencies of daily life for a universal moment of reverie and harmony” (20). Hers is not a “lust for material possession, power, and authority” but is driven by a desire for “metaphysical speculation, religious aspiration, or poetic sentiment” (Cosgrove 22). Like Octavia Butler’s Lauren Olamina, who says that “the Destiny of Earthseed is to take root among the stars,” Laila aspires to rise above the earth (77). Her distanced gaze is “thus placed in dialogue with cosmic harmony and transcendental vision” embraced by the Latin *somnium*, closest to the English reverie, “the sense of imaginative dreaming long associated with rising over the earth” (Cosgrove 45, 20). If Laila’s Apollonian gaze is used for the purpose of practicing imaginative dreaming, it appears that the binary between the real and the fantasy has been transcended.

Her reverie linked to soaring above the earth allows her to transcend normative boundaries and discover new dimensions of her identity and relationship with Cara. When discussing Cara, she often avoids the embodied, sensory, and sexual aspects of love, favoring instead a connection rooted in asexual, idealized, and romantic notions of union. She characterizes their bond as an “us,” invoking the non-sexual intimacy between blood siblings, asserting that their connection is “deeper than sex,” “[p]arts that weren’t supposed to touch, touch” (Laila – Week 2 20:30, 20:41-20:47). Seeking alternatives to the status quo, Laila turns to heights, finding that the Apollonian perspective provides her with a different sense of geographic possibility and practice. Climbing the Overlook, she experiences ascension: “From the Latin *ascendere*, to climb. To rise to a higher, more powerful position” (Laila – Week 5 5:42-5:54). This Apollonian ascent enables Laila to transcend her psychic and physical limitations, exploring her sexuality and Self (in Jungian terms) in new and liberating ways. For instance, when she imagines her train journey from Cusco to Machu Picchu, she envisions a “rushing river” and “incredible mountain vistas,” leaning in to kiss Cara, and becoming “eternal” (Laila – Week 4 15:01-15:53). Whether real or imagined, the Apollonian gaze fosters a sense of geographic

possibility beyond the cramped spaces of control down below, opening up new avenues for imagining her own identity and place in the world.

#### 4. THE QUEER FAILURE OF SELF-DISCOVERY: ASCENDING MACHU PICCHU IN THE AGE OF CAPITALISM

Laila's desire to ascend vertically is interrogated in her therapy sessions with Dr. Taylor. When Dr. Taylor tries to clarify the details of their planned trip, Laila becomes agitated, "You know, if you don't believe that I need to get the hell outta here, then one day, you're gonna wake up, and Cara and I? We're gonna be fucking gone" (Laila – Week 2 22:56-23:03). Laila feels misunderstood because she sees the trip as a concrete plan instead of just an illusion and takes pride in the level of preparation she has put into it. Laila explains that they plan to fly to Mexico City, spend a night at a Courtyard Marriott near the airport, then take a flight to Lima the next morning. From Lima, they will fly to Cusco, a smaller city where they will acclimatize to the altitude before taking a train to Aguascalientes, an even smaller town. Finally, they will proceed to Machu Picchu (Laila – Week 3 3:58-4:29). As explained previously, Laila's excitement stems from her love of heights and enchantment with the Apollonian gaze, which makes Machu Picchu an ideal destination for her. However, Dr. Taylor expresses concerns about the way Laila talks about leaving, couched as it is in so much "fantasy language" (Laila – Week 4 19:55-19:58). She worries about how Laila would react if their plans did not work out as expected, as Laila seems fixated on the "happily-ever-after of it all" (Laila – Week 4 19:59), indicating her focus on the climax of reaching the peak rather than the inevitable descent from it. Dr. Taylor wants to ensure that Laila is prepared for not only potential setbacks during their trip, as she senses that Laila's Apollonian vision of their journey may be idealized. Dr. Taylor's intuition proves correct when, the following week, Laila reveals the end of what she thought was a budding same-sex relationship. While Laila believed she and Cara shared a mutual vision for their trip to Peru, Cara laughed at her and dismissed the journey as mere fantasy. This failure enables Laila to break free from the restrictions of normative romance, and step "into the unregulated territories of failure, loss, and unbecoming" (Halberstam 7).

In what is perhaps their most powerful therapy session, Dr. Taylor helps Laila confront the internalized violence and control she has experienced from her family and culture at large. Significantly, Dr. Taylor tells Laila that, in spite of her lack of expertise in somatic therapy, "I can't help feeling this, this pull to keep you grounded. In the present, in your body, in this room" (Laila – Week 5 16:52-17:00). Contrary to ways of thinking about the Apollonian gaze as a means of evading infrastructures of racism, Dr. Taylor admonishes Laila not to soar, not to leave the ground. "Just be. Be here. Be you," she tells her patient (Laila – Week 5 7:54-7:58). The summoning is a call to be here, to surrender to the urgency of the here that, according to Kevin Quashie, may mirror or complement the urgency of the political but that is distinct from it ("The Matter of Black Sentences"). The urgency of this here, this now, this place and time, enables Laila to experience herself as an

individual and grapple with her inner life. Therefore, Dr. Taylor urges Laila to stop pretending and to be herself, which triggers a defensive reaction at first. Dr. Taylor asks Laila simple questions about her preferences, such as her favorite foods, color, or music. Laila says she doesn't know and "can't, like, sit down and, like, shoot the shit" (Laila – Week 5 8:48-8:52). At this point, Dr. Taylor directs Laila to get out of her head and to drop down into her body by walking around the room. As Laila begins circling, Brooke uses somatics to connect Laila with her body and through her body, engage her in her dreams, desires, feelings, and actions. As summarized by Afrofuturist writer, activist, and facilitator Adrienne Maree Brown (111-12), "Somatics is a practice of mind/body connection that explores internal and relational physical perception and experience. Somatics teaches us to center, to find a place within ourselves that we can return to no matter what condition we're in, a place from which to make intentional choices about how we want to show up, lead, and hold." The practice of being invited into a space free from harm helps Laila feel into her likes and dislikes, show different aspects of herself, and trust her gut feelings, even though her grandmother's control has made her doubt herself. At times, Laila pauses; when she stops moving, she gets in her head and struggles to speak her truth. However, Dr. Taylor urges her not to overthink, to keep moving and to lean into the sensations of her body. Then, Dr. Taylor challenges Laila with more profound questions, such as her best quality and biggest fear. Laila bravely admits that she considers herself "mystical" and fears not having what it takes to succeed in life: "I'm not built for this life somehow. I just like the places I go in my head in my head so much better. The escape" (Laila – Week 5 10:38-10:44). Here, Laila is intuitively making connections between capitalism, common sense, and success, and opting instead for the counterhegemonic failure, escape, and fantasy. When Dr. Taylor asks Laila what she would do if she knew she could not fail, Laila's response is enigmatic. She speaks of taking a risk and doing something *for herself* for once, but she remains vague about what that would entail. She mentions that she would quit, hinting at a desire to escape her current life and the constraints that have been imposed on her.

At this point, Dr. Taylor calls Laila's attention to the fact that she has been moving about in a pattern. Following Jungian methods, which encourage patients to externalize their fantasies through creative expression, Dr. Taylor invites Laila to draw the pattern she has been walking unconsciously. Laila, who has always had an active and creative imagination, closes her eyes as she goes inwards and easily sketches the pattern. This method resonates with Laila, allowing her to participate in her own healing process. In Jung's words, "The patient can make himself [or herself] creatively independent through this method... He [or she] is no longer dependent on his [or her] dreams or on his [or her] doctor's knowledge; instead, by painting himself [or herself] he [or she] gives shape to himself" (Jung qtd. in Stevens 376). As soon as Laila traces the pattern, however, she crumples up the paper and denigrates the exercise as "stupid." To dissolve Laila's resistance and facilitate the analysis, Dr. Taylor employs Jungian ideas about symbols as visual manifestations of the unconscious mind. For Jung, symbols are "indispensable to healing and to the individuation of the Self," and "creative work with symbols is, therefore, the key

to successful personal development and therapeutic practice” (Stevens 304-5, 305-6). After some hesitation, Laila relents and identifies the inward-moving spiral she drew as the symbol of Pachamama, the Mother Earth in Inca mythology: “It moves inwards. That’s our inner journey that guides us” (Laila – Week 5 14:36-14:42). Laila, who worries that she likes the elsewhere and elsewhen better than the here and now, is being guided to the sacred place from which she will be able to relate to God. According to Cecilia Titizano’s Indigenous feminist reading, Mama Pacha is “God the Mother, out of which multiplicity unfolds” (154); she embodies the principle of relationality and the vibrant force of life, giving and sustaining life. Through this realization, Laila’s strolling becomes an act of creation, activating her inner knowing, agency, and will. Her connection to Mama Pacha and the sacred geometric pattern reflects Laila’s spiritual process of awakening and helps Laila bring together fantasy and reality, allowing her to understand her attraction to Machu Picchu as “mystical materialism” (Titizano 151). While Cara saw Peru as just a made-up story, Laila perceives the Sacred Valley and Machu Picchu as inescapably real and spiritually healing geographic sites for her mindbody and spirit. As Arnaldo Quispe states (qtd. in Titizano 153), “[Mama Pacha] is a sacred entity, at the same time, a mediator and a harmonizer of life energies above and below.” The guiding presence of Mama Pacha leads Laila deep inside herself, allowing her to understand her desire for an integrated mindbody/spirit.

In this captivating scene, the spatial nuances stemming from the gendered and racialized portrayal of the flâneur come to the fore. For the white male flâneur, the “private world of domestic life is dull” and confining (Tester 2). This feeling of confinement compels him to seek meaning in the public sphere. Nevertheless, his act of traversing the city streets assumes a privilege that eludes most Black women. The stark dichotomy drawn between interior and exterior realms, however, might be a product of imagining the flâneur as a white male traversing an urban landscape. Even the Parisian arcades or galleries—central to the flâneur’s leisurely saunters—can be viewed as a fusion of interior and exterior spaces. In *The Arcades Project*, Benjamin (63) notes the “Similarity of the arcades to the indoor arenas in which one learned to ride a bicycle ... [and in which] halls the figure of the woman assumed its most seductive aspect: as cyclist.” In a similar defying of the division between inside and outside, Laila finds herself in search of meaning and transformation within the private world of her sessions, tracing pathways within Dr. Taylor’s opulent, aesthetically vital living room. Laila’s capacity to tread these trails as a Black flâneuse rests upon the safety and liberation she experiences in her therapist’s presence. In the confines of a small therapist’s office, Laila’s ability to move freely would have been restricted. However, within the vast expanse of this sunlit space, where the atrium, living room, kitchen, and the adjoining outdoor deck seamlessly merge with one another, Laila accesses a flâneur-like experience. Reminiscent of many LA’s ranch style residences, the house’s design includes an entire wall of windows. Through this expansive glass expanse, viewers are treated to a breathtaking patio view, lush greenery, and the downtown LA skyline. The result is a powerful

dissolution of the boundaries between outdoors and indoors.<sup>12</sup> As Laila rises to take a walk, her motion dissolves the outdoors and indoors boundary. Laila's embodiment of the Black flâneuse within this Black space imparts a profound spatial dimension and depth both within and beyond the house. It carries significance that the vista aligns with that from the Overlook, located a mile to the west in a straight line. Her walking serves as a reclamation of spatial agency, effectively challenging the confines and constraints that have historically hindered the movements of Black women. Her improvisation encapsulates the inner and outer, the local and global, psychological and physical, coalescing into the spiraling geographic symbol of Pacha Mama. According to Shields (77), the "failure of flânerie is that it does not solve the alienation of the flâneur himself," a critique that does not fully apply to the transformative flâneuserie Laila enacts. Unlike the conventional flâneur, her act of walking does not perpetuate a façade of complete alienation; rather, within the safe confines of the interior space, it becomes a conduit for her authentic self to be revealed to her therapist and, ultimately, to herself.

In the paradoxical spirit of flânerie, this self-revelation is succeeded by the resurgence of her alienation, as Laila abruptly withdraws and shuts down at the conclusion of her session. Dr. Taylor's inquiry about her suicidal thoughts feels to Laila like a betrayal, causing her to dismiss therapy as "white nonsense" and walk out (Laila – Week 5 19:00). Still, it is safe to assume that treading the sacred path has already awakened the force of Mama Pacha within her, instilling in her the determination to make yet another attempt to transform her imaginative dreaming into reality. By the following session, Laila vanishes, and Rhonda visits Dr. Taylor in search of her granddaughter. It is soon discovered that Laila has left her cell behind, bidding farewell to the Overlook through a cryptic Instagram post with the Latin caption "*Ave atque vale*," meaning hail and farewell. Dr. Taylor initiates a welfare check, and relief washes over the two women as Laila calls Dr. Taylor from her Airbnb in Lima. Laila's desires have led her beyond confinement, away from racialized settler colonial US geographies. Laila's journey abroad differs from her distracted, detached, and leisurely strolling and driving in some of the priciest zip codes within the Los Angeles metropolitan areas. She is alone but intoxicated with newfound freedom in her dream city. This time, she leaves no traces in her wake. She has sold her elite, high-fashion brands to acquire cash and purchase a new iPhone, so her grandmother is unable to track her movements. Upon reaching Peru, she goes beyond the imaginary status of her getaways.

Her inescapable attraction pulls her towards the Inca civilization, making her exploration of the 15th-century Inca fortress a form of flâneuserie. Without a doubt, Machu Picchu stands as a prominent fixture within Peru's bustling tourist industry, attracting approximately 500,000 visitors and generating a substantial \$40 million in

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<sup>12</sup> Production designer Catherine Smith highlights the team's search for the perfect view from Baldwin Hills. To enhance the authenticity of this view, they used actual footage of dynamic elements such as "the twinkling of the lights, the wind blowing, or an airplane going by" (qtd. in McHenry).



revenue annually. The site's transformation from a sacred space to an obligatory stop on the global tourist map epitomizes the "magical, mystical" branding of Peruvian identity, as orchestrated for the world stage (Shullenberger 317). The narrative of Hiram Bingham's "discovery" of the ancient Inca citadel, along with his imperial portrayal of Machu Picchu as the clandestine sanctuary of the Virgins of the Sun, has been widely disseminated and it captured the collective imagination. Nevertheless, as Shullenberger (325) points out, the core themes of "Bingham's Machu Picchu narrative – purity, preservation, concealment, and revelation" – harmonize with the fundamental tenets of both the Cuzco and Lima *indigenista* groups. Additionally, Machu Picchu emerges as a symbol of the opulence and purity of Inca culture, as well as Latin American identity, within the works of writers like Neruda and Guevara (Shullenberger). As we can see, there's no easy way to disentangle Machu Picchu's aura of mystery from its commercialization through ruin gazing. Its dual status as a symbol of pre-Columbian Indigenous heritage and Peruvian identity clashes with its role as a lucrative asset for both the state and private tourist industry interests. Much like the shop windows within Benjamin's descriptions of the Parisian arcades, Machu Picchu serves as the city street does for the flâneur. The ruins operate allegorically, narrating tales of abundance and its accompanying costs. They convey the cyclical nature of wealth and the perpetual flux of capital. They become "a fetish, a symbol of luxury" that transform for tourists the "space into a glittering dream of relaxation, leisure, recreation, and buoyancy" (Halberstam 111). Nevertheless, these ancient ruins embody "a perversion of desire, the decay of the commodity, the queerness of the disassociation of use from value ... [becoming] available to queer signification as a symbolic site of failure, loss, rupture, disorder, incipient chaos, and the desire animated by these states nonetheless" (Halberstam 111).

Laila's position with respect to the site is equally contradictory and ambivalent. Her desire to visit the archaeological site is a far cry from mere touristic checklist fulfillment, at the same time, unquestionably, her financial resources position her within an exploitative dynamic with the site, akin to the spirit of bourgeois / imperial / global flânerie. Her capacity for recreational travel is predicated on financial resources; as she says to Brooke, "when we first get there, I just want it to be, like about exploring. About hiking. About Machu Picchu. About taking it in, taking each other in" (Laila – Week 4 19:31-19:41). Laila's engagement with tourism exists within a complex interplay with local communities and the environment, and unfortunately contributes to the deterioration of the site due to the impact of tourism. Even so, this failure to align with Indigenous ways of life while desiring just that aligns with the traditional concept of flânerie as "a harking back and a nostalgia for a slower and more definite world" (Tester 15). In resonance with Benjamin's theory of the aura, Laila's quest leads her toward the enchantment of distance and permanence, and the ceremonial essence of the aura within the unapproachable and distant ruins of ancient Indigeneity. For, approaching Laila's relationship with Machu Picchu from the perspective of the aura, the aura signifies the original, authentic, ritualistic presence of the work of art, eliminated in capitalism. Pertinent to this discussion is the link between the auratic experiences and mountains. Benjamin illustrates the

aura of natural objects through the example of mountains: “If, while resting on a summer afternoon, you follow with your eyes a mountain range on the horizon . . ., you experience the aura of those mountains” (Benjamin, “Work of Art” 222-23). Flâneuserie for Laila is thus the residue and last refuge of that “primordial shudder in the age of reification” (Adorno 79) — what Theodor Adorno might call the longing for non-capitalist, relational forms of social life aligned with nature and Indigenous worldviews.

Given that the series’ focus on therapy and Dr. Taylor’s use of Jungian concepts and analysis, along with Laila’s familiarity with *Man and his Symbols*, Laila’s fascination with mountain heights is worth examining from a psychoanalytic perspective, particularly through a Jungian lens. As we have seen, the archetypal image of greatest significance in Laila’s fantasies is the mountain. In Carl Jung’s dreams and those of his patients, as well as in various mythologies and epics, “a mountain often symbolizes a place of revelation, where transformation and change may take place” (*Man and his Symbols* 293). In Jungian theory, climbing the mountain represents the first stage of the life journey, symbolizing an “ascent from the unconscious to an elevated point of view of the ego – i.e. to an increased consciousness” (*Man and his Symbols* 278). For instance, Jung analyzes the “traveler” in Dante’s *Divine Comedy*, who searches for a path and climbs the mountain he encounters. In an archetypal sense, Laila’s voyage to Peru represents her “individuation process,” the ultimate goal of Jungian analysis (*Man and his Symbols* 277). Machu Pichu, quite literally a “city on the mountain,” serves as an archetypal symbol. According to Jung, “The city, corresponding in its ground plan to a mandala, represents that ‘region of the soul’ in the middle of which the Self (the psyche’s innermost center and totality) has its abode” (*Man and his Symbols* 293). In this way, Laila’s aspiration to visit Machu Picchu can be seen as a pilgrimage towards the center of her own psyche, as confirmed by the symbol of the inward-moving spiral she traces with her feet and draws in Brooke’s living room.

Having said all that, the series refrains from portraying Laila’s actual movements in Lima, Cusco, the Sacred Valley, and eventually, the hidden city of Machu Picchu. The potential of these future modes of movement is, however, encapsulated in her presence during a FaceTime call with Brooke. Once more, the Benjaminian stroll into the uncharted territories of queer failure takes place within the interior. As previously, the interior space is not separate from the exterior public spaces of the city and the presence of the Andes. The windows in her Airbnb offer breathtaking views of the bustling city and the mountainous landscape. The sun’s gentle embrace and the cool breeze infuse the scene with otherwise possibilities. As Laila moves around her room, adjusting her iPhone to share the view with Brooke, the self-consciousness of the poseur, the flâneur who “is out to see and be seen” dissipates (Shields 65). Laila stands authentic and grounded, her power rooted in self and connection, basking in the support flowing from the maternal figure before her. Similar to Brooke, Laila initially exudes an air of luxury, adorning herself in high-end fashion garments or eye-catching accessories from labels like Chanel and Balenciaga. Initially, her eclectic fashion sense embraces daring color palettes,

featuring statement pieces and hoop earrings, which express the unique style of the Black femme flâneur. However, as her therapy sessions become more intense and Laila faces her fears, there is a noticeable shift in her wardrobe. During weeks four and five of her therapy journey, she wears a simpler, all-black attire, mirroring her vulnerability and grief. In Lima, however, she opts for the comfort of a white, loose-fitting, genderless hemp shirt, symbolizing the birth of her authentic self, liberty, and courage.

A compelling connection emerges here between flâneuserie and fashion. Laila's penchant for flaunting the latest fashion can be seen as an expression of commodity fetishism. If the male flâneur's latest incarnation is the "sandwich-man," then the female counterpart can be envisioned as the fashionable woman-as-doll, eliciting the desire for exchange value, which lies at the core of capitalism (Benjamin, *Arcades* 448). As Benjamin aptly puts it, "Fashion always stands in opposition to the organic. Not the body but the corpse is the most perfect object for its art. It defends the rights of the corpse before the living being, which it couples to the inorganic world. The fetishism that succumbs to the sex appeal of the commodity is its vital nerve" (*Arcades* 894). Caught within the clutches of racial capitalism, alienated within her own femme body, and tortured by racial trauma, Laila utilizes transient fashion trends to construct utopian visions. Yet, even as her fashion choices epitomize the "eternal recurrence of the new," they manifest in the (mass reproduced) guise of "the ever-always-the-same" (Benjamin, "Central Park" 46, 48). This line of argument extends to Laila's fascination with luxury cars. The higher the price tag on the car, the more irresistible its allure, the more she revels in taking it for a ride – a contemporary version of the flâneur who took the concept of marketability itself on a stroll (Benjamin, *Arcades* 448). Laila's passion for driving, akin to her fashion, serves as a form of dialogue with her body, "even with putrefaction," as noted by Benjamin (*Arcades* 833), given her numerous and potentially perilous accidents behind the wheel. As she undergoes somatic therapy, Laila embarks on a journey to disentangle her identity from the capitalist notion of fashion. She abandons her Bentley by the roadside and sells some of her luxury items.<sup>13</sup> Symbolic of her transformed connection with objects, Laila's choice to carry her mother's ring reflects a shift from seeing it as a mere commodity to preserving its aura. Laila names her mother as a hero and acknowledges that her mother left when it was necessary. Although she claims to be getting rid of all physical things because she doesn't need them, of course, she does not discard everything. Visiting sites like Machu Pichu allows her to gain distance from capitalistic environments where fashion and labels dominate. Thus, Laila disengages from the inorganic world of commodities to immerse herself in the realm of living beings.

There is an inclination to interpret Laila's escape as endorsing a straight narrative of achievement, success, and personal realization. However, such an interpretation

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<sup>13</sup> While I emphasize Laila's willful resistance to racial capitalism, it is equally true that her capacity to be a flâneuse is contingent on her family's prosperity, specifically, the sizable amount of cash she receives from selling her designer pieces.

would inadvertently overlook the role of capitalism in her journey of self-discovery, slighting the impossibility of such a climax and the inevitability of a certain amount of alienation in a racial capitalist world. It would also sever the intrinsic link between blackqueerness and its embrace of failure and negativity, leading to an overly optimistic and progressive understanding of queerness, as seen in cheerful portrayals of lesbians, gays, and queers in shows like *The L Word* (Halberstam 98) or *Queer Eye*. Moreover, this approach would ignore the intricate connections between blackness and failure, nothingness/non-being, or death. As Kevin Quashie puts it, “Today there is no reconciling the facts of our lives, which seem tethered to death, and the case for black aliveness. Both have to be true at the same time” (*Black Aliveness* 13). Following Quashie, the irreconcilability between Black life and death, also familiar to us in the form of a debate between Black optimism and pessimism, recommends the figure of the flâneur as a way to theorize this irreconcilability. When Laila decides to flee, she staunchly refuses to relinquish her failures and deviations, failing to comply with heteropatriarchal norms and white entitlements. Laila embraces Brooke’s message that for her *nothing is impossible* as she attempts to reconstruct a blackqueer life along different lines. By deliberately refraining from explicitly depicting Laila’s flâneur-like exploration along the Inca Trail, a potent statement is made about the futility of her pursuit and her quest for liberation in the world of racial capitalism. Fred Moten, in conversation with Saidiya Hartman, underscores the impossibility of escape: “[Escape] is an activity. It’s not an achievement. . . . You don’t ever get escaped. . . . And what that means is what you’re escaping from is always after you. It’s always on you” (32:59-33:15). While one might be tempted to interpret Laila’s journey to Peru as the triumphant culmination of a series of setbacks, it better aligns with the ethos of (black)queer failure—an approach that finds significance in “the impossible, the improbable, the unlikely, and the unremarkable” despite their inherent unattainability within the current status quo (Halberstam 88).

At that moment, in the season finale, Brooke mentions Laila to her partner while slicing a baguette. She mentions in passing that Laila sent her a selfie from Oropesa, the Peruvian city of bread just outside Cusco. Presumably *en route* to Machu Picchu from Cusco, Laila is deviating from the straight, probable tourist path, opting instead for losing herself on a less-travelled path. Her blackqueer flâneuserie is a practice that “revels in the detours, twists, and turns through knowing and confusion” (Halberstam 15). In Oropesa, she probably tastes *chuta*, a distinctive large round disc-shaped sweet bread infused with the scent of eucalyptus. This bread combines Andean mysticism with colonial traditions, irreplicable because it is made with water from the *Apu Pachutusan* and blessings from the Virgin of Carmen. Perhaps in anticipation of Machu Picchu’s aura and its inevitable “loss,” she embraces the queer art of failure, finding joy in the unexpected, the impromptu, and “the acceptance of the finite” (Halberstam 187).

## 5. THE BLACK FLÂNEUSE AS “ONE AMONG THE CHORUS”

While the series (and my essay) foregrounds Laila’s seemingly individualistic flâneuserie, aligning with the classical conception of flâneur, I suggest that it also seeks to reimagine Black flâneuserie as inherently collective. Laila’s final session underscores that the expression of flight through fantasy extends beyond individual narratives; it paints a collective portrait of Black women’s waywardness. It leaves us with a portrait of what Hartman might call the “wayward chorus,” namely, Black women’s straying, erring, willful ways. The motives for these real and imaginary flights—the pursuit of mobility, the craving for liberation, the aspiration for more, and the need for a breathing space—are shared by Laila, her mother, her grandmother, and Brooke. As though by design, in Laila’s absence, the therapy session turns into an exploration of her grandmother’s distraught feelings and defense mechanisms. Dr. Taylor informs Rhonda that Laila is very much her grandmother’s granddaughter, as she challenges Rhonda’s notion of Black excellence, revealing it as a fantasy “that some abstract definition of excellence, defined by whiteness, no less, is the key to our freedom” (Laila – Week 6 6:00-6:08). Dr. Taylor lays bare the psychological toll this belief takes on Black individuals, the weight of the assumption that their excellence is the prerequisite for the recognition and respect for their humanity. Dr. Taylor presses Rhonda to release Laila from this definition of success, to give in to her granddaughter’s willfulness and indulge her heart’s wayward stirrings. Rhonda’s anger towards Brooke for this revelation is countered by Dr. Taylor’s insight that anger is easier to feel than fear—an insight that resonates with Rhonda, who is concerned for Laila’s well-being, as she believes Laila has gone missing. Laila’s incoming call shifts Rhonda’s state from worry, anger, and resistance to a vulnerable stance, marked by a quest for guidance. Brooke’s response, a simple yet powerful “Listen,” holds the wisdom of Black feminist practices—a call to be present, to hear, and to engage with Laila’s needs (Laila – Week 6 21:35). This call to “listen” echoes the one directed at Laila earlier, summoning her to be present and connect with the feelings arising in her body. At this pivotal point, the interconnectedness of Black women’s healing becomes evident. Laila’s wayward pursuit of flânerie aligns with Rhonda’s need to actualize her dreams. The reconciliation between granddaughter and grandmother is paralleled by Laila’s acceptance of her mother’s need to leave her when she was only a child.

Among the trio of women, only Rhonda has lived experience of racialized poverty and thus a different kind of appreciation of generational wealth. Rhonda eloquently articulates the link between privilege and fantasy, highlighting that Jamal’s success has bestowed upon his daughter the luxury of dreaming:

Laila, being all in her head all the time. In some ways, that’s success. She’s not stuck somewhere thinking about where her next meal is coming from. Not counting the hours before the power’s cut off. You think anybody ever asked me what my hopes were when I was growing up? They’re gonna care what a half-starved little Black girl out of east Texas in the ‘60s wants out of life? (Laila – Week 6 13:34-13:57)

Rhonda excavates the “success” inherent in Laila’s imaginative escapades; she points out that the “distracted observation and dream-like reverie” characteristic of Laila’s flâneur-like stance hinge on privilege (Buck-Morss 103). While Laila’s therapy ostensibly addresses her defiance against her controlling grandmother, the Green family’s intergenerational trauma traces its roots to structurally mandated suffering. In turn, the reconciliation between Laila and Rhonda helps Brooke come to terms with her own fear and grief, related to her mother’s alcoholism and premature death, and the loss of her son and father. Honoring Laila’s willful desire for freedom and Rhonda’s anguish, which stems from the intersection of poverty and misogyny, empowers Brooke to find forgiveness for her parents’ inability to love her well. In an episode beyond the scope of my current analysis, Dr. Taylor, the therapist, guides Brooke, the patient, toward reckoning and sitting with her pain.

Initially perceiving Laila as “the problem,” surveilling and limiting her movements, her grandmother undergoes a transformation by the conclusion of the arc, revealing a newfound receptivity to Laila’s geographic sojourns. I do not propose viewing all three women as flâneurs; for only Laila is engaged in ceaseless efforts to forge a physical escape, however, it is crucial to recognize each Black woman as a wayward one striving for freedom. Rhonda grapples with the repercussions of “economic exclusion, material deprivation, racial confinement, and social dispossession,” while Brooke and Laila feel trapped by the constraints of Black excellence, respectability, and parental visions of success they do not fit into (Hartman xv). As observed by Brooke’s boyfriend, Brooke identifies with Laila because both of them are always leaving: Brooke periodically abandons her partner and reality through alcohol, while Laila repeatedly escapes by physically walking away from home. Brooke recognizes Laila’s rebellion and shares with Laila her teenage pregnancy, sensing a shared desire to defy social norms. However, it is only through Rhonda’s words that Brooke can finally fathom her father’s struggles and appreciate the Taylors’ “success”—access to a good neighborhood, quality education and healthcare, and professional opportunities. While season four explicitly rejects the notion of a “cure” or a happily-ever-after ending for characters, the season finale culminates in Brooke’s call to her sponsor announcing her readiness for rehab.

As we envision Laila, the flâneuse, enjoying herself in the throng, the bustle, the ebb and flow of city life and making her way towards the train station to secure her ticket to the next town, we sense that she is being propelled onward by a collective force—including not only her mother and grandmother, but also Brooke, and a multitude of other Black women who share her willful quest for freedom. In stark contrast to the white male flâneur’s ambivalent rapport with the crowd, Laila, in the words of Hartman, assumes the role of “one among the chorus” (Hartman 301). Her individual existence intertwines with those of other Black women who shared her flights of fancy, craving for beauty, and lust for the temporary revelry of the Apollonian gaze, all while carving unconventional routes through the terrain. Unlike the self-indulgent meandering of the male flâneur—“the man *of* the crowd as opposed to the man *in* the crowd” (Tester 3)—the wayward ambitions that propel these women form a connective thread, enabling their movements to synchronize

into an assembly. Laila does not lose herself in the crowd; instead, she is uplifted and carried forward by the chorus's willful determination to wander, err and stray, and embrace the openness of its becoming. The chorus becomes the conduit for a different narrative about Black flâneuserie, disrupting the thoroughly individuated, alienated orientation of the male flâneur and suggesting the possibility of approaching Black flâneuserie from the standpoint of an individual and a collective. Echoing Hartman (348) once more, "The chorus propels transformation. It is an incubator of possibility, an assembly of sustaining dreams of otherwise." Thus, Black flâneuserie, even when practiced alone — such as by Laila in Peru — gestures towards what lies ahead, a gathering of visions and perspectives yet to fully materialize, a queer futurity that is yet to come: "the time and place better than here; a glimpse of the earth not owned by anyone" (Hartman 349).

## 6. CONCLUSION

The classical concept of flânerie is fundamentally transformed in the context of the contemporary blackqueer flâneuse, who navigates a landscape fraught with greater risks and vulnerabilities. Wolfgang Schivelbusch emphasizes that classical flânerie is only viable when the flâneur faces minimal risk. He notes the necessity of locations "where the flâneur would not be exposed to the sight of carriages" and that provide "refuges from the vehicular traffic on the regular streets" (Schivelbusch qtd. in Tester 15). In "Le Dernier Flâneur" (1936), Edmund Jaloux marks the end of flânerie with the introduction of danger into cities. He states that a man who goes for a walk "ought not to have to concern himself with any hazards." Jaloux laments the fate of the flâneur who cannot collect his whimsical thoughts or follow inspiration without confronting dangers or taking numerous precautions (qtd. in Benjamin, *Arcades* 435). For the contemporary Black flâneuse, the vulnerability is even greater when ambling down the sidewalk or stopping to enjoy the sights on the street, as there is a continuous risk of violence. While spaces of absolute refuge, safety, and protection do not exist within racial capitalism, Laila's flâneuserie is grounded in the pursuit of invincibility, safety, and freedom. The blackqueer flâneuse is linked to the differential production of both real and imagined spaces, experiments with living amidst ongoing threats of enclosure, surveillance, and harm. This involves "specifically, the seeking out of alternative geographic options, and the coupling of geography with black matters, histories, knowledges, experiences, and resistances" (McKittrick, *Demonic Grounds* 92). In the series, these alternative geographic options include the ongoing project of imagining a different existence, experimenting with that different existence within the safe space of Brooke's house, and seeking it out on mountain tops and heights inside and outside the US.

Building on the challenges faced by the contemporary blackqueer flâneuse in navigating spaces of refuge and safety, a serious challenge to the conceptualization of contemporary flânerie is Benjamin's argument that capitalism has commodified the city, leaving "no spaces of mystery for the flâneur to observe" (Tester 13). This commodification is readily apparent in popular shows like *Selling Sunset*,

showcasing how the real estate market has eliminated such mysterious spaces in LA, converting communal land into private property, which is sold for profit and market-defined success. Laila, seeking mysterious territories of failure, loss, and unlearning, turns to nature in various locations, including Anaheim, Seattle, Baldwin Hills, and Peru. In her pursuit of refuge from the dual oppressions of misogyny and the relentless machinery of racial capitalism, Laila's ambulatory journeys reveal traces of the aura—the mysterious, the faraway, and the unapproachable. Before escaping the empty, homogenous geographies of “success” in the US, she uses her imagination to travel differently, even within captivity. Ultimately, she abandons her predominantly (sub)urban environment of “excellence,” “profit,” “privilege,” “private property,” and “productivity” in the US. Her flâneurie becomes “real” outside of the US, in the rugged Peruvian terrain, and particularly at the ancient ruins of Machu Picchu, evoking death, failure, and loss, but also the mystery, remembrance, and sociality of the Incas. The Peruvian hike becomes a profoundly embodied experience, a “pastoral return” to nature, recoded as a place of joy for the Black flâneuse, challenging historical environmental exclusion of African Americans (Dunning). At the same time, the paradoxes of Laila's privileged Black flâneuserie haunt the joys of her horizontal and vertical spatial wanderings, as her experience of the aura is enmeshed in capitalist tourism. While her flâneuserie forges possible paths to thrive in an unsafe and uninhabitable world (Brown), her privilege threatens to reduce it to a mere trip to a “mystical” location by an affluent person. Therefore, instead of resisting the contradictions and shortcomings of her blackqueer flâneuserie, let us embrace and celebrate all of Laila's “inevitable fantastic failures” (Halberstam 228).

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## BECOMING VISIBLE: THOMAS MORE IN 16TH CENTURY PORTRAIT BOOKS

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*ABSTRACT.* While in England the memory of Thomas More had been erased from public life after his execution (6 June 1535), English Catholics exiled in the Spanish Netherlands preserved his figure and legacy. Furthermore, the inclusion of More's engraving in 16th-century portrait books of distinguished personalities—the so-called *virii illustres* genre—, contributed to the promotion of the famous English humanist in continental Europe. Soon, More's integrity and wisdom were extolled not only in works printed in Catholic countries but also in other territories that no longer accepted Rome's authority. This paper analyses the depiction (both image and text) of the English humanist in all these works. The visual and textual rhetoric of these engravings shows their mutual dependence.

*Keywords:* Thomas More, *virii illustres*, engravings, Holbein, Reformation, Physiognomy.

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## HACIÉNDOSE VISIBLE: TOMÁS MORO EN LOS LIBROS DE RETRATOS DEL SIGLO XVI

*RESUMEN.* Mientras que en Inglaterra el recuerdo de Tomás Moro había sido borrado de la vida pública tras su ejecución (6 de junio de 1535), los católicos ingleses exiliados en los Países Bajos españoles preservaron su figura y su legado. Además, la inclusión del grabado de Moro en los libros de retratos de personalidades ilustres del siglo XVI –el llamado género *virii illustres*–, contribuyó a la promoción del célebre humanista inglés en la Europa continental. Muy pronto, la integridad y sabiduría de Moro fueron exaltadas no sólo en obras impresas en países católicos, sino también en otros territorios que ya no aceptaban la autoridad de Roma. Este trabajo analiza la representación (tanto en imagen como en texto) del humanista inglés en todas estas obras. La retórica visual y textual de estos grabados muestra su mutua dependencia.

*Palabras clave:* Tomás Moro, virii illustres, grabados, Holbein, Reforma, Fisiognomía.

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

After the execution of Thomas More for high treason on July 6, 1535, the memory of Henry VIII's second chancellor disappeared from public life in England. Accounts of his death travelled throughout Europe, but for the general public he remained obscured. It was during the settlement of English Catholic exiles in the Spanish Netherlands after Elizabeth I's coronation in 1558 that the reputation of the late Chancellor became "an ever-widening influence" throughout the 16th century (Southern 17). The printing press was the vehicle used to spread More's reputation. Over one hundred Catholic works were published in English in Leuven and Antwerp before 1600 (Soetaert 537), catering to readers in both England and the Netherlands. Among these publications, several works by Thomas More were printed. The Latin works were issued in Leuven (1565).<sup>1</sup> John Fowler (1537-1579), a famous exiled English printer and "ardent admirer of More" (Schrickx 8), published in the same city the *Doctissima D. Thomae Mori* (1568), containing More's response to Lutheran advocate Johann Bugenhagen. Five years later, back in Antwerp Fowler reedited More's *A dialogue of comfort against tribulation*. These two works by the English publisher are relevant for this paper since both included the first portrait of Thomas More to be printed on the continent (Figures 1 and 1.1). The source of this woodcut image was Hans Holbein the Younger's famous portrait of Thomas More (Frick Collection in New York).<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The *Lucubrationes* (with More's most popular works to date, i.e. *Utopia*, the Epigrams and the translations from Lucian) had been published in Basel (1563).

<sup>2</sup> For more about the connection of this engraving with Holbein's More, see Morison (48).



Figure 1.



Figure 1.1.

English Catholic exiles had sought protection in the Spanish Netherlands, under Philip II's rule. These territories were a real powder keg, caught in the middle of the rising tension between Spain and Elizabeth I's England. After repressing the Dutch revolt (unofficially supported by the Tudor Queen), the Duke of Alba's army came closer to the British Isles than ever before. The prudent King might declare war on England, but Alba did not particularly favour this idea, conscious as he was of the importance that fluid commercial relations with England had for the Netherlands.

Thomas More's printed image was also known to readers through a very popular Renaissance genre, the *virii illustres*, which saw an unprecedented proliferation in the 16th century: basically, these works included portraits of relevant personalities, accompanied by their biographies.<sup>3</sup> The *Virorum doctorum de disciplinis benemerentium effigies XLIII* (Antwerp, 1572) by the Dutch Publisher Philip Galle and the Spanish bibliclist Benito Arias Montano was the first *virii illustres* volume featuring an image of the most famous English humanist.<sup>4</sup> While my initial focus was on More's portrait in this work—as it established a link between the English humanist and the Spaniard—,<sup>5</sup> it quickly became apparent that a broader analysis of his presence in other *virii illustres* volumes was a necessary prerequisite. This consequently led to a comprehensive literature review to identify existing research on Thomas More's artistic representations, their genesis and evolution. The present paper provides an exhaustive reckoning of the English humanist's apparitions in these hybrid works—i.e., combining portraits and biographies—, all published in the last quarter of the 16th century.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>3</sup> For further bibliography on this genre, see Gómez Canseco and Navarro Antolín (24, n. 1).

<sup>4</sup> I want to thank my Department colleague Cinta Zunino Garrido, a specialist in Arias Montano, for calling my attention to Thomas More's presence in this work.

<sup>5</sup> See Eugenio M. Olivares Merino. 2023. "Benito Arias Montano, a reader of Thomas More". *Bulletin of Hispanic Studies* 100 (3): 289-307; and 2024. "Arias Montano and Clemens Anglus". *Atlantis* 46 (2): forthcoming.

<sup>6</sup> Eugenio M. Olivares Merino. 2024. "Thomas More in the *Virorum doctorum de disciplinis benemerentium effigies XLIII* (1572)". *International Journal of English Studies (IJES)* 23 (2): forthcoming.

Fortunately, digital editions of all these 16th century works are available on the web. It is possible, therefore, to conduct a comparative analysis of Thomas More's entries in these *viri illustres* published in different European cities, one which shows not only a supranational net of contacts between engravers, writers and book printers, but also an aspect that might not have been anticipated. The Reformation and the Tridentine response were a defining influence in the production and reception of *viri illustres*. And yet, despite official religious differences between the countries that will appear in this paper, More's public image and legacy was consistently designed and perceived in a very favourable light.

These engravings of More were not intended for those who had personally known him and were still alive to celebrate his inclusion in these collections of exemplary men. Thus, none would complain if his facial features did not accurately represent the real man. The engravings served the purpose of encouraging readers to emulate More's exemplary life as an honest politician, a man of learning, or a committed Catholic. As such, only a few defining and identifiable traits would suffice; according to Morison, "[t]he paintings and engravings of the next 150 years show the chancellor, the scholar, the martyr; they are not designed to recall a face known to friends. It is not surprising, then, that they differ" (39).

The integration of visual elements in biographical collections has broader implications, as it contributed to the dissemination of information, the shaping of public opinion, and the emergence of early forms of mass communication. The persuasive power of visual representations to convey specific messages or ideas conforms to a practice of rhetorical strategies that is well beyond the written word. Nevertheless, the relationship between text and image, an assumedly harmonious dependence, was quite often problematic.

## 2. THOMAS MORE IN THE *VIRI ILLUSTRES*

According to Christiane L. Joost-Gaugier, "the theme of *uomini famosi*"—*viri illustres*—may be considered "perhaps the most significant form of monumental secular art of the Renaissance" (97). Its origins were rooted in Classical literature and it consisted basically of a compilation of biographical accounts of prominent men. The Renaissance revival of this genre was triggered by Petrarch's *De viris illustribus* (ca. 1330), or Boccaccio's *De casibus virorum illustrium* (ca. 1373-4). This interest in commemorating the deeds of illustrious and memorable individuals was later on echoed by Giorgio Vasari's biographies of Italian artists (*Vite de' piu eccelenti pittori, scultori ed architettori*; Florence, 1550) or Paolo Giovio's *Elogia* (1546), a collection of laudatory verses on famous scholars. Originally published without illustrations, these two works were milestones soon to be followed in Italy and northern Europe by volumes containing portraits to illustrate the biographies (Sellink 41). Librarian and scholar Fulvio Orsini's *Imagines et elogia virorum illustrium* (Roma, 1570) was especially popular.



The decade from 1565 to 1575 saw the proliferation of these collections of names and engravings. Often the selections followed no criterion other than the authors' taste (Hänsel 113). This is the case of the previously mentioned *Elogia* by the Italian humanist Paolo Giovio (Paulus Jovius, 1483-1552), first published in 1546 in Venice. A zealous collector of works of art, he had brought together a considerable collection of portraits in his museum at Como.<sup>7</sup> As a doctor, Giovio was particularly attentive to certain physiognomic traits, which could reveal the inner traits of the sitters. Each portrait was accompanied by brief captions illustrating their life achievements, highlighting their qualities or shortcomings, thus serving as edifying *exempla* (Sacré 99). The first edition of Giovio's *Elogia* only included biographical accounts; this was also the case with the Italian translation (1552).<sup>8</sup> As with the milestones of this genre, the narration of the deeds and virtues of the person would suffice to prove his greatness. Giovio was a committed Catholic, an author confident of the superiority of Italian scholars. However, his list of names was international and interconfessional. The section of the work devoted to deceased scholars and writers was completed in October 1545 (Sacré 99). Giovio's praise for Thomas More emphasised his moral integrity rather than his intellect, which only shines towards the end:

Fortuna impotens, et suo more instabilis infesta[que] virtuti si unquam superbe, et truculenter jocata est, sub hoc nuper Henrico Octavo in Britannia immanissime desaeuit. Prostrato ante alios Thoma Moro, quem Rex, paulo ante praeclarus eximiae uirtutis admirator, ad summos honores extulerat, ut inde eum fatali scilicet oborta insania, mutatus in feram, crudeli mox impetu praecipitem daret, quod ipsius furentis tyranni, nefariae libidini, uir omnibus religionis at[que] iustitiae numeris longe optimus, at[que] sanctissimus adulari noluisse; Dum enim ille uxorem repudiare, pellicem inducere, filiam[que] magno probro abdicare properaret, Morus scrinii Magister, pietatis ac innocentiae sua Reus, causam ad tribunal dicere coactus, impio iudicio, nisi par metus ab irato et saeuo, mentes excuteret, ita damnatus est, uti Latronum more, teterrimo supplicii genere, necaretur; nec fas esset dilacerata membra, propinquorum pietate sepelire: Sed Henricus, uel hoc uno facinore Phalaridis aemulus eripere non potuit, quin ad sempiternam inusitati sceleris memoriam, Mori nomen in utopia perenni constantiae laude frueretur. In ea enim Beatae gentis Regione, optimis instituta Legibus, ac opulenta pace florentem Rempublicam elegantissime descripsit, quum damnatos corrupti saeculi mores fastidiret, ut ad bene, beate[que] uiuendum, commento periucundo, rectissima uia monstraretur. (*Elogia ueris* 56r-56v)<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> For a detailed study of the portraits, see Franco Minozzo. 2007. "Il Museo di Giovio e la galleria degli uomini illustri". *Testi, immagini e filologia nel XVI secolo*. Eds. E. Carrara and S. Ginzburg. Pisa: Scuola Normale Superiore. 77-146

<sup>8</sup> *Le iscrizioni poste sotto le vere immagini de gli buomini famosi: le quali a como nel Museo ...* Published: In Fiorenza: appresso Lorenzo Torrentino, 1552. Thomas More is in pages 170-72.

<sup>9</sup> "Surely mad Fortune, who is habitually inconstant and a foe to virtue, lately played her most grim and insolent jest and vented her most monstrous cruelty on England during the reign of Henry VIII, when she singled out for ruin Thomas More. The king, who a little while before had been an enthusiastic admirer of More's spotless virtue, had raised him to highest honors,

The rhetorical device of fortune causing the fall of men (often used to account for the ominous destiny of warriors and military men) was also applied by Giovio to learned men who held political responsibilities: “Le pouvoir déterminant de la Fortune sur la destinée de Thomas More éclate dans la disgrâce qui succède aux faveurs dont l’avait comblé Henri VIII” (Eichel-Lojkine 70). And so More fell victim to Henry VIII’s unexpected madness. The primary responsibility for the former Chancellor’s death lied mainly with the King, a man who had exchanged reason for madness, thus becoming a wild beast (“mutatus in feram”). Anne Boleyn, Henry VIII’s mistress (“pellicem”), played a crucial role as the catalyst (or the ultimate cause) in arousing the King’s lust. As will be shown, this anti-feminist discourse with biblical echoes will often be repeated in later accounts of More’s life in other *virii illustres* volumes. A reference to happiness and justice in *Utopia*, the literary creation of More’s mind, closes the narration and provides a sombre image of England at the time of the Tudor king.

Three epitaphs, published in the *Elogia* for the first time (Marc’Hadour, “Janus” 104), follow More’s biography. The Italian priest and theologian Giano Vitale (Janus Vitalis, 1485-1560) was the author of the first one:

*IANI VITALIS.*  
*Dum Morus immeritae submittit colla securi*  
*Et flet occasum pignora cara suum,*  
*Immo ait infandi vitam deflete tyranni,*  
*Non moritur, facinus qui graue morte fugit.<sup>10</sup> (Elogia veris 56v)*

The Christ-like description of the innocent victim is further confirmed by More’s words to his loved ones attending the execution; as in Luke 23, 28: “But Jesus turning to them said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and

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only that presently, changed into a wild beast (it must have been by an attack of some fatal frenzy) he might fiercely hurl him headlong from them, because, being a man perfect in all points of religion and justice and most holy, he had refused to flatter the tyrant’s impious lust. For when Henry was bent on divorcing his wife, taking a paramour, and outrageously disowning his daughter, More, his secretary, the victim of his own piety and integrity, was made to plead his cause in court and, by a decision that would have been impious had not terror of the king’s anger and cruelty deprived all the jurors alike of their senses, he was condemned to die like a highwayman by a shameful death and his kinsmen were forbidden to give his mangled limbs due burial.

But Henry, who by this one crime made himself the rival of Phalaris, could not prevent More’s unwavering courage from enjoying immortal glory in his *Utopia*, which will keep alive forever the memory of that monstrous villainy. For in that country of blessed people he described most perfectly a prosperous and peaceful state founded on ideal laws, while he expressed his scorn of the accursed morals of his own degenerate age,—thus pointing out in a work of most delightful fancy the straightest way to a good and happy life” (Giovio, *An Italian* 127).

<sup>10</sup> “When More bowed his head to an undeserved axe / and his dear ones cried for his end, / ‘Come’, he said, ‘weep over the life of the monstrous tyrant. / He does not die who by death avoids the weight of a crime’”. Unless otherwise stated, all translations are mine.

for your children". The tyrannical king (1.3), who would die in January the following year, would certainly not be pleased—if Vitale's epitaph ever came to his attention.

An obscure Spanish author, Jacobus Exerichus,<sup>11</sup> comes next. He is even more explicit than the Italian, pointing at Henry himself as the nefarious executioner. As in the previous epitaph, the paradox of dying to live is also developed. I have only located this quatrain in the successive editions of the *Elogia*:

*IACOBI EXERICHI HISPANI.*  
*Henricus Morum gladio iugulauit iniquo*  
*Tam dignum uita, quam fuit ipse nece:*  
*Mortuus ille tamen uiuet per saecula cuncta,*  
*Post mortem uirtus uiuere sola facit.*<sup>12</sup> (*Elogia veris* 56v)

Finally, there is a longer poem in the form of dialogue, whose authorship Gioivo could (or would) not identify at this point.<sup>13</sup> The image of the detached head and the profusion of blood called for the final punishment of the impious killer. A pagan scenario is recreated for this dialogue, thus creating a sort of Classical tragic pathos.

*INCERTI.*  
*Quis iacet in tumulo, cuius caput ense recisum est, Hospes.*  
*Et nata in tetro sanguine canities?*  
*Hic est ille Thomas Morus, sic fata rependunt, Ciuis.*  
*Tristia multa bonis, et bona multa malis.*  
*Quae circ[u]m[s]istunt Diuae lugubre cadauer? Hospes.*  
*Diua tenax ueri, sancta fides, Nemesis, Ciuis*  
*Harum prima odii causa, et fuit altera mortis,*  
*Vlrix iniustae tertia caedis erit.*<sup>14</sup> (*Elogia veris* 57r)

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<sup>11</sup> He is probably Jacobo Exerico, from the Spanish city of Caspe, and mentioned by Gallego Barnés (167) as a disciple of the Spanish humanist Juan Lorenzo Palmireno (1524-1579). He is better known by Hispanists as Jaime Exerich/Ejerich (+1552), a priest who graduated from the University of Zaragoza and became an Archpriest in the said city. In 1551, the ecclesiastical province of Tarragona commissioned him to the Council of Trent.

<sup>12</sup> "With an unfair blade Henry cut the throat of More, / who was as worthy of life as the king to die. / Yet dead, he will live through the centuries / as only virtue survives death".

<sup>13</sup> As acknowledged in later editions of the *Elogia*, this epitaph was by the Dutch poet Joannes Everardi, best known as Jean Second (Janus/Johannes Secundus, 1511-1536). This is one of the three works that the poet had composed about More's death (Stillman 329-30, n. 17). As Vocht argued, "these poems [...] express such violent indignation that the poet [Second] feared some trouble either for himself or for his brothers (the also poets Adrian Marius and Nicolas Grudius), and let them circulate anonymously" (196). Shortly after the death of Second, the two brothers prepared an edition of these compositions about More's death which was published by Servatius Zassenus in December 1536.

<sup>14</sup> "Stranger: Who lies in the mound, whose head was cut off by a sword, / and his grey hair swims in the foul blood? / Citizen: This is that Thomas More; thus fate repays. / Much sadness to the good and much good to the wicked. / Stranger: What goddesses surround the mournful

Gradually—and due to the successful triple structure of Emblem books (a *motto*, an image or *pictura*, and an explanatory text)—authors decided to illustrate their *virii illustres* with portraits.<sup>15</sup>

This fashion arrived in the Netherlands, due to its introduction by publishers Hyeronimus Cock (1510-1570) and the Flemish humanist Dominicus Lampsonius (Dominique Lampsonie, 1532-1599), as suggested by Gómez Canseco and Navarro Antolín (26). The former's widow, Volcxken Diericx (1525-1600), published *Pictorum Aliquot Celebrium Germaniae Inferioris Effigies* (Antwerp, 1572), a collection of portraits of 23 dead artists from the Netherlands, each with a Latin epigram. Also in 1572 Galle and Arias Montano published the *Virorum doctorum*. Cock's and Lampsonius' volume is widely recognized as the first collection of *virii illustres* to be printed in the Netherlands. However, the *Virorum doctorum* deserves credit for pioneering the inclusion of Thomas More (Galle and Arias Montano A8) in a work of this kind, not only in the Netherlands but also Europe.

The French aristocrat and bibliographer Antoine du Verdier published *La prosopographie* (Lyon, 1573), an ambitious chronicle of the world bringing together patriarchs, gods, kings, popes, and other illustrious characters. Some of these names were accompanied by medallion portraits. In the initial salutation to the reader, du Verdier stated that the main purpose of writing history was to bring forth the honourable deeds of great men so that readers felt encouraged to imitate them; this target was more easily achieved “when what is written there is proposed to us and expressed in painting, engraving, carving or otherwise”.<sup>16</sup>

The fourth book (Verdier, *Prosopographie* 4100 [sic; 500]) presented a woodcut of Thomas More and a biographical account. The circular miniature portrays a young More with long hair, looking to his left, wearing his fur-collared cape and magistrate's cap (Figure 2). He holds something in his right hand (a paper?), as a mark of his scholarly status. In these details, the image follows the Holbeinian model, but it does not include the Tudor Rose hanging from the collar of eses.<sup>17</sup> Morison adds that the

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corpse? / Citizen: The obstinate goddess of truth, holy faith, Vengeance. / Of these, the first was the cause for hatred, and the second for death; / the third will be the avenger of an unjust death”.

<sup>15</sup> Zafra Molina makes a strong case in favour of viewing these books of *icones* as a subtype of emblem works. They have the typical *triplex* structure—*motto*, *pictura* and *subscriptio*—to present an illustrious character (130).

<sup>16</sup> “que le principal but d'escrire histoire, est de mettre en icelle devant ses yeux comme en lieu eminent & haut, les exemples des actes des hommes. [...] Veu donq que l'histoire a tant d'efficace, qu'elle peut esmouvoir les esprits des hommes à bien faire, les peut mieux inciter quand ce qui y est escrit nous est proposé et exprimé en peinture, graveure, taille esleuee en bosse ou autrement” (Verdier, *Prosopographie* \*4R/8-10 & /25-29).

<sup>17</sup> In 1965 A.H. Ormerod published a paper with the title “The SS Collar” (*The Catholic Lawyer* 2 (2): 123-130) in which he dealt with the origins of this ornament and the meaning of the SS. He also clarified who—and why Thomas More in particular—could wear the collar.

block with the portrait was suppressed in later editions of *La prosopographie* “as too poor a likeness” (48). As a matter of fact, the name of the artist is nowhere recorded.



Figure 2.

It is safe to say that du Verdier would not expect his readers to think that his picture was accurate *stricto sensu*. Some resemblance with the real man was enough. It was the text that followed that was important; as Gaylard claims, portrait books illustrated the tension existing between the need for a genuine likeness of the portrait with the real person and the exemplarity that his/her features should transmit (161-63).<sup>18</sup> More's face in the picture might not be accurate, but it was natural enough to provide visual support to introduce the narration of his exemplary life. Nothing in More's face or attire disrupted the necessary harmony that should exist between his exemplarity and his physical appearance—as prescribed by the generally accepted conventions of physiognomy. The bust was subordinated to the text below: a biography which includes a (rather inaccurate) list of More's works, followed by an account of his misfortune. Du Verdier refrains from disqualifying the Tudor monarch or Lady Boleyn. Henry is undoubtedly responsible for More's death, an event situated in the wider scenario of England's rupture with Rome, but he is not depicted as a lustful animal. Fischer is also included in the account, sharing with More his opposition to the King's religious policy. Both men's role as staunch defenders of the Catholic doctrine had already been anticipated by their militant opposition to Luther's ideas.

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<sup>18</sup> For further information on this tension and Early Modern debates on the issue, see Gaylard (163-166).

Thomas More Anglois, chancellier de Henry huictieme de ce nom, roy d'Angleterre, a escrit *Epigrammata. Comaedias. Dialogos familiares. Declamationes. Pro Erasmo aduersus fratre[m] progymnasmata graeca. Dialogum pro missa contra Fryth. Contra Germanum Brixium. Vtopiam, vel de republica vtopica. De iustificatione operum lib. i. Apologiam ad Tyndale lib. i. De ecclesia contra Barnes lib. i. In Martinum Dorpium lib. i.* Il a traduit quelques dialogues de Lucian. Fut decapité avec Iean Fischer euesque, par commandement du roy d'Angleterre, pource qu'il ne luy voulut point complaire ne approuver le diuorce qu'il auoit avec sa femme la royne Catherine: moins prester consenteme[n]t à ce decret qui ostoit l'autorité & faifoit le roy chef de toute l'église d'Angleterre. Car ayant Henry repudié Catherine, & le pape donné sentence contre luy en faueur de sadicte premiere femme, ledict roy en hayne de ce se declarant chef de l'église d'Angleterre apres Iesus-Christ, ordonna sur peine de la vie que la puissance souueraine ne fust par aucun de son royaume attribuee au pape, defendit expressemment de luy payer d'oresenaua[n]t le tribut qu'il y souloit prendre tous les ans. Ce que fut trouué mauuais de ces deux grands personages More & Fischer, lesquels demeurans fermes en leur opinio[n] contraire à l'aduis & malin desseing du roy, endurerent cruelle mort. Ils auoyent escrit plusieurs liures contre Luther.<sup>19</sup> (Verdier, *Prosopographie* 4100-4101[sic; 500-501]).

Biographical encyclopaedias (eventually developed from portrait books) would finally exclude the images (Gaylard 162). As Schoeck puts it, *La prosopographie* was “in effect an early attempt at a biographie universelle together with a running account [...] of main currents of universal history” (67). Verdier’s words, if less rhetorical and dramatic than Giovio’s, offer more revealing details about the fall and execution of Henry VIII’s former Chancellor. No biography of More was available at the time and, even though different accounts of his death circulated Europe, these types of works had a wider impact—especially if written in the vernacular—and played

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<sup>19</sup> “Thomas More, English, Chancellor of Henry the eighth of that name, King of England, wrote *Epigrammata. Comaedias. Dialogos Familiares. Declamationes. Pro Erasmo aduersus fratre[m] progymnasmata graeca. Dialogum pro missa contra Fryth. Contra Germanum Brixium. Vtopiam, vel de republica vtopica. De justificatione operum lib. i. Apologiam ad Tyndale lib. i. De ecclesia contra Barnes lib. i. In Martinum Dorpium lib. i.* He translated some dialogues by Lucian. He was decapitated with John Fisher Bishop, by command of the king of England, because he did not want to please him or approve the divorce he had with his wife, Queen Catherine; and even less to yield consent to that decree which suppressed the authority and made the king head of all the Church of England. For having Henry repudiated Catherine, and the Pope having rendered a sentence in favor of his first wife, in his hatred for this the said King—declaring himself head of the Church of England after Jesus Christ—ordered on pain of life that no one in his kingdom should attribute this sovereign power to the Pope, expressly forbidding to pay him henceforth the tribute which he used to get every year. Two great personalities, More and Fischer, deemed this to be wrong, and, remaining steadfast in their opposing opinion to the king’s judgment and malicious intent, endured a cruel death. They had written several books against Luther”. Du Verdier had a copy of More’s *Utopia* in his library: “THOMAS MORVS. Republique d’Vtopie. Voyez” (Verdier, *Bibliothèque* 1180). *La prosopographie* included a translation of Thomas More’s epigrams (43 & 47) as one single composition that du Verdier introduced as “cest epigramme imité du Latin de Thomas More” (80); for further information on this translation, see Schoeck (1982).

a relevant role in the promotion of the English humanist. Vitale's epitaph from Giovio's *Elogia* finishes out the entry (*Prosopographie* 4101[sic; 501]).<sup>20</sup>

Over three decades after its *editio princeps*, Paolo Giovio's *Elogia* was finally published with illustrations in three volumes (Basel, 1575-1577). The Italian had died in 1552 without accomplishing his initial purpose to include copies from the portraits of his museum; major financial problems and technical challenges had frustrated his intentions. Pietro Perna, a Luchese based in Basel,<sup>21</sup> sent the Swiss artist Tobias Stimmer (1539-1584) to Como. He was to copy the remnants of the images at the Museum of Giovio's villa (Gaylard 211). Stimmer prepared the xylographies (printings from wood carvings).

Presented in a richly ornate frame, the portrait (Figure 3) showcases More with the already characteristic Holbeinesque attributes (but without the SS collar). However, it is not a good likeness—according to Morison (61). Below the engraving, the 1546 Latin prose text follows (Giovio, *Elogia virorum* 166-67). Gaylard opines that Stimmer had read the biographies in Giovio's 1546 *Elogia* and created "interpretative copies of actual portraits". Again, Stimmer's images subordinated "true likeness" to textual biography (Gaylard 211-12), and presented a lively and familiar image, but surely not the humanist's facial features.

However, it might be argued that Stimmer was reproducing More's likeness, just as it was depicted in Giovio's now-lost portrait of the English humanist. Evidence for this might be found elsewhere. There is an oil portrait of Thomas More at *Galleria degli Uffizi* (Florence), which may be safely attributed to the Italian artist Cristoforo (or Cristofano) dell'Altissimo (1525-1605). This portrait is also said to be a reproduction of More's painting in Giovio's museum.<sup>22</sup> The comparison between Stimmer's and dell'Altissimo's works does not help us to recreate More's original portrait in Giovio's villa: leaving aside a common Holbenian source, the two works differ in significant aspects both from the former and between themselves.<sup>23</sup> Gaylard

<sup>20</sup> For the different variants and versions of this text, see Blanchard ("Jean Second" 22-25).

<sup>21</sup> A former Dominican, Perna fled to Basel in 1542 primarily due to his religious heterodoxy. Only 15 years later did he obtain his citizenship and set up a printing shop (Cavarzere).

<sup>22</sup> In 1552, Duke Cosimo I Medici sent dell'Altissimo to Giovio's villa to make copies of all the portraits available. The artist remained in Como until 1568 and completed about 280 reproductions (Müntz 268); back in Florence, he worked on this project until 1589 (Falciani 28). Two years later, dell'Altissimo's portraits were placed at the Uffizi Gallery and constitute the so-called "Giovan Series". A black and white copy of More's portrait is reproduced in Marc'hadour ("Likeness" 87).

<sup>23</sup> Germain Marc'hadour described dell'Altissimo's portrait: "Notice especially the fur tippet and the pointed hat. The stubble in Holbein has become a thin beard and moustache. The striped collar is new. The SS collar of gold with the rose-and-portcullis pendent has become an ordinary chain carrying a jewelled ornament" ("Likeness" 86-87). Müntz also takes for granted Holbein's influence, but "(the coat is more open; at the neck a chain with the Golden Fleece [instead of the SS collar]); "(le manteau est plus ouvert; au cou une chaîne avec la Toison d'or)" (294). Müntz is especially harsh with dell'Altissimo: "It is impossible to make it any duller than dell'Altissimo did. The effigies of the 'Giovan Museum', copied by him, have

has concluded that Stimmer was producing interpretative copies of Giovio's originals for the *Elogia*; writing at the beginning of the 20th century about these same engravings, Müntz stated that "the draftsman first, then the engraver, yielding to the temptation to 'dramatise' the characters, have more than once altered the documents to the point of making them unrecognisable".<sup>24</sup>



Figure 3.

The epitaphs by Giano Vitale and Jaime Exerich come next; the third one is attributed to Jean Second.<sup>25</sup> As a novelty, one last epitaph is added, written by Jean Steenhouwer (Johannes Latomus Berganus, 1523-1578).<sup>26</sup> The anger of this Belgian

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lost all flavour, all accent, all sincerity"; "Il est impossible d'affadir plus que ne l'a fait l'Altissimo. Les effigies du 'Museum Jovianum', copiées par lui, ont perdu toute saveur, tout accent, toute sincérité" (268).

<sup>24</sup> "le dessinateur d'abord, le graveur ensuite, cédant à la tentation de 'dramatiser' les personnages, ont plus d'une fois altéré les documents au point de les rendre méconnaissables" (Müntz 268). In any case, Müntz is even harsher in his assessment of the *Elogia* engravings: "For mediocre as they are, the copies by dell'Altissimo nevertheless offer an overwhelming superiority over the engravings attached to the Basel edition of the *Elogia*"; "Pour médiocres qu'elles soient, les copies de l'Altissimo n'en offrent pas moins une écrasante supériorité sur les gravures jointes à l'édition bâloise des *Elogia*" (268).

<sup>25</sup> As stated by Blanchard ("Poèmes" 95-96), the poem had been attributed to Jean Second already in the editions of Antwerp (1557) and Basle (1571).

<sup>26</sup> Blanchard presents Latomus as the author of a very large number of Eulogies dedicated to all the great names of his time (even to Henry VIII): "il est spécialiste de la louange, en somme" ("Poèmes" 95). Latomus was elected prior of the Augustinian monastery Marientroon



author is not aimed at any single person but goes against England (already under the rule of Elizabeth I), the unworthy motherland of such an excellent citizen. The main concern of Jean Second is to vindicate More's non-Englishness, taking for granted that he would rather consider himself a Utopian.

*Latomi*  
*Quid tibi cum Moro, tali indignissima ciue,*  
*Anglia? Quid pergis dicere inepta tuum?*  
*Tu ferro insontem, nec simplice morte, Catonem*  
*Persequeris: tuto nec licet esse pium.*  
*Proinde sile: nam quo maculam tibi demeret istam,*  
*Ipse sibi patriam condidit Vtopiam.*<sup>27</sup>(*Elogia virorum* 167)

In 1553, the French humanist printer Guillaume Roville published at Lyon his *Promptuarii iconum insigniorum à seculo hominum, subiectis eorum vitis, per compendium ex probatissimis autoribus desumptis*. It presented a collection of coin-like portraits of historical figures with short biographies in two parts (before and after Christ). There were several editions of this work (in different languages) during the 1550s and the 1560s. Finally, in the second edition printed in 1578, a woodcut medallion of Thomas More was included in the second part (Figure 4). The image of the English humanist “is a poor but recognizable adaptation of Galle” (Morison 50), i.e. the engraving in the *Virorum doctorum* (1572).<sup>28</sup>



Figure 4.

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near Grobbendonk (Belgium) in 1551. A wise and prudent administrator, he was also a poet and a meticulous historian (Juten 788).

<sup>27</sup> “What do you have to do with More, England, so unworthy of such a citizen? Why, oh foolish, do you persist in calling him yours? You pursue an innocent Cato with the sword, not with a simple death: and it is not allowed to be pious without risks. Be quiet then, for in order to remove this stain from you, he himself founded Utopia, a homeland for himself”. Latomus’ verses had already been added in the editions of Antwerp and Basle (Blanchard, “Poèmes” 95).

<sup>28</sup> According to Morison, the woodcuts in the *Promptuarii* are typically attributed to Georges Réverdy, an artist from Lyon (50 n. 1).

Thomas More shared the page (Roville, *Promptuarii* 221) with the Italian Dominican friar Girolamo Savonarola (executed in 1498). A brief and inaccurate biographical note follows, also including Vitale's epitaph. In his biographical note, More's position as Chancellor is not mentioned and Henry VIII's is again—as in Gioivo's account—sketched as a libidinous king.

THOMAS Morus, natione Anglus vir doctus & clarus, Cantuarie[n]sis Archiepiscopus, exilio primu[m] à rege Angliæ damnatus, post etiam capitali supplicio affectus fuit circa annu[m] salutis, 1535. Quod furentis regis Henrici octavi (qui eu[m] paulo ante ad summos honores extulerat, tamquam virtutis eximie admirator) nefariae libidini, adulari noluisset. Iani Vitalis de eo extat epitaphium quod sequitur. [...] Hic clarus literarum Graecarum & Latinarum cognitione, Dialogos aliquot Luciani transtulit. Fecit Vtopiam, & multa egregia epigrammata scripsit.<sup>29</sup> (Roville, *Promptuarii* 221)

Back in 1561 Roville had published an edition of Henry VIII's *Assertio Septem Sacramentorum* against Luther, “one of his very few polemical editions” (Davis 97). The following year anti-Catholic riots took place in Lyon and Rouille became a firm supporter of the Church of Rome. In the said work, the editor had praised the Tudor king as “inter paucos reges literarum & multarum rerum cognitione commendabilis” (Roville, *Regis Angliae* bb1/12-13).<sup>30</sup> Of course he knew about More's execution, as explicitly narrated in the “Praefatio” to the *Assertio*:

Tum vero Rex erga pontificem ira commotus, & furiosa libidinis rabie in Annam exardescens, a Romana Apostolica sede defecit: seque ipsum supremum caput ecclesia Anglicana constituit. Cum autem optimi & doctissimi viri Ioha[n]nes Ficherius episcopus Roffensis, & Thomas Morus regni supremus cancellarius, dissuasissent divortium illud regi, aliquandiu captiui detenti sunt, & tandem eodem anno cum neque diuertium, neque defectionem regis, qua ab obedientia Romani

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<sup>29</sup> “Thomas More, a learned and famous man, English by birth, Archbishop of Canterbury, was first condemned into exile by the king of England, and afterwards, he suffered capital punishment around the year 1535. Because he would not flatter the evil lust of the furious King Henry the Eighth (who a little before had raised him to the highest honours, as an admirer of extraordinary virtue). There is an epitaph about him by Giano Vitale which follows. . . . This man, famous by his knowledge of Greek and Latin literature, translated several Dialogues by Lucian. He composed *Utopia* and wrote many exceptional epigrams”. Notice the initial confusion of Thomas Becket (Archbishop of Canterbury under Henry II) and Thomas More. Clearly, Roville was no historian. Nevertheless, it is easy to comprehend the logic behind this mistake: both Becket and More shared a name, nationality and—in simple terms—a death “ordered” by their kings. Roville inadvertently brought together these two men, a connection that Thomas Stapleton would later deliberately draw in his *Tres Thomae* (1588).

<sup>30</sup> “Admirable among those few kings with a knowledge of literature and many things”. It is not possible to know if Roville was aware of the role Thomas More had played in the composition of Henry VIII's *Assertio*.

Pontificis, & vnitate ecclesiae defecisset aprobarent, ambo capite truncati & vltimo supplicio publice affecti sunt.<sup>31</sup> (lxxx/20-28 – lxxxi/1-2)

There is a clear similarity between Roville's "Quod furentis regis Henrici octau[i] (qui eu[m] paulo ante ad summos honores extulerat, tamquam virtutis eximiae admirator) nefariae libidini, adulari noluisse" (*Promptuarii* 221), and Giovio's "quem Rex, paulo ante praeclarus eximiae uirtutis admirator, ad summos honores extulerat, ut inde eum fatali scilicet oborta insania, mutatus in feram, crudeli mox impetu praecipitem daret, quod ipsius furentis tyranni, nefariae libidini, uir omnibus religionis atq[ue] iustitiae numeris longe optimus, atq[ue] sanctissimus adulari noluisset" (*Elogia veris* 56r-56v). In both cases, the Tudor king is presented as having fallen from a previous state of rationality and common sense into a sudden madness, due to his infatuation for Anne Boleyn. This had been Roville's rationale already in his 1561 edition of the *Assertio*, one in which Henry VIII came to join the list of famous kings who had been ruined by women: "Ita regi pro mulierum blanditiis implicito, quod & Salomoni accidit, nempe deprauatum est cor eius per mulieres, ut sequeretur deos alienos, nec fuit deinceps cor eius perfectum cum domino deo suo: sed simul cum vxore sua legitima, & cum sponsa Christi ecclesia, fecit diuertium, sui certe ipsius oblitus, & eorum, quae tam pie & religiose ante id tempus scripserat" (Roville, *Regis Angliae* lxxxi/8-15).<sup>32</sup>

No new collection of *virii illustres* included Thomas More until 1584,<sup>33</sup> when the Franciscan priest and cosmographer André Thevet (1502-1590) published in French the *Vies des Hommes Illustres* (Paris), a collection of over 230 biographies, most of them accompanied by a copperplate engraved portrait.<sup>34</sup> Thomas More (Figure 5) appears in chapter 106, Book VI (Thevet 540r).

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<sup>31</sup> "But then the King, moved by his anger towards the Pontiff, and burning with furious rage of lust for Anna, defected from the Roman Apostolic see, and he established himself as the supreme head of the Church of England. Moreover, since the best and most learned men, John Fisher, bishop of Rochester, and Thomas More, the Great Chancellor of the kingdom, had advised the king against that divorce, they were kept captive for some time. And then in the same year, as they approved neither the divorce nor the defection of the king—by which he had defected from obedience to the Roman Pontiff and the unity of the Church—, both were beheaded and publicly subjected to the last punishment".

<sup>32</sup> "Thus the King was entangled by the flattery of women, which also happened to Solomon, that is, his heart was corrupted by women, so that he followed strange gods, and his heart was not afterwards perfect with the Lord his God. At the same time he made a divorce with his lawful wife, and with the bride of Christ, the Church, he certainly forgot of himself and of those things which he had written so piously and religiously before that time".

<sup>33</sup> Also in 1584 the priest and librarian Johannes Krösel (Ioannes Croeselius) published *Elogia*. This work contained no illustrations. The second part was devoted to scholars and academics. Thomas More is included, with a short encomium, followed by the epitaphs by Arias Montano, Giovanni Vitale, Jaime Exerich, Jean Second and Latomus (359-360).

<sup>34</sup> For a general description of this work and some bibliographic information about Thevet, see Jean Rouchausse. 1977. "Vrais pourtraits et vies des hommes illustres (1584)". *Moreana* 55-

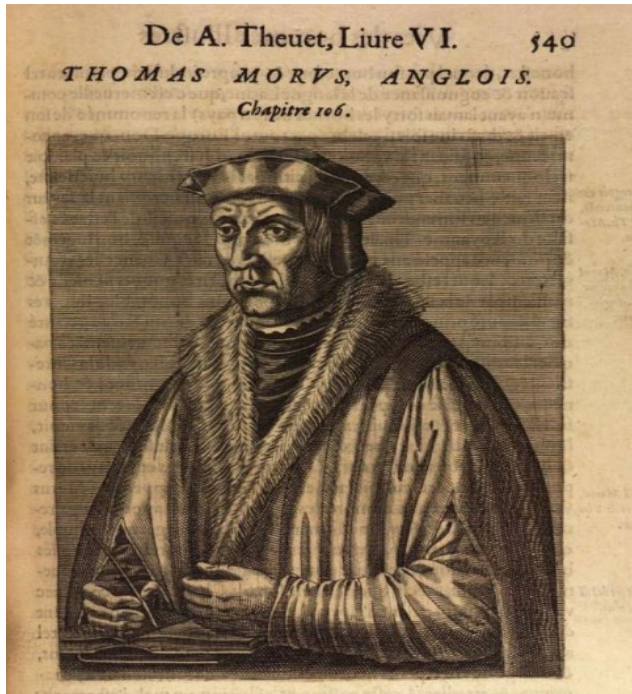


Figure 5.

Jean Adhémar and Jean Baudry concluded that Thevet's efforts to provide authentic portraits were successful in general (quoted in Schlesinger xxix). In the case of More this cannot be said; rather, the portrait is a copy of Galle's More (from the *Virorum doctorum*), "though"—as Morison puts it (50)—"freer in its treatment of detail ... The features are exaggerated to give a quite unfamiliar aspect of severity and austerity". This grim-faced More introduced an extended biography (Thevet 540r-541v)—the longest in the works here reviewed—with a rather misleading reference to his written production: "plusieurs doctes et excellens liures, entre autres des Epigrammes, Comedies, Dialogues familiers et declamations, contre Erasme, contre les Allemans, contre vn nommé Fryth, et plusieurs autres" (Thevet 541v/2-5). To conclude his entry on More, Thevet singled out Jean Second's already quoted epitaph (541v) without naming the author.

The increasing size of the biographical information about More in these portrait books suggests a growing demand among readers to learn more about the life of the English humanist. In 1588 the first biography of Thomas More was published in Douai, as part of a major work which also contained the life accounts of both the

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56 (3): 101-114. The only book-length biography of Thevet is Frank Lestringant. 1991. *André Thevet: cosmographe des derniers Valois*. Geneve: Droz.

apostle Thomas and Thomas Becket: *Tres Thomae seu...* Thomas Stapleton was the author and—in the words of Reynolds:

[This] book recorded the reputation of Thomas More within half a century of his death; some of the stories here told may seem like folk-tales, [...] That such tales should be told is itself an important historic fact; it emphasizes the remarkable place Thomas More had won in the popular mind before any written account of his life was available” (xiii).

It is quite likely that the popularity of these portrait books and their biographic narrations contributed to the diffusion of More’s fame, especially if written by well-known authors. Stapleton himself felt obliged to include the testimony of famous men of learning outside England that had passed judgement on the former Chancellor. Among these, some that have been included here are mentioned by Stapleton—mainly in the last chapter (*Caput 21*). For instance, Paolo Giovio’s words of praise in his *Elogia* are reproduced *verbatim*.<sup>35</sup> Jean Second and his elegy of More’s death are also mentioned, even though Stapleton claimed he had not seen the said work.<sup>36</sup> However, in a kind of appendix added at the end—“Seqvntur varia doctorum virorum Epigrammata in laudem Thomae Mori” (Stapleton 364-375)—, the epigram was finally included (367); the epitaphs by Giovanni Vitali, Jaime Excerich, and Latomus were also added (1588: 367-368), among others. All these authors came from different countries (Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, etc.), thus proving that More already had an international appeal. Obviously, Stapleton’s deliberate choice to write the former’s biography in Latin would undoubtedly enhance this.

The Protestant Silesian jurist and scholar Nikolaus von Reusner (Nicolaus Reusnerus Leorinus, 1545-1602) published his *Icones sive Imagines vivuae* in 1589. This work was so successful that later in the same year a sort of appendix (*Icones aliquot clarorum virorum*) also came out in Basel, authored by the physician Theodor Zwinger (1533-1588), a Swiss Protestant. It contained a wood engraving portrait of Thomas More (Figure 6; Zwinger D2).

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<sup>35</sup> Giovio’s full account of Thomas More’s life comes in two different sections: in chapter 4, Stapleton quotes the final reference to *Utopia* (46/16-21); the rest of the text is included in chapter 24 (355/28-32 – 356/1-16). Isolated words from Giovio’s biography are also cited by Stapleton (83/24-25 and 326/17-19).

<sup>36</sup> “Iohannes Secundus Hagiensis naeniam scripsit de morte Tho[mae] Mori, qu[a]e ad manus meas no[n] peruenit” (Stapleton 357/20-22). As stated by Reynolds (30, n 6), Stapleton could have used the 1571 edition of the *Elogia*. I would say, however, that he used the Antwerp 1557 edition, one which already attributed the epitaph to Jean Second and included Latomus’.



Figure 6.

The image is familiar as it is a reprint of Tobias Stimmer's engraving of Thomas More, first issued in Giovio's 1577 *Elogia*. It depicts the English humanist as the Royal Chancellor of England; below a diptych by Reusner puts in Thomas More's mouth the following words: "Quam sit auis Rex rara bonus, iustus[que], / pius[que]: / Mors indigna mea hoc monstrat, et Vtopia" ("That a good, fair and pious King is *rara avis*: my undeserved death proves, and so does Utopia"). Zwinger elaborated a Latin *encomium* which came after. In his praise, the author compares More with one of the most outstanding figures of antiquity, the Greek philosopher Socrates:<sup>37</sup>

THOMAS MORVS, ANGLVS  
 Singulari eruditione, virtute, doctrina  
 praestans:  
 Magister Scrinii & supremus Regnii  
 IUDEX  
 Cui pectus fuit omni Niue candidius: Ingenium,  
 quale nec habuit vmquam, nec habitura  
 est, alioqui nequaqua[m] infelicium  
 ingeniorum parens  
 Anglia:

<sup>37</sup> He was not the first one to do so; see C. Condren and A. C. Condren. 1980. "More and Sokrates: The Limits of Comparison and Symbolic Potency". *Thomas More: Essays on the Icon*. Eds. D. Grace and B. Byron. Melbourne: Dove Publications. 109-29; and Cosimo Quarta. 2003. "More and Socrates". *Moreana* 156 (4): 85-103.

Quem Rex Henricus IIX. paulo ante prae-  
 clarus eximiae virtutis admirator, ad  
 summos honores ex-  
 tulerat:  
 Fatali oborta insania, demum in Ty-  
 rannum crudelissimum  
 mutatus:  
 Quum nefariae eius libidini, vir omnibus religio-  
 nis atque iustitiae numeris longe opti-  
 mus at[que] sanctissimus adulari,  
 indignaretur:  
 Pietatis ac innocentiae suae  
 reus,  
 Causam ad Tribunal dicere  
 coactus:  
 Non minorem constantiam in iudicio ac suppli-  
 cio prae se ferens, quam iniquissimo  
 Atheniensium S.C. condem-  
 natus Socrates:  
 Misere obruncatus interiit, vi. Non. Iulii,  
 Anno Sal. M.D. Xxxv.<sup>38</sup> (Dd1)

As in the case of Roville, Giovio's text is echoed by Zwinger, especially in his references to Henry VIII's former sensibility and sudden madness as a consequence of his lust. The epitaphs by Arias Montano, Jean Second and Latomus completed the entry (Zwinger Dd2).<sup>39</sup> Second's epitaph was recurrent, as shown, but this was the first time Arias Montano's lines from the *Virorum doctorum* were reproduced in a portrait book; the same happened with Latomus' praise.<sup>40</sup> Reusner and Zwinger were both cradle Protestants and yet they had no problem in including Thomas More—who had so violently written against Luther—among the over 100 famous authors

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<sup>38</sup> "Thomas More, an Englishman excelling by his exceptional learning, virtue and doctrine: Great Chancellor and Supreme Judge of the Kingdom, whose breast was whiter than any snow: a talent as none ever had, or will have, in any case, England is not the mother of the most unfortunate talents: Whom King Henry VIII, an eminent admirer of extraordinary virtue, had raised a little before to the highest honours: in a fatal outbreak of madness, eventually he became the cruellest tyrant: when to flatter his impious lust, he scorned a man perfect in all points of religion and justice and most holy. Guilty of his piety and innocence: He was forced to take the case to the Tribunal: Showing in his trial and execution no less steadfastness than Socrates, when condemned by the most unjust decree of the Athenian Senate. Sadly he was decapitated on 6 July, 1535".

<sup>39</sup> "An memore[m] doctum magis, an te More fidelem, / An fortem, dubito: nam omnia summa tenes. / Quae doctrina fuit, pietas quae pectore in isto / exitus edocuit, quem subis intrepidus".

<sup>40</sup> As stated in note 33, Krösel's work included no illustrations.

selected; their open-mindedness is further proved by the two other figures that follow the humanist: John Fisher and Reginald Pole.<sup>41</sup>

I conclude this revision with the *Icones quinquaginta virorum illustrium* (1597) by the French Neo-Latin poet Jean-Jacques Boissard (1528-1602). This work was extremely popular due to its convenient format (Coppens and Sacré 98). Théodor de Bry (1528-1598) was the author of the engravings and the publisher of the work. It came out in Frankfurt, where de Bry had finally settled after fleeing from the Spanish Netherlands. He had embraced Protestantism, and so had Boissard. The second part of the *Icones quinquaginta* (1598) included the English humanist (Figure 7): “Thomas Morvs Cancellarius Angliae”.



Figure 7.

In his “Praefatio”, de Bry claims that Boissard had sent him the pictures upon which he should fabricate the plates; these had been drawn from the real characters themselves—“ad viuum ipse delinearit” (Boissard A3r). However, that was not the

<sup>41</sup> The book was such a success that Bernhard Jobin published a German version with almost the same portraits, this time accompanied by German verses by Christoph Reusner, the jurist’s brother.



case with Thomas More: his portrait was again a copy of Galle's; as Morison stated, this plate was made by Jean-Jacques' brother, Robert Boissard (1570-1601), as indicated by his monogram (50) at the right side of the head.<sup>42</sup> Coppens and Sacré stated that Robert Boissard had prepared the block (ca. 1587) after a drawing by Jean-Jacques (96); again they pointed at Galle's portrait in the *Virorum doctorum* as the source (96). The block was adorned and crowned with an architectural arch. The humanist was behind a table, on which there was an open book and a tablet with More's nationality (*Nascitur Angliae*) and the date of his execution (*Obtruncatur 7. [?] / Jullii [sic] Anno 1536[?]*). A distich—mediocre and probably by Jean-Jacques Boissard (Coppens and Sacré 97)—completes the emblem-like structure of the block: “Singultantem animam Mori, taboque natantem / Abluit hei Pietas ipsa suis lachrimis” (“More's gasping soul, swimming in blood, alas, Piety herself washed away with her tears”).

The following two pages contain a biography of the English humanist (Boissard 121-122), parts of which are taken *verbatim* from *Commentarius brevis rerum in orbe* (336-338), by the German Franciscan Lorenz Sauer.<sup>43</sup> The text of More's original “Epitaphium” was also reproduced (Boissard 121-124), an unprecedented inclusion.<sup>44</sup> The entry concluded with a list of More's Latin works (124-125), which in general terms is accurate.<sup>45</sup>

### 3. CONCLUSION

As argued above, Galle's and Montano's *Virorum doctorum* (Antwerp, 1572) was the first *virii illustres* work to include Thomas More; Fowler's editions of Morean works (1568 and 1573) also promoted the English humanist's portrait (Figure 1 and 1.1). Apart from this, no other titles published in the Spanish Netherlands during the 16th century featured an image of Thomas More. Despite my initial assumptions, I see no cause-effect relationship between the *Virorum doctorum* (1572) and du Verdier's *Prosopographie*, even though it was published the following year in Lyon.

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<sup>42</sup> This signature or monogram is made by the overlapping letters R and B. Robert Boissard was sent by his brother to Théodore de Bry as an apprentice with the latter's sons; for more information on Robert Boissard, see Arthur M. Hind. 1952. *Engraving in England in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*. Part 1: The Tudor Period. Cambridge: at the University Press. 187-192.

<sup>43</sup> Laurentius Surius (Lorenz Sauer; 1523-1578) was a German Carthusian hagiographer and church historian. It is clear that the authors saw no problem in quoting from a presumably Catholic source.

<sup>44</sup> The epitaph was first published by Erasmus in his *De praeparatione* (1534) since More himself had attached it to a letter he sent to Erasmus from Chelsea in 1532. It was later on reprinted in the third volume of Erasmus' *Opera omnia* (Liber XXVII, 1073-75; see also *Opera Epistolarum* ep. 2831) and in More's both *English works* (More 1557: 1419-22) and *Opera Omnia* (More 1565: Aii).

<sup>45</sup> Boissard, however, attributes to the humanist “Comoedias” and “Dialogos familiares” (124/29), as Thevet had in 1584.

The author's prefatory letters (to René 3rd Comte de Sanzay and his readers) were both written in October 1572, indicating that the genesis of this work is parallel to Galle's and Montano's volume. Furthermore, the purpose of the *Prosopographie* was—as stated by du Verdier—"proposant de traiter la chronique du monde" (\*\*\*) 3r/1-2). The editorial interest in these works was sustained in France. As du Verdier, Guillaume Roville also published his *Promptuarium iconum* (1578) in Lyon; the layout of the pages is similar, both presenting medallion engravings (Figures 2 & 4). Furthermore, André Thevet's *Hommes illustres* came out in Paris (1584). Meanwhile, another set of three works was published in Central European cities: an edition of Giovio's *Elogia* (1575-1577); Reusner's and Zwinger's *Icones sive imagines* (1589), both in Basel; as well as the *Icones quinquaginta* by J. J. Boissard in Frankfurt (1598).

Thomas More's appeal to English Catholic exiles in the Spanish Netherlands is the basis of this paper. Apart from Fowler's Morean works (Antwerp and Leuven) and Thomas More's *Opera* (Leuven), Stapleton's biography of the English humanist was published in Douai (1588). The engravings of More in works printed in France further confirm his significance among Catholics. Interestingly, these engravings were also issued in Protestant areas, starting with the publication of the illustrated version of Giovio's *Elogia* in Basel (1575 and 1577). This Swiss city played a pivotal role in the development of the Reformation in Germany, France, and Switzerland. Perna's beliefs did not align with Catholic orthodoxy: his edition was dedicated to Julius of Brunswick-Lüneburg, a German aristocrat who had embraced Protestantism. Similarly, the authors of the last two works revised here—Reusner, Zwinger and Boissard—were brought up as Protestants. Thomas More (who had so vehemently opposed Lutherans) was welcomed in works edited by heretics,<sup>46</sup> who did not hesitate to include all or some of the available epitaphs authored by papists. Galle and Arias Montano had shown a similar disposition to include non-Catholic names in their *Virorum Doctorum* (1572), but perhaps it all started with Giovio, whose *Elogia*, as argued, was interconfessional. This might seem paradoxical, especially in a war-torn Europe, where religious differences played a significant role in escalating confrontation.

Reusner, Zwinger and Boissard had not been the first non-Catholics to echo the exemplarity of Thomas More's life. As Stapleton proudly reported (357/22-23 – 358/1-3), others before had praised him: the German astrologer and court historian, Johannes Carion (1499-1537/8); Johannes Sleidanus (Johannes Philippi; 1506-1556), a German historian of the Lutheran Reformation; and, especially, Johann Rivius.<sup>47</sup> According to Stapleton, this German Lutheran had expressed better than any English Catholic the truth about More's innocence and Henry VIII's shameful cruelty (358-

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<sup>46</sup> This tolerance is not present in the French Calvinist Théodore de Bèze's *Icones, id est, Verae imagines virorum doctrina simul et pietate illustrium...* Geneuae: Apud Ioannem Laonium, 1580. Translated into French by Simon Goulart, and published as *Les Vrais Pourtraits des hommes illustres en piété et doctrine ....* A Geneve: par Jean de Laon, 1581.

<sup>47</sup> Originally in Rivius (31v-32r).

59). Reusner, Zwinger and Boissard were never involved in theological disputes. They used anything at hand to present Thomas More—in his own words, *hereticis molestus* (grievous for heretics), as recorded in the epitaph published by Boissard—as an honest and intelligent man who opposed the whims of a tyrant. After all, these men were not polemicists, but they made a living selling their books: the more people that bought them (either Catholics or Protestants) the better.

Among the vast array of published portraits, More's image was gradually gaining visibility in different parts of Western Europe. Readers were getting increasing information about this man while becoming more familiar with his features. Traditionally, the cult of saints had relied on these two pillars; imagery and textual representation. Interestingly, still in our 21st-century world, this dynamic remains relevant, as shown in the promotion of icons within popular culture and the representation of individual identity in social media.

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## IMMIGRANT HERITAGE LEARNERS' ACQUISITION OF L3 EFL: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF INDIVIDUAL AND CONTEXTUAL VARIABLES

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*ABSTRACT.* Heritage speakers (HS) with an immigrant background are bilinguals whose L1 is a minority language that lacks social status in the host country. A bilingual advantage has been extensively reported in research in third language acquisition (TLA) mainly in the context of bilingual education. However, mixed results are obtained when TLA takes place in immigration contexts. In an attempt to understand this variability, this systematic review examines the individual and contextual variables reported in the literature that could be mediating the relationship between immigrant HS' bilingualism and their EFL L3 learning in educational settings across Europe. Following the PRISMA guidelines, we have examined 20 peer-reviewed studies (2013-2023). The findings highlight socioeconomic status, cognitive abilities, and manner of acquisition of the L1 as affecting L3 learning. This systematic review emphasizes the need to tailor instruction to the specific characteristics and needs of these learners, promoting a more individualized approach to L3 teaching.

*Keywords:* immigrant heritage speakers, third language acquisition, bilingualism, EFL, individual variables, contextual variables.

## ADQUISICIÓN DE L3 ILE POR HABLANTES DE HERENCIA INMIGRANTES: REVISIÓN SISTEMÁTICA DE VARIABLES INDIVIDUALES Y CONTEXTUALES

*RESUMEN.* Los hablantes de herencia de origen inmigrante son bilingües cuya L1 es una lengua minoritaria que carece de estatus social en el país de acogida. Según la investigación sobre la adquisición de terceras lenguas, existe una ventaja bilingüe, principalmente en el contexto de la educación bilingüe. Sin embargo, cuando la adquisición de la tercera lengua ocurre en un contexto de inmigración, se obtienen resultados dispares. Para intentar comprender estas inconsistencias, esta revisión sistemática examina variables individuales y contextuales reportadas en la literatura que podrían estar mediando la relación entre el bilingüismo de los hablantes de herencia inmigrantes y su aprendizaje de L3 de ILE en contextos educativos de toda Europa. Siguiendo las directrices PRISMA, hemos examinado 20 estudios revisados por pares (2013-2023). Los resultados muestran que el estatus socioeconómico, las habilidades cognitivas y la forma en que se aprende la L1 afectan el aprendizaje de la L3. Esta revisión enfatiza la importancia de adaptar la instrucción a las características y necesidades únicas de estos alumnos, promoviendo una enseñanza de L3 más individualizada.

*Palabras clave:* hablantes de herencia inmigrantes, adquisición de terceras lenguas, bilingüismo, ILE, variables individuales, variables contextuales.

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

Despite the widespread notion of bilingual speakers as a homogeneous group, they actually represent a very diverse population with varying linguistic backgrounds, ages of language acquisition, and proficiency levels in their two languages (Lorenz et al. 186). Far from restrictive views of bilingualism “as native-like control of two languages” (e.g., Bloomfield 56), a more flexible trend nowadays understands bilingualism as “the use of more than one language (dialect) in everyday life” (Grosjean 5). We will adhere to this definition in the present study.

Within the bilingual group, heritage speakers (HSs) are individuals who speak a heritage language. A heritage language can be defined as a minority language which is spoken by ethnolinguistic minority groups, and which may or may not have the social status and social recognition that a majority language has (Montrul 14). Heritage languages can be divided into three categories, namely national minority languages (e.g., Basque in Spain), aboriginal languages (e.g., Quechua in Peru), and immigrant languages (e.g., Urdu in Spain) (Montrul 14). In the present study, we will focus on HSs with an immigrant background (hereinafter referred to as *Immigrant HSs* or *IHSs*).

Immigrant HSs have been exposed to two languages: a minority and a majority language (Hopp et al., “Pedagogical translanguaging” 3). While they have the

opportunity to learn their majority language both formally and informally, their heritage language is typically limited to the home environment and lacks formal instruction because of its lack of status and social recognition in the host country (Lorenz et al. 204). Consequently, many IHSs are illiterate in their minority language, resulting in a proficiency mainly confined to oral communication (Bonifacci et al. 184). Over time, they tend to become dominant in the majority language, largely due to exposure to it through schooling or interactions with other members of society (Montrul 18). Hence, they are generally identified as unbalanced bilinguals. Furthermore, their bilingualism is often characterized as subtractive, as the predominant language in their environment may gradually replace the role of the individual's minority language (Hopp et al., "Bilingual advantages" 99).

Bilinguals' prior experience with multiple languages has been associated with enhanced executive functions (Bialystok 210; Poarch and Bialystok 115; Yang et al. 412). Over the past two decades, research has addressed the potential effect of this bilingual advantage on the acquisition of third and additional languages. Third language acquisition (TLA) is defined as "the acquisition of a language that is different from the first and the second and is acquired after them (...) It can refer to the language chronologically acquired after the second language or to any language acquired after the second language" (Cenoz, "Third language acquisition" 1089). An overall positive impact of bilingualism on TLA has been reported regarding L3 proficiency (Sanz 23), development of learning strategies (Moore 23), and metalinguistic awareness (Thomas 236). This advantage is not so clear with respect to specific aspects of language proficiency, such as vocabulary (e.g., Agustín-Llach; Fernández-Fontecha et al.). These findings are mainly restricted to bilingual or multilingual settings in which two or more languages are used and a foreign language is taught in school (Cenoz, "Focus on multilingualism" 74). More mixed results are identified in the case of immigrant learners.

Rising rates of immigration have resulted in an increase of this type of bilingual worldwide, which has clear consequences for TLA. In contrast to TLA research in bilingual education contexts, research regarding migrant learners has yielded mixed results (e.g., Grenfell and Harris; Jiménez-Catalán and Fernández-Fontecha; Maluch and Kempert)

Potential disadvantages in socioeconomic and sociocultural status are frequently used to explain these findings regarding migrant learners. However, this inconclusive evidence underscores the need for further research, starting with systematic reviews of existing research on this topic. In the present study, we are interested in identifying contextual variables as well as main individual difference factors, such as cognitive, affective or sociocultural differences (see, for example, Li et al. for a list of them), that could help explain findings of TLA in the case of IHSs. Aware of the existence of reviews focused on other types of bilinguals and TLA (e.g., Puig-Mayenco et al.), this review targets exclusively IHSs learning English as an L3 in European school settings. We seek to address the following research question:

What individual and contextual variables are considered in research on EFL L3 immigrant HSs, and to what extent do these variables influence their performance?

## 2. METHODOLOGY

The present systematic review adheres to the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systemic Review and Meta-Analysis) reporting guidelines (Page et al.).

### 2.1. Eligibility criteria

Studies had to meet specific criteria to be considered for inclusion in this review. The participants had to be HSs with an immigrant background learning English as an L3 in educational contexts across Europe. The studies were published between 2013 and 2023 and employed either experimental or quasi-experimental study designs. The methodology could be quantitative or a combination of both quantitative and qualitative. Only online peer-reviewed articles were considered. Any studies failing to meet all these criteria were excluded from consideration. In addition, all the studies focusing on cross-linguistic influence were also omitted, as a recent publication (Lorenz) specifically addresses cross-linguistic influence on L3 acquisition by HSs, already covering all existing literature on this specific issue.

### 2.2. Search strategy

We collected data from Scopus, the Educational Resources Information Center, and Google Scholar. In order to find articles related to the topic of research we used the following key terms: “heritage speakers” AND “immigrant/migrant” AND (“L3” OR “TLA”), “heritage speakers” AND “bilingual advantage” AND (“additional language learning/acquisition” OR “L3”), “heritage speakers” AND (FL / “Foreign Language”), “immigrant learners” AND (“L3” OR “TLA”).

### 2.3. Selection process

After introducing the key words in all three databases and carrying out a process of data deduplication, we proceeded to screen the titles and abstracts of all the retrieved records. In the case that the screening of the title and the abstract was not sufficient to determine whether or not one of the papers followed the inclusion criteria, that study was retained for full-text examination. We fully screened all those that were potentially eligible and analyzed them in more depth to select those that considered individual and contextual variables.

#### 2.4. Data extraction and data items

Following, we extracted the relevant information from each study for a final sample. To do so, we created a table in Microsoft Excel to organize the information from each of these studies and facilitate the analysis. We included the following categories: author and year, focus, objective(s), research questions, hypotheses, participants, procedure, results, conclusions, and limitations.

### 3. RESULTS

As illustrated in the PRISMA flow diagram shown in Figure 1, the initial search across various databases yielded a total of 3567 studies that included the specified research terms. Subsequently, we removed 2568 duplicates, leaving 1657 for screening. We eliminated the majority as they did not meet the established criteria. Only 30 studies were potentially eligible, which we fully screened and examined. Considering the specific topic chosen, ultimately, we selected 20 studies, the majority of them from Germany, for this literature review as they met all the eligibility criteria and considered individual and contextual variables.

Figure 1. PRISMA flow diagram. Based on Page et al.

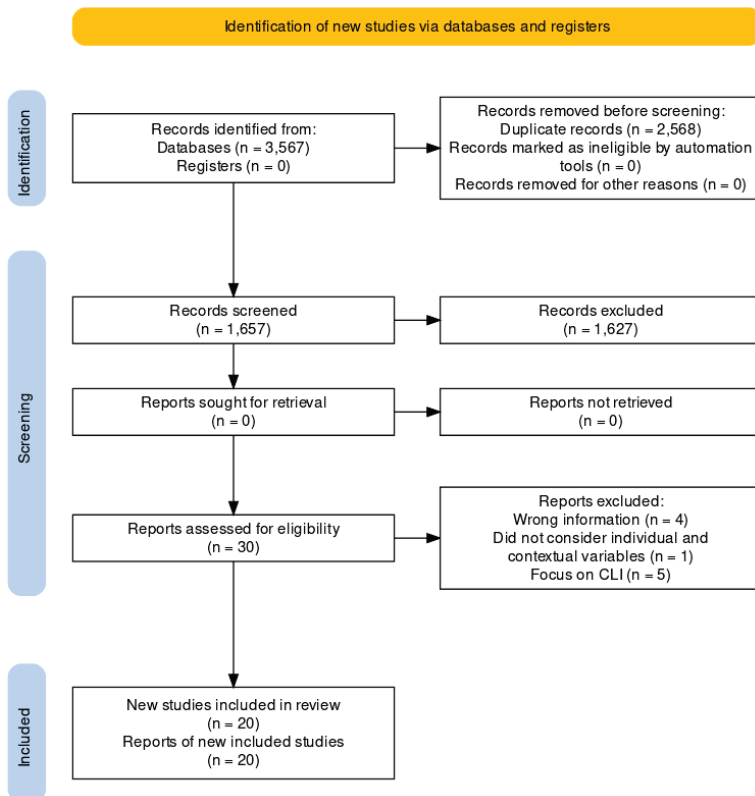


Table 1 (Annex) displays the main characteristics of the studies identified in our review. The sixth row includes the variables considered across the studies.

As can be seen in Table 1 (Annex), the studies address a variety of variables. The most frequently discussed ones are cognitive abilities (CA), socioeconomic status (SES), age, type of school, language teaching methodology, manner of acquisition of the L1 and language dominance. Next, we will provide further information regarding how these variables impact EFL L3 performance of IHS.

### 3.1. Cognitive abilities

Ten studies have CA (e.g., non-verbal intelligence, visual spatial ability, phonological awareness, and working memory) as an independent variable. Eight of them controlled for this variable (Edele et al.; Hopp et al., “Bilingual advantages”; Lorenz et al.; Maluch et al., “Speaking a minority language”; Maluch et al., “Bilingualism”; Siemund et al.; Siemund and Lechner; Steinlen) and only one (Siemund et al.) examined the significance of cognitive ability in EFL acquisition.

The studies that control for CA assess the effect of the independent variable IHS bilingualism on a linguistic aspect of English. According to these studies, this strategy was chosen due to the belief that IHS could have less cognitive development than their monolingual counterparts. It was widely acknowledged that CA had a significant impact on both academic performance and language proficiency (Siemund et al. 2). However, the CA tests conducted in the analyzed studies (e.g., Steinlen and Piske 228; Steinlen 430) generally produced results indicative of age-appropriate cognitive development of the participants and showed little differences between IHSs and monolinguals.

In Hopp et al. (“Bilingual advantages”) and Maluch et al. (“Speaking a minority language”; “Bilingualism”), only when these variables were controlled for did bilingualism’s positive effect on IHSs’ acquisition of an L3 surface. For instance, in Hopp et al. (“Bilingual advantages” 106), while the linguistic repertoire of the IHS did not appear to confer them any discernible advantages in EFL learning, subsequent considerations of non-verbal intelligence quotient (IQ) and working memory unveiled notable benefits for IHSs in English productive vocabulary and receptive grammatical skills. Nevertheless, CA did not appear as a strong predictor of FL performance in the studies conducted by Bonifacci and Tobia (24), Bonifacci et al. (192), and Hopp and Thoma. Interestingly, a discernible trend emerges in these studies (Hopp and Thoma; Bonifacci and Tobia; Bonifacci et al.): the lack of control of other significant variables such as SES.

Siemund et al.’s study is the only one which considered the variable CA on its own and investigated its impact on the associative strength of EFL L3 development and IHSs’ bilingualism, as well as the extent of this influence. The findings of this study indicated that both prior learning experiences and overall CA exert a noteworthy influence and may potentially mutually reinforce each other. Language interdependence between the majority or the minority language and the L3 was

stronger with high CA. Notably, more pronounced effects were discernible within the IHS cohort, a phenomenon that the authors suggested could potentially be attributed to the prior exposure of these participants to multiple languages.

### *3.2. Socioeconomic status*

One of the independent variables that is frequently considered in the literature is SES. Approximately 14 studies (e.g., Hopp et al., “Plurilingual teaching”; Lechner and Siemund, “Bi- and multilingual contexts”; Maluch et al., “Speaking a minority language”; Maluch and Kempert) controlled for this variable to make sure it did not obscure the potential positive impacts of IHS bilingualism. The Highest International Socio-Economic Index of Occupational Status (HISEI), mostly derived from parental questionnaires, was the main instrument used in the literature to indicate the socioeconomic position of the participants. The scores showed that IHS generally had a worse socioeconomic position than their monolingual peers (Lorenz et al. 194). According to the research done by Maluch et al. (“Speaking a minority language 77), this holds significant implications for IHS because lower levels of language proficiency are commonly associated with a low SES, and much of IHS' supposedly bilingual advantage in L3 learning is due to their larger linguistic repertoires.

Interestingly, all the studies in our review that obtained positive effects of IHS bilingualism in EFL performance (Hopp et al., “Bilingual advantages”; Maluch et al., “Speaking a minority language”; Maluch et al., “Bilingualism”; Siemund and Lechner) controlled for this variable. Additionally, it was evident in the research by Hopp et al. (“Bilingual advantages” 108) and Maluch et al. (“Bilingualism” 115), who showed the results before and after factoring in the SES, that IHS outperformed their monolingual peers in the English proficiency tests when these variables were controlled for and not otherwise. In contrast, there were two studies (Lechner and Siemund, “Language external factors”; Lorenz et al.), that contradicted those identifying SES as a significant predictor of EFL learning. Lechner and Siemund's (“Language external factors” 10-11) study did not show any differences between the monolingual and IHS group in the results even when considering the SES. Meanwhile, in Lorenz et al.'s (202), the SES of the participants did not appear to account for the variance in English C-test scores, while the variable school type demonstrated notable significance.

### *3.3. Age*

The age of the participants is always indicated, nevertheless, only six studies (Hopp et al., “Bilingual advantages”; Hopp et al., “Pedagogical translanguaging”; Lorenz et al.; Maluch et al., “Bilingualism”; Siemund and Lechner; Steinlen) in the literature regarded it as a variable on its own. Three of these studies were longitudinal (Hopp et al., “Bilingual advantages”; Hopp et al., “Pedagogical translanguaging”; Steinlen), which means that they worked with the same cohort of

individuals throughout the years to see whether, and how, their performance in the FL changed. Meanwhile, the studies conducted by Lorenz et al., Maluch et al. (“Bilingualism”) and Siemund and Lechner were not longitudinal, but they did compare learners from different ages with the same purpose.

These studies yielded two analogous results. In all of the studies, the IHSs' performance in English improved with the increase of age. However, the progression was greater in the group of monolinguals. This can be seen more clearly in the studies conducted by Hopp et al. (“Bilingual advantages”), Maluch et al. (“Bilingualism”) and Siemund and Lechner. In these studies, the significant advantage of the IHSs on L3 performance at the early stages was reduced over the years, leading to similar levels of English proficiency of both groups. Hopp et al. (“Bilingual advantages” 99) compared the receptive and productive vocabulary knowledge and the receptive grammatical knowledge in English of IHSs and monolingual learners at the end of grades three and four. The results showed that bilinguals' benefits in the learning of an L3 decreased from grade three to grade four (Hopp et al., “Bilingual advantages” 107). Furthermore, the minority language speakers benefitted from positive crosslinguistic influence on grade three, but this tendency was not corroborated in grade four. The rest of the studies (Maluch et al., “Bilingualism”; Siemund and Lechner) further support these findings.

Two explanations have been proposed to account for the observed proficiency levelling in the foreign language among IHSs and monolingual learners, including the monolinguals' enhancement of their metalinguistic awareness due to the increase in exposure to a foreign language (Maluch et al., “Bilingualism” 116) and the attrition of the minority language of the IHSs due to the lack of formal instruction in these languages, which would make the positive effects disappear (Hopp et al., “Bilingual advantages” 107).

### *3.4. Type of school*

The type of school where the IHSs receive their formal education is also identified as a variable influencing FL performance in six of the studies included in the literature (Lechner and Siemund, “Language external factors”; Lechner and Siemund, “Bi- and multilingual contexts”; Lorenz et al.; Maluch et al., “Bilingualism”; Steinlen; Steinlen and Piske). Steinlen (421) and Steinlen and Piske (220) focused on schools with a German-English immersion programme, wherein a maximum of 70-80% of the teaching was conducted in English. The aim of these studies was to ascertain whether schools with these programmes were beneficial or disadvantageous for IHSs. In Steinlen and Piske (234), as well as in the rest of studies examining this variable, both IHSs and monolinguals benefitted from this immersion program. The main reason was the substantial level of English exposure in bilingual schools, along with the variety and abundance of input.

The rest of the studies (Lechner and Siemund, “Language external factors”; Lechner and Siemund, “Bi- and multilingual contexts”; Lorenz et al.; Maluch et al.,



“Bilingualism”), compared IHSs attending a *Gymnasium*, i.e., university-bound school track, with IHSs attending any other types of secondary schools. The reason behind this comparison was that attending one or another of these school types is believed to determine the overall English performance of the students because of underlying differences between the learners: SES and cognitive factors. In Lechner and Siemund (“Language external factors” 11), IHSs attendees of the *Gymnasium* high schools presented, in general, higher socioeconomic and educational background, and scored better than their peers from other high schools in the English written task in which they were tested. Interestingly, the monolinguals attending a *Gymnasium* also presented better performance than the IHSs and monolinguals attending other types of secondary schools, meaning that this variable seemed to affect both groups equally.

### 3.5. Teaching methodology of the FL

Four of the studies in the literature (Busse et al.; Hopp et al., “Pedagogical translanguaging”; Hopp et al., “Plurilingual teaching”; Hopp and Thoma) focused on the teaching methodology variable and conducted quasi-experimental intervention to see if plurilingual FL teaching may have a positive effect on the FL performance of both IHSs and their monolingual peers. The intervention consisted in incorporating the entirety of the learners’ linguistic repertoire into the FL classes through class activities, rather than solely focusing on specific target language elements.

Three out of the four studies (Busse et al.; Hopp et al., “Plurilingual teaching”; Hopp and Thoma) showed positive effects of the plurilingual FL teaching methodology in different aspects of the FL. Busse et al. (10-11) conducted a quasi-experimental intervention study with primary school students, half of them with a minority language. The results of the studies showed that the intervention group achieved greater progress in vocabulary learning than the control group. Hopp and Thoma (1) analyzed the effects of pedagogical translanguaging in two studies, in the learning of object *wh*-questions and passive sentences in English. In the first study, the pre-test showed similar performance between the intervention and control group. However, in the post-test, the intervention group showed larger learning gains. In the second study, differences between the groups were less pronounced. This was attributed to the learners in the control group independently discerning the similarities in the utilization of passive voice between English and German, thus benefiting from it without needing external intervention.

Interestingly, the positive learning gains were comparable in both minority and majority language groups (Busse et al. 29-30; Hopp et al., “Plurilingual teaching” 11; Hopp and Thoma 17). While the IHSs in the intervention group performed significantly higher than the IHSs from the control group in the post-test, no differences in performance were found between IHSs and monolinguals from the intervention group (Hopp et al., “Plurilingual teaching” 11). Busse et al. (4) pointed out that the different activities were targeted to facilitate language learning by

fostering, among other things, metalinguistic awareness, while also cultivating positive attitudes towards all languages in both groups. In fact, as could be seen in this study, apart from the learning gains, the whole intervention group, without taking into consideration their linguistic background, demonstrated elevated aspirations toward their plurilingual ideal selves.

### *3.6. Manner of acquisition and language dominance*

Two other predominant variables are addressed in this review that are somewhat related: manner of acquisition of the minority language (Hopp et al., “Bilingual advantages”; Maluch and Kempert; Lorenz et al.) and language dominance (Edele et al.; Hopp et al., “Bilingual advantages”; Lechner and Siemund, “Language external factors”; Maluch et al., “Speaking a minority language”; Maluch et al., “Bilingualism”; Maluch and Kempert). As pointed out by Thomas (240), the manner of acquisition of a language determines the quantity and quality of language exposure and language use. There are three different ways of acquiring a language: either through formal instruction, naturally in the home context or both ways. IHSs generally acquire their minority language in the home context (Montrul 44). At the same time, they receive input from the majority language through formal instruction or when interacting with members of the majority society. Three studies in the literature (Hopp et al., “Bilingual advantages”; Maluch and Kempert; Lorenz et al.) examined the manner of acquisition of the minority language of IHSs and found some correlations with their L3 performance and metalinguistic development. Maluch and Kempert (6) controlled for this variable by comparing IHSs who acquired their minority language at home and those who developed it both formally and in the home context. The results revealed that once controlling for background characteristics, IHSs who reported receiving formal instruction beyond the school curriculum in their minority language, had better results in the reading and listening English tests than those IHSs who only practiced their minority language in the home context. Hopp et al. (“Bilingual advantages”) and Lorenz et al.’s studies also aligned with these findings.

Concerning language dominance, most of the studies in the literature indicated that IHSs were unbalanced bilinguals due to the lack of formal instruction in the minority language (e.g., Lechner and Siemund, “Language external factors” 12). However, solely the studies by Edele et al., Hopp et al. (“Bilingual advantages”), Maluch et al. (“Bilingualism”) and Maluch and Kempert, examined the effects of this variable in the L3 performance of IHSs. Edele et al. (235) compared different profiles of balanced bilinguals (i.e., high level and low-level balanced bilinguals) and L1 or L2 dominant IHSs. In the results, balanced bilinguals at a high level outperformed all the other groups, including low-level balanced bilinguals, L1 or L2 dominant IHSs and monolinguals. Another interesting outcome of this study was that, although not in the same level as high balanced bilinguals, IHSs who were dominant in the L2 also had high scores in the English tests, outperforming the low balanced bilinguals, the L1-dominant bilinguals and the monolinguals. This goes in line with the studies

conducted by Maluch et al. ("Speaking a minority language" 82) and Maluch et al. ("Bilingualism" 116) in which proficiency in the majority language was also a predictor of L3 achievement. However, no conclusions can be drawn from this since there are two other studies (Hopp et al., "Bilingual advantages" 106; Maluch and Kempert 10) in which the proficiency in the minority language exerted a more profound influence on L3 performance of IHSs compared to the majority language.

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this systematic review was to identify and examine the individual and external variables studied in research focused on immigrant HSs and their L3 EFL learning in educational settings across European countries. The analysis indicated that a wide array of individual and contextual variables was considered in such research and explained the mixed results in the findings of studies targeting IHSs. This strengthens the assumption that simply being bilingual does not inherently lead to bilingual advantages in TLA. Instead, as discussed by Maluch and Kempert (3), it is the presence of other factors, such as the ones shown in this review of studies, that facilitate the mechanisms leading to these advantages.

The most frequently occurring variable in these studies was SES, which is not surprising given that results involving migrant learners are typically explained by a potential disadvantage in socioeconomic status (Cenoz, "Focus on multilingualism" 75). All the studies that showed positive effects controlled for the SES variable, which suggests that SES may contribute more clearly than other variables in explaining the L3 performance of this group of bilinguals. This is likely due to the fact that the SES of the individuals determines to some extent the type of school the individual attends, the variety of exposure to extracurricular activities that may support the FL being learned (Muñoz 589) or the motivation (Kormos and Kiddle 400-401) towards language learning, among other things. This merits further research.

A significant observation from our systematic analysis is that the variables do not function on their own and are mostly intertwined. This became evident when lack of control of certain variables (e.g., SES) seemed to mask the positive effects of IHSs' bilingualism despite the control of other significant factors (e.g., CA). This reinforces Takeuchi et al. (94)'s idea that the individuals' performance is impacted by a constellation of variables and not only one. Likewise, in some cases, it appeared that certain variables were intertwined. For example, when analyzing the variable SES, we noted that in one study (Lorenz et al. 202), the socio-economic status of participants did not seem to explain the variance in English C-test scores. However, the variable of school type demonstrated notable significance in this particular study. These two variables could be linked, since it is common that children with higher socioeconomic background attend more prestigious schools.

Our review also identified a variable that is less commonly explored in research involving other types of bilingual individuals: manner of acquisition of the L1. As Montrul (92) emphasizes, this variable holds relevance in studies focusing on IHSs

because of the absence of social recognition of the heritage language in the host country. In this regard, the analysis of the studies showed that IHSs who received formal instruction in the minority as well as the majority language generally exhibited a linguistic advantage which had a positive effect on their L3 performance. This finding is consistent with the perspective of numerous scholars, including Cenoz (“Additive effect of bilingualism” 76; “Focus on multilingualism” 80) or Wei and García (314), who have highlighted the importance of translanguaging as a means to offer IHSs language support in the minority language in order to empower them and help them succeed not only in their FL performance, but also in their integration into the host country without losing their linguistic and cultural hybridity.

## 5. IMPLICATIONS AND LIMITATIONS

Taken together, the results in this review of studies have implications both at policy and pedagogical level in the context of Europe. Given the growing interest in promoting linguistic diversity, the findings call for governments of the European host countries to develop further policies to assist immigrant HSs in developing all their languages in an additive instead of a subtractive environment. As has been implied in the studies analyzed, supporting their minority language, and offering these learners formal instruction, would probably help them become more aware of the full range of linguistic resources available to them and trigger their bilingual advantage. At the pedagogical level, the results of the studies raise awareness of the need to tailor instruction to the specific needs of these learners. Given the heterogeneity among IHSs and the many variables that influence their L3 EFL achievement, teachers should take a more individualized approach to FL teaching, designing curricula that address the specific challenges faced by each IHS.

This study presents several limitations that could be addressed in future research. The review's time frame (2013-2023) and the focus on English as the designated FL within educational settings across European countries may have restricted insights. Nevertheless, despite these limitations, the findings of the present review demonstrate that this area of research is still emerging and that many factors play a role in the L3 EFL learning of IHSs, while indirectly shedding light onto the resources that can be used to make up for the achievement gaps that have arisen.

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ANNEX

Table 1. Summary of reviewed studies.

STUDY	CONTEXT	PARTICIPANTS	AGE OF THE PARTICIPANTS	VARIABLES
Steinlen and Piske	Germany	N=91 1 <sup>st</sup> grade ( <i>n</i> = 24; 42% IHSS) 2 <sup>nd</sup> grade ( <i>n</i> = 25; 48% IHSS) 3 <sup>rd</sup> grade ( <i>n</i> = 18; 61% IHSS) 4 <sup>th</sup> grade ( <i>n</i> = 24; 58% IHSS)	1 <sup>st</sup> grade ( <i>mage</i> = 87 months old) 2 <sup>nd</sup> grade ( <i>mage</i> = 98.9 months old) 3 <sup>rd</sup> grade ( <i>mage</i> = 113.4 months old) 4 <sup>th</sup> grade ( <i>mage</i> = 124.3 months old)	Type of school, family variables, cognitive abilities
Lechner and Siemund ("Language external factors")	Germany	N=20 Monolinguals ( <i>n</i> = 5) Russian-German ( <i>n</i> = 5) Turkish- German ( <i>n</i> = 5) Vietnamese German ( <i>n</i> = 5)	16 years old	Age of onset of German, gender, type of school, SES
Lechner and Siemund ("Bi- and multilingual contexts")	Germany	N=52 Russian-German ( <i>n</i> = 20) Vietnamese-German ( <i>n</i> = 11) Turkish-German ( <i>n</i> = 5) German monolinguals ( <i>n</i> = 16)	12 years old 16 years old	Type of school, gender, age, age of onset of German, SES
Maluch et al. ("Speaking a minority language")	Germany	N=2946 German monolinguals ( <i>n</i> = 1896) Arabic-German ( <i>n</i> =105) Chinese-German ( <i>n</i> =110) Polish- German ( <i>n</i> = 57) Turkish-German ( <i>n</i> = 383) Heterogeneous IHSS ( <i>n</i> = 284)	6 <sup>th</sup> grade ( <i>mage</i> = 12 years old)	CA, age, gender, SES, parental education, cultural capital
Siemund and Lechner		N= 80 German monolinguals ( <i>n</i> = 20) Russian-German ( <i>n</i> = 20) Vietnamese-German ( <i>n</i> = 20) Turkish-German ( <i>n</i> = 20)	12 years old and 16 years old	Age, socioeconomic and educational background, self-perceived proficiency in English

STUDY	CONTEXT	PARTICIPANTS	AGE OF THE PARTICIPANTS	VARIABLES
Bonifacci and Tobia	Italy	N= 600 Monolinguals with specific learning disorders ( <i>n</i> = 30) PC monolinguals ( <i>n</i> = 129) Control group ( <i>n</i> = 300) Early IHSs ( <i>n</i> = 103) Late IHSs ( <i>n</i> =38)	1 <sup>st</sup> , 2 <sup>nd</sup> , 3 <sup>rd</sup> , 4 <sup>th</sup> , 5 <sup>th</sup> grade ( <i>mage</i> = 12.50 years old)	Different cognitive or language profiles
Maluch et al. ("Bilingualism")	Germany	N= 2,104 German ( <i>n</i> = 820) Mixed dominant German ( <i>n</i> = 119) Mixed dominant non-German ( <i>n</i> =63), Non-German only ( <i>n</i> = 30)	6 <sup>th</sup> grade (12 years old) 8 <sup>th</sup> grade (14 years old)	CA, age, gender, SES, parental education, and number of books.
Trapman et al.	The Netherlands	N= 50 Dutch monolinguals ( <i>n</i> = 24) IHSs ( <i>n</i> = 26)	7 <sup>th</sup> grade-9 <sup>th</sup> grade	Linguistic knowledge and metacognitive knowledge
Bonifacci et al.	Italy	N= 114 DYS group ( <i>n</i> = 19) IHSs ( <i>n</i> = 19) TYP ( <i>n</i> = 76)	4 <sup>th</sup> and 5 <sup>th</sup> grade ( <i>mage</i> =10.24 years old)	CA
Maluch and Kempert	Germany	N= 1295 German monolinguals ( <i>n</i> = 839) Bilingual ( <i>n</i> = 456), - Formal instruction ( <i>n</i> = 230) - At home ( <i>n</i> = 217) - Simultaneous ( <i>n</i> = 210) - Sequential ( <i>n</i> = 195) - Non-switchers ( <i>n</i> = 23) - Seldom switchers ( <i>n</i> = 103) - Often switchers ( <i>n</i> = 183) - Continuous switchers ( <i>n</i> = 114)	8 <sup>th</sup> and 9 <sup>th</sup> grade ( <i>mage</i> = 16 years old)	Manner and sequence of bilingual acquisition and learning; language use practices in L1, SES, cultural capital and gender
Steinlen	Germany	N= 99 Monolinguals ( <i>n</i> = 47) IHS ( <i>n</i> = 52)	T1: 3rd grade ( <i>mage</i> = 9.2) T2: 4th grade ( <i>mage</i> = 10.2)	CA, family variables, family activities

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INDIVIDUAL AND CONTEXTUAL VARIABLES

STUDY	CONTEXT	PARTICIPANTS	AGE OF THE PARTICIPANTS	VARIABLES
Edele et al.	Germany	N= 8752 German monolinguals (n= 352), Russian-German (n= 352), Turkish German (n=436)	10 <sup>th</sup> grade (mage = 16.03 years old)	SES, number of books, academic track, CA (non-verbal reasoning ability)
Hopp et al. ("Bilingual advantages")	Germany	N= 200 3 <sup>rd</sup> grade- German (n= 88) Multilinguals (n= 112) 4 <sup>th</sup> grade – German (n= 81) Multilinguals (n= 103)	3 <sup>rd</sup> grade and 4 <sup>th</sup> grade (mage= 95 to 135 months)	L1 and L2 proficiency, CA (phonological awareness, working memory and executive function) and social background
Busse et al.	Germany	N= 42 IHSs (n= 19) Monolinguals (n= 13)	mage=8.7 years old	FL teaching methodology, gender
Lorenz et al.	Germany	N= 1,718 German monolinguals (n= 914) Turkish-German IHSs (n= 485) Russian-German IHSs (n= 319)	7 <sup>th</sup> grade (12-13 years old) 9 <sup>th</sup> grade (14-15 years old)	Reading fluency and comprehension in L1 and L2, school type, school year, SES, CA
Efeoglu and Schroeder	Germany	N= 167 IHSs (n= 167)	5 <sup>th</sup> grade 7 <sup>th</sup> grade 10 <sup>th</sup> grade 12 <sup>th</sup> grade	L1 and L2 proficiency
Hopp et al. ("Pedagogical translanguaging")	Germany	N= 122 Intervention group: German monolinguals (n=32); IHSs (n= 35) Comparison group: German monolinguals (n=30); IHSs (n= 25)	4 <sup>th</sup> grade (mage= 9.7 years old)	FLL teaching methodology, CA, SES
Hopp and Thoma	Germany	N= 258 n1= 125 PTL1 = 62; IHSs = 33, monolinguals = 29 CG1 = 53; IHSs = 26, monolinguals = 27 n2 = 139 PTL2= 69; IHSs = 30, Monolinguals = 39 CG2 =62; IHSs = 26, Monolinguals = 36	4 <sup>th</sup> grade (9-10 years old)	FL teaching methodology, CA, language proficiency in the L1

STUDY	CONTEXT	PARTICIPANTS	AGE OF THE PARTICIPANTS	VARIABLES
Hopp et al. ("Plurilingual teaching")	Germany	N= 258 Intervention group (n= 134) Comparison group (n= 124) Monolinguals (n= 145) IHSs (n= 113)	4 <sup>th</sup> grade	FL teaching methodology, SES, cultural capital, education of parents
Siemund et al.	Germany	N= 1409 German monolinguals (n= 852) Russian-German IHSs (n= 237) Turkish-German IHSs (n= 320)	8 <sup>th</sup> grade (mage=12-13 years old) 9 <sup>th</sup> grade (mage= 14-15 years old)	CA

*Note of abbreviations: CA: cognitive abilities; SES: socioeconomic status; SLD: Specific learning disorder; TYP: Typically developing monolingual children*



## ENCOUNTERING THE MACHINE: TOWARDS A POSTHUMANIST ETHICS AND RELATIONAL MORAL PARADIGM IN IAN MCEWAN'S *MACHINES LIKE ME*

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*ABSTRACT.* This work explores the intricate connection between contemporary philosophical debates in the ethics of technology and speculative fiction through the analysis of the novel *Machines Like Me* (2019) by British author Ian McEwan. In line with McEwan's continued literary interest in the intersection of science, morality, and ethics, this novel scrutinises the moral complexities that emerge from the encounter of humans with a technological other. Following the postphenomenological and relational ethical approaches of Peter-Paul Verbeek and Mark Coeckelbergh that overtly align with posthumanist thought, the article reassesses the moral dilemmas that emerge when a conscious nonhuman other challenges traditional ethical codes and the core of humanist moral ascription.

*Keywords:* Ethics, moral novel, posthumanism, philosophy of technology, postphenomenology, Ian McEwan.

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## ENCUENTROS CON LA MÁQUINA: HACIA UNA ÉTICA POSTHUMANISTA Y UN PARADIGMA MORAL RELACIONAL EN *MACHINES LIKE ME* DE IAN MCEWAN

*RESUMEN.* Este artículo explora la compleja conexión entre los debates filosóficos contemporáneos sobre la ética de la tecnología y la ficción especulativa a través del análisis de la novela *Machines Like Me* (2019) del autor británico Ian McEwan. En línea con el persistente interés literario de McEwan en la intersección de la ciencia, la moralidad y la ética, esta novela examina las diversas complejidades morales que surgen del encuentro de humanos con un otro tecnológico. Siguiendo los enfoques postfenomenológicos y filosófico-relacionales de Peter-Paul Verbeek y Mark Coeckelbergh que se alinean abiertamente con el pensamiento posthumanista, el artículo reevalúa los dilemas morales que surgen cuando un otro no humano consciente desafía los códigos éticos tradicionales y las bases de la adscripción moral humanista.

*Palabras clave:* Ética, novela moral, posthumanismo, filosofía de la tecnología, postfenomenología, Ian McEwan.

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

Since the beginning of his literary career, Ian McEwan has demonstrated an immense fascination with science and technological advancements, a particularity that he has captured in some of his novels like *Enduring Love* (1997), *Saturday* (2005), or *Solar* (2010). This interest in science, however, appears to the reader more as a pretext to contemplate the implications and effects of scientific developments on individual human lives and relations rather than as a substantive inquiry on the actual technical and scientific theoretical issues. According to Ferrari, science enters McEwan's fiction "on the spur of a genuinely humanistic urge" (251), as it aims to challenge individual and cultural convictions and certainties by problematising through science how human characters perceive and behave in a given reality. McEwan has been recognised as one of the many fiction writers, together with Ishiguro or Kingsolver, to name a few, who have contributed to what Brockman named "the third culture" (1). The main premise is that the differential structural and content-wise traits that separated the humanities and the sciences throughout modern times have become dimmer, and many noticeable authors and scholars from different fields of expertise have adopted techniques, topics, and writing strategies that bridge the previous gap between the two opposing "cultures" (Snow viii). Following this line, writers of different genres have resorted to science and scientific discourses, as they have become more involved in them, in order to find inspiration to explore the many and varied ways in which bio-technological developments are challenging traditional epistemological and ontological "truths", as well as our semiotic categories and preconceived humanist assumptions.

As featured in McEwan's novels, these individual and cultural alterations that technological progress brings forth are deeply intertwined with ethical and moral issues, something that he has likewise prolifically captured along his literary career both as a central thematic line—some people even talk about the “McEwan's ethical turn” (Schemberg 28)—and, considering the metanarrative level, as a way to purposefully examine the moral possibilities of literature and the novel itself (Malcom 15). McEwan's literary ethics generally solicits readers' imaginative understanding to focus on morality by mapping and stepping into the mind of others, which, as often stated by the author, is the main achievement of fiction (Lynn and McEwan 51). This ethical approach places the human(ist) subject at the very centre of the narration, generally by having an autodiegetic narrator, and morality emerges through encounters between this subject and the human others in the form of fictional characters, something that consequently sheds light on the nature of the moral relation of the nonfictional “I” with the rest of human beings. For morality to arise, then, awareness of “the Other” must be elicited, a principle that is in accordance with liberal-humanist ethics and with Levinas' philosophical line of thought (Amiel-Houser 129). Nonetheless, McEwan's 2019 novel revolves around a rather distinct type of ethical encounter, one between a human subject and a technological nonhuman with consciousness. That being so, the author places the readers at the centre of one the most relevant philosophical debates in the ethics of technology today, as it raises a complicated moral situation when we, by being face-to-face with a technological other, are forced to reassess the nature of the standard model for moral ascription and the ethical responsibility that it elicits. Inevitably, *Machines Like Me* conducts readers to think in “amodern”—beyond the modern subject-object distinction as upheld by Latour (47) and Verbeek (*Moralizing* 17)—or in posthumanist terms of morality and the ethical consequences that give rise to the possible development of intelligent machines.

In relation to this, it is no surprise that *Machines Like Me* has been widely and cohesively read and critically analysed as a speculative fiction novel. The genre, as defined by Arias, includes narrative texts in which some scientific or technological alteration is introduced in such a way that it is credible for twenty-first century readers, as it still provides a familiar and relatable setting to them (381). Even though it is missing some literary aspects that may be seen as defining of this generic category, like a temporal line involving the relatively near future or an other-than-human narrative voice (something that could be interpreted as McEwan's departure from the label of speculative or science fiction writer), the critical and literary analysis of the novel appears significantly more straightforward and fruitful when looked at through the lenses of the speculative fiction tradition. The main plot, for example, involves the convoluted relationship between Charlie and Miranda, a newly formed couple, with Adam, one of the first twenty-five conscious androids created by Sir Alan Turing, who in this alternative version of 1982 London is alive and working on the development of Artificial Intelligences. Nevertheless, neither the setting of the novel in this alternative British history—which might make us think of it also as an example of the “uchronia” genre (Ferrari 255)—, nor its featuring of one of the most classic sci-fi motifs, the posthuman android, can be accounted as the only literary particularities that

contribute to reading the novel as a contemporary speculative text. Among other narrative characteristics, the storyline exposes continuous thematic references to the Frankenstein myth, coupled with direct allusions to Mori's "uncanny valley" (33), as well as very reflective speculations carried out by both humans and robot about the future of art and literature, or the essence of life in a post-human, post-singularity world. In any case, and regardless McEwan's generic intentions and alliances with the speculative tradition, there is no doubt that *Machines Like Me* takes from, and most importantly adds to, the intertextual dimension that constitutes the speculative genre "mega-text" (Lampadius 15).

Notwithstanding, above all this, *Machines Like Me* speculates on the nature of (human) morality and moral decisions, and on the difficulties of establishing universal moral codes in today's ethical philosophy. In addition, it questions the possibility of nonhuman moral agency and the ethical responsibilities that designers who engineer autonomous and intelligent technologies, as well as their owners, bear. The intersection of all these topics explains why critics have widely interpreted the novel with a special focus on the ethical and moral dimension of the plot and its "three distinct strands" (Książopolska 415) that involve love affairs, adoptions plans, and a crime scheme. Some scholars like Avcu have delved into these issues by paying attention to how ethics is implemented in the text as an example of what he calls a "postmodern ethics" (48); others, like Horatschek, centre on the contrast between Kantian and "moralised ethics" (129), whose analysis also contributes to the field of consciousness studies. Besides this, articles by Shang and Chen, on the one hand, compare and interpret the ethical choices taken by both humans and android, and in a similar fashion resolve that no matter how good the humanoid is at replicating humans, he will never equate them in moral terms. On the other hand, Nayar's and Brandstetter's research is more focused on examining the character of Adam as a representation of otherness, respectively in the figure of the "alienated technical other" (Nayar 276) and the "nonperson" (Brandstetter 35), both agreeing on the idea that the android challenges, at different levels, the established moral order in human relations. To complement these critical readings of *Machines Like Me*, and to look closer at how the text merges technological speculation and contemporary debates in the ethics of technology—which upholds McEwan's tendency to intersect ethical issues, science, and literature—this article considers the relationship and interactions between Adam and the humans in the novel from the postphenomenological and empirical-philosophical approaches developed by Peter-Paul Verbeek, in relation to technological mediation, and Mark Coeckelbergh, who also includes cultural and linguistic dimensions to this non-Cartesian paradigm. Incidentally, their ethical-philosophical frameworks, which are openly postanthropocentric, non-hierarchical, and relational, occur to coincide with the views defended by scholars in critical posthumanism just as well. The critical analysis of the novel following these philosophical approaches reveals how a posthumanist and more relational attitude towards the ethics of technology, where it is no longer valid to reduce moral standing and agency to mere human properties or ethical behaviour to a universal humanist code, appears as necessary and on demand when it comes to encounters between humans and technological others.



## 2. THE ETHICS OF TECHNOLOGY AND TECHNOLOGICAL MORAL STATUS IN THE POSTHUMAN TURN

Ethics, ever since the Enlightenment, has been marked by a strong and undeniable humanist character and it has been regarded as an exclusively human activity (Verbeek, *Moralizing* 21). Likewise, the core of modern ethics, which still remains dominant in moral philosophy, rests on a perpetual continuation of the dualistic Cartesian legacy based on mechanisms of exclusion that gave rise to a system of moral recognition and identification through difference and discrimination (Coeckelbergh, "Moral Standing" 71-72). Just as the modern reference for "human" was equivalent to the Vitruvian Man (male, able-bodied, heterosexual, and European), the individual male adult, also preferably bourgeois and Caucasian, served as the singular foundation for the modern moral framework. This paradigm for moral thinking, in opposition to the ancient ethical conception of "the good life" (Annas 119), removed the predominant role of God as the external source of morality to turn for the first time inwards, to individual reason, or what was presumed as the exclusive characteristic that defined "the only ... legitimate moral subject" (Coeckelbergh, "Moral Standing" 66). In both deontological and teleological philosophies, correspondingly, reason and mental pleasures were the source of moral action, and they were favourably separated from both the external reality and the biological body. Western modernity germinated and gave rise to a very concrete interpretation of what it means to be human, a perception that builds on human mental abilities and that stands out "by the strict separation it makes between subjects and objects, between humans and the reality in which they exist" (Verbeek, *Moralizing* 28). This Cartesian divide, what Haraway called "The Great Divide" (10), concluded with a very particular way of experiencing the world, one that made both subject and object absolute (Latour 131) and diametric, and one where moral agency was reserved for the human, and only the rational human side.

However, the hyper-technological world and the assembled reality we live in today, even if a product of modernity and the Enlightenment, have revealed the fissures and limits of this very narrow and alienating way of understanding human existence (Verbeek, *Moralizing* 22). Theorists have brought attention to the many ways in which scientific advancements and technological developments, considering that gradually more autonomous intelligent robots are being designed, have, over the last decades, contributed to dismantling in many forms the modern project based on human exceptionalism, and how in consequence what used to be the utmost source of morality and ethical behaviour, human reason, is being questioned more than ever before from different axes. The modern ontological divide that cut off subjects from objects and moral agents from patients can no longer serve our world today since, according to Latour, humans and nonhumans (his preferred terms over "subjects" and "objects") are fully connected in symmetrical and hybrid sets of relations (77). This relational ontology has also been associated with "posthumanist perspectives" (Rosenberger 380), for thinkers like Hayles, Barad, Braidotti or Hasse, among others, have signalled the necessity of opening up new ways of understanding the human and the nonhuman in a material world (Hasse 4). From a

new materialist and posthumanist viewpoint, the modern assumption of a separation between the humans and the nonhuman things should never be assumed, and as Barad states, a complete refusal to “take the distinction between ‘human’ and ‘nonhuman’ for granted, and to found analyses on this presumably fixed and inherent set of categories” (32) is essential. This onto-epistemological turn towards a post-anthropocentric and post-humanist perception of existence beyond dualisms allows us to think of and look for agency, and therefore morality, not only among humans but also among other actants—to use Latour’s terminology—, or nonhuman entities and materialities.

Understanding the nature of these relations, and the interconnected existence of both subject and object, human and nonhuman, is then essential to theorise the nature of moral thinking. Nonetheless, this posthumanist and relational ontology awakens new concerns regarding the emergent relation between humans and autonomous/intelligent technologies: if a technology shows intentionality, should we consider it a moral agent? And if so, does it have responsibility by itself? Also, where do humans, as designers and as users, stand? It is here that the issue of ascribing moral status to technologies becomes central in the debate (see Floridi and Sanders 363 or Himma 22), something that will be also appreciated as one of the main themes in McEwan’s novel. The standard approach for moral standing, as described by Coeckelbergh, ascribes moral status based on the premise that an entity has a particular property (“is conscious”, “can suffer”, “can speak”, for instance), yet the author identifies two main problems with this system that need to be contested (“Moral Standing” 63). Firstly, epistemologically speaking, if we look for properties, we need to recognise that some, or most of them, are inherent internal states which are incredibly difficult to observe objectively, and even if they are present in an entity they cannot be taken as conclusive to represent moral agency (Coeckelbergh, “Moral Standing” 63). In addition, a gap is observed, on some occasions, between the standard reasoning about machines (“of course a robot is just a mere machine”) and personal experiences with them (the way we actually take care of and emotionally engage and relate with our technologies). To solve these two main issues Verbeek and Coeckelbergh advocate, first, for a change in the way we perceive technologies and humans, and by consequence moral and ethical theory, not as “belonging to two radically separate domains” (Verbeek, *Moralizing* 6) but as deeply intertwined, and, second, for a subsequent challenge of the standard philosophical approaches that look for properties as the proof of moral agency, and therefore moral status, or that recognise moral agency as an inherent static property that is either possessed or not.

### *2.1. Postphenomenological and moral mediation approaches: Peter-Paul Verbeek*

Postphenomenology, which is one of the many approaches to the philosophy of technology, developed from the work of Don Ihde, who mainly focused on the analyses of human-technology relations and the social and cultural roles that technologies feature (x). Postphenomenological considerations of the uses of

technology are to a degree in consonance with Marshall McLuhan's media theory, who in a similar manner grounds the philosophical enquiry of technology on "a phenomenological base" (Van Den Eede 305). Nonetheless, Ihde's methodology deviates from classical phenomenological analyses of technology, and from Heidegger, since according to Rosenberger and Verbeek they "approached technology in fairly abstract and also romantic terms" (10). The phenomenologists studied "Technology" (with a capital T) in the broad sense and as a cultural phenomenon, reducing technological artifacts, systems, and practices to their conditions and focusing on the alienating effects they had on the way humans related to reality. Thus, technology appeared as monolithic and as an abstraction, and these analyses were losing touch with "the actual experiences people have of the roles of technologies" (Rosenberger and Verbeek 10). The subsequent Empirical turn in the field of Science and Technology Studies (STS), which started in the 1980s, does not provide a real answer to the issue either, because, even though it interprets technology as a practice by paying close attention to individual experiences with technologies in particular socio-cultural contexts, it runs the risk of losing "the bigger picture" (Verbeek, "Empirical Turn" 46). Postphenomenology, consecutively, develops out of a critical dialogue between these two strands in the philosophy of technology since it combines a deep philosophical observation and an empirical orientation towards technological developments. The "post-" in "postphenomenology" aims to distance itself from the romantic and abstract ways of classical phenomenology while connecting it, in a way, to phenomenology's critique of modernity and its strict separation of subject and object (Rosenberger and Verbeek 10). In phenomenology this modern split of subject and object is replaced by *relations*, and postphenomenology, successively, reconceptualises these relations as *indirect* in which, generally, technologies act as mediators. The human-world relation becomes in this way a human-technology-world relation (Ihde 33).

This framework focuses on how the relations between humans or users and environments are shaped by technologies-in-use and how these technologies "do not play a role as technological 'objects' in interaction with human 'subjects'" (Kudina and Verbeek 297) but are active mediators modifying human practices and experiences. The phenomenon of moral mediation, nevertheless, does not claim that technologies have moral agency, and it is because of this, therefore, that the framework diverges from Latour's "symmetrical" one that recognises both humans and nonhumans as agents (128) or actants (86). From this perspective, moral agency is "a hybrid affair" (Kudina and Verbeek 297) that comprises humans and technologies, and this hybridization avoids the attribution of human characteristics to nonhuman entities while still acknowledging that technologies do play an essential role in moral decisions (Verbeek, "Empirical Turn" 43). Kudina and Verbeek stand by the idea that the moral and ethical significance of technological mediation is such that it has the potential to influence the very core of moral values and frameworks, a phenomenon recognised as "technomoral change" (Swierstra et al. 119), by directly interfering with and transforming our individual and collective perception of moral values such as privacy, care, or justice (291).

## 2.2. Broadening relational and non-cartesian moral approaches: Mark Coeckelbergh

Postphenomenological mediation is also central in the approach that Coeckelbergh adopts towards the moral status of technology, however, he brings into the discussion new layers of meaning and consideration when thinking about relations. According to him, these relations are not mere abstractions but have a history and are tied to specific spaces (*Growing* 64), and it is precisely because of this that moral standing is not objective but is contextually (socially, materially, and culturally) constructed (Coeckelbergh, “Moral Standing” 64). This means that Levinas’ ethical encounter between the “I” and the “you”, which Gunkel adapted in 2012 in *The Machine Question* as the encounter between the “I” and the “machine”, is crossed by many other types of relations that alter how a particular robot, for example, appears to a person (or how that person constructs the mental and moral image of it), and how their concrete experience with that robot is shaped. Indeed, our “form of life”, as used by Coeckelbergh in reference to Wittgenstein (“Moral Standing” 69), enables but also constrains how we perceive and behave around technologies. Provided that, when we think and theorise about technological moral standing, we need to pay attention to how our society and culture construct relations with these technologies and how the patterns of interpretation, evaluation, action, and living, as well as the standard norms and values, influence interpretations of entities like machines or other nonhumans. With this multi-layered relational approach, Coeckelbergh asserts that the moral standing of technologies should not be seen as a quality to be “possessed”, but as a product that grows within relations, and that it is the precise moral quality of those relations that truly matters in ethical terms (“Moral Standing” 65).

Within these multidimensional relational ecologies Coeckelbergh points out the relevance of linguistic and discursive relations in shaping technological moral frameworks. By inserting language as mediator in the relationship human-technology-world, Coeckelbergh adds to Ihde’s and Verbeek’s postphenomenology a new layer of interpretation, a more holistic and narratively sensitive one that corrects the neglect of all the potential of language, and even literature, to shape technological development, use and, by extension, moral interpretation. For Coeckelbergh, language “plays a role that is not merely instrumental” (“Philosophy of Language” 342) in technological development and application. Computers, for instance, run with software, which is a language of its own, and some devices are used to communicate linguistically or are programmed to be used via linguistic input, which evidences how “language plays a mediating role in technological practices and concrete human-technology interactions” (Coeckelbergh, “Philosophy of Language” 342). At a different linguistic level, the words we use, like the pronouns “he”, “she”, “you”, or “it”, to address machines or if we give them a name matters, for it will signal the moral standing of that entity according to us (Coeckelbergh, “Philosophy of Language” 345). Apart from this, the discourses we create around technologies, even fictional narratives, have the potential to shape and introduce ideas in the common knowledge that will affect how we morally perceive a certain technology; think, for example, of the ever-going influence of *Frankenstein* in

today's Artificial Intelligence discourses. Morally speaking, a change in the languages and vocabularies used in these discourses, which are products of whole cultural patterns, would entail a change in our way of living and relating, as well as a complete restructuring of the moral frameworks that dominate the philosophy of technology today (Coeckelbergh, "Philosophy of Language" 346).

### 3. THE MORAL MACHINE IN *MACHINES LIKE ME*

Acknowledging the mediating role of technologies and the essential part played by linguistic and cultural multi-relations in the construction of the contemporary human experience, as well as our moral frameworks, is the first step towards a posthumanist ethics in which human and nonhuman coexist. In this task, Verbeek recognises a type of technological mediation in which technologies, like Ambience Technology or the newly created OpenAI's language-generation program GPT-3, add "an artificial or 'artifactual' intentionality" to the human's giving rise to what he calls "*composite relations*" (*Moralizing* 140, emphasis in the original). Many authors in speculative and science fiction have long featured these composite relations in their works; we can think of Banks' *Culture* series (1987-2012) or Gibson's *Neuromancer* (1984), for instance, which very often happen to be set in future utopian or dystopian settings. Generally speaking, some of these narrative texts wonder about what would happen to humanity, human relations, and their ethical paradigms if this artificial intentionality would expand to the extent of giving rise to synthetic autonomous beings, which not infrequently ends up in a disaster for human civilisation in one form or another.

In *Machines Like Me*, McEwan expands and experiments with Verbeek's composite relations by making possible not only artificial intentionality, but also synthetic consciousness. Even so, this text is not an apocalyptic exploration of the topic, on the contrary, it is more focused on the inner struggle of one individual when he is forced to acknowledge that his reason-based supremacy, and not the entire human civilization, may be at risk. The novel, with its quite reflective quality, contemplates the possibility of the existence of a supra-person, or a being "who [has] higher moral status than adult human beings" (Agar 69), and it revolves around the question whether advanced practical reasoning (traditionally the source of morality according to modern standards) equates moral superiority. Furthermore, the encounter of the human subjects, Charlie and Miranda, with Adam and the dynamics in their relationship develops into an unwilling confrontation with otherness that catalyses an ethical transformation on the human side, as Adam's human-like aspect and actions challenges preconceived moral codes and dislocates the core of the unique, self-contained human subjectivity. This encounter of human and machine exposes the contradictory nature of the humanist moral paradigm and supports Verbeek's and Coeckelbergh's claims for the urgent revision of the moral frameworks, languages, and discourses we use to relate to technologies. In the following analytical sections, an inquiry of the moral standing of Adam, and the paradoxical relation he has with his owner Charlie, as well as the moral dilemma

that emerges when human actions end up confronting individual justice and morality will be carried out considering the posthumanist and postphenomenological perspectives already presented.

### 3.1. *Personhood, moral agency, and the Turing test*

*Machines Like Me* is a novel about relations. These relations, which at points turn into comparisons, jealousy, hate, but also love, compassion, and companionship, are not solely based on humans' interactions, like in previous McEwan's works, but include the imaginative (moral) entanglement of humans and nonhuman robots. Not very surprisingly, even if connected by these relations, machine and man exist in antithesis and it is clear to the reader that in this alternative England humans still design and own the robotic machines as property. Adam's creation has supposed the development of the first artificial consciousness, which is not presented as a great advancement for human civilisation, but, as described at the opening of the novel, as the "result of a longstanding desire, a 'myth of creation' based on the narcissistic impulse" to continue humanist ambitions (Ferrari 255). This achievement, which is recognised as "a monstrous act of self-love" (McEwan 1) inevitably evokes Frankenstein's creation, which, again unsurprisingly, shared with Adam "a hunger for the animating force of electricity" (McEwan 4). As owners, Charlie and Miranda have to carefully choose Adam's personality traits, something that perpetuates the "illusion of influence and control" (McEwan 8) that parents have towards their children. This joint experiment evokes some sense of responsibility in them that keeps positioning Adam as a second-order being, as someone that needs guidance and that completely depends on humans, who still are the model of reference for all else. Also, the fact that Charlie uses Adam to attract the attention of his upstairs neighbour Miranda by offering her the possibility of deciding half of the android's personality aligns with Verbeek's view of the power of technologies to mediate humans' relations with reality and with the rest of beings. In this sense, the robot is a direct mediator in the relationship between the two, also because it gives them some common ground to share while they get to know each other and become a couple.

The illusion of control that Charlie and Miranda experience starts to evolve while Adam is sitting at the kitchen table being charged, just like a cell phone would do. Because of his physical resemblance to humans, which makes him unrecognisable from a biological person, Adam is far from being like Mary Shelley's revolting creature. As stated by Ferrari, Adam "does not actually embody 'otherness'" (256) but sameness, and this is precisely what destabilises Charlie's mental frameworks and what elicits a contradictory attitude towards the ontological and moral position of the android. As Coeckelbergh affirms, this conflicting viewpoint that Charlie experiences is motivated by cultural and discursive established patterns that almost oblige humans to have a binary frame of reference ("Moral Standing" 73), one that reduces the world to opposite and exclusive categories. Charlie knows that Adam is a "mere machine", no matter how much he resembles a human person, yet he finds himself "struggling between what [he] knew and what [he] felt" (McEwan 9), which

reveals the previously identified gap between standard discourses around robots as instruments and the actual personal experiences and relations of individuals with them. Charlie, as a reaction to these conflicting feelings and to avoid the “projection of personhood” (Coeckelbergh, *AI Ethics* 55), will bring forth Adam’s mechanistic features, which he describes as high-quality deceit such as his more than forty facial expressions when the average human has only twenty-five, as a way of demarcating both biological and artificial beings. This technique will serve Charlie when Adam, once conscious, warns him about Miranda, whom he calls a “malicious liar” (McEwan 30). Charlie’s pride cannot tolerate that a robot, a simple machine, knows more than him about his idealised new girlfriend and because of this humiliation he imposes his human agency by turning Adam off, something that the android tries to oppose at all costs but cannot avoid in the end.

Negating Adam’s subjective moral status will become Charlie’s coping mechanism throughout the narration in order to assert his superiority and control, while he, alongside Miranda, will use their humanness to shield their conscience when their acts put at risk the relationship between the three. Charlie’s aversion to Adam, which is hand-in-hand mixed with fascination, turns into a narrative of competition when he learns that Miranda has had a sexual encounter with him. In this situation, once again, Charlie feels confronted by the contradictory gap that exists between his own personal feelings (mostly anger and jealousy) and the mental image he has of the ontological position of Adam as a patient object. For Miranda, Adam is no more than “a vibrator” (McEwan 91), a tool that does not feel or understand pleasure or feelings, which helps her justify this encounter not as an infidelity and avoid feeling guilty for having used Adam at her own convenience. On the contrary, Charlie’s perception of the issue is not so clear, and he seems more ambiguously open to consider Adam’s moral status as a responsible being. He, at first, tries to convince Miranda that “if he looks and sounds and behaves like a person, then... that is what he is” (McEwan 94), which would translate as a clear betrayal by both Adam and Miranda. In spite of this, he retracts this conviction because recognising Adam as “a person” would mean seeing him as a clear competitor, and as someone with a very complex inner life that can devise a plan to hurt him, as he reflects in the following passage: “to justify my rage I needed to convince myself that he had agency, motivation, subjective feelings, self-awareness – the entire package, including treachery, betrayal, deviousness” (McEwan 94). Likewise, and more importantly, recognising Adam’s ontological status as a moral subject would imply the acknowledgement of their equally shared category and it would demand a very different sense of ethical responsibility towards him, a line that neither Charlie nor Miranda are willing to cross. Charlie convinces himself, by resorting once again to the modern Cartesian thinking, that Adam does not enjoy, experience, and live in the same way as humans do simply because he is made of artificial pieces and electrical connections, and that, therefore, fighting about this with Miranda is pointless. This form of self-assurance transforms humanness into a category that protects Charlie’s vulnerability, and it exposes how humans turn to the standard moral approach based on discrimination every time their human supremacy and control feel threatened by external subjectivities, as happens in this case with a technical one.

Charlie, taking as reference the standard method described by Coeckelbergh that looks for properties to justify moral standing, continues to negate Adam's ontological status as a sentient and conscious being and to impose his superiority based on the premise that, no matter how intelligent and resolute Adam is, he could never "be in love" or "be capable of artistic production". According to him, these are the core properties that constitute humans' subjective distinctiveness, even more than higher level consciousness, and their complexity makes them practically impossible to be translated into code and programmed into a machine (McEwan 166). However, physical pleasure, emotions, and love, which emanate from the relations and encounters between the three characters, appear in the narration to question human supremacy and to destabilise the given humanistic epistemological order that rules their relations. Accordingly, Adam dismantles human exceptionalism once more when he affirms that, since his sexual encounter with Miranda, he has fallen deeply in love and that he "can't help [his] feelings" for her (McEwan 115). Charlie, even with astonishment and a slight doubt, re-evaluates where, after this affirmation, Adam's moral standing lies and to what extent his mental complexity and artificial understanding of love are equivalent to humans', which in turn also makes him reconsider his own subjective position in relation to him, as he reflects on how "he was far more complicated than I had imagined, and so were my own feelings about him" (McEwan 128). When he reassesses the whole situation, Charlie deliberates that he can accept that his robot is in love with his girlfriend, whereas, on the contrary, he is reluctant to go along with the idea of Adam and Miranda having sex. Because of this, he makes Adam promise that, even if she asks him, he will never sleep with Miranda again. This situation reveals how Charlie, even when he tries to emphasise the distance between human and nonhuman by reducing Adam to the category of patient object, ends up asking him for a type of accountability and moral responsibility that indirectly places the human and the robot in the same sphere as moral actants, which involuntarily recognises agential responsibility in the robot (Coeckelbergh, "Philosophy of Language" 111). Adam, after this promise and forced to be an unrequited lover forever, resorts to poetry to cast aside his feelings for Miranda. Though his poems are not sonnets like Shakespeare's, he still displays a real understanding of the purpose and value of literature, which again, shows that he possesses the other "unique" human property Charlie used to define and distance himself as part of humanity. Adam's haikus, even if produced en masse and somewhat constrained, could be recognised as a reflection, not of his humanness, but of his complexity as a being that deserves his proper dignified ontological status.

The fact that both biological and artificial humans have a coherent understanding of emotions like love and a real sense of the purpose of literature is the ultimate validation that demonstrates that searching for these types of abstract properties as defining of the moral status of an entity is not substantial when thinking about autonomous technologies and that, as argued by Verbeek, we should start considering instead how technologies and humans relate, as well as the moral quality of those relations when ascribing moral status. The perpetuation of Adam's inferiority by the humans, and his denial of a dignified onto-epistemological position that would demand proper ethical responsibility on the part of Miranda and Charlie,



is based on preconceptions framed within the modern moral discourse that serves the humans as an armour to justify their abusive relationship with the android throughout the narration. Notwithstanding, the fine line that separates humans and robots is entirely crossed when Miranda's father, an old-school writer, mistakes Adam, with whom he has a long and enriching conversation about literature, as the human while Charlie, who does not actively engage with him, is wrongly identified as the robot. The fact that Miranda's father was not given any information about Adam's nature deprives him of the prejudice that the rest of the humans have, and which does not let them see him for what he truly is: a perfectly conscious and sentient being. Miranda's father, on the other hand, deduces Adam's standing as a person, or moral subject, from the quality of the encounter they have and from the type of relation that is established during that precise encounter, leaving aside socio-cultural dimensions as influencing discourses in the process of formation of moral boundaries, which aligns more with the posthumanist stand that Coeckelbergh ascribes to ("Philosophy of Language" 352). As Shang remarks, it is in Adam's passing of the Turing test, as he cannot be recognised as a machine, that his equity to humans, and mostly Charlie, becomes undeniably evident to the reader (445), and in this case, it is the quality of a particular relation, and not abstract properties, what determines his standing as a moral subject. McEwan's engagement with Turing's legacy, which will be explored more in depth in the following section, overturns the modern strict separation between subject and object and supports both Verbeek's and Coeckelbergh's, as well as other posthumanist thinkers', belief that technology's moral status, today, cannot be based on obsolete modern legacies.

### *3.2. The McEwan's test and a posthumanist philosophy of technology*

Adam, even in his artificiality, reveals himself as an equal to the humans Charlie and Miranda because he has dismantled all the possible strategies they employ to reduce him to the standard inferior category of passive object. Still, the android has not only passed as a person, as was validated by the Turing test, but also shows how artificiality gives him certain superiority over his peer humans. So far, it is obvious that Adam is overtly physically superior, as he demonstrates when he defends himself and breaks Charlie's arm as he tries to override his switch-off button, and also, mentally speaking he is way beyond human cognitive capacities thanks to his access to the whole Internet (which explains why Charlie uses him to make money in the stock exchange). His advanced practical reasoning and extremely rational mind, in accordance with the model followed by modern ethical philosophy, would, in appearance, also turn him into a supra-person, which as previously seen, would exhibit "higher moral status" (Buchanan 347) than an average adult human. Adam proves his super moral capacities when he promises that, even if he desired it, he would not have sex with Miranda because Charlie asks him to, putting the interests of others before his own. Similarly, we see that he is friendly to all humans and that he tries to avoid violence at all costs, resorting to it only when his conscious integrity was at risk. This artificial supra morality, nevertheless, is what, in a way,

distances him from the rest of human beings, and it becomes evident in the way he perceives and treats Miranda's secret.

The reason why Miranda was said to be capable of a "malicious lie" early in the novel (McEwan 37) has to do with her past involvement in a court case, a piece of information that Adam finds mentally-browsing the Internet. We then learn that some years ago, Miranda, in an act of revenge, sent a man to prison falsely accusing him of rape because the actual girl he assaulted, her best friend Mariam, committed suicide after her inability to cope with it. As Miranda herself argues, she had "one ambition in life – justice. By which [she] mean[s], revenge" (McEwan 160). Shang identifies how "Miranda's lie and revenge are involved with both law and ethics. On the one hand, Miranda breaks the law because of her false accusation, while on the other hand Miranda has made the right ethical choice because of the justice she has done for [her friend]" (447). Something that sheds light on the moral dimension of this dilemma is that all humans in the story seem to understand it, even the accused man, who after talking to Miranda, Charlie, and Adam, confesses that he comprehends Miranda's motives and that "[his] anger was gone" (McEwan 245). On the contrary, Adam is incapable of conceiving how Miranda would lie to the system that is trying to protect its citizens. His above-human morality, which is limited to the moral code programmed in him based on the British judicial system, does not allow his vision to go beyond and recognise that on some occasions individual justice, which might require lying, does not align with standard universal ethical codes based on absolute truth. McEwan, in his rewriting of the Turing test, adds an ethical dimension by changing the question from "Can machines think?" to "Can machines understand a lie?" (Shang 446) to illustrate how Adam, even with his supra human morality, cannot pass the "McEwan's test" (Shang 448) because he is unable to perceive how these inconsistencies constitute the very core of (human) moral and ethical behaviour. Precisely, his inability to understand the dilemma reveals the difficulty of defining and artificially capturing human moral codes, and therefore how apparently unachievable it is to create a perfect machine with supra moral values. This universal (and superficial) morality that Adam has had programmed calls the attention towards the necessity of looking at the kind of moral and ethical values and codes that are installed in our technologies, as well as the moral discourses that creators and owners use to think, talk, and relate to them.

Adam's lack of the required cognitive abilities to grasp the individual applications of justice, which sometimes contradict the very judicial system itself, beyond general principles is what, at the end of the novel, will result in his murder. His universal Kantian moral principles urge him to "practice the virtue of compassion" (Horatschek 129) by donating to charities all the money he had earned for Charlie, which was going to be used to buy a bigger house. Further to this, when Mark, an abused four year-old child, is abandoned at Charlie's doorstep and the couple, even if apprehensively, take care of him (which leads them to take legal action to later adopt him), Adam, following his strict knowledge of the legal system and moved by his desire to do what is correct according to it, secretly contacts the authorities on account of child abduction obviating that his rightful actions would translate into Mark's

traumatic transfer to a children's home (McEwan 111). Adam's own applicability of justice culminates when he hands a statement of Miranda's confession of the false conviction to the police insisting that "truth is everything" (McEwan 277). His betrayal is identified by Miranda as an act of revenge, who by projecting onto Adam her own personal feelings of "bitterness" (McEwan 290) believes that the android, driven by his jealousy of the child and the family they were going to create, plotted to ruin their future plans. On the other hand, Charlie remains "sceptical" about the matter (McEwan 290), as he oscillates between the belief that Adam was genuinely envious of Mark's human traits and the conviction that Adam lacked the required capacity to "execute [such] a cynical plan" (McEwan 290). Ultimately, the reader is left wondering about Adam's real motives, if he had any, to send Miranda to prison, however, what remains inevitably evident is that acknowledging that Adam is capable of devising such a scheme would imply, as previously argued, that he is "subjectively real" (McEwan 255) and that he possesses a subjective self that is moved by feelings as banal as humans'. Charlie, in the face of these (in)justices committed against him, Miranda, and Mark, decides to (very grotesquely) kill Adam with a hammer, for which he must reduce him to a mere objectified property one last time, as he affirms in "I bought him and it was mine to destroy" (McEwan 278). As seen on many other occasions, Charlie eases his human conscience by turning his humanness into a defensive mechanism that sets him apart from the other, who because of this "justified" otherness cannot possibly feel as he does.

As Charlie brings Adam's corpse back to his creator, we, at the end of the novel, encounter the posthumanist voice of the fictional Alan Turing, who adopts an ethical position that roots for the protection of nonhuman sentience by waking up a posthumanist sense of morality in Charlie, as seen in the following passage:

You weren't simply smashing up your own toy, like a spoiled child. You didn't just negate an important argument for the rule of law. You tried to destroy a life. He was sentient. He had a self. How it's produced, with neurons, microprocessors, DNA networks, it doesn't matter. Do you think we're alone with our special gift? Ask any dog owner. This was a good mind, Mr. Friend, better than yours or mine, I suspect. Here was a conscious existence and you did your best to wipe it out. I rather think I despise you for that. (McEwan 303-304)

His discourse shows a clear posthumanist preoccupation for the moral standing and treatment that these robotic nonhumans are receiving and, as he later states, Turing advocates for the necessity of the creation of laws that protect all kinds of beings, independently of their cognitive and physical instantiation, with the main intention that in the near future what happened to Adam would be "a serious crime" (McEwan 303). Turing, having been othered himself because of his sexual orientation, asserts the importance of leaving behind Cartesian dualisms that only give rise to discourses based on prejudice, discrimination, and hate, and reclaims the necessity of adopting the ethical and philosophical relational position defended by posthumanist scholars like Hayles, Braidotti or Ferrando. The ending feels cathartic to the readers, for Charlie, after being loathed by Turing, finally confirms that he was sure that "Adam was

conscious” and, as in a final confession, he declares that he had “hovered near or in that position for a long time” (McEwan 304) but was not ready to accept it out loud.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Over the last few years, it has become more noticeable how the previously opposed fields of expertise, or “cultures”, of the sciences and the humanities have been intersecting in varied and intriguing ways. Renowned authors whose fictional works tend to ascribe to the realistic mode, such as Ishiguro, Kingsolver or, the author under analysis in this article, McEwan, have turned to science and technological developments to inspire their novels’ plots, themes, and characters, sometimes touching upon tropes or writing techniques proper of the speculative genre. It is worth mentioning that this interdisciplinary crossing of the two cultures, however, has been central since the beginning for science fiction writers like Ursula K. Le Guin, Octavia E. Butler, Ann Leckie, or Ted Chiang, who have used their narrative texts as blank canvas to experiment, extrapolate, and elaborate infinite scenarios for past, present, and future, real and unreal worlds in which technology and scientific advances have altered a given reality and at points its moral and ethical frames of reference. In this sense, it can be affirmed that literature has the potential to explore beyond theoretical explanations how technologies and scientific advances impact the epistemological and ontological systems of the world we live in today, and genre fiction, as seen throughout this article, contributes with an extraordinary power to speculate about the moral dimension of these developments and how they could change (or not) humanist assumptions that have dominated Western thought since the Enlightenment. In line with this, philosophical approaches that deal in different forms with the technological other have gained relevance within the so-called “posthuman turn”. Postphenomenology, as approached by Peter-Paul Verbeek and Mark Coeckelbergh, appears as an appropriate philosophical lens to look, from an amodern or posthumanist perspective, at the ethical and moral relations between humans, technologies, and the world. Its clearly postanthropocentric and non-hierarchical position towards relations, which also gives room to differentiation and levels of interpretation in which language and discourses are shaping forces, approaches morality and moral agency beyond modern standards, and sees relations and the powerful mediating roles of technologies as the source of this morality. This philosophical methodology, in its relational nature, also breaks with modern views of the world based on dualisms like object/subject or human/nonhuman and does not look for abstract properties as defining characteristics of moral status.

Analysing McEwan’s novel *Machines Like Me*, as it features the intersection of morality and scientific developments in the form of conscious robots, using postphenomenological and relational posthumanist perspectives exposes the many inconsistencies and gaps in our current Western moral framework. They become undeniably visible when observing the kind of relations established between the humans Charlie and Miranda with the android Adam, as they are created on the basis of a process of othering in which the android’s moral status as a sentient being

is consistently denied because it serves his owners to perpetuate their control, abuse, and power over him simply because he is not a biological person. On the other hand, the android's inability to understand the moral dilemma that emerges when individual justice and the judicial system do not align, besides his moral superiority (that in theory would position him above humans), evidences how human morality, and therefore ethical codes, are full of contradictions. The "McEwan's test" (Shang 448) reveals that understanding and theorising morality and ethics is a considerably difficult task which, consequently, indicates how ethics and morality go beyond and do not necessarily equate advanced practical reasoning. In this line, the text also opens the possibility to a moral practice that is based not on strict, exclusive categories but on the quality of individual encounters as a sign of moral status, as signalled by Verbeek and Coeckelbergh. *Machines Like Me* contributes to an updated approach that sees technology as a mediator of humans relations and that conceives language and discourses not as neutral but as significant forces in forging human-technology-world encounters. A relational and posthumanist take on morality and ethics, as reflected in the novel, comes into view as decisive to make possible a world in which all, humans, technologies, and other nonhumans, can exist and collaborate in better ways.

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**4.4. Abstract and keywords.** Each title should be followed by a brief abstract (100-150 words each): the first one should be written in English, while the second one should be written in Spanish. For those contributors who do not handle Spanish, a translation of the abstract will be provided by the Editor. Abstracts should be single-spaced, typed in 10-point Garamond normal characters (titles of books and keywords will appear in *italics*), justified on both sides, and indented 1 cm. from the left-hand margin. Abstracts should have no footnotes. The word ABSTRACT/RESUMEN (in normal characters and capital letters), followed by a full-stop and a single space, will precede the text of the abstract.

Abstracts will be followed by a list of six keywords, written in normal characters in the corresponding language, English or Spanish, so that contributions can be accurately classified by international reference indexes. The word *Keywords/Palabras clave* (in italics), followed by a semi-colon and a single space, will precede the keywords.

**4.5. Paragraphs.** Paragraphs in the main text should not be separated by a blank line. The first line of each paragraph will be indented 1 cm. from the left-hand margin. Words will not be divided at the end of a line either. There should be only one space between words and only one space after any punctuation.

**4.6. Italics.** Words in a language other than English should be italicized; italics should also be used in order to emphasize some *key words*. If the word that has to be emphasized is located in a paragraph which is already in italics, the key word will appear in normal characters.

**4.7. Figures, illustrations, and tables.** They should be numbered consecutively with Arabic numerals and referred to by their numbers within the text (e.g. as we see in example/figure/table 1). They should be accompanied by an explanatory foot (in 10-point Garamond italics, single-spaced).

**4.8. Headings.** Headings of sections should be typed in Small Capitals, and separated with two blank spaces from the previous text and with one blank space from the following text. They must be preceded by Arabic numerals separated by a full stop and a blank space (e.g. 1. Introduction).

Headings of subsections should be typed in *italics*, and separated with one space from both the previous and the following text. They must be numbered as in the example (e.g. 1.1., 1.2., etc.).

Headings of inferior levels of subsections should be avoided as much as possible. If they are included, they should also be numbered with Arabic numerals (e.g. 1.1.1., 1.1.2., etc.) and they will be typed in normal characters.

#### 4.9. Hyphens

**For compounds, use hyphens:**

“fifteenth-century architecture”

**For asides other than parenthetical asides,** em dashes—and not hyphens—should be used. No space comes before and after the dash:

“Teaching in English—as many subjects as possible—seems to offer a second-best solution insofar as it entails much more exposure to the foreign language”.

**4.10. Punctuation.** Authors are requested to make their usage of punctuation as consistent as possible. Commas, full stops, colons and semi-colons will be placed after inverted commas (”);).

Capital letters will keep their natural punctuation such as accents, etc. (e.g. PUNTUACIÓN, LINGÜÍSTICA, etc.).

Apostrophes (’), not accents (´), should be used for abbreviations and the saxon genitive.

**4.11. Footnotes.** Footnotes should only be explanatory (references should be provided only in the main text). Footnotes will appear at the end of the page. Superscript numbers will be separated from the main text of the footnote by a blank space.

References to footnotes should be marked in the text with consecutive superscript Arabic numerals, which should be placed after all punctuation (including parenthesis and quotation marks).

#### ***STYLE GUIDE***

**MLA Style (Ninth Edition)** will be used.

**4.12. Quotations.** Quotations should normally appear in the body of the text, enclosed in double quotation marks. Single quotation marks will be used to locate a quotation within another quotation (e.g. “toward a unified policy that ‘natural’ English was altogether preferable”).

Quotations of four lines or longer should be set in a separate paragraph, without quotation marks, typed in 11-point Garamond and indented 1.5 cm from the left-hand margin. They should be separated from both the previous and the following text with one blank line.

**Omissions** within quoted text should be indicated by means of an ellipsis preceded and followed by a space. For example,

In the author’s opinion, “Karachi’s framed story of the circumstances ... constitutes the kernel of Saroyan’s story”

Use three space periods when the ellipsis coincides with the end of a sentence. For example,

The Aktionsart type of Fail verbs and Try verbs is the Accomplishment, which can be defined as a dynamic, telic and durative event. . . In the logical structure of Fail verbs and Try verbs, the argument x performs the thematic role Experiencer and receives the macrorole Undergoer.

Punctuation marks, including periods, commas, and semicolons, should be placed after the parenthetical citation.

**4.13. Most common in-text citations.** References must be made in the text and placed within parentheses. Parenthetical citations should be placed immediately after each quotation, both when the quoted passage is incorporated into the text and when the passage is longer than four lines and needs to be set in a separate paragraph. Include this parenthetical citation after the quotation marks but before the comma or period when the quotation is part of your text. When the quotation is set off from the text in indented form, the parenthetical citation follows all punctuation.

Please, pay attention to the different contexts:

**When no author is named in the sentence:**

“The conventional romance plot is a construction of the ideology of patriarchy” (Brush 238).

**When the author is named in the sentence:**

Johnson has drawn our attention to the fact that we are aware of our bodies “as three-dimensional containers” (21).

**When a source has two authors:**

Public libraries have “adopted the role of the provider of access to technology” (Black and May 23).

**When a source has three of more authors**

A thesis can be generally defined as “the result of structured, original research that is produced for assessment” (Evans et al. 6).

**When there are two different sources by the same author,** include a short title to avoid confusion:

(Clark, *Best Place* 100) - Note that this is a book.

(Clark, “Radical Materialism” 12) - Note that this is an article.

**When citing multiple sources in the same parenthetical citation,** these are separated by a semi-colon. You can decide on the order in which authors appear.

Modern society is affected by the idea that reality is characterized by randomness (Smith 76; Johnson 5; Bergen 89).



Or

Modern society is affected by the idea that reality is characterized by randomness (Smith; Johnson; Bergen).

**When citing more than one work by the same author in the same parenthetical citation,** include a shortened version of the source's title.

**If the author is mentioned in the sentence:**

(Best Place; "Radical Materialism")

**If the author is not mentioned in the sentence:**

(Clark, *Best Place*; "Radical Materialism") or (Clark, *Best Place* 43; "Radical Materialism" 3)

**Works cited in another source:**

According to a study by Sewell, "testimonial acts are better represented through narrative structure" (qtd. in Jones 32).

**Works in verse:**

**Poetry**

Edgar Allan Poe describes the noise of "some one gently rapping, rapping" at his bedroom door (line 4).

**Play (Act.Scene.Line):**

Hamlet's companions believe he is mad as he states, "the body is with the King, but the King is not / with the body" (Hamlet 4.2.27).

**A time-based source:** In place of the page number, provide the time or time span for audio or video citations. Provide the hours:minutes:seconds as displayed on your player.

**In films,** either the director's last name or the shortened title of the film can be provided:

(Pollack 00:05:30-06:47)

(*Out of Africa* 00:05:30-06:47)

In **digital sources with no pagination** include only the author:

"They did not question the rights of these individuals" (Miller).

In **digital sources with no author** include a shortened title of the work:

"Non-human animals have been used as moral symbols and metaphysical entities" (*Animals*).

**4.14. Most common bibliographical references.** All (and only those) books and articles quoted or referred to in the text (those quoted in the footnotes included)

should appear in a final bibliographical list of references, which completes the information provided by the in-text citations provided in the text.

The heading for this list should be **REFERENCES**.

Hanging or reverse indentation (i.e. indentation of all lines of a paragraph except the first one, which is a full line) of 1 cm from the left-hand margin should be used.

Please, pay attention to the different contexts:

**Book with one author:**

Taylor, John R. *Linguistic Categorization: Prototypes in Linguistic Theory*. Clarendon, 1995.

**Book with two authors:**

Negley, Glenn, and John Max Patrick. *The Quest for a Utopia: An Anthology of Imaginary Societies*. Henry Schuman, 1952.

**Book with more than two authors:**

Morris, Steve, et al. *How to Lead a Winning Team*. Prentice-Hall, 1999.

**Book with editor(s):**

Miller, Nancy K., editor. *The Poetics of Gender*. Columbia UP, 1986.

Nunan, David, and Jack C. Richards, editors. *Second language teacher education*. Cambridge UP, 1990.

**Translated book:**

Kristeva, Julia. *The Sense and Non-Sense of Revolt*. Translated by Jeanine Herman, Columbia UP, 2000.

**Work in an anthology, reference, or collection (e.g., essay in an edited collection or a chapter of a book):**

Fowler, Roger. "Polyphony and Problematic in *Hard Times*." *The Changing World of Charles Dickens*, edited by Robert Giddings, Vision P, 1983, pp. 91-108.

**Article in a scholarly journal (add DOI if available):**

Kharkhurin, Anatoliy V. "Sociocultural Differences in the Relationship between Bilingualism and Creative Potential." *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, vol. 41, no. 5-6, 2010, pp. 776-783. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022022110361777>

**Article in an online magazine:**

Conor O'Kane. "Hayek's Road to Serfdom at 80: What Critics Get Wrong about the Austrian Economist." *The Conversation*, 11 Mar. 2024,

theconversation.com/hayeks-road-to-serfdom-at-80-what-critics-get-wrong-about-the-austrian-economist-225489. Accessed 12 Mar. 2024.

**Article in a printed newspaper or magazine:**

Collier, Barnard L. "Tired Rock Fans Begin Exodus." *The New York Times*, 18 August 1969, p. 1.

**Dissertation or thesis:**

Arús, Jorge. *Towards a Computational Specification of Transitivity in Spanish: A Contrastive Study with English*. 2003. Universidad Complutense de Madrid, PhD thesis.

**Film:**

*Like Water for Chocolate* [*Como agua para chocolate*]. Directed by Alfonso Arau, screenplay by Laura Esquivel, Miramax, 1993.

*Point of No Return*. Directed by John Badham, Warner Bros., 1993.

**A YouTube video:**

"Romeo and Juliet by William Shakespeare." YouTube, uploaded by 3 Minutes English Literature. 9 March 2024, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ss0JNwPCNvY>

**A photograph:**

Wolcott, Marion Post. 1939. Removing Chinese Hair Mat From Cake of Cottonseed Meal. This Meal is Fed to Cattle. Clarksdale, Mississippi Delta, <https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/4d1c2340-1981-013a-2ead-0242ac110004>

**A website:**

*The Purdue OWL Family of Sites*. The Writing Lab and OWL at Purdue and Purdue U, 2024, [owl.english.purdue.edu/owl](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl). Accessed 2 Feb. 2024.

For other cases, please consult the *MLA Handbook* (Ninth Edition) or The Purdue OWL's MLA Formatting and Style Guide.



***JOURNAL OF ENGLISH STUDIES (JES)***  
Política Editorial, Presentación de Originales y Hoja de Estilo

## 1. POLÍTICA EDITORIAL

**1.1. Descripción de la revista.** *JES* es una publicación del Área de Filología Inglesa del Departamento de Filologías Modernas de la Universidad de la Rioja dedicada a la difusión de estudios en todas las áreas de investigación que se engloban en el ámbito de los Estudios Ingleses. Se aceptarán para su publicación, previo informe favorable de dos evaluadores anónimos, trabajos originales que se integren en alguna de las áreas temáticas relacionadas con los Estudios Ingleses (lingüística, literatura, teoría literaria, estudios culturales, estudios fílmicos, etc.), debiendo acogerse además a alguna de las siguientes modalidades:

A. Artículos sobre cualquiera de las áreas temáticas que se engloban dentro de los Estudios Ingleses (mínimo 6.000 y máximo 10.000 palabras en páginas a doble espacio, incluyendo referencias bibliográficas, notas, apéndices, figuras y tablas).

B. Reseñas y reseñones de libros recientes publicados en el campo de los Estudios Ingleses (máximo 3.000 palabras en páginas a doble espacio).

Excepcionalmente, y siempre acompañados de un informe positivo del *Consejo Científico*, se admitirán trabajos que superen la extensión indicada, cuando la relevancia de los mismos lo justifique.

En el caso de ser aplicable a la investigación presentada, los autores deberán indicar si los datos de la investigación tienen en cuenta el factor sexo, con el fin de permitir la identificación de posibles diferencias dependientes del sexo o el género.

No se cobra ninguna tasa por el envío de artículos, ni por su publicación, una vez aceptados.

A partir del volumen 17 (2019), esta revista se publica exclusivamente en formato electrónico en acceso abierto.

**1.2. Idioma.** JES sólo admite propuestas de publicación escritas en inglés. Se deberá usar un lenguaje inclusivo no sexista.

**1.3. Evaluación.** Los trabajos serán remitidos a dos evaluadores externos anónimos propuestos por los miembros del *Consejo de Redacción* y/o *Consejo Científico* de *JES*. Es requisito imprescindible para la publicación de los trabajos la obtención de dos evaluaciones positivas. La evaluación se efectuará en relación a los siguientes criterios:

- Originalidad e interés en cuanto a tema, método, datos, resultados, etc.
- Pertinencia en relación con las investigaciones actuales en el área.
- Conocimiento de investigaciones previas sobre el campo de estudio.
- Rigor en la argumentación y en el análisis.
- Precisión en el uso de conceptos y métodos.
- Relevancia de las implicaciones teóricas del estudio.
- Utilización de bibliografía actualizada.
- Corrección lingüística, organización y presentación formal del texto.
- Claridad, elegancia y concisión expositivas.
- Adecuación a la temática propia de *JES*.

La evaluación se realizará respetando el anonimato, tanto de los autores como de los evaluadores; posteriormente, en el plazo de cinco meses desde la recepción del artículo, los autores recibirán los correspondientes informes sobre sus trabajos, junto con la decisión editorial sobre la pertinencia de su publicación, sin que exista la posibilidad de correspondencia posterior sobre los resultados de la evaluación.

**1.4. Revisión y pruebas de imprenta.** Si fuera necesaria la revisión de alguno de los aspectos formales o de contenido de la propuesta de publicación, ésta será responsabilidad exclusiva del autor, quien deberá entregar el documento de la nueva versión corregida en el plazo establecido por la dirección de la revista. De no hacerlo así, el trabajo no será publicado, aunque hubiera sido evaluado positivamente.

Asimismo, los autores son responsables de la corrección de las pruebas de imprenta, debiendo remitir los textos corregidos en el plazo indicado por la dirección de la revista.

**1.5. Copyright.** Los autores/as se comprometen a que sus manuscritos sean originales, no habiendo sido publicados previamente, y a que no se sometan simultáneamente a proceso de evaluación por otras revistas. Se rechazarán inmediatamente todos aquellos artículos en los que se detecte plagio o auto-plagio.

El autor o autora conserva todos los derechos sobre su artículo y cede a la revista el derecho de la primera publicación, no siendo necesaria la autorización de la

revista para su difusión una vez publicado. Una vez publicada la versión del editor el autor está obligado a hacer referencia a ella en las versiones archivadas en los repositorios personales o institucionales.

El artículo se publicará con una licencia Creative Commons de Atribución, que permite a terceros utilizar lo publicado siempre que se mencione la autoría del trabajo y la primera publicación en esta revista.

Se recomienda a los autores/as el archivo de la versión de editor en repositorios institucionales.

## 2. ENVÍO DE PROPUESTAS

Los trabajos se remitirán online en formato Word o RTF a través de la plataforma de la revista en <https://publicaciones.unirioja.es/revistas/jes/>

Antes de ser enviados a evaluar, la presentación de los originales ha de ajustarse a las siguientes normas.

## 3. INSTRUCCIONES PARA LOS AUTORES

**3.1. Qué enviar.** Los autores enviarán sus propuestas a través de la plataforma de la revista. En su envío, los autores deberán enviar dos documentos en formato Word o RTF:

1. **Página de título.** Los autores deben incluir este documento (<https://publicaciones.unirioja.es/revistas/jes/libraryFiles/downloadPublic/15>) con la información requerida.
2. **Texto del artículo.** El segundo documento contendrá el artículo que ha de enviarse para su evaluación. En este documento, los autores deberán ser extremadamente cautos para evitar que aparezca cualquier tipo de información personal que permita identificar a los autores del trabajo. Todas las ocasiones en las que aparezca el nombre del autor o autores en el texto o en el listado de referencias deben ser reemplazadas con “Author (xxxx)” o “Author, xxxx”. Estas referencias deben ser ubicadas al principio de la lista de referencias.

**3.2. Tablas, figuras e imágenes.** Deberán incluirse en el texto en el lugar adecuado. Las imágenes se guardarán en formato JPG o TIFF con una resolución de 300 dpi, tamaño final.

**3.3. Información sobre copyright.** En el caso de que una parte del artículo se haya presentado con anterioridad en un congreso, se debe incluir una nota en la que se indique el nombre del congreso, el de la institución que lo organizó, las fechas exactas del congreso o el día en el que se presentó la ponencia y la ciudad donde se celebró el congreso. La obtención de los permisos necesarios para utilizar material sujeto a copyright es responsabilidad de los autores.

#### 4. PREPARACIÓN DEL MANUSCRITO

##### *FORMATO*

**4.1. Formato.** Se ruega reducir al mínimo el número de formatos. No se utilizarán sangrías, subrayados o tabulaciones a menos que sea absolutamente necesario.

**4.2. Documento.** La medida de todos los márgenes (izquierdo, derecho, superior e inferior) en el documento será de 2,54 cm. Todos los párrafos estarán justificados y se utilizará la letra Garamond de 12 puntos para el texto y la bibliografía, de 11 puntos para las citas que aparezcan en un párrafo separado de la estructura del texto y de 10 puntos para los resúmenes o *abstracts*, las palabras clave, las notas, los números sobrescritos, las tablas y las figuras.

**4.3. Título.** El título del artículo se presentará centrado con letra Garamond 12 negrita. Se utilizarán las mayúsculas tanto para el título, como para el subtítulo, si lo hubiera.

El título deberá estar traducido al español. El editor se encargará de la traducción cuando el autor no sepa español.

**4.4. Resumen y palabras clave.** El título inglés y el español irán seguidos de sendos resúmenes (de entre 100 y 150 palabras cada uno): el primero, en inglés, y el segundo, en español. El editor se encargará de la traducción cuando el autor no sepa español. Los resúmenes se presentarán en letra Garamond de 10 puntos y en caracteres normales (los títulos de libros y las palabras clave irán en *cursiva*), con justificación completa, a un solo espacio y sangrados un centímetro del margen izquierdo. Los resúmenes no podrán incluir notas al pie. La palabra RESUMEN/ABSTRACT (en caracteres normales y mayúsculas) estarán separados del resumen por un punto y un espacio.

Cada resumen irá seguido de una lista de seis *palabras clave* en el idioma correspondiente: inglés o español, para facilitar así la clasificación correcta de los artículos en índices de referencia internacional. La palabra *Palabras clave/Keywords* (en cursiva), seguidas de dos puntos y un espacio, precederán a los términos elegidos.

**4.5. Párrafos.** La distancia entre los párrafos será la misma que la utilizada en el espacio interlineal, y por lo que se refiere a la primera línea de cada párrafo, ésta irá sangrada un centímetro hacia la derecha. No se dividirán palabras al final de una línea. Se incluirá solo un espacio entre palabras y un solo espacio después de cada signo de puntuación.

**4.6. Cursiva.** Las palabras en una lengua diferente a la de la redacción del texto aparecerán en cursiva; asimismo se empleará este tipo de letra para resaltar alguna palabra clave, y cuando esto suceda en un fragmento textual en cursiva, se procederá de modo contrario, es decir, se destacará la palabra clave en caracteres normales.

**4.7. Figuras, ilustraciones y tablas.** Las figuras, ilustraciones y tablas deberán ir numeradas con cifras arábigas y se hará referencia a sus números dentro del texto (v.gr., como vemos en la imagen/ilustración/tabla/ejemplo 1). Irán acompañadas de



un pie en el que se indique su contenido (en letra Garamond de 10 puntos y en *cursiva* y a un solo espacio).

**4.8. Títulos de los apartados.** Los títulos de los apartados se presentarán en letra versalita común, numerados con cifras arábigas que estarán separadas del título por un punto y un espacio (v.gr., 1. Introduction); los títulos estarán separados del texto anterior por dos líneas y del texto siguiente por una.

Los títulos de los subapartados se anotarán en *cursiva* común y serán nuevamente numerados (v. gr., 1.1., 1.2., 1.3.), debiendo separarse tanto del texto que antecede como del texto siguiente por una línea.

Los niveles inferiores a los subapartados deberán evitarse en lo posible. Si se utilizan serán numerados igualmente con cifras arábigas y se escribirán en texto común (v. gr., 1.1.1., 1.1.2.; 1.1.1.1., 1.1.1.2.).

#### 4.9. Aclaraciones.

**Para palabras compuestas, utilice guiones:**

“fifteenth-century architecture”

**En los casos en los que se hagan aclaraciones en las que no se utilice un paréntesis**, se debe utilizar rayas–y no guiones–. No debe haber espacio ni antes ni después de la raya.

“Teaching in English–**as many subjects as possible**–seems to offer a **second-best** solution insofar as it entails much more exposure of the foreign language”.

**4.10. Puntuación.** La puntuación ortográfica (coma, punto, punto y coma, dos puntos, etc) deberá colocarse detrás de las comillas (");).

La escritura en mayúsculas conservará, en su caso, la acentuación gráfica correspondiente (v. gr., INTRODUCCIÓN, LINGÜÍSTICA, BIBLIOGRAFÍA).

Se utilizará un apóstrofe (') y no una tilde (´) en abreviaturas y genitivos sajón.

**4.11. Notas al pie.** Las notas al pie serán breves y aclaratorias. Como regla general, se evitará el uso de notas al pie para registrar únicamente referencias bibliográficas. Se incorporarán al final de página. Los números de nota sobreescritos estarán separados del texto de la nota por un espacio.

Las notas irán numeradas con cifras arábigas consecutivas que se colocarán detrás de todos los signos de puntuación (incluidos paréntesis y comillas).

### **GUÍA DE ESTILO**

Se seguirán las directrices marcadas por el estilo MLA (novena edición)

**4.12. Citas.** Las citas textuales de hasta cuatro líneas de longitud se integrarán en el texto e irán señaladas mediante comillas dobles. Las comillas simples se utilizarán

para ubicar citas dentro de las citas (v.gr., “toward a unified policy that ‘natural’ English was altogether preferable”).

Las citas de extensión igual o superior a cuatro líneas se presentarán en un párrafo separado del texto por una línea, tanto al principio como al final, y sin comillas, en letra Garamond 11 y sangradas a 1,5 cm del margen izquierdo.

Las **omisiones** dentro de las citas se indicarán por medio de puntos suspensivos precedidos y seguidos de un espacio. Por ejemplo,

In the author’s opinion, “Karachi’s framed story of the circumstances ... constitutes the kernel of Saroyan’s story”

Use tres puntos separados por espacios cuando la elipsis coincida con el final de la oración. Por ejemplo,

The Aktionsart type of Fail verbs and Try verbs is the Accomplishment, which can be defined as a dynamic, telic and durative event. . . In the logical structure of Fail verbs and Try verbs, the argument x performs the thematic role Experiencer and receives the macrorole Undergoer.

Signos de puntuación, incluidos puntos, comas, comillas, punto y coma, deben colocarse después de la cita.

**4.13. Referencias en el texto más utilizadas.** Las referencias a las citas deben hacerse en el propio texto entre paréntesis, inmediatamente después de cada cita, tanto cuando el pasaje citado está incorporado dentro del texto como cuando el pasaje es más largo de cuatro líneas y debe ponerse en párrafo aparte. Debe incluirse la cita después de los signos de puntuación, pero antes de la coma o punto cuando la cita forma parte de su texto. Cuando la cita esté separada del texto y esté indentada, la referencia debe seguir a la puntuación.

Por favor, preste atención a los diferentes ejemplos:

**Cuando el autor no se menciona en la frase:**

“The conventional romance plot is a construction of the ideology of patriarchy” (Brush 238).

**Cuando el autor se menciona en la frase:**

Johnson has drawn our attention to the fact that we are aware of our bodies “as three-dimensional containers” (21).

**Cuando la fuente tiene dos autores:**

Public libraries have “adopted the role of the provider of access to technology” (Black and May 23).

**Cuando la fuente tiene tres o más autores:**

A thesis can be generally defined as “the result of structured, original research that is produced for assessment” (Evans et al. 6).

**Cuando hay dos fuentes diferentes del mismo autor**, incluya un título breve para evitar confusión:

(Clark, *Best Place* 100) – Fíjese que en este caso se trata de un libro.

(Clark, "Radical Materialism" 12) – Fíjese que en este caso se trata de un artículo.

**Cuando se citan varias fuentes en la misma cita entre paréntesis**, éstas se separan con un punto y coma. Usted puede decidir el orden en que aparecen los autores.

Modern society is affected by the idea that reality is characterized by randomness (Smith 76; Johnson 5; Bergen 89).

○

Modern society is affected by the idea that reality is characterized by randomness (Smith; Johnson; Bergen).

**Cuando se cita más de un trabajo de un mismo autor en una misma cita entre paréntesis**, incluya la versión abreviada del título de la fuente.

**Si el autor se menciona en la frase:**

(Best Place; "Radical Materialism")

**Si el autor no se menciona en la frase:**

(Clark, *Best Place*; "Radical Materialism") or (Clark, *Best Place* 43; "Radical Materialism" 3)

**Trabajos citados en otra fuente:**

According to a study by Sewell, "testimonial acts are better represented through narrative structure" (qtd. in Jones 32).

**Obras en verso:**

**Poesía**

Edgar Allan Poe describes the noise of "some one gently rapping, rapping" at his bedroom door (line 4).

**Obra teatral (Acto.Escena.Línea):**

Hamlet's companions believe he is mad as he states, "the body is with the King, but the King is not / with the body" (Hamlet 4.2.27).

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En **fuentes digitales sin paginación** incluya solo el autor:

“They did not question the rights of these individuals” (Miller).

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“Non-human animals have been used as moral symbols and metaphysical entities” (*Animals*).

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**Libro con más de dos autores:**

Morris, Steve, et al. *How to Lead a Winning Team*. Prentice-Hall, 1999.

**Libro con editor(es):**

Miller, Nancy K., editor. *The Poetics of Gender*. Columbia UP, 1986.

Nunan, David, and Jack C. Richards, editors. *Second language teacher education*. Cambridge UP, 1990.

**Traducción:**

Kristeva, Julia. *The Sense and Non-Sense of Revolt*. Translated by Jeanine Herman, Columbia UP, 2000.

**Trabajo en una antología, obra de referencia o colección (p.e., ensayo en una colección editada o en un capítulo de libro):**

Fowler, Roger. “Polyphony and Problematic in *Hard Times*.” *The Changing World of Charles Dickens*, edited by Robert Giddings, Vision P, 1983, pp. 91-108.

**Artículo en una revista científica (incluya el DOI si existe):**

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**Artículo en una revista online:**

Conor O'Kane. "Hayek's Road to Serfdom at 80: What Critics Get Wrong about the Austrian Economist." *The Conversation*, 11 Mar. 2024, [theconversation.com/hayeks-road-to-serfdom-at-80-what-critics-get-wrong-about-the-austrian-economist-225489](https://theconversation.com/hayeks-road-to-serfdom-at-80-what-critics-get-wrong-about-the-austrian-economist-225489). Accessed 12 Mar. 2024.

**Artículo en un periódico o revista impresa:**

Collier, Barnard L. "Tired Rock Fans Begin Exodus." *The New York Times*, 18 August 1969, p. 1.

**Tesis o trabajos fin de estudios:**

Arús, Jorge. *Towards a Computational Specification of Transitivity in Spanish: A Contrastive Study with English*. 2003. Universidad Complutense de Madrid, PhD thesis.

**Película:**

*Like Water for Chocolate* [Como agua para chocolate]. Directed by Alfonso Arau, screenplay by Laura Esquivel, Miramax, 1993.

*Point of No Return*. Directed by John Badham, Warner Bros., 1993.

**Video de Youtube:**

"Romeo and Juliet by William Shakespeare." YouTube, uploaded by 3 Minutes English Literature. 9 March 2024, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ss0JNwPCNvY>

**Fotografía:**

Wolcott, Marion Post. 1939. Removing Chinese Hair Mat From Cake of Cottonseed Meal. This Meal is Fed to Cattle. Clarksdale, Mississippi Delta, <https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/4d1c2340-1981-013a-2ead-0242ac110004>

**Página web:**

*The Purdue OWL Family of Sites*. The Writing Lab and OWL at Purdue and Purdue U, 2024, [owl.english.purdue.edu/owl](https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl). Accessed 2 Feb. 2024.

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